

# Partners Unlimited Bulletin Board

Spring  
2012

D.C. PUBLIC  
SCHOOL  
PARTNERSHIPS  
PROGRAM



*Arnold Hall from Beveridge & Diamond helps a Savoy student add water to his container of fish so that he can keep his catch alive.*

## Beveridge & Diamond Teaches Savoy Students About the Environment

Water pollution, smog, and global warming are not abstract issues for the Savoy Elementary School students who have taken the environmental course taught at the school by attorneys and staff from **Beveridge & Diamond**.

For over ten years, the firm, which specializes in environmental law, has put its passion and expertise into a seven-week course for students at its partner school. The majority of the classes relate to air pollution, focusing specifically on acid rain, smog (low-level ozone issues), stratospheric ozone, global warming and the regulation of sulfur dioxide under the cap-and-trade program.

## Project Seeks Support In Recruiting School Partners

The School Partnership Project is actively seeking additional law firms, businesses, agencies, and other groups to become partners with DC Public Schools. These efforts have been greatly assisted by the efforts of former DC Bar President Ron Flagg, a Partner at **Sidley Austin**. Last month, he hosted the third partnership recruiting luncheon at the firm.

At the luncheon, the DC Public Schools' new Chief of Family and Public Engagement, Josephine Bias Robinson, listed ten schools that the school system would like to see established in partnerships with law firms or other organizations in the near future.

Ms. Robinson also stressed the importance of school partnerships: "In order to fulfill the academic and professional goals that we have set for our students in the District of Columbia, we cannot approach our mission alone. That is why organizations like the Washington Lawyers Committee are essential partners in the effort to reform our schools. Your work is critical to our students, to their growth and their success. Thank you for everything you're doing to make our schools places where our students not only learn, but want to go to learn and to interact with smart, engaging people like you."

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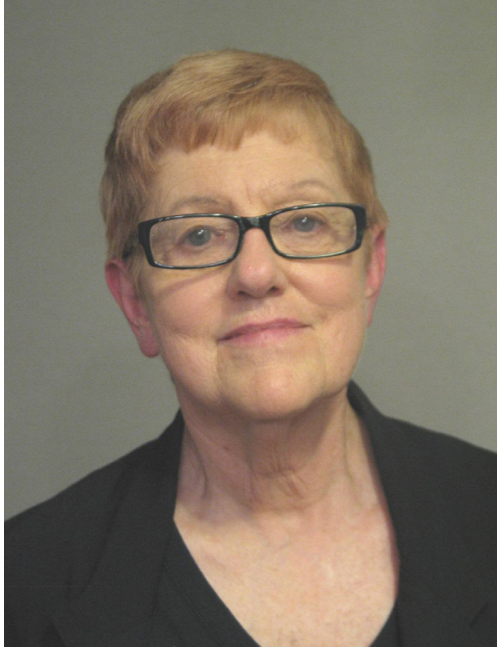
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**WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE**  
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

# P R O G R A M

## E R S P E C T I V E



**Elinor Hart**  
**Coordinator**  
**DC Public School**  
**Partnership Program**

The 2011-12 school year has been a time of significant expansion for the Committee's Public Education Project. Not only have we added seven new school partnerships, we welcomed Kent Withycombe to our staff in January. Kent was already well known to and acquainted with our Project because he represented **Dickstein Shapiro**, the firm where he was a partner, at quarterly luncheons and other school partnership events. During his tenure at the firm, he worked closely with Georgetown University Law Center's Street Law course and helped coach students from the Ellington School of the Arts for the annual spring mock trial tournaments.

Kent will be focusing on recruiting new school partners, particularly for high schools, and expanded outreach to law firms, firm clients, the DC business community, litigation support companies and associations. Because of his additional efforts, we are very hopeful about expanding our School Partnership Program.

And you will understand why the partnership program should be expanded when you read the articles that follow on tutoring, the seven-week environmental course, inviting children from your partner school to spend the day at your firm, and coaching for a variety of competitions. And you will know a few of the reasons why the many hardworking volunteers from our law firms and agencies deserve to be very proud of their efforts, and why they deserve many thanks.

I also need to give special thanks to two law firms and two individuals. We continue to be grateful to Charlie Johnson and his firm **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld** for hosting our quarterly partnership luncheons. We are also very grateful to Ron Flagg and his firm **Sidley Austin** for hosting our school partnership recruiting luncheons. These meetings help us to reach more firms and businesses and to encourage their involvement in new DC public school partnerships.

As you enjoy the summer and regroup for the 2012-13 school year, keep the following dates in mind: the 2012 DCPS Beautification Day will be held on August 25th, and the 8th annual city-wide GeoPlunge Tournament will be held on December 5th at the National Portrait Gallery.

*Elinor Hart*  
*Coordinator*  
*DC Public School Partnership Program*



# SCHOOL PARTNER'S

We launched **Perkins Coie's** partnership with Powell Elementary School two years ago. Even though the firm's DC office has been involved with the Washington Lawyers' Committee for many years, this was its first involvement in the school partnership program.

Powell is a pre-K to fourth grade English-Spanish dual-language school. Next year, the school will add a fifth grade. Most of Powell's students' families fall below the poverty line and for a majority of the parents of Powell students, English is a second language.

The key to our partnership with Powell is the warm and productive relationship we have with the school's principal, Janice Docal. Ms. Docal is a great advocate for the school and has unlimited energy and vision for ways to enhance the student learning experience at Powell.

We have also found the staff to be very dedicated and caring. With the guidance of Ms. Docal and the faculty, we have been involved in a number of programs.

We have recently begun a weekly early morning reading program. During this school year, we have held fundraising events on several occasions, including new and used book drives.

We were excited to participate in the annual Cooking For Kids Bake Sale and thrilled to have been awarded our Taste-Off prizes.

We have also served as judges and helped prepare students for several presentations and contests, including the GeoPlunge Geography Tournament.

Helping with the school's beautification days is an enjoyable change of pace for attorneys and staff and family members.



**Ronald Kamis  
Of Counsel  
Perkins Coie**

Looking to the future, we are assisting Powell in establishing an on-line tutoring program and a nonprofit organization.

With both of these initiatives, we have found that the Washington Lawyers' Committee and other law firms with partner schools have provided invaluable suggestions based on their experience undertaking similar activities in other school partnerships.

As we complete our second year working with Powell and the delightful students there, we realize how valuable this community service experience has become.

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*GeoPlunge team from Shepherd Elementary School decides on its next move.*

## Over 200 Young Geographers Compete at the National Portrait Gallery

Last November 15th, more than 230 students from almost 40 DC Public Schools met to compete in the 7th Annual GeoPlunge Citywide Geography Tournament at a new location, the National Portrait Gallery.

Although the top scorer was again J.O. Wilson Elementary School, there were numerous other award winners. The level of skill in last year's competition was so high that there were several teams that won a high percentage of rounds, even though they were not among the highest scorers. These teams were recognized with explorer awards. Shaw Middle School at Garnet-Patterson, coached by **Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton**, won the Theodore Roosevelt Award. The Daniel Boone Award went to Bancroft Elementary School, coached by **K & L Gates**. Thomson Elementary School, coached by **Sidley Austin**, received the John Smith Award.

The year 2011 was the second year that coaches from **Zuckerman Spaeder** prepared students from Orr Elementary School for the GeoPlunge Tournament. As Eleanor Smith from the firm described it, "Last fall there was a GeoPlunge explosion at the school. Twenty-one students wanted to be in the tournament. So after six students were selected to compete in the citywide tournament, the rest of the students took part in a tournament at the school."

(Continued on page 9)



## Multiple Taste-Off Prizes Won by Perkins Coie and Drinker Biddle

The 2012 Cooking for Kids bake sales on the morning of March 19th raised a record \$8,225 for 13 DC Public Schools. And the Taste-Off that afternoon involved more firms than ever.

In the Cookie Division, always the most competitive category in the Taste-Off, **Perkins Coie** took first place for the Thumbprint Jam Coconut Cookie, baked by Cynthia Herron. The firm also placed third in the Cake Division with the Lemon Cake with Raspberry filling, baked by Michelle Depass. **Drinker Biddle & Reath** took second place in the pie category for Claire Plante's Apple Pie and third place in the Cookie Division for Stevie Dewitt's Oreo Truffle.

The other first-place winners were **Beveridge & Diamond** in the Cake Division for Lemon Poppy Seed Cake, baked by Regina Miller, and **McDermott Will & Emery** for Evelyn Bond's Tuxedo Brownie Tart. **Pepper Hamilton** took third place in the Pie Division with Black Bottom Peanut Butter Moose Pie, baked by Henry Liu. Second place in the Pie Division went to **Foley & Lardner** for Rich Rum Cake, baked by Tiffani DeFreitas and Andre Cheslock.

The culinary experts who selected the Taste-off winners this year were Alex Kramer, owner and chef at Dos Gringos in Mount Pleasant; Chef Frank Ruta, who owns Palena Restaurant in Cleveland Park; and Palena's pastry chef, Aggie Chin.



*Taste-Off cake entries (L/R) assessed by Judges Palena Pastry Chef Aggie Chin; Alex Kramer, owner of Dos Gringos; and Palena Chef Frank Ruta.*

**Zuckerman Spaeder's** special guest at its bake sale was Michelle Edwards, the principal of its partner school Orr Elementary. Her participation made it possible to interest more people at the firm in becoming involved in partnership activities.

**DLA Piper; Fried Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson ; Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton; and Reed Smith** also held bake sales and participated in the Taste-Off.



*Taste-Off winners (L/R) Claire Plant, Stevie Dewitt, Drinker, Biddle & Reath; Cathy Scheineson, representing winner Evelyn Bond of McDermott, Will & Emery; Trudy Clark, representing winner Henry Liu of Pepper Hamilton; Regina Miller, Beveridge & Diamond; and Cynthia Herron, Perkins Coie, display their medals.*



# A C H I E V E

C

## From Their Desks Online Tutors Help Students

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Online tutoring may prove to be the way to overcome the biggest barrier to involving professional adults in tutoring school children—time.

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Tutors from **Paul Hastings, Crowell & Moring**, and **DLA Piper** are thrilled with being able to participate in weekly tutoring sessions without ever leaving their desks. Volunteers from these firms are tutoring children at elementary schools that have software and curriculum materials developed by Chicago-based Innovations for Learning.

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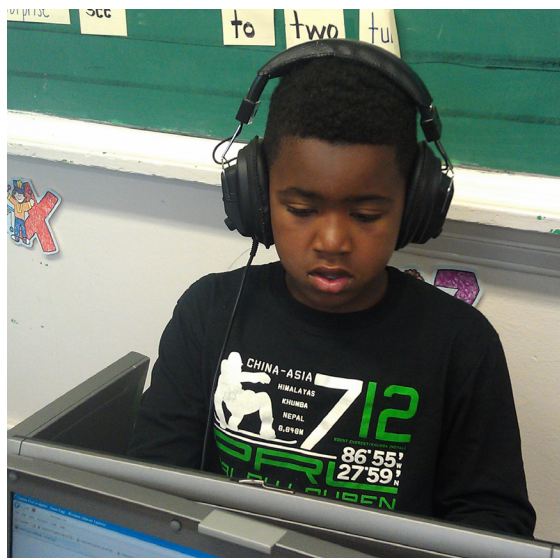
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Since last fall, Paul Hastings has been using the online system to tutor first graders at Garfield Elementary School. Ellie Roberts, who coordinates the tutoring program, reports that it took her only a week to identify 20 colleagues who were willing to make a commitment of 30 minutes a week. Her tutoring team includes the managing partner, associates, legal secretaries,

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*Davin, a first grader at Garfield Elementary School listens to a question from his tutor Ellie Roberts who is in her office at the law firm of Paul Hastings.*



*Ellie Roberts at Paul Hastings questioning first grader Davin at Garfield Elementary School.*

and other staff. The tutors were trained through an online webinar that they found convenient and user friendly.

Ellie tutors Davin. Every Tuesday at 11:00am, she calls his classroom. When he comes to the phone, Ellie tells him it is time to read. He takes the phone to his computer. Then, he and Ellie read and discuss the stories that are on their computer screens. Toward the end of their session, they play interactive games. One of their favorites is hangman.

According to Davin's teacher, Tasha Shaw, phone calls from tutors give students celebrity status. She also reports that online tutoring motivates students and makes them enthusiastic about improving their reading skills. Over the year, Davin has moved up five reading levels. He now enjoys reading bedtime stories to his three-year old sister.

Kathleen Stratton at Crowell & Moring has also become an online tutor for a student at Davis Elementary School. She reports that it is working well for her and several of her colleagues and is fun for both tutors and students.

At DLA Piper, about 12 attorneys and staff are enthusiastic about the online tutoring they have recently started with students at Thomas Elementary School.

## Mock Trial History Made by Fried Frank And School Without Walls

Accomplishing a rare feat in the 40-year history of the annual District-wide mock trial tournament, sponsored by Georgetown Law Center's Street Law Clinic, the highest-scoring teams for both the Plaintiff and the Defendant were from the School Without Walls and both teams were coached by attorneys from **Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver, & Jacobson**.

In the final round on April 21, the School Without Walls' Plaintiff's team edged out their classmates to become the city champions in a tournament that involved 250 students on 24 teams from 11 DC public high schools this year.

Associate David Perez led the Fried Frank team of attorneys and other employees who mentored the School Without Walls teams. In addition to Perez, Joseph DeSantis, Karen Grisez, Jamila McCoy, Brendan McNamara, Katherine Raimondo and Trey Sadiq spent significant time helping the students prepare for the competition. A key to the school's success was Fried Frank's pre-mock trial courtroom training session for students, held at the firm, where volunteers Beverly Chang, Kimberly Hiepler, Ashley Moore, Eugene Poverni, Richard Park, Miten Shah, Karen Soares, and Phillip Yen assisted the mock trial teams in their preparation.

(Continued on page 10)



*Chloe Rollins, left, and Brianna Green, fourth graders at J.O. Wilson Elementary School decide on their next move at the citywide Scrabble Tournament.*

## Old Partnership Becomes Renewed Through Scrabble Club

Volunteers from the **U.S. Courts for the DC Circuit** and administrators at J.O. Wilson Elementary School felt their school partnership needed something new. For over 13 years, volunteers from the Courts had been tutoring first and second graders from J.O. Wilson.

This fall, when the school requested that the partnership take on two new projects, the DC Circuit volunteers accepted the challenges of organizing and working with a Scrabble club and a book club, while continuing with the tutoring.

(Continued on page 10)

## Zuckerman Volunteers Prepare Young Orators

Coaching Orr Elementary School students for the annual Frederick Douglass Oratorical Competition was an ideal project for **Zuckerman Spaeder's** school partnership program.

Cedar Hill, the Frederick Douglass home in Anacostia, is less than a mile from the school, and Eleanor Smith and Jean Faubell from the firm have experience with drama and recitation.

(Continued on page 12)



*Young orators Anesha Stelly (left) and Tiyana Moore (right) with Orr Elementary School librarian Patrice Cruz.*





*Students from Davis Elementary School at Crowell & Moring's Take your Kid to Work Day.*

## Davis Students “Go to Work” At Crowell & Moring

On April 25th, dozens of children came to work at **Crowell & Moring** and at thousands of other businesses and offices across the country.

This year, the firm added a new feature to its observance of Take Your Kids to Work Day. The children of Crowell & Moring employees were joined by the children from Davis Elementary School who participate in the firm's tutoring program and who were not accompanying their parents to work.

The day was filled with educational, thought-provoking, creative, and entertaining activities. Students were treated to a tour of the firm and took part in a discussion about what a law firm does.

They also participated in discussions about bullying and staying in school. A highlight of the day was the mock trial involving Shrek and Spider Man. The students were fascinated by science demonstrations involving lasers, wind and dry ice. And they enjoyed creating their own art projects.

## Cleary Gottlieb and McKinley HS Begin School Partnership

**Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton** began its partnership with McKinley Technology High School this spring.

This summer, the firm will provide summer internships for two college-bound graduates. One of the young women, who will be attending George Washington University, will be working in the IT Department. The other, who is seriously considering a legal career, will have a variety of responsibilities that will expose her to working in the law.

The firm is also planning a labor-intensive beautification effort at the school, which will take place in July.

Activities for the 2012-13 school year are expected to include a financial planning project for McKinley seniors and mentoring. The firm is also exploring a variety of activities on the principal's wish list.



## Beveridge & Diamond Teaches Environment to Savoy Students (cont'd)

Each class begins with a short introductory lecture, but most of the time is taken up with interactive experiments and exercises.

For example, during the class on watersheds, water pollution, and the effects of acid rain, students measure the acidity of water, lemon juice and water with baking soda.

They also use a topographic map to trace how water flows from their school to the Anacostia River.

The class on watersheds and water pollution ties in nicely with the field trip at the end of the course—a boat trip on the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers.

During the trip, students see the local power and sewage treatment plants and witness pollution and its effects.

They also have the opportunity to test the pH of the river and spot endangered and threatened wildlife species.

The boat trip is an enjoyable way to reinforce what has been taught in the course.

Beveridge & Diamond will make its Environmental Curriculum materials available to other law firms. Those interested can contact Jamie Auslander or Arnold Hall at Beveridge & Diamond.



*Ellen Squires from Beveridge & Diamond shows Savoy students how to test the pH balance of the river.*

## Over 200 Young Geographers Compete at the National Portrait Gallery (cont'd)

“One of our goals was to improve the students’ knowledge of geography which certainly happened. Another goal was for the students to learn sportsmanship. We think the Teamwork Medal that Orr won demonstrates that these students were very good sports,” declared Eleanor.

Other Teamwork Medal winners included Garfield Elementary, coached by **Paul Hastings**; Tyler Elementary, coached by **Akin Gump**; and West Elementary, coached by **Goodwin Procter**.

GeoPlunge is an award-winning set of geography card games created by **Arent Fox** attorney Alan Fishel. As one student explained, “GeoPlunge is a very educational game. It helps you with a lot of things you should learn—border states, capitals, top cities—everything you want to know about cities and states.”

The 2012 citywide GeoPlunge Tournament will take place on December 5th at the National Portrait Gallery. Each year, the event draws raves from the student players, teachers, principals and sponsors. “This opportunity is absolutely huge for our students,” said DC Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson. “It instills in them a love of geography at a critical time in their educational development. They have a chance to interact with their peers at other schools. They understand team sports in a very different way, and they are rewarded for their academic success. To see these kids engage around GeoPlunge is very heartwarming.”



*Kathleen Stratton and Davis Elementary student have lunch together at Crowell & Moring during Take Your Kids to Work Day.*

(Continued on page 10)

## Mock Trial History (cont'd)

**Covington & Burling** and **Dickstein Shapiro** also coached teams from their partner high schools. Before the final round, Covington & Burling hosted teams from Cardozo for a rehearsal, which was followed by a pizza party for students and coaches. Cardozo's Plaintiff Team was second runner-up. Cardozo's teams were assisted by several Covington & Burling attorneys, including Benjamin Wiseman, Benjamin McJunkin, Brianne Bharkhda, and Michael Sawyer. Attorneys from Dickstein Shapiro who coached the third runner-up Defense team from the Ellington School for the Arts were Lisa Hall Johnson, Efreem Yemane-Brehan, Shavon Smith, Aja Sae-Kung and Kristin Davis.

Street Law is a year-long survey course primarily taught by 2nd year Georgetown Law School students and coordinated by DC public high-school teachers. Law firm mentors take on significant roles in preparing students for the Spring mock trial tournament, and some mentors choose to teach classes or sponsor field trips to the courts and the law firms as well. The high-school students learn about civil rights, constitutional law, family law and consumer law, while honing their critical thinking, judgment, public-speaking and leadership skills.

## Over 200 Young Geographers Compete at the National Portrait Gallery (cont'd)

The Washington Lawyers' Committee and DC Public Schools, along with Arent Fox, organize the annual tournament, which is sponsored by dozens of local law firms, businesses, and individuals. The 7th Annual GeoPlunge Tournament was made possible by the following sponsors: **Jodi Avergun, Rod Boggs, Cadwalader, Guy Collier, Dave Cynamon, Joe Davis, Amadou Kilkeny Diaw, DLA Piper, Drinker Biddle & Reath, Epstein Becker Green, Alan Fishel, Fried Frank, Tina Garnett, Kilpatrick Stockton, Ben Klubes, Michael Lukens, Patrick Macrory, Isabelle Thabault, Bob Bruskin, Megan Whyte, Bill O'Reilly, April McPherson, Perkins Coie, Ana Reyes, George Ruttinger, Cathy Scheineson, Barbara Schmidt, Sidley Austin, Eleanor Smith, Paul Smith, Kartik Venguswamy, Elizabeth Vermilye, Robert Watkins, Ben Wilson, David Williams.**



*Students from the School Without Walls Defense and Plaintiff teams begin the final round of the DC High School Street Law Mock Trial Tournament.*

## Old Partnership Becomes Renewed Through Scrabble Club (cont'd)

The Scrabble club got underway with four coaches from the Courts and eight students—four in fourth grade, three in third and one in second. As soon as the fourth graders learned they were eligible to participate in tournaments, these students and their coaches began preparation through weekly sessions at the school. Their coaches took them to a small tournament at Janney Elementary School in April.

Since the J.O. Wilson students had never played Scrabble competitively, this first tournament experience was very exciting for the fourth graders. The citywide DC Public Schools Scrabble Tournament at Wilson Senior High School on May 5th was an even greater thrill. According to Harold Smith, one of the coaches from the Courts, "Both coaches and J.O. Wilson third graders are looking forward to next year's tournament."

Two fourth graders from Janney Elementary School won the tournament, in which 48 students from eight elementary, middle, and high schools competed. Students played on boards donated to the school system last year by Hasbro, which owns the game. The National Scrabble Association provided game tiles, timers, and other materials. The tournament director was Stefan Fatsis, author of a book about competitive Scrabble.



## 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

**Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton**  
McKinley Technology High 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 Academy

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

**K&L Gates**  
Bancroft Elementary School

**McDermott Will & Emery**  
Seaton Elementary School

**Paul Hastings**  
Garfield Elementary School

**Patton Boggs**  
Francis Stevens Education Campus

**Perkins Coie**  
Powell Elementary School

**Pepper Hamilton**  
Stanton Elementary School

**Pierce Atwood**  
Patterson Elementary School

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

**Shearman & Sterling**  
Ketcham Elementary School

**Sidley Austin**  
Thomson Elementary School

**Steptoe & Johnson**  
Walker Jones Education Campus

**Sutherland Asbill & Brennan**  
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

**Zuckerman Spaeder**  
Orr Elementary School



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## **Zuckerman Volunteers Prepare Young Orators (cont'd)**

Students Anesha Stelly and Tiwana Moore who participated in the competition, sponsored by the National Park Service, were very aware of Douglass and they like history.

They had also acted in school plays, and GeoPlunge had taught them to enjoy competition.

Julie Allard from Zuckerman and Orr's librarian Patrice Cruz were also involved in preparations for the oratorical competition.

D.C. Public School Partnerships Program's

### **PARTNERS UNLIMITED BULLETIN BOARD**

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