

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Samantha Meinke

New Law Day Contest Links 2012 Theme with Michigan Legal Milestones

The State Bar of Michigan begins a new Law Day tradition in 2012 by launching a state-wide contest centered on the theme "Michigan: No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom" using Michigan Legal Milestone-based content.

The 25-year-old Michigan Legal Milestone program commemorates important jurists and court cases that have contributed to our rich legal history. To date, 36 bronze plaques have been placed throughout the state detailing the background and importance of the case, event, or personality.

To participate, contestants should familiarize themselves with the milestones and create a project that ties appropriate milestones to the 2012 Law Day theme. Project examples include dramatic or musical plays, debates, video game designs, essays, podcasts, commentaries, reenactments, mock trials, and short documentaries. Electronic submissions are encouraged.

"The idea behind this unique contest is to promote greater public understanding of the law and to create more partnership opportunities for lawyers and the community at large," said SBM President Julie Fershtman. "Lawyers and local bar associations can get started by collaborating with schools, community adult or youth groups, colleges, universities, and law schools."

Winning projects will effectively illuminate or dramatize the significance of the Michigan Legal Milestone and its relationship to the role of the courts as well as an understanding of the role of the judiciary in Michigan's constitutional democracy. The first-place winner will receive a prize of \$1,000; two second-place winners will each get \$750; and three third-place winners will each receive \$500. Winning submissions will be eligible for statewide recognition as a Michigan Model Law Day project and earn entry into the National ABA Law Day awards competition. Michi-

gan's 2012 Law Day theme closely parallels that of the American Bar Association. This year also marks the 225th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

The entry deadline is 5 p.m., Saturday, April 7. For details about the contest rules and resources, visit lawday@mail.michbar.org. For a complete list of the Michigan Legal Milestones, visit www.michbar.org/programs/milestones. Questions may be directed to Naseem Stecker, SBM media and public relations manager, at (517) 367-6428 or nstecker@mail.michbar.org; or Samantha Meinke, media specialist, at (517) 346-6332 or smeinke@mail.michbar.org.

The contest is overseen by a subcommittee of the Law-Related Education and Public Outreach Committee, chaired by Margaret Krasnoff and Jeff Paulsen. Krasnoff and Bart O'Neill head the Law Day subcommittee. ■

LAW DAY
2012

Michigan: No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom



Judge Feikens' Papers and Records Donated to Damon Keith Collection



Photo courtesy of Wayne State University Law School

Judges John Feikens (left), Damon Keith, and Ralph Freeman at Keith's district court swearing-in ceremony in October 1967.

The records and papers of the late John Feikens, a former judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan who passed away last May, are now permanently housed at Wayne State University Law School's Reuther Library. The university recently announced the donation of the materials to the Damon J. Keith Law Collection

of African American Legal History. Feikens and Judge Keith had a lifelong friendship, sharing a strong commitment to civil rights and equal justice. Feikens was appointed to the bench in 1970 and served as chief judge of the Eastern District of Michigan from 1979 to 1986, at which point he took senior status. He has been recognized for

his integrity and commitment to creating fair access to justice. His papers will be available to scholars and researchers in the near future. For more information on the Keith Collection, visit <http://keithcenter.wayne.edu/collection/index.php>. ■

Lawyer to Climb Mt. Kilimanjaro to Raise Funds for the Needy

Attorney Mike Balian of Lake Orion has always been a bit of an adventurer. He's a skier, skydiver, and licensed pilot and is about to add mountain climber to that list—all for a very good cause. A managing partner of Balian & Busse in Rochester Hills, he's climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in an effort to raise at least \$5,000 to help the work of an organization called Lighthouse of Oakland

County (LOC), which has provided services to low-income families in the area since 1972. LOC offers immediate food, housing, and medical care as well as long-term housing and support to help women and children achieve stability and self-sufficiency.

Balian and a small group will climb Mt. Kilimanjaro—Africa's highest mountain at

19,341 feet—February 20–27. It's a grueling physical challenge; statistics show that only 30 percent of those who set out for the summit actually make it. A Facebook page has been set up for Balian's climb at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/258361084229242/>. ■

Michigan Law Schools Commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Photo by Leisa Thompson Photography



A standing-room-only crowd packed the University of Michigan Law School's new Robert B. Aikens Commons January 16 for the school's Martin Luther King Jr. Day event, "Dr. King's Vision for Economic Justice: Focus on Detroit." Panelists included (left to right) *Michigan Chronicle* Senior Editor Bankole Thompson, Detroit City Council President Charles Pugh, New Detroit CEO Shirley R. Stancato, and Excellent Schools Detroit CEO Daniel Varner. The event's moderator, Angela Dillard, director of the Residential College and professor of Afro-American and African Studies, stands at the lectern. ■



The Black Law Students Association at Thomas M. Cooley Law School's Grand Rapids campus hosted its Martin Luther King Jr. Day program, "Where Are All the Black Men?" on January 16. The program focused on the numbers of incarcerated black men and their transformation when they are released from prisons. Pictured from left to right are 61st District Court Judge Benjamin Logan; Cooley students Phil Harte, Shavasia Lanier, Ashley Burress, Tiffany Floyd, and Amanda King; Grand Rapids Urban League Interim President and CEO Joe Jones; social worker Stacy McGinnis; attorney Patrick Miles; Cooley Assistant Dean Tracey Brame; and student Ashlee Reynolds. ■

Photos courtesy of Thomas M. Cooley Law School



The Student Diversity Committee at Thomas M. Cooley Law School's Auburn Hills campus hosted its Equal Access to Justice: Martin Luther King Jr. Day activities on January 16. Students, faculty members, and staff attended a United Negro College Fund breakfast in Southfield, volunteered at Grace Centers of Hope and the Baldwin Center in Pontiac, and presented a panel discussion on economic justice. Pictured in the back row from left to right are student Zeinab Moughnia; Cooley Enrollment and Student Services Coordinator Angela Tyszka; Council on American-Islamic Relations Director Daud Walid; and Professor Ashley Lowe, director of Cooley's Family Law Assistance Project. In the front row from left to right are students Kelly Thompson, Desireah Kuhn, and Christy Williams; Cooley Associate Dean John Nussbaumer; and student Ulises Macias Robles. ■

Portrait Dedication

The portrait of former Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor was dedicated in a special Court session last September. The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society maintains the historic portrait collection, and most of the 87 portraits of former justices are on display in the Hall of Justice in Lansing. ■



Photo by Dave Trumpie Photography

Clifford W. Taylor poses with his official portrait and the artist, Patricia Hill Burnett.

R E M E M B E R I N G
VINCENT CHIN

The Legacy and Future

A 30th Year Remembrance

of the man, the case, and the continuing relevance for racial profiling, hate crimes, bullying, media, civil rights, and pan-Asian American and multiracial coalition building

Keynote Speaker:

Frank H. Wu

UC Hastings Law School Chancellor and Dean

Saturday, June 23, 2012

9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Chinese Community Center

32585 Concord Drive, Madison Heights, MI 48071
 (one block east of I-75/14 Mile interchange)

Sponsored by American Citizens for Justice

www.americancitizensforjustice.blogspot.com

Co-sponsoring Organizations: Association of Chinese Americans/OCA Detroit Chapter; Organization of Chinese Americans; Brinks, Hofer, Gilson & Leone; Council of Asian Pacific Americans; Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission; Japanese American Citizens League – Detroit Chapter; American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee – Michigan Region; Asian American Journalists Association, Michigan; APIA Vote – Michigan; Damon J. Keith Center, Wayne State University; Michigan Asian Pacific American Bar Association; Filipino American Community Council of Michigan (FILAMCCO); Philippine American Community Center of Michigan; The Hmong Community; Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion; State Bar of Michigan; United Asian American Organizations at the University of Michigan; Miller Canfield; Pangborn Design; multiculturaltoolbox.com; franceskaihawang.com; The Boggs Center.



For more information: Prasanna@americancitizensforjustice.com

