

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Samantha Meinke

SBM Honored for its Efforts to Boost Legal Services Funding

Photo courtesy of the American Bar Association Communications and Media Relations Division



The State Bar of Michigan Delegation accepted the American Bar Association Grassroots Advocacy Award on April 18 at the United States Supreme Court. The SBM received the award for its efforts to increase funding to the Legal Services Corporation. Pictured, left to right, are ABA Day Planning Committee Chair William C. Hubbard, SBM President-Elect Bruce A. Courtade, ABA State Delegate Reginald Turner, SBM President Julie I. Fershtman, United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, SBM Director of Governmental Relations Elizabeth K. Lyon, and ABA President Wm. T. (Bill) Robinson. ■

Task Force Issues Recommendations on Judicial Selection

A bipartisan group led by two veteran Michigan jurists—Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly and Senior Judge James L. Ryan of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit—has issued recommendations for improving the state's process for selecting Supreme Court justices. The report, unveiled at a Lansing press conference April 26, advocates more public transparency and less partisan-

ship. The recommendations call for public disclosure of all judicial campaign spending, the implementation of an open primary system, increased citizen involvement, more information about Supreme Court candidates, and the elimination of the discriminatory age-70 ceiling on judicial candidates. The report can be viewed in its entirety at www.mi-judicialselection.com. ■

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Representative Assembly Adopts Proposal Defining the Practice of Law

A panel discussion defining the practice of law in Michigan kicked off comment and debate April 21 when members of the State Bar Representative Assembly met in Lansing for their biannual gathering. The RA's proposal was overwhelmingly adopted and will now be presented to the Michigan Supreme Court for consideration. The draft proposal information is available at <http://www.michbar.org/generalinfo/repassembly.cfm>. ■



Left to right: James Harrington III, Family Law Section member; Christopher Hastings, Unauthorized Practice of the Law Committee chair; Hon. Elwood Brown, Judicial Conference Section member; and Linda Rexer, Michigan State Bar Foundation executive director.



Representative Assembly leaders, left to right: Dana Warnez, vice chairperson; Stephen Gobbo, chairperson; and Kathleen Allen, clerk.

Pipeline to Power and Women Lawyers



Photo by Frank Weir for the State Bar of Michigan

Participants in the final panel discussion at the "Gender and the Legal Profession's Pipeline to Power" symposium included (left to right) former State Bar Presidents Nancy J. Diehl and Julia D. Darlow and current President Julie I. Fershtman. SBM Executive Director Janet K. Welch, far right, served as panel moderator. The panel concluded the two-day symposium sponsored by the Michigan State University College of Law and addressed "The Pipeline to Power for Women Lawyers in Michigan." The symposium was held April 12–13 at the Westin Book Cadillac in Detroit. ■

SBM Commissioners Triumph Again in Bowling Challenge to Help ATJ Fund

SBM commissioners Margaret (Peggy) Costello and David Perkins pose with the trophy from the annual Young Lawyers Section v. Board of Commissioners bowling tournament. The Board won the trophy for the third year in a row, and the event raised \$355 for the Access to Justice Fund. ■



Photo by Tammy Allen for the State Bar of Michigan

Jenkins Roast Benefits ATJ Fund Endowment

A dinner and roast was held in honor of SBM Past President W. Anthony Jenkins on April 24 to benefit the Access to Justice Fund Endowment, which supports civil legal aid to the poor in Michigan. The event was emceed by renowned sports commentator James Brown. Video comments were provided by Jenkins' college basketball coach and mentor, Tom "Satch" Sanders. Pictured, left to right, are Reuben Munday, Wilson A. Copeland II, Theodore M. Shaw, W. Anthony Jenkins, Larry H. Sherman, and Steve Fishman. ■

Photo by Frank Weir for the State Bar of Michigan



Winning Team Celebrates with Mock Trial Judges

The 2012 Michigan High School Mock Trial Tournament, run by the Michigan Center for Civic Education, culminated in victory for Ann Arbor Community High School at the state finals competition held on March 24 in Lansing. The winning team is pictured with judges, from the back row, left to right: Attorney M. J. Stephen Fox of Fox & Associates, Michigan Center for Civic Education President Don Fulkerson, Joris Von Moltke, Daniel Roy, Cooper DePriest, and Eli Sugerman. Front row, left to right: Rianna Johnson-Levy, Leah Penner, Judge Jodi Debbrecht, Julia Karr, and Shadi Ahmadmehrabi.

See more photos on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sbm.news. ■

Photo by Tammy Allen for the State Bar of Michigan



2012 State Bar Elections

Supreme Court rules require the State Bar election to begin no later than June 2, 2012, and ballots be returned no later than June 15, 2012. To increase member convenience, encourage wider participation, and save money, the State Bar has conducted the election electronically for the past two years. On May 29, the State Bar's election services provider will send an e-mail to all active SBM members with an e-mail address on file. This e-mail will contain an embedded link that will take you to a secure website to cast your ballot. To ensure that this e-mail is not blocked by your spam filter, please take any necessary steps to allow the following address to be accepted by your Internet provider: SBM_Election_Admin@vres.us. Members who have not provided an e-mail address to the State Bar will receive a paper ballot in the mail. For questions, contact Marge Bossenbery at (517) 346-6327 or mbossenbery@mail.michbar.org. ■

Correction

Correction to "Up Front" piece on Richard Bernstein (January 2012, p 8) and "Citizen Lawyer: Richard Bernstein" (January 2006, p 34): A lawsuit against the state superintendent of education to stop a restructuring of special education was attributed to Bernstein. Bernstein was not an attorney on the case; Calvin Luker of Royal Oak represented the plaintiffs and obtained an injunction, which effectively stopped the Engler reorganization. *Plotzke v Ellis and Engler*, Ingham Co Cir Ct 01-93454-CZ (2001). Bernstein was active in the community and the legislature opposing the reorganization and received an award for his efforts. ■

Drum Major for Justice Advocacy Competition Marks 20th Year

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Martin Luther King Drum Major for Justice Advocacy Competition. This event, to showcase high school students' written and oral advocacy skills, is organized annually by the D. Augustus Straker Bar Association in conjunction with the Wolverine Bar Association and the Association of Black Judges of Michigan. Vanessa Murphy, a 12th grader from Heart Academy in Harper Woods, advanced to the regional phase and will take part in the National Bar Association's event on May 19 at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School's Auburn Hills campus. She will meet other winners from Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The regional winner will compete in the finals on July 17 in Las Vegas.

Other sponsors of the local competition included General Motors; the SBM Young Lawyers Section; Macquarie Equipment Finance; Collins, Einhorn, Farrell & Ulanoff P.C.; and Thomas M. Cooley Law School. ■

Photo by John Meiu, courtesy of Detroit Legal News Publishing LLC



Front row, from left to right: Students Vanessa Murphy, Odessa Murphy, Terri O'Neal, and Edward Adegboyega. Middle row: Shawntane Williams, co-chair, MLK Advocacy Competition; student Faith Darnell; Linda D. Johnson, past president, Wolverine Bar Association; Danon D. Goodrum-Garland, past president, D. Augustus Straker Bar Association; and Tenicia Vanzant, co-chair, MLK Advocacy Competition. Back row: John Nussbaumer, dean, Thomas M. Cooley Law School, Auburn Hills; Madame Justice Micheline A. Rawlins, president, Association of Black Judges of Michigan; T. L. Summer-ville, president, Wolverine Bar Association; Stephanie Jones, president, D. Augustus Straker Bar Association; and Hon. Wade H. McCree, Third Judicial Circuit Court.

Conrad Mallett Jr. Portrait Dedicated at Supreme Court Ceremony

Former Chief Justice Conrad L. Mallett Jr. is seen here at his portrait dedication in a special session of the Michigan Supreme Court on April 25. The portrait was painted by Simmie Knox, a Washington, D.C.-based artist whose previous subjects include President Bill Clinton, former United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, boxer Muhammad Ali, and comedian Bill Cosby. Justice Mallett was appointed to the Court in December 1990 and reelected to a two-year term in

1992 and an eight-year term in 1994. He was elected chief justice in 1997, becoming the first African American to serve in that capacity. He left the Court in 1999 and currently heads Detroit's Sinai Grace Hospital. Portrait dedications are undertaken by the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, a nonprofit organization that preserves documents, records, and memorabilia related to the Court. ■



Photo courtesy of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society