

# Partners Unlimited Bulletin Board

Fall  
2011

D.C. PUBLIC  
SCHOOL  
PARTNERSHIPS  
PROGRAM



Two students from Garfield Elementary School who had their faces painted by volunteers from Paul Hastings at the school's Registration Carnival.

## Paul Hastings Has Active Role In School Registration Carnival

Many law firms are becoming increasingly active in events and activities at their partner schools. **Paul Hastings**, for example, played such a significant role in Garfield Elementary School's Registration Carnival last June that the firm's contribution was acknowledged on the school's sign (see page 7).

The Carnival had two purposes, and Paul Hastings put considerable effort into both. To help make sure that Garfield students and their brothers and sisters had fun, the firm set up a tent where children could get their faces painted and enjoy carnival games. Volunteers from the firm also staffed a castle bounce, cotton candy booth, and other activities organized by the school.

Another important purpose of the carnival was to encourage parents to register their children early for the 2011-12 school year. Early registration can

(Continued on page 7)

## 7th City-Wide GeoPlunge Contest Set for November 15 at Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery

The District of Columbia's 7th city-wide GeoPlunge Tournament will be held at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery on November 15 from 9:00 AM to 2:45 PM.

Three-person teams of 5th and 6th graders will be welcomed from all D.C. public elementary and middle schools. The Committee's D.C. Public School Partnerships Program, **Arent Fox**, and the D.C. Public Schools are sponsoring the tournament. The Committee is also actively recruiting coaches and sponsors for GeoPlunge teams from individual schools. This year, a record number of firms are involved in coaching teams for the tournament. There were 210 student participants and over 50 team sponsors for the 6th city-wide tournament in November 2010. The National Portrait Gallery is located at the corner of 7th and F Streets, NW, Washington, D.C.

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**WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE**  
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

# P R O G R A M

# E R S P E C T I V E



**Elinor Hart**  
**Coordinator**  
**D.C. Public School**  
**Partnerships Program**

The D.C. Public School Partnerships Program is pleased to welcome six new partnerships, which this issue of the newsletter highlights on page 5.

We are also delighted that **K & L Gates**, **Mayer Brown**, and **McDermott, Will & Emery** have already agreed to coach teams for the 2011 GeoPlunge Tournament on November 15.

We know that we can count on many firms and individuals to sponsor what we hope will be a record number of teams in this year's GeoPlunge competition.

A very positive trend occurring among our school partnerships is an increasing involvement of law firms in the life of their partner schools. Whether it's a school fair, beautification day, back-to-school night, graduation, or a special event, law firms and their volunteers are playing major roles. You will find details about this involvement in the articles on pages 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8. For example, Maisha Riddlesprigger, Principal at Davis Elementary School, describes her school's relationship with **Crowell & Moring** this way: "I feel like they are true partners in what we are trying to do for the Davis Community."

Law firms are also supporting efforts of their partner schools to increase parent and community involvement in creative ways. **Paul Hastings** provided gift card incentives for parents to register students early for Garfield Elementary School, and the firm provided dinner for a special Science Night at the school. **Steptoe & Johnson** held a benefit concert at Walker Jones Education Campus.

Schools are also involved at their partner firms, particularly at holiday time. As you will see on page 9, this is a 14-year-old tradition for **Dickstein Shapiro** and the Ellington School of the Arts. For **Pepper Hamilton** and Stanton Elementary School, the tradition is newer.

To all our school partners, many thanks for your great work.

*Elinor Hart*  
*Coordinator*  
*D.C. Public School Partnerships Program*

# A PARTNER'S

**Dickstein Shapiro's** longstanding relationship with Duke Ellington School of the Arts began with a holiday card contest. Now in its 14th year, this artistic tradition includes an annual design competition, in which students submit artwork for Dickstein Shapiro's holiday card. Each year, the entire firm votes for the one student's artwork that will grace the holiday cards sent to firm clients and friends. Since the program's inception, more than 900 pieces of student art have been submitted.

Ten years ago, Dickstein Shapiro attorney Margaret Feinstein, working with Duke Ellington teacher Lynn Moore, created the Student-Lawyer Roundtable. Margaret has continued to lead a team of Dickstein lawyers that meet every two weeks with 25-30 juniors and seniors. During their lunch hour, students and attorneys meet to discuss issues ranging from D.C. politics, international law, citizenship, college preparation, and ethical conundrums. Students are challenged to think critically with only one guiding rule: there are no wrong answers.

Under the leadership of Partner Kent Withycombe, for the past ten years, the firm has mentored Duke Ellington students through Street Law, a graded elective class run by Georgetown University Law Center. The course teaches high school students practical legal knowledge. Dickstein Shapiro attorneys donate their time almost every week of the year assisting a Georgetown student with lesson plans, teaching classes, and coaching student teams for a citywide mock trial competition. In April 2008, the Duke Ellington School scored a remarkable achievement when it won the 36th annual citywide Street Law Mock Trial Tournament for the first time in its history.



**Sid Dickstein**  
**Partner**  
**Dickstein Shapiro**

For eleven years, the firm has sponsored the attendance of four Duke Ellington students and a faculty member at the Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass Village, Colorado, for intensive summer arts courses which complement Duke Ellington's rigorous academic and artistic curriculum. At Anderson Ranch, the students take two weeks of full-day classes and attend presentations by prominent artists.

Dickstein Shapiro's partnership with Duke Ellington School of the Arts combines the students' creativity and talent with attorneys' enthusiasm and energy to create new learning experiences for everyone involved.

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*Preparing for the 7th GeoPlunge Tournament at the Fall 2011 School Partnership Luncheon: L/R: Committee Executive Director Rod Boggs, with Alan Fishel, Missy Hudzik, and Eva Pulliam from Arent Fox.*

## Calling GeoPlunge Teams, Coaches and Sponsors For 7th City-Wide Tournament (cont'd)

GeoPlunge is played with a set of cards, each representing one of the 50 states. The tournaments include three different card games that combine geography and fun. *Guess the State* encourages students to learn the names of the 50 states, their capitals, large cities, and much more. Playing *Race for the Borders* teaches participants where states are located geographically. When students *Play the Ranks*, they learn how the states rank in size, population and order of entry into the union.

Alan Fishel, a partner at Arent Fox, invented the geography game and created the set of GeoPlunge cards. GeoPlunge was such a success with students at Arent Fox's partner school, Randle Highlands Elementary, that the Washington Lawyers' Committee decided to co-sponsor with Arent Fox the first two GeoPlunge tournaments. For the second tournament, they were joined by 28 law firms, which sponsored individual schools. The third tournament had 48 team sponsors.

As in past tournaments, the competition in 2010 was fierce. Stuart Hobson Middle School's narrow victory ended the three-year winning streak of J.O. Wilson Elementary School, which came in second.

D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson, who attended the GeoPlunge tournament last year, remarked that the tournament "was incredible to see" and that GeoPlunge "has a catalytic effect on our students." She added: "This opportunity is huge for our students."

If you or your firm would like to sponsor a team from your partner school and/or another school, contact Program Coordinator Elinor Hart at 202-387-2966, or [hart11651@juno.com](mailto:hart11651@juno.com).

## Law Firms, Agencies and Bank Become New School Partners

The D.C. Public School Partnerships Program is pleased to announce six new partnerships that are already busy with activities. In August, **DLA Piper**, **Goodwin Procter**, and the **Federal Highway Administration** volunteered on the school system's Beautification Day at their partner schools—Thomas, West, and Payne Elementary Schools. **Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton** and **TD Bank** are coaching GeoPlunge teams from Shaw Middle School at Garnet-Patterson and Kimball Elementary School respectively. DLA Piper and Goodwin Procter will also be coaching GeoPlunge teams.

The **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** will be planning activities for the 2011-12 school year with J. O. Wilson Elementary School.

## Volunteers from Law Firms Help Beautify D.C. Schools

On August 20, law firm volunteers took part in the D.C. public school system's annual Beautification Day by planting, painting, weeding, and repairing ceilings at schools around the city.

A team of seven people from the **Federal Highway Administration** helped prepare Payne Elementary School for the school year. Fred Wagner, the agency's chief counsel replaced ceiling tile, while his colleagues, Sheryl Williams and Bianca Joseph weeded and painted.

(Continued on page 10)



*Sheryl Williams from the Federal Highway Administration weeds a planting bed at Payne Elementary School.*

## Computers for Schools From Federal Agencies

The federal government makes computers that agencies no longer need available to public schools. One way this is done is through the General Services Administration's Computers for Learning Program. To participate in the program, schools register on-line at [www.gsa.gov/computersforlearning](http://www.gsa.gov/computersforlearning). This website makes it possible for schools to view computers and computer accessories no longer needed by federal agencies.

It is also possible for registered schools to "shop" at a GSA warehouse near Springfield, Virginia. To find out more about obtaining computers from the warehouse, call Pamela Samuels at 703-605-9314 or Sherlean Route at 703-605-9318.

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## November Auction & Gala To Benefit Partnership Program

A November 1 auction and gala will benefit the Washington Lawyers' Committee's School Partnership Program as well as other Committee projects. The event will feature the acclaimed mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts Show Choir. Ms Graves is an Ellington graduate. **Arnold & Porter** will host the gala and auction at their offices at 555 12<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

The live and silent auction will include one-of-a-kind travel packages, vacation homes in sought-after destinations, original artwork, and more. For more information about the event, go to the Committee's website: [www.washlaw.org](http://www.washlaw.org).



*Bianca Joseph (left) from the Federal Highway Administration and another volunteer paint the multi-purpose room at Payne Elementary School.*

# PARTNERS

# ARTICULATE



*Paul Hastings Career Day Team included the following people from the firm: Melissa Andrews, Josh Christensen, Bill Grady, Lianne Labossiere, Jerald Lassiter, Karen Long, Michael Lukens, Liz Norton, Bill Pendergast, and Daryl Tate.*

## Paul Hastings Brings Career Education to Garfield Elementary School

When Garfield Elementary School decided to emphasize career education, the school turned to its partner law firm, **Paul Hastings**, to play a major role in Garfield's Career Education Week last May.

On Career Day, one of the week's highlights, the firm's team of 20 people brought a wide variety of experiences from the world of work to the school. The team included ten people who hold a variety of positions at Paul Hastings—including former partner, associate, legal assistant, billing supervisor, and librarian.

With the people from the firm came friends and clients who made the career mix even wider. There was an art dealer, a personal trainer, a radio DJ, a secret service agent, and a medical researcher from NIH. Each team member spent about 20 minutes in several 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes.

The students were very responsive, and the Career Day team had a great time. Retired partner, Bill Pendergast, for example, found the students were interested in finding out how the President's Cabinet and the Executive Branch of the federal government are structured. Career Day was organized by Michael Lukens, Lianne Labossiere, and Kristen Roe.

Garfield's career education effort was for parents as well as students. One of the highlights of Career Education Week was Science Night. The school arranged for health-care professionals from area hospitals to speak to the parents about health-care careers and the preparation required for those careers. The dinner for Science Night was catered by Paul Hastings. The school administration was pleased with the number of parents who attended and with the interest they showed in career possibilities for their children.

## Law Firm Volunteers Speak At School Graduations

Elementary schools that are partnered with law firms are turning to their partner firms for speakers to help make the graduations of their 5<sup>th</sup> graders memorable occasions.

**Perkins Coie**, for example, brought Partner Judith Corley to Powell Elementary School. Most people know Ms. Corley as the person who, in her capacity as President Barack Obama's personal attorney, traveled to Hawaii to retrieve the long form of the President's birth certificate. Her colleagues at Perkins Coie, however, know her as someone who welcomes challenges. She did not enter law school until after she began working for the firm, and she recently rode a bicycle from her hometown of Seattle to Washington D.C., a trip that took 58 days and required her to ride 80 miles a day.

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## Paul Hastings Active In Registration Carnival (cont'd)

make a difference in the financial resources available to a school, because enrollment is a major factor in determining the budgets of individual schools. Paul Hastings helped motivate parents to register their children by giving away gift cards. Parents who had registered their children could win a gift card from Giant or from the company that makes the uniforms worn by students at Garfield.

The money for the gift cards came from a bake sale held at the firm.

## It's Back To School For Attorneys and Staff

In September, **Step toe & Johnson** played a major role in Back-to-School Night at Walker Jones Education Campus. Attorneys and staff from the firm helped the teachers set up their classrooms for visitors. They created maps to help parents locate their children's classrooms and other important areas in the school. The law firm volunteers also set up and helped staff tables for registration, fundraising, and other purposes. Another important Steptoe contribution was dinner for everyone who was served by people from the firm. The dinner included food from the school's garden.

According to Direthia Cummings, one of the Steptoe volunteers who helped out at Back-to-School Night, parent turnout was very good. Direthia also reports that she has seen a significant increase in parent and community involvement since Walker Jones became Steptoe's school partner.

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*Judith Corley from Perkins Coie speaks at Powell Elementary School's graduation.*



*Sarita Davis, Benefit Concert vocalist with student from Walker Jones Education Campus.*

## Children's Benefit Concert Staged at Partner School By Steptoe & Johnson

Last June, volunteers from **Steptoe & Johnson**, led by Legal Executive Assistant, Valerie Anyim, presented a children's benefit concert for Walker Jones Education Campus. The concert combined professional talent, the school's glee club, and a student step team with performances by people from the community and a musician from Steptoe.

The professional talent was a big hit with the audience. It included vocalist Sarita Davis, the Stella Mira Band, and poet and storyteller Tavia Gilchrist. Gary Randall from Steptoe & Johnson performed on the keyboard, and the Gamble family from the neighborhood brought rhythm and blues and pop music.

The professional performers not only donated their talent, they also took time to meet and talk with Walker Jones faculty and students.

The printed program distributed at the concert featured artwork created by Walker Jones students.

## Pepper Hamilton, Other Firms Turn to Elementary Partners To Create Holiday Cards

Student art has proved to be a valuable resource for **Pepper Hamilton** and other firms that have conducted art competitions at their partner schools for the designs of their holiday cards. For the second year in a row, all children at Stanton Elementary School will have the chance to submit their artwork in Pepper Hamilton's holiday design contest.

The day after the deadline for submitting designs, Trudy Williams Clark, who coordinates Pepper Hamilton's partnership with Stanton, will collect the student artwork for display in the firm's kitchen. After a panel of judges from the firm completes the challenging task of choosing the first- and second-place winners, a graphics expert transforms the winning art into holiday cards.

The prize for the first-place winner is \$50. For second place, the prize is \$25. Both winning artists receive a gift pack of art supplies with paint, chalk, pencils and paper, and they are both given a box of the holiday cards with their designs. In 2010, first place went to 5<sup>th</sup> grader Brandon Stewart for the card below. Second place went to another 5<sup>th</sup> grader, Donald Brown.

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*Pepper Hamilton's holiday card designed by Brandon Stewart, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Stanton Elementary School.*



## Ellington Students Compete In 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Card Contest Held by Dickstein Shapiro

Attorneys and staff at **Dickstein Shapiro** will soon be deciding which student-created design will grace the firm's 2011 holiday card. They will choose from some 100 drawings submitted by Visual Arts students at their partner school, Ellington School of the Arts. The drawings will line the walls of Dickstein's largest conference room, where all firm employees have the opportunity to vote for the winning entries. Their votes will determine the first-, second-, and third-place winners.

Prizes will be awarded to the winners at a December reception, during which the student artwork will be displayed and offered for sale with the consent of the artists. First prize will be a \$250 gift certificate to an art supply store. Second- and third-place prizes are \$150 and \$75 gift certificates for art supplies. Dickstein Shapiro will also donate \$2,500 to Ellington's Visual Arts Department.

The winning design will appear on over 20,000 holiday cards that the firm will mail this year. It will also be turned into an electronic card that is sent to thousands more and displayed on the firm's website. Dickstein Shapiro's 2011 holiday card will be the firm's 14th card designed by an Ellington student.



*Dickstein Shapiro's holiday card designed by Malik Haleem Taylor, now a senior at Ellington School of the Arts.*



*Sid Dickstein looks at Dickstein Shapiro's display of holiday card designs created by students at the Ellington School of the Arts.*

Twelfth-grader Malik Haleem Taylor won the 2010 competition. During the summer before he won, a Dickstein Shapiro scholarship made it possible for him to study visual art at the Anderson Ranch Arts Center near Aspen, Colorado. Every summer, the firm provides scholarships to Anderson Ranch for four Ellington students. Another Anderson Ranch alum, Miguel Valdez, won Dickstein Shapiro's holiday card competition in 2009.

The contest schedule has to be fairly tight to ensure enough time to print the cards and have them at the firm to distribute to Dickstein attorneys right after the Thanksgiving weekend. The time from when the students begin work on their drawings to the selections of the winners is about five weeks.

## GeoPlunge Tournament (cont'd)

D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson, who attended the GeoPlunge tournament last year, remarked that the tournament “was incredible to see” and that GeoPlunge “has a catalytic effect on our students.” She added: “This opportunity is huge for our students.”

If you or your firm would like to sponsor a team from your partner school and/or another school, contact Elinor Hart at 202-387-2966, or hart11651@juno.com.

## Computers for Schools From Federal Agencies (cont'd)

The National Institutes of Health in Bethesda also makes surplus computers available to schools. Public school faculty or staff can visit the warehouse where surplus computers are kept on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

To participate in the NIH surplus computer program, send an e-mail to Hannah Stachmus at [hs67u@nih.gov](mailto:hs67u@nih.gov). She will then e-mail an application to your school. You can also call Ms. Stachmus at 301-496-4180.

## Law Firm Volunteers Speak At School Graduations (cont'd)

**Crowell & Moring** sent Brenda Austin to speak to the graduates of its partner school, Davis Elementary. Brenda is a legal secretary at the firm and a former teacher. She often speaks to youth groups. Brenda helped prepare Davis graduates for middle school, paraphrasing from Dr. Seuss' famous book, “*Oh, the Places You'll Go*.”

*Now look at you on this day, June 15, 2011... you are on your way to middle school. Oh the places you'll go. And, now is the time to tell yourself that I am college bound and I am going to make it because I am a believer and achiever, I am a proud Davis Scholar, I succeed at everything I put my hand to because I have brains in my head. I have feet in my shoes. I can steer myself in any direction I choose. I am on my own and I know what I know. And I am the one who'll decide where I go. Oh the places I will go.*



Students at J. O. Wilson Elementary School displaying the temporary tattoos they acquired at the end-of-the-year party given by the tutoring team from the U.S. Courts for the District of Columbia.

## Back-to-School Night (cont'd)

**Drinker, Biddle & Reath** set up a booth during Back-to-School Night at Ann Beers Elementary School. Parents, students, faculty, and community members who stopped by the booth were offered cookies and information about the school's partnership with the firm.

Providing meals for PTA meetings, which has been shown to increase attendance by parents, is another way in which law firm involvement can contribute to the success of these school events. Firms that provide food for PTA meetings include **Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld**; **Beveridge & Diamond**; and **Covington & Burling**.

## Volunteers from Law Firms Help Beautify D.C. Schools (cont'd)

A team from **Crowell & Moring**, led by Kathleen Stratton, painted hallways at Davis Elementary School. Not only did they paint the halls, they decorated them with college logos. Davis principal, Maisha Riddlesprigger explains why their effort was so important: “Now, when our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders walk to their classrooms, they are walking along what we call our ‘wall of success.’”

Volunteers from **Goodwin Procter** and **DLA Piper** also took part in Beautification Day at West and Thomas Elementary Schools.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld**  
Tyler Elementary School

**Arent Fox**  
Randle Highlands Elementary School  
Eastern Senior High School

**Beveridge & Diamond**  
Savoy Elementary School

**Bracewell & Giuliani**  
Brightwood Elementary School

**Crowell & Moring**  
Davis Elementary School

**Covington & Burling**  
Cardozo Senior High School

**Dickstein Shapiro**  
Ellington School of the Arts

**DLA Piper**  
Thomas Elementary School

**Drinker, Biddle & Reath**  
Ann Beers Elementary School

**Epstein, Becker & Green**  
Langley STEM Education Campus

**Fannie Mae's Corporate Legal Dept.**  
Marie Reed Elementary School

**Federal Highway Administration**  
Payne Elementary School

**Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson**  
School Without Walls

**Fulbright & Jaworski**  
Macfarland Middle School

**Goodwin Procter**  
West Elementary School

**Greater Washington Area Chapter,  
Women Lawyers Division, National Bar  
Association**  
Jefferson Middle School

**Holland & Knight**  
Cleveland Elementary School

**Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton**  
Shaw Middle School at Garnet-Patterson

**Paul Hastings**  
Garfield Elementary School

**Patton Boggs**  
Francis Stevens Education Campus

**Perkins Coie**  
Powell Elementary School

**Pepper Hamilton**  
Stanton Elementary School

**Reed Smith**  
Bruce Monroe at Park View Elementary  
School

**Shearman & Sterling**  
Ketcham Elementary School

**Sidley Austin**  
Thomson Elementary School

**Step toe & Johnson**  
Walker Jones Education Campus

**Sutherland**  
Columbia Heights Education Campus

**TD Bank**  
Kimball Elementary School

**U.S. Courts for the District of Columbia  
Circuit and U.S. Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission**  
J.O. Wilson Elementary School

**Williams & Connolly**  
Dunbar Senior High School

**Zuckerman Spaeder**  
Orr Elementary School

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## **Pepper Hamilton, Other Firms Turn to Elementary Partners To Create Holiday Cards (cont'd)**

Pepper Hamilton also sponsored a program at the school where the art was displayed and refreshments were served.

Other firms that involve elementary students in holiday card competition are **Beveridge & Diamond** and **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld**.

D.C. Public School Partnerships Program's

### **PARTNERS UNLIMITED BULLETIN BOARD**

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