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LAW FIRM BUSINESS

Beverly Hills Bar celebrates Ivy Kagan Bierman

Ivy Kagan Bierman recognized as top lawyer for work in the entertainment industry

By Ashley Cullins
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BEVERLY HILLS — Master of Ceremonies and comedic actress Kate Flannery led the audience in a chant of Ivy Kagan Bierman's six syllable moniker several times Wednesday night, as Bierman was honored as the Beverly Hills Bar Association Entertainment Lawyer of the Year at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel.

"Ever since I got the news it has actually motivated me to perform at an even higher level," Bierman said, adding that she was especially touched to learn her commitment to the community also factored into her win.

Bierman, a partner at Loeb & Loeb LLP specializing in labor and employment matters related to the entertainment industry, also serves on the boards of Women in Film, the Hollywood Radio & Television Society and the Anti-Defamation League.

Beverly Hills Bar Association CEO Marc Staenberg said in choosing Bierman the committee looked at not only at her recent work, but also at her long term contributions to the entertainment legal community and her charity efforts.

"There aren't too many people who do as much work with the various unions and guilds as she does," he said. "She is indefatigable."



Ashley Cullins/ Daily Journal

Ivy Kagan Bierman, honored as the Entertainment Lawyer of the Year by the Beverly Hills bar, with the organization's CEO Marc Staenberg.

Staenberg said Bierman's energy and personality make her stand out among her peers. "She's one of those people who maintains a wonderful, sometimes off-center sense of humor," he said. "As great a lawyer as she is, she's also known as a wonderful friend."

COO and general counsel of SAG-AFTRA Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, who is frequently on the other side of the table as Bierman, said she epitomizes the old school Hollywood notion of a handshake deal. "You can rely on her word and she has a reputation of living up to her commitments," he said. "That's incredibly valuable in this industry."

Crabtree-Ireland said he was recently opposite Bierman in a situation that could have resulted in multiple ongoing productions being shut down, but said her

savvy approach to the issues led to a resolution that was favorable to everyone involved.

"She really helps [her clients] understand the benefit of taking the long term approach to your relationships with industry institutions," he said. "That is one of the elements of those positive interpersonal relationships that helps make her so effective."

John Acosta, president of the American Federation of Musicians, said his contacts with Bierman have always been respectful and professional.

"She's someone who approaches problems with a real clear intent in trying to solve them without falling into an adversarial position," he said, adding that he appreciates Bierman's clear and balanced approach.

"She has the ability to understand the real issues on the union

side, which I think helps her find a resolution to whatever the issue is — Ivy has always been a fair partner and a good representative."

IATSE 6th International Vice President Michael F. Miller's negotiations with Bierman have spanned all spectrums of labor relations and he said she excels in challenging situations.

"She is very tough, a strong advocate for her clients who recognizes where the deal is and how to get there," he said. "She is absolutely capable of and more than willing to fight when a fight is what's necessary, but she's also more than capable of finding a deal when it's time to find a deal."

Miller said Bierman creates relationships in which communication is easy, something that is especially important in tense negotiations. "She has an ability to recognize what's important for both sides," he said. "That is a trait that is incredibly useful and beneficial to the bargaining process."

When she gets a frantic call from a client, Bierman knows that time is of the essence. "I understand the grave importance of those situations," she said. "I devote 24-7 time to helping clients resolve those disputes."

Those critical, time-sensitive negotiations are the ones Bierman finds most rewarding.

"I'm incredibly fortunate because I do something that I really love to do," she said. "Clients often say things like 'I sleep better because of you' and 'you saved our production.'"