

Partners Unlimited Bulletin Board

A Public Education Legal Services Project
of the Washington Lawyers' Committee
for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs

Fall 2004

Covington & Burling Launches Legal Clinic At Cardozo High School By Bob Gage and Anne Proctor

The legal clinic that **Covington & Burling** is establishing at our partner school, Cardozo Senior High, will meet the needs of both the firm and the school. With the help of the school, we will set up what we enjoy calling our newest branch office because we wanted to expand our ten-year-old partnership in a way that gives our lawyers the opportunity to do legal work in the context of the partnership.

We also understand from our long-term relationship with the school that the distractions from problems at home and in the community are a barrier to academic achievement at Cardozo. We feel that the legal expertise we have to offer can help kids cope with a variety of problems and make it possible for them to put the effort needed into their school work.

(Continued on page 4)



Clinic office renovation crew. L/R, First row: Cardozo student; Robert Wone, Covington & Burling attorney; Katherine Wone. Second row: Cardozo student; Kerry Sylvia, Cardozo teacher.

Washington Revels Eager To Partner with DC Schools

This December and throughout the coming year, the Washington Revels will be a valuable cultural resource for D. C. Public Schools. The Washington Revels is a unique performing arts organization best known for its annual performances at the George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium that have become a holiday tradition in Washington. This year's production is a mid-winter tale of "The King and the Fool." On December 2, public school students will be able to attend a special dress rehearsal of the production free of charge. Groups interested in attending this rehearsal should contact Outreach Performance

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IRIS'

INTRO



IRIS J. TOYER
Project Director, Public Education Legal Services
Project, Washington Lawyers' Committee

Every now and then even the most passionate among us need to be renewed. And so it has been with me. The past few months have been an especially difficult time for those of us who seek stability and reform of this city's public schools.

During the spring and summer, we wondered whether we would have a new Superintendent before this school year began. As this drama unfolded, our schools received a devastating blow with a major layoff of valued teachers and support staff. We questioned how we would adequately staff our schools for the coming year.

I can report that our schools will face these challenges as they have in the past by attempting to do the best job that they can. We need to give the young people of this city a better chance at a stable and quality

public education. Many of the firms in this city are committed to offering this chance through their partnerships with D.C. public schools.

As you will read in this issue, partnership firms continue to provide students with academic support through tutoring and mentoring. They are also helping students to deal with many life problems that interfere with academic success. For example, **Covington and Burling** has established a legal clinic at its partner school, Cardozo Senior High. Both the school's principal Reggie Ballard and the firm recognize the daily difficulties many students face and are prepared to help the students develop coping skills.

You will also learn about our new partnership with the Washington Revels, a unique performance arts organization that is excited about working with our schools, many of which lack arts and music programs.

At our recent Principals and Law Firm Partners Luncheon, Margot Berkey, Executive Director of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools, thanked the firms that have become partners with D.C. public schools. As a parent, she wanted the firms to know that their work in our schools has been invaluable.

My renewal came from talking with the firms' volunteers and school personnel about how much these partnerships mean to their schools. I offer you the opportunity to join us in this endeavor.

Iris

Iris J. Toyer, Director
Public Education Legal Services Project

IMPORTANCE OF



*Benjamin F. Wilson
Partner, Beveridge & Diamond
Co-Chair, Washington Lawyers' Committee*

P A R T N E R S H I P S

including uniforms, school supplies and book bags. The firm recently donated \$250.00 to the school for the purchase of prizes for an upcoming Spelling Bee. We open our doors each Fall to 25 students and provide them a firm tour, lunch, and engage them in a mock trial. In 2002, the Committee established a reading program and firm employees have the opportunity to visit the school and read books to the students at Birney. The teamwork and number of staff involved — Directors, Associates and staff — are a testament to Beveridge & Diamond's commitment to these children.

Although Beveridge & Diamond's involvement, on a corporate level, with Birney is extensive, I am most proud of the individual mentoring relationships we have developed with students. Michael Redd is one of those students. Michael calls me on occasion and we chat about how our week has gone, and other events in our lives — basically whatever he wants to talk about. Michael's excitement and enthusiasm for life inspire me. I feel that through these weekly phone calls I have gained as much as Michael, if not more.

As Co-Chair of the Washington Lawyers' Committee, I view being a school partner as a critical civil rights activity. Our firm's partnership is not related to the litigation that has produced impressive legal victories for the Committee. But it and the other partnerships the Committee works with and looks forward to working with are a vital part of the struggle to achieve equality of opportunity.

Since **Beveridge & Diamond** started its collaboration with Birney Elementary School in 1997, our firm has engaged the students and staff on an educational and community level. Students at Birney face many challenges. Our aim is to mitigate some of those challenges and to help create an environment more conducive to learning. All of the students at Birney are African American or Latino; a majority of the students at Birney receive a free lunch; and the majority read and perform mathematics at or below the 'Basic' level. If our involvement can impact these statistics in a positive way, every effort is immediately worth the time and expense.

Annually, Beveridge & Diamond provides Thanksgiving dinner to over 50 families through gift cards from area grocery stores. During the Christmas season, the firm "adopts" and provides gifts to over 60 children. Last year, the firm donated back-to-school items,

LAW CLINIC

E G A L I S S U E S



Cardozo student painting legal clinic office.

Law Clinic at Cardozo Launched by Covington (cont'd)

Moreover, we recognize that students, like others in our society, have a need to resolve conflicts. We want to help them develop the capacity to do this in a reasonable way, and we think they will benefit from understanding the process of mediation. In connection with the legal clinic, we will be supporting the school's new peer mediation program.

The legal clinic is a true law firm/school partnership. One of the key elements is the solid relationship that Covington has with Cardozo and the mutual trust that has developed over the years. The principal, Reginald Ballard, has given us unqualified support, and the day-to-day involvement of Kerry Sylvia, the Co-Chair of the school's Social Studies Department, is both invaluable and essential.

At the clinic, legal counseling is provided by Covington attorneys who meet with students during the Friday lunch periods. However, our Cardozo clinic also has a third and very important legal partner—Georgetown University Law Center. Two Georgetown law students handle intake at the clinic. These students are in their third year of law school, and they speak Spanish. Since Covington's policy is to involve as many of the firm's attorneys as possible in the clinic, each attorney is there only a couple of times a year. But the Georgetown students who are there every Friday provide the necessary consistency.

We're very excited about our Cardozo clinic, and we hope other law firms paired with high schools will consider the possibility of establishing a school-based legal clinic. Any firm thinking about this should consult the ABA publication, *Unmet Legal Needs of School Children* for an overview of school law clinic experiences throughout the country.

It's important to understand that a school-based legal clinic requires a sustained commitment over several years. It

(Continued on page 12)



*Legal Clinic champions at Covington & Burling:
Anne Proctor, pro bono coordinator and senior
partner, Bob Gage.*



Kerry Sylvia, Co-Chair, Social Studies Department and Legal Clinic Coordinator at Cardozo Senior High School.

Teacher and Students Play Key Roles In Clinic Startup

By Kerry Sylvia

The clinic is a great resource for our students. From the moment Anne Proctor at Covington mentioned it to me, I was really excited, and I knew we had to do a lot here at the school to get things underway.

One of the social studies classes I teach is Street Law where students learn about the importance of law in their everyday lives. I made the legal clinic a project of this class. After we explored the reasons why students at Cardozo need a legal clinic, the class created a questionnaire and survey for other students to take. Groups of students from the Street Law Class made presentations in about 15 classrooms. Their presentations were followed by discussions, and then they asked the students in these classrooms to complete the questionnaire they had created. After the series of classroom presentations, the students in

the Street Law class tallied the results. The results showed that Cardozo students are overwhelmingly in favor of the clinic. The responses to a questionnaire I created for the faculty also revealed strong support for the clinic.

To encourage participation in the clinic, I sent a memo to the faculty asking them to make sure that students who come to them with problems are aware of the clinic and how they can take advantage of it. I also gave the teachers stacks of palm cards with basic information about the clinic and flyers to post in their classrooms.

Issue seminars and workshops were very effective in generating interest in the legal clinic, and we plan to have a number of them throughout the 2004/05 school year.


The focus of these programs reflect the kinds of issues students bring to the clinic—student rights, law enforcement, immigration, housing, domestic abuse, etc.

Over the summer, we renovated our new clinic office. We had a great painting crew made up of students and volunteers from Covington & Burling.

(Continued on page 10)



A Cardozo student takes a break from painting the legal clinic office.



Are you having legal problems?
Would you like to talk to a lawyer?

Cardozo Legal Clinic
Free and open to all Cardozo students
Open every Friday during lunch* in Room 3
The legal clinic is CONFIDENTIAL

*See back for times

WIDER

OR R L D S



Children's chorus in the 2003 holiday production, "Roads of the Roma."

Revels Seeks Educational Partners for New Program (cont'd)

Coordinator Rosanne Gochman at 301-657-8796 or rgochman@revelsdc.org. Revels will provide teaching materials about the production to each of the school partnerships that are taking students to the performance.

A Washington Revels performance is a memorable experience for children of all ages. Each professionally staged and directed production combines professional actors and musicians with a volunteer chorus of adults, teens, and children who represent members of the community. The spirit of the performance and energetic audience participation create a feeling of communal celebration.

A limited number of students and parents will also be able to attend a Washington Revels production workshop at Lisner during the first week of December. Directors will give students an inside

look at the creation of this production, from set design and construction to lighting, costume, makeup and sound systems design. This program is recommended for junior high or high school students with an interest or experience in theater and will be

(Continued on page 7)



Students from Birney Elementary School at Beveridge & Diamond

Revealing New Worlds To School Partners

The very presence of law firm volunteers in a school widens the horizons of the students who see and hear them. And when these volunteers share their experiences, they make the world beyond the school real. Career education, for example is a typical partnership activity. Last November, **HealthRight, Inc.** observed American Education Week with a presentation to LaSalle Elementary students. Ms. Patrina Fowler, HealthRight CEO, visited a fifth-grade class and led a discussion about careers in health care.

As many law firms know, bringing students to the firm provides a memorable experience for both host and visitors. **Beveridge & Diamond** is one of many firms that frequently host students from their partner schools. Attorneys and staff at Beveridge & Diamond provide a tour of the firm, lunch, and engage the students in a mock trial.

School partnerships give law firm volunteers the opportunity to share the wonder of a student's first visit to a museum, live theatrical performance, or trip out of the city. Even though they have lived in Washington all of their lives, many of the students at partner schools have not been able to take advantage of nearby cultural resources. As Sharon Johnson from the **U.S. Attorney's Office** recalls, one enchanted 10-year-old who experienced the Museum of Natural History for the first

(Continued on page 10)



Ms. Patrina Fowler, HealthRight CEO, talks to a fifth-grade class about careers in health care.



Students in the Drug Education for Youth Program sponsored by the U.S. Attorney's Office on an outing to the Museum of Natural History.

Revels (cont'd)

offered on a first-come basis. For more information, contact Peter Behr at 703-533-0951, or at pbehr@revelsdc.org.

For the past three years, the Washington Revels have been involved in a pilot outreach program sponsored by the Library of Congress. This program includes a repertoire of three productions for student audiences, including "Hidden Washington: the Alley Communities of the Nation's Capitol." It is based on material from the 1998 "Shepherd Alley" Christmas Revels. This interactive learning experience delves into the lives of African-American and immigrant city dwellers who shared alley neighborhoods after the Civil War. Streaming Webcasts of all three productions are available on the Library of Congress LIVE Web site.

Because the three-year pilot phase of the Washington Revels-Library of Congress collaboration has ended, the Revels recently began a multi-year campaign to raise funds for a new and expanded Educational Outreach program. Beginning next year, Revels will offer a range of programs to its school partners, ranging from workshops on cultural traditions to performances that include student actors. Revels proposes to meet with a representative from each participating school and the coordinator from its partner firm to explore the kind of production best suited to the school's interests and Revels' funding and staff resources. For more information on the Revels 2005 Educational Outreach Program, contact Peter Behr at 703-533-0951, or at pbehr@revelsdc.org.

LESSONS

E A R N E D



Charles Harden, Principal Park View ES; Ann Proctor, Covington & Burling; Donna Graham, Teacher MacFarland MS; Kristin McGovern, Fulbright & Jaworski; Laura Cordero, US Attorney's Office ; John Goudeaux, Principal Amidon ES; Jan Bise, Akin Gump; Michelle Pierre, Principal Tyler ES; Iris Toyer

Law Firms Can Reach Out to New Principals

To establish relationships with new principals at their partner schools, law firms are using a variety of effective approaches. A school partnership team from **Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld**, for example, called on Stanton Elementary School's new principal, Michele Pierre, during her first two weeks on the job. The firm also hosted the principal and teachers for Stanton's first faculty meeting of the year. The faculty meeting was preceded by a continental breakfast, and it ended with a luncheon graciously provided by Akin Gump.

Several long-term partnerships have successfully made a recent transition to a new principal. They include partnerships between **Swidler Berlin Shereff Friedman** with Adams Elementary School and the **Greater Washington Area Chapter of the Women Lawyers Division-National Bar Association (GWAC)** with Malcolm X Elementary School. Valerie Evans-Harrell, former GWAC president, reports that things got off to a good start when she met with the new principal, Vaughn Kimbrough, and asked for his permission to continue being involved in the school.

Valerie recalls that he was very positive about the partnership and pleased to be asked. Mr. Kimbrough has since become an enthusiastic member of the partnership team. GWAC's current president, Rita Sampson, points out that the very good working relationship the organization had developed with the assistant principal helped make an almost seamless transition possible.

It is important to keep in mind that an initial challenge facing new principals is getting up to speed on many aspects of their new schools. Law firm coordinators can assist principals by making it as easy as possible to learn about the partnerships with their firms. Principals appreciate a written summary of partnership activities, and would enjoy seeing photographs showing student participation, as well as items produced through the partnerships, including holiday cards, bookmarks, and cookbooks.

Coordinators can invite principals to explore the possibilities of law firm/school partnerships by sharing copies of this newsletter or the school partnership handbook published by the Committee.

What Tutors Are Learning

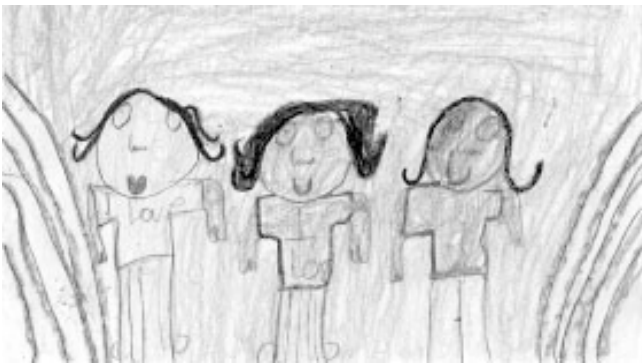
Over 15 law firms and legal offices are involved in tutoring D.C. public school children. These firms have a cadre of veteran volunteers who know how to work with students on reading and math skills and self-confidence.

Several firms—including **Howrey, Simon, Arnold & White**; **Piper Rudnick**; and **Swidler Berlin Shereff Friedman**—begin the school year with an orientation session. This tutoring kick-off is often a luncheon attended by the principal, guidance counselor and/or teachers from the partner school. It provides an opportunity for new tutors to hear about the experiences of those who have done it before and for people at the firm to get the latest information on what is happening at their partner school.

One of the keys to effective tutoring is first establishing a good relationship with the student, and this takes time. As Angela Aiken from Spriggs & Hollingsworth explains about the firm’s experience at Bertie Backus Middle School: “In the beginning, we concentrated on getting to know the students and gaining their trust. After we spent two or three tutoring sessions with them, they started to let us know what their shortcomings were and where they needed help.”

When first meeting a student, Trudi Williams from Pepper Hamilton, who tutors at Stanton Elementary School, always asks about family, favorite foods, and what he or she likes to do for fun. Another way for law firm volunteers to help students feel comfortable is to share personal information about themselves.

End-of-the-year thank-you art presented to a tutor from the U.S. Courts by a second grader from J. O. Wilson Elementary School.



Melanie Gerber from Patton Boggs tutors Luis Carcamo at Francis Junior High School.

Being prepared to engage a student in a variety of activities is important says Nancy Adams from Piper Rudnick and Tracy Scarrow from the U.S. Courts. Teachers typically provide exercises for students to work on during tutoring sessions, but an hour is a long time to spend on multiplication drills. When tutors from Piper Rudnick and the U.S. Courts go to Bruce Monroe and J. O. Wilson Elementary schools, they have games with them. As Nancy Adams says, “Reading and math are only two of the life skills we are teaching.”

Because tutoring sessions seemed to be such an effort for a boy at Stanton Elementary, Trudi Williams wanted to make tutoring more enjoyable. She created a game of unscrambling words that was a big hit with her student. In fact, Trudi felt that her student seemed to learn more when they were playing the game.

The partnerships have found that flexibility is essential for sustaining a tutoring program. A number of firms have tutoring teams of two or three. Other firms have substitutes who can step in when work keeps a tutor away from school. Volunteers from the U.S. Courts are asked each month to commit to a tutoring schedule for the month ahead. They are comfortable accepting assignments for a single month at a time for each of the nine months of the school year.

It is not always easy to get to a school for tutoring week after week, but Nancy Adams says, “When we get to the school and see our children watching for us, we know we are in the right place.”

FYI

Taste-Off Prizes Go To Six Firms

The Fifth annual **Cooking for Kids Bake Sale** on June 14th raised funds for eight schools. That afternoon, the quality of the pastries made picking the **Taste Off** winners a real challenge for judges Eric Kirkeeng, Executive Chef at Jury's Washington Hotel and Margot Berkey, Executive Director of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools.

The top winner in the Pie Division was a raspberry crumble baked by John O'Keefe of **Levine Sullivan Koch & Schulz**. A peanut butter pie from **Steptoe & Johnson** and an apple pie from **Spriggs & Hollingsworth** took second and third places in that division.

A lemon bar created by Tina Harrington of **Spriggs & Hollingsworth** took first place in the Cookie Division. Second place in that division went to **Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw** for its baklava. Old-fashioned oatmeal raisin cookies with pecans from **Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld** came in third.

First place in the Cake Division went to Marilyn Owendorff from **Steptoe & Johnson** for her brown sugar strawberry shortcake. A pina colada cake from **Levine Sullivan Koch & Schulz** and a carrot cake from **Bracewell & Patterson** won second and third places.

Teacher and Students Help Clinic Startup (cont'd)

This school year will be the second year of our program, and we'll be adding a new feature—support for the school's new

peer mediation effort. The first mediators will be students in my Street Law class. Mediation sessions will be held in the clinic office, and referrals to mediation will come from the clinic.

I'm very glad to have the opportunity to be part of this program. The legal clinic can really help our vulnerable students with the issues that make it difficult for them to focus on doing well in school.

Essay Contest for High School Students

The Holocaust Remembrance Project, sponsored by **Holland & Knight's** charitable foundation, conducts a national essay for high school students every year. This competition is designed to encourage and promote the study of the Holocaust. Next summer, thirty winners will receive cash prizes, and scholarships of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to the first-place winners. For a 2005 contest application and further information, contact the project toll free at 1-866-452-2737 or via e-mail at holocaust@hklaw.com.

Revealing New Worlds To School Partners (cont'd)

time, exclaimed: "This place is the best. You can eat. You can see a movie, and you can walk around and see lots of things."

According to Rita Sampson, president of the **Greater Washington Chapter of the Women Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association (GWAC)**, a GWAC outing gave most of the fifth- and sixth-grade Malcolm X Elementary School girls mentored by that organization their first trip out of Washington. GWAC's wide range of outings has included museums, theater performances, recreation, and even a weekend in Chantilly, Virginia.

PARTNERSHIPS

Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld

Tyler Elementary School

Arent Fox

Randle Highlands Elementary School

Arnold & Porter

Garrison Elementary School

Baker & McKenzie

Payne Elementary School

Beveridge & Diamond

Birney Elementary School

Bracewell & Patterson

Van Ness Elementary School

Covington & Burling

Cardozo Senior High School

Crowell & Moring

Garnett-Patterson Middle School

Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky

Ellington School of the Arts

Fannie Mae's Corporate Legal Dept.

Marie H. Reed Learning Center

Foley & Lardner

Wilkinson Elementary School

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson

School Without Walls

Fulbright & Jaworski

Macfarland Middle School

Greater Washington Area Chapter -

Women Lawyers Division -

National Bar Association

Malcolm X Elementary School

Health Right Inc.

H.D. Cooke Elementary School

Ferebee-Hope Elementary School

LaSalle Elementary School

Lincoln Middle School

Holland & Knight

Banneker Senior High School

Cleveland Elementary School

F I R M S C H O O L S

Howrey Simon Arnold & White

Bancroft Elementary School

Levine Sullivan Koch & Schulz

H.D. Cooke Elementary School

McDermott, Will & Emery

Bowen Elementary School

McKenna Long & Aldridge

Stevens Elementary School

Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw

Gage-Eckington Elementary School

The Office of the Attorney General,

District of Columbia

R.H. Terrell Junior High School

Patton Boggs

Francis Junior High School

Pepper Hamilton

Stanton Elementary School

Piper Rudnick

Bruce Monroe Elementary School;

Law Scout Program

Eastern, Dunbar and

Ellington Senior High Schools

Reed Smith

Park View Elementary School

Sidley Austin Brown & Wood

Thomson Elementary School

Spriggs & Hollingsworth

Backus Middle School

Steptoe & Johnson

Montgomery Elementary School

Sutherland Asbill & Brennan

Bell Multicultural Senior High School

Swidler Berlin Shereff Friedman

Adams Elementary School

U.S. Attorney's Office for the

District of Columbia

Amidon Elementary School

U.S. Courts for the D.C. Circuit

J.O. Wilson Elementary School

Washington Bar Association -

Young Lawyers' Division

Banneker and Ballou Senior High Schools

Weil, Gotshal & Manges

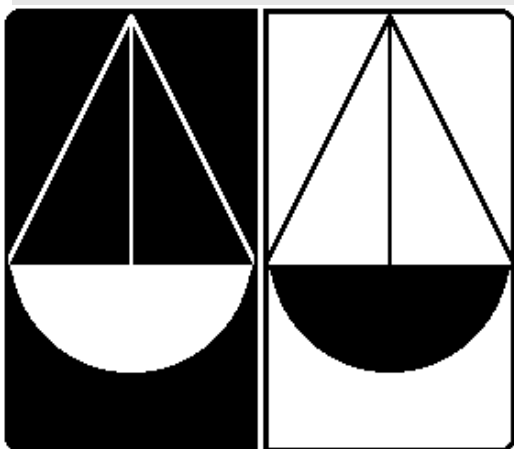
Seaton Elementary School

Williams & Connolly

Dunbar Senior High School

Winston & Strawn

Kamit Institute for Magnificent Achievers



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Covington's Clinic at Cardozo (cont'd)

will take time for the clinic to become a familiar and significant part of the world of the students who need its resources.

We have found that while models are helpful, the structure of our program depends to a great extent on what we have found works best at Cardozo and at Covington. We have discovered that working with our partner school to establish our legal clinic to be very rewarding.

Authors: Bob Gage is a partner at Covington & Burling. Anne Proctor, a pro bono coordinator at the firm, has major responsibility for the Cardozo Legal Clinic. Both are active members of the Cardozo Clinic Leadership Board.

2005 Partnership Dates

January 25	Partnership Luncheon
April 19	Partnership Luncheon
June 13	5th Annual Cooking For Kids Bake Sale and Taste-Off

Partnership Luncheons will be at
Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld

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