

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Samantha Meinke

Judicial Crossroads Task Force Begins its Work



Sitting left to right: Hon. Victoria Roberts, Hon. Alton Davis, Hon. Barry Howard, Edward Pappas, Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly, Anne Vrooman (SBM). Standing, first row: Hon. Susan Moiseev, Diane Akers, E. Christopher Johnson, Dirk Hoffius, James Brady, Hon. Maria Oxholm, Michael Hodge, Valdemar Washington, William Molner (AG's office), Marilyn Atkins, Catherine McClure (legislative liaison). Back row: Hon. James Alexander, Marge Bossenbery (SBM), Hon. Kirk Tabbey, Rep. Justin Amash (legislative liaison), Thomas Cranmer, Hon. James Kingsley, Hon. Kenneth Tacoma, Hon. Milton Mack, Reginald Turner, and Andrew Doctoroff.

A prominent group of judges and lawyers met October 23 at the State Bar to set in motion the very crucial work of identifying how Michigan's justice system can meet the economic changes in the state. Members of

the Judicial Crossroads Task Force heard a speaker from the National Center for State Courts discuss how other states are grappling with similar issues. The work of the task force is supported by four committees: court

structure and resources, access to justice, technology, and business impact. The next task force meeting has been scheduled for March 2010. ■

For a complete list of task force members, visit http://www.michbar.org/news/releases/archives09/judicialtaskforce_announced.cfm.

Courtroom Visit Highlights Berrien County Constitution Day Observance



Photos by Candace Crowley

Lawyers and judges in Berrien County observed Constitution Day on September 17 by working with teachers and high-school students in St. Joseph and Benton Harbor. Their efforts culminated with a joint school visit to the jury room in the courthouse to replicate the experience of being called to jury duty. ■

Bookholder Wins Family Law Section Lifetime Achievement Award

The Family Law Section of the State Bar has awarded its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award to Troy attorney Ronald M. Bookholder. He was honored September 16 in Dearborn, during the State Bar Annual Meeting. The Lifetime Achievement Award has been given only eight times in the past 25 years. The award recipient is chosen by his or her peers on the Family Law Section Council. Bookholder was recognized for his "exceptional dedication to, involvement in, and advancement of the practice of family law in Michigan over the course of his career." He has served as the past chairperson of the Family Law Section, past president of the Michigan Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, and past member of the Board of Governors of the National AAML. ■

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Project SALUTE

Forty-three attorneys attended Project SALUTE's October 13 training at the State Bar of Michigan in Lansing. The all-day workshop, sponsored by the Pro Bono Initiative in recognition of Pro Bono Month, prepared attorneys to assist low-income veterans in obtaining federal benefits.



Project SALUTE, a program sponsored by the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, provides free legal advice to low-income veterans across the country, while teaching law school students the value of using the law to serve the community. It provides attorneys with many opportunities each month to be trained in laws affecting veterans.

"We did the original training in February 2008 here at the Bar," said Peggy Costello. "Since then, we've trained around 200 attorneys.

Costello added that because of the increasing number of veterans and their rising

awareness of federal rights due to them, there is an ever-growing need for attorneys to help.

If you missed the October training, Project SALUTE will offer a series of webinar trainings throughout November. Find out more at http://www.law.udmercy.edu/project_salute/index.php. ■

State Bar Committees Gear Up



State Bar committee chairs and staff liaisons met with President Charles Toy at the State Bar in Lansing on September 29 to share information on goals and strategies for the bar year. Twenty-six standing and three special committees will work throughout the

year to implement the State Bar Strategic Plan. Nearly 900 volunteers are involved in State Bar committee work. For more information about the State Bar committee structure, visit <http://www.michbar.org/generalinfo/committees.cfm>. ■