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## Meet The Solo Employment Atty Who Is New DC Bar President

By **Alison Knezevich**

Law360 (July 10, 2026, 4:15 PM EDT) -- Diane Seltzer won last year's race to lead the District of Columbia Bar in an election with unprecedented member participation. Now that she's starting her term as president of the organization, Seltzer wants to motivate attorneys to stay involved.

After focusing her campaign on upholding the rule of law, the solo employment law practitioner told Law360 Pulse in an interview this past week that she hopes she can use her platform to encourage lawyers to stay energized after they turned out in record numbers to vote.

"I'm not going to tell people what to do, but I will say ... find what makes sense to you and do that," Seltzer said. "There are so many ways to get involved in supporting democracy."

**Seltzer beat** Paul Hastings LLP's Brad Bondi, the brother of then-U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi, with more than 90% of the vote last year after a heated race that attracted national attention. Seltzer was president-elect for one year before her term as president began July 1. Some expressed concerns about what Brad Bondi's personal connection to the Trump administration could mean for the nation's largest mandatory bar association. He **said during his campaign** that he didn't discuss his decision to run with anyone from the administration, including his sister.



Diane Seltzer

About 43% of eligible D.C. Bar members cast ballots, up from fewer than 9% the year before.

Member participation was down to 16% in this year's election, in which Joshua Mogil of WilmerHale **prevailed over** Amy Bess of Vedder to become president-elect.

Seltzer succeeds Crowell & Moring LLP's Sadina Montani as president of the D.C. Bar, which has about 124,000 members.

A New York City native, Seltzer graduated from law school at American University after earning a sociology degree at Tufts University. Early in her career, she clerked for judges in Maryland and worked at small firms. She started the Seltzer Law Firm nearly three decades ago, a year before her first child was born, she told Law360 Pulse.

Running her own firm gave her flexibility as she raised her two children, Seltzer said.

"My thought was, if I want to go to my kid's [event], or if I just want to be with my child, or if my kid is sick, I do not want or need the pressure of someone else challenging me on that," she said.

Law360 Pulse talked with Seltzer on her goals as D.C. Bar president and the mindset she brings as a solo attorney, among other things. This interview has been edited for clarity and length.

### What are your goals as president this year?

The overarching goal is always helping our members individually, and helping our bar figure out what we can do to support the rule of law, preserve democracy, and support our judiciary. My first president's column [in Washington Lawyer, the D.C. Bar's magazine] was about how we can support the rule of law. My next one is going to be about what we can do to support our judiciary, and those are things that people really seem to want to know: Give me practical advice. I feel that in this moment, in this profession right now, people want to do something, and so my job is to say, here are some things you can do in ways that make sense to you.

The other thing I'm really trying to do is get our bar to manage to get an AI research platform available for solo and small firm lawyers.

## **Can you elaborate on that?**

If you think about professional liability insurance or disability insurance, a lot of people who are out on our own just don't have access, so we buy it through a group. The bar offers that kind of benefit. A lot of people get, for example, their malpractice insurance through a group that the bar has formed. I want to see if we have the power as a group to get access to AI tools for our members.

## **How do you think being a solo practitioner will shape your perspective in this role?**

There are a lot of us in solo practice, a lot of people who'd like to be, but don't know how, and a lot of people who are intrigued by it, even if it's not the path for them.

A lot of people have said, "How are you doing all this?" and it's sort of the only way I know, so I feel like I will bring the same I-get-everything-done energy. I'm very organized. I am a planner. I am not a procrastinator. And my son says to me, "You're not always worried, but you're always thinking," and he's right. As a solo, I've always managed many different things and enjoyed it, so this is just the newest thing.

## **Why did you become an attorney?**

I love to argue, and I love to write. My mother used to say, "You could convince people that the sky was orange when it was blue." And that's not why I stayed an attorney, necessarily. The advocacy really lights me up. I like being someone who can help someone, and at the end of the day I feel that the law is a helping profession; it's not always about fighting. A lot of times it's about finding solutions. Not everything is adversarial, not everything is litigation. A lot of times people just want to know, "What does the law require? I want to comply with it," or "This is my problem. Can you help me figure out a solution?" I love when someone says, "I didn't know that, I hadn't thought of that. I'm so glad you knew the law and had some creativity and came up with an idea that I never would have thought of." That makes me beam.

## **What was intriguing to you about employment law?**

It was so relatable. Everyone — and I mean everyone — had a comment or a question about their job or their boss or someone they work for, or "Can they do that to me?" So it was such an easy field to talk about in conversation. It wasn't some weird esoteric area of law that no one had heard of, or that no one could understand. And I think between that and my sociology background — I just am always interested in what makes people do things they do, particularly within organizations or groups — it was a natural fit. Everyone wants to talk about work, everybody.

Also, in the early '90s, a lot of new laws were coming out, so it was also a very vibrant area from that perspective. The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1990. The Family Medical Leave Act was enacted in 1993. The Civil Rights Act Title VII was amended in 1991. The early '90s were a time of a lot of growth and interest in legislation in this area.

## **What are your interests outside of work?**

I love to travel. I love running and going to the gym. I love concerts, particularly country music, and have done some country line dancing lessons. I may go to Nashville just to go to a concert. I am an

enormous Yankees fan, and because I'm from New York, I love everything and anything New York. And I love going to the Jersey Shore. I spent a lot of time there growing up, because I lived in New Jersey after I turned 12. So that is a very peaceful place for me, where I can just be outside, go running, and get a little bit away from the whole D.C. scene.

## **Is there anything you would like to add about your new role as D.C. Bar president?**

It's really exciting. I didn't understand how much our bar does until I was on the board. I just don't think I understood or appreciated it, and how hard our volunteers and our staff work to make this bar this gold standard for everyone else. There's nothing here to fix. If I leave things in as good condition as I found them in, I'll consider that a huge win. I just want to amplify and let people know what we're doing, and get more people to be active and do more with us.

--Editing by Brian Baresch.

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