

BAR FOUNDATION ANNUAL DINNER CELEBRATES AND LOOKS AHEAD

CONCORD, NH -- With grant funding reaching a record high of over \$1.7 million dollars this year, the New Hampshire Bar Foundation had much to celebrate at their Annual Dinner on May 11. Over 225 lawyers, bankers, donors, grant recipients, and friends gathered to recognize their colleagues and pay tribute to the significant accomplishments of the past year. Through its IOLTA and Justice Grants programs, the Foundation is currently supporting two dozen organizations that provide civil legal services for the disadvantaged or law-related public education programs for New Hampshire residents.

Outgoing chair, Paul W. Chant, expressed the board's appreciation to outgoing board members, James Gleason, Marilyn McNamara, Emily Rice, and Steven Scudder. A moment of silence was held for former board member, Bob Dunning, who passed away in March. Incoming board chair, Russell Hilliard, thanked Paul for his leadership over the past three years and his nine years of board membership. New board members, Doug Hill, Bill Glahn, Bonnie Boulanger, Lisa Wellman-Ally, and Kathleen M. Robinson were welcomed.

Attorney Mary Ann Dempsey of Wiggin & Nourie, received the Robert E. Kirby Award for her excellent advocacy, civility and good humor. She received a large, Simon Pearce crystal bowl with "Kirby Award 2006" etched on the rim. Mary Ann's parents were in attendance along with forty of her colleagues from Wiggin & Nourie.

Attorney Elliott Berry from New Hampshire Legal Assistance (NHLA) was honored with the Frank Rowe Kenison Award acknowledging his dedication and exceptional service to New Hampshire's disadvantaged populations and the homeless during the past 30 years. Elliott's parents flew in from Michigan and joined several dozen of Elliott's colleagues to congratulate -

him. Elliott received a Shaker lap writing desk handcrafted in cherry wood from the League of NH Craftsmen.

In lieu of a keynote speaker this year, David Snyder, the Foundation's executive director, chose to invite presenters from NHLA and NH Bar Association's Law-Related Education (NHBA LRE) program to demonstrate the value of the work being done through Foundation grants. Attorney Kay Drought gave an overview of the process and impact of advocacy work that has improved access to dental care for well over 70,000 of New Hampshire's poor and disabled children. NHLA was able to devote time and resources to this class action lawsuit, thanks, in part, to an operating grant from the NH Bar Foundation. A mother of four, Aimee Grant, spoke about the positive impact it had on her family and the value of having a lawyer involved in addressing a systemic problem that actually required reforming the Medicaid dental program.

Five students from Milford High School, Nikki Caravella, Tom Parisi, Kristen Bohkan, Steve Place, and Kristen Green, representative of this year's team of state champions of "We the People and the Constitution" competition, graciously accepted the Foundation's invitation to restage a portion of the competition so everyone could gain greater understanding of this Foundation-funded program. Accompanied by their teacher, Dave Alcox, and LRE coordinator, Valenda Morrissette, the students "had a great time" having dinner with two hundred attorneys, bankers, and friends. When their time came to present the program, they gallantly faced and responded to judges, Howard J. Zibel, General Counsel for the NH Supreme Court, Attorney Marilyn McNamara, director of Legal Advice and Referral Center, and Attorney Martha Van Oot of Orr & Reno. Dressed in coordinated dark suits, each member of the student team voiced their interpretations and opinions about specific aspects of the Constitution related to questions posed by the judges, clearly demonstrating their thorough examination and understanding of the

landmark legal document of the United States.

Sponsorships from lawyers, law firms, banks, and individuals helped underwrite the Annual Dinner and allowed the Foundation to offer free or half-price tickets to attorneys working in the nonprofit legal public sector. IOLTA Leadership Banks, Justice Society donors, pro bono and reduced-fee attorneys, and all contributors to the Foundation play a significant role in helping children, youth, seniors, and those of limited means gain access to justice.

The NH Bar Foundation has invested over \$20 million of philanthropic funds in New Hampshire since 1977. Bar Foundation grants serve New Hampshire's most vulnerable populations through support of: direct legal aid and counsel, programs designed to educate the public about the law and the justice system, and innovation in the administration of justice to help provide equal access for all. The Bar Foundation is the single largest financial supporter of civil legal aid in New Hampshire.

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