

UpFront

By Samantha Meinke

Michigan Delegation Presents a Collaboration to Restore Justice

A delegation from Michigan presented "Collaboration to Restore Justice—the Michigan Experience" at the American Bar Association's Sixth Annual Summit on Indigent Defense Improvement at the ABA's Midyear Meeting on February 6.

Moderator Dennis W. Archer, a former president of the State Bar of Michigan and the American Bar Association, discussed the current crisis facing Michigan's public defense system and introduced key players in this collaboration, including Hon. Marilyn J. Kelly, chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court; Rep. Mark Meadows, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee; James R. Neuhard, director of the State Appellate Defender Office; Elizabeth K. Lyon, director of governmental relations for the State Bar; and Prof. Norman Lefstein from the Indiana University School of Law. The panelists discussed the forward momentum to achieve public defense reform that



SBM President Charles Toy congratulates members of the Michigan delegation, pictured from left: Dennis Archer, Hon. Marilyn Kelly, Rep. Mark Meadows, Elizabeth Lyon, James Neuhard, and Norman Lefstein.

SBM photo

has benefitted from the involvement of the bench, the bar, the Michigan Campaign for Justice, and other important stakeholders.

State Bar President Charles R. Toy thanked the panelists for their work in Michigan. ■

Cooley Continues Law-Related Education

The Thomas M. Cooley Law School continues to reach out to high school students to give them hands-on education about the law.



Courtesy photo

Students had fun while learning about legal careers at the 2008 Street Law program.

On February 20, Cooley and General Motors partnered with nonprofit organization Street Law, Inc. to bring back the Street Law program they have presented since 2004. The goal of the program is to empower high school students to transform democratic ideals into citizen action. The program at Cooley's Auburn Hills campus hosted about 50 Pontiac High School students, who participated in mock negotiations and mediations.

If you're interested in supporting the program in the future, contact GM attorney Paul Zavala at paul.zavala@gm.com. ■

Wayne Law Students' 313 Project Seeks to Lift the Community

Tired of the negative attitudes aimed at Detroit by the media and outsiders, a diverse group of Wayne State University Law School students came together in the fall of 2009 to create the 313 Project.

Board members of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, Black Law Students Association, and Hispanic Law Students Association came together in this project, which aims to collaborate with organizations in and beyond law school to advance the Detroit community through public service, revitalization, and charity efforts.



Dean Robert Ackerman supports the 313 Project by purchasing food from Ollie Schmitt at the "Tamales and Dim Sum" bake sale.

They've already made quite an impact. They raised more than \$500 in a "Tamales and Dim Sum" charity bake sale to support La Vida, a group that addresses domestic violence in the Latino community; Asian Pacific Islander American Vote—Michigan, a group that offers translation services and

voter protection; and Detroit City Love, a city revitalization and urban renewal project. They also provided clothing and toys for seven children during the holiday season in the Detroit Adopt-A-Child Project, and are involved in Detroit Reading Corps to tutor elementary school students. ■



313 Project members Natalia Santanna, Yvonne London, Erica Washington, Julianna Rivera, Khalida Sims, and Aisa Villarosa at Detroit Adopt-A-Child at Cobo Hall.

Courtesy photos

Wayne State Law Students Raise Money for Haiti Relief

Seventeen Wayne State University Law School student groups joined forces to host a bake sale and raise money to aid survivors of the Haiti earthquake. The more than \$1,400 they raised will be sent to Doctors Without Borders.

"They make me proud to be a member of the Wayne Law community," said Wayne Law Dean Robert Ackerman. "Though Haiti will have a long road to recovery, the funds raised by Wayne Law students and the community will have a positive impact on the country and its people at a time when positive efforts are truly needed." ■

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Samantha Meinke
State Bar of Michigan
306 Townsend Street
Lansing, MI 48933-2012
e-mail: smeinke@mail.michbar.org
phone: (517) 346-6332