

Partners Unlimited Bulletin Board

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

Spring 2005

Foley & Lardner Takes 3rd Graders Out To Baseball Game

April 3, 2005, was a historic day for 3rd graders from Wilkinson Elementary School and attorneys and staff from **Foley & Lardner**. They were among the first to welcome the Nationals baseball team to Washington, D.C., and to a renovated RFK stadium. And for the Wilkinson students, the exhibition game against the New York Mets that followed was their first professional baseball game.

Early that morning, decked out in Foley shirts and Nationals' baseball caps, the kids loaded buses and headed for RFK Stadium. The excitement was contagious. "You could tell the kids were really excited," said Annie Westover, Project Manager. Shouts of "Let's play ball!" and "Go Nats go!" filled the buses as they drove from the school to RFK.

Besides enjoying hot dogs and ice cream, the students also got a chance to talk to Nationals' coaches Don Buford and Dave Huppert. The coaches

(Continued on page 10)



Students from Wilkinson Elementary School wait for the bus that will take them to the Nationals' opening game. With them is April McPherson (bottom right), who coordinates Foley & Lardner's partnership with Wilkinson.

Inspired Teaching at Tyler Supported by Akin Gump

During the 2004/2005 school year, **Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld** helped its partner school, Tyler Elementary, increase the effectiveness of the school's faculty. Tyler's new principal, Michelle Pierre, identified a valuable staff development resource, the Center for Inspired Teaching, and Akin Gump provided funds for the entire faculty to participate in a year-long program.

The Center for Inspired Teaching program at Tyler included two weekend retreats. At the March retreat, the staff created two powerful statements outlining their expectations of students and staff. The statement of expectations for students begins: "I am a beautiful, creative, and capable student. I will strive each day to show respect, understanding and patience for myself and others. I believe in myself."

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IRIS'

INTRO



IRIS J. TOYER

Project Director, Public Education Legal Services Project, Washington Lawyers' Committee

I remember when I was a D.C. public school student and the end of the school year arrived. On the last day of school, my friends and I would go tearing out of the door running across Stanton School's playground headed home for the summer!

Unlike the students who are privileged to attend school with law firm partners, my school did not have a great friend like Bracewell & Giuliani, which holds Big Book Parties not only for students at their Washington, D.C., partner school Van Ness Elementary, but also for students in six Texas cities and in Almaty, Kazakhstan! We have gone global!

Nor did we have a partner like Foley & Lardner, which invites 3rd graders from Wilkinson Elementary School to their conference rooms after school for tutoring,

encouragement, fun and refreshments to improve their academic opportunities. On page 8, read how Foley overcame the challenge of transporting staff to their partner school in far southeast Washington, D.C. Then discover how Foley and students from Wilkinson attended the Nationals' opening day to witness baseball history!

If you were a young student at Tyler Elementary School with a generous partner like Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld that believed the students at your school were capable of studying classic literature, you might be a part of the Tyler Book Club, reading from the Junior Great Books Series. On page 7, you can learn how the firm is supporting high academic achievement through this special reading program.

If you were lucky to be a 4th grade male student at Gage-Eckington Elementary School, then you might be involved in the school's male mentoring program. On page 5, read how Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw combine March Madness basketball, pumpkin painting, Black History and Santa Claus to mentor and motivate students.

The school system is using the summer to prepare for the return of our students with new academic standards, intensified professional development, and greater community engagement.

After reading this newsletter, perhaps your firm will use the summer to prepare for a partnership with a D.C. public school. If so, give me a call.

Iris

Iris J. Toyer, Director
Public Education Legal Services Project

THE VIEW FROM

A C F A R L A N D



Dr. Donna Graham
Technology Coordinator
Macfarland Middle School

For nearly five years, Macfarland Middle School in the Petworth area of Northwest has had a partnership with **Fulbright & Jaworski**. Right now, we have seven 7th graders and four 8th graders involved in the program, and each is paired with an attorney/mentor from the firm.

Throughout the year, the students are delighted by the activities they share with their mentors. One activity was a painting session at Fulbright & Jaworski. In preparation for this activity, students had a chance to choose the kind of picture they wanted to paint. When we arrived at the firm a professional artist talked about color, design, lines, etc. After each student received an outline of a picture that matched his or her choice, our mentors and students started painting.

The painting activity created a bond between our students and their mentors. But

it also takes the one-on-one contacts that occur during organized activities to establish and maintain strong and really meaningful bonds.

Since our students continue in the program from grades 6 through 8, Fulbright has mentored a total of about 20 students. Because of the firm's sustained commitment to providing enriching and rewarding experiences for our students, our partnership has weathered scheduling challenges, changes in coordinators, and replacement of mentors and students.

As a former student of Macfarland, then a teacher (as well as a parent), then an assistant principal and returning back to the classroom, I have seen it all over my close to 50 years involved in D.C. Public Schools. Middle-school students need support and consistency. At this critical time in their lives, it is important for them to have an adult other than a parent or teacher to confide in. Our students who have mentors are very excited about the special attention they are getting. More adults need to reach out to children, especially those in middle school. It can be challenging to relate to these youngsters whose hormones and bodies are constantly changing. I know this for a fact, because when my son who is now 27 years old was in middle school, I was not sure what to do. However with the help of mentors and after-school activities we both survived.

When our attorney/mentors from Fulbright & Jaworski reach out to Macfarland students, it means a lot. We are grateful for their involvement and for the firm's strong commitment to our school.

MENTORS

E A N A



Attorneys from Fulbright & Jaworski and students from Macfarland Middle School display the results of their painting class. From left to right, the Fulbright attorneys are Kerry Long, Ashley Seuell, Rena Scheinkman, Devanshi Patel, and Sarah Warlick.

Fulbright & Jaworski Mentors Macfarland Students

On a hectic day in March, as the time for the students from Macfarland to arrive got closer, Bob Burgoyne wondered whatever had made him think he could leave all those important things on his desk for an hour or two of painting! But he rushed down to the **Fulbright & Jaworski** conference room that had been transformed into an art classroom and greeted Trenton, the 8th grader he mentors. “Within two minutes I got over my angst,” explains Bob. It was great being with Trenton and the other kids, and the painting was a lot of fun.

The painting class is one of the activities that attorneys from Fulbright & Jaworski shared with the group of students they mentor from Macfarland Middle School, the firm’s partner school. For another activity, each student worked with his or her mentor to create a special gingerbread house during the holiday season. On another occasion, the students watched a trial on videotape and then acted as jurors. They took the case and their responsibilities very

seriously and later asked their mentors a great many questions about the work of trial lawyers.

The Macfarland students have also joined their mentors on trips to the National Zoo and the Air and Space Museum. The leadership of Fulbright & Jaworski’s partners is a major reason for the success of this partnership. They provide financial support and have assigned the Macfarland Partnership its own accounting number, making it possible for the attorneys to charge the time they spend on mentoring activities as *pro bono*.

Partners also actively participate in the mentoring program. Bob Burgoyne, for example, not only shares organized activities with Trenton, but the two of them have also exchanged e-mails throughout the school year. And they are making plans to attend an Orioles game this summer. It is a really great program,” says Bob. “Whenever we are working with these kids, it is time well spent.”

L O T

Men From Mayer Brown Connect With Boys

Things that matter to guys, educational activities, and fun are the focus of the mentoring partnership **Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw** has with Gage Eckington Elementary School. Once a month, a diverse male team from the firm shares an activity with a group of 4th grade boys from the school. Most of these activities take place at the school, and they often have a seasonal theme. In October, it was pumpkin painting. In December, Santa Claus was part of the team.

In February, the boys at Gage competed in a Black History tournament modeled on the television program *It's Academic*. In keeping with the spirit of March Madness, the boys created their fantasy basketball league. In May, the men from Mayer Brown and the boys from Gage enjoyed a trip to the Air and Space Museum. The Mayer Brown team includes partners, associates, secretaries, other staffers and even a few recruits from one of the firm's suppliers. Angel Keane, the firm's partnership coordinator, provides gender diversity and handles the critical element of refreshments.



Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw partner, Stu Pergament, with boys from Gage Eckington Elementary School.



6th grade girls from Malcolm X at their annual dinner dance sponsored by GWAC.

GWAC Widens Horizons For Girls at Malcolm X

For over ten years, the **Greater Washington Area Chapter of the Women's Division of the National Bar Association (GWAC)** has mentored and tutored 5th and 6th grade girls from Malcolm X Elementary School. The GWAC/Malcolm X partnership is organized around weekly tutoring sessions at the school and about a dozen enrichment activities that take place during the year throughout the greater Washington area.

Enrichment activities in April focused on the importance of math and jazz. A panel that included an accountant, a Securities and Exchange Commission analyst, a pediatrician, and a lawyer spoke to the girls about science and math related careers. Also during April, the GWAC mentors took the Malcolm X students to the Jazz Festival at the National Museum of American History. The girls were able to learn about jazz first-hand by playing instruments and singing with the jazz musicians.

May was an especially busy month. It included a workshop on etiquette and manners, a field trip to Six Flags Amusement Park in Maryland, and the annual dinner dance to reward the 6th grade girls for completing the tutoring program. During the dinner dance, the girls, who were escorted by boys, received gifts and certificates of appreciation from GWAC. The school's graduation for 6th graders was the final activity. During the ceremony, GWAC mentors presented gifts and certificates of completion to the 6th grade girls who participated in the tutoring and enrichment activities this year.

BOOK CLUB

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Bracewell's Big Book Party for Van Ness Elementary School.

Bracewell Holds Big Book Parties for 1200 Children

Van Ness Elementary School was one of eight locations where Bracewell & Patterson (now **Bracewell & Giuliani**) sponsored Big Book Parties for elementary students and their parents and teachers last November.

The firm also had Big Book Parties in six Texas cities and in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

In Bracewell's Washington office, a committee of attorneys and staff planned a book party they thought would be especially enjoyable for Van Ness students. It featured a musical book walk during which all children won book prizes. Because the party took place in November, there was a Presidential History Game for the older children. The younger children heard the story of *Duck for President*.

G-Wiz, the Washington Wizards mascot was a big hit at the party as he encouraged the youngsters to take an interest in books.

Each child received a t-shirt and a goody bag, complete with a take-home copy of a new book. Bracewell also brought several hundred new and gently used books to the party. Those that were not distributed as prizes are being put to good use by the school's teachers. The Big Book Party t-shirt has a place of honor at Van Ness. It has been officially declared an acceptable part of the school uniform.

"The response of the students, parents, and teachers told us what a great day it was for them, and it was a very special occasion for the firm," said Randy Rich, one of the organizers of Bracewell's party at Van Ness. "It was wonderful to see the children so excited about books and reading."

"We want to be the children's firm. . . a culture of attorneys whose charitable work embraces initiatives on behalf of young people in every city where we have a home," explained Patrick Oxford, managing partner.

(Continued on back page)

Fried Frank Hosts Awards For High School Readers

Even though the School Without Walls is one of the area's highest achieving schools, supporting the school's literacy efforts is a tradition at the school's partner firm, **Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson**. The faculty at Walls, as the school is often called, encourages reading by rewarding students who read 25 or more of the books on the school's reading list during a school year.

For the past four years, the students have received their awards during a ceremony that is held at the firm in mid-June. The reading list is tweaked every summer to accommodate new titles. It includes both fiction and nonfiction as well as classics and contemporary books.

The annual Walls awards program at Fried Frank has grown from an occasion for recognizing the school's avid readers into an impressive event. The school now uses the event to make all of its end-of-year awards and to recognize graduating seniors who have received scholarships. Immediately after the awards program, the firm also holds a reception for the Walls students, their teachers and parents.

At the beginning of the school year, Fried Frank provided space and lunch so that the Walls faculty could spend a staff development day at the firm. During lunch, the faculty and attorneys and staff from Fried Frank discussed partnership activities.



Van Ness student selects his prize at Bracewell's Big Book Party.



Gilbert Mead, Chair, Mead Family Foundation (left rear); Coleen Clarke, Tyler teacher (center rear); Iris Toyer, Director, Public Education Legal Services Project (right rear); with Tyler students.

Akin Gump Supports Book Club For Eager Tyler Students

Most law firms involved in tutoring work with students who need extra help with reading and math. But in response to the principal's request, the focus of **Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld's** reading project at Tyler Elementary School has a very different focus.

The school's principal, Michelle Pierre, is eager to provide encouragement for youngsters who have good reading skills and who have the potential to become high-achieving students. She therefore asked Akin Gump to sponsor and lead a book club for these students.

The firm purchased the Junior Great Books Series for the school. Twice a week, volunteers from Akin Gump go to Tyler and lead small group discussions about the books that both the students and volunteers are reading.

The volunteers from Akin Gump are sure that the readers in the Tyler Book Club can look forward to impressive academic achievements. And the principal is grateful to the firm "for giving our students this special opportunity at a critical time in their educational development."

TUTORS

U T O R I N G



Regina Toler works with three Wilkinson 3rd graders during their weekly tutoring session at Foley & Lardner.

Foley Brings Students to Firm for Tutoring

Every Wednesday afternoon throughout the school year, **Foley & Lardner's** conference rooms are filled with 3rd graders from Wilkinson Elementary School and the attorneys and staff who tutor them. From four to five o'clock the youngsters and their tutors work on reading exercises, flash cards, and word games. Refreshments, lots of encouragement, and fun are also important elements of these tutoring sessions.

Tutoring has always been the centerpiece of the firm's eight-year partnership with Wilkinson. Most of the students at the school come from low-income households, and they do poorly on standardized tests. When the tutoring project got underway, tutors would go to the school by car and cab once a week. Several problems, however, made recruiting and retaining tutors a challenge. It was hard to get away from the office in the middle of the day and very difficult to get cabs to

pick up tutors at the school in Southeast Washington. Quiet places for tutoring at the school were always scarce.

These problems were solved when Foley's tutoring project became part of the school's aftercare project. Transportation is not a problem since a bus provided by the firm brings the 3rd graders to the firm and takes them back to the school.

No longer does the firm's partnership coordinator, April McPherson, have to put a major effort into recruiting tutors.

People at the firm eager to tutor now seek her out. Outings are an important part of the partnership. A Potomac cruise on the Spirit of Washington has become a spring tradition for both the school and the firm. Foley also treated Wilkinson's 3rd graders to their first theatrical performance at the Public Playhouse.

The Foley tutors have found the experience rewarding because they have been able to see the children improve. And as the school year came to a close, their teachers were pleased to note their progress. "I went to the school's graduation, and as I watched our kids march across the stage, I was so proud," said April.

The Foley/Wilkinson partnership also includes outings, a holiday art competition, and drives for school supplies, books, and winter coats.

For her outstanding work in the school partnership program, April recently received a community service award from Foley & Lardner. She has certainly earned this honor.

McDermott, Will & Emery Sends Tutoring Teams To Bowen Elementary

Tutors from **McDermott, Will & Emery** work with 20 2nd graders at Bowen Elementary School. This tutoring program, like those that provide the centerpiece of over a half-dozen other partnerships, takes place at the school during regular business hours. McDermott has resolved the issue of transportation by providing a van that takes tutors to the school and brings them back to the firm.

McDermott's tutors, which include partners, associates, secretaries, and other staff, are part of either the Tuesday Team or the Wednesday Team. Each team goes to Bowen twice a month. Every tutor is assigned to a particular child. However, when an emergency makes it necessary for a tutor to miss a session, his or her child works with another tutor from the firm.

Tutoring activities are customized to meet the specific needs and interests of each Bowen student. Because Sherise, the student that Cathy Scheineson tutors, likes books, reading is always a part of their tutoring session. "Most of us always bring a book or two," says Cathy. "And we often play hangman, the old spelling game. The kids really like that game. The tutoring resources we have managed to compile also include flash cards and other proven exercises."

Enjoyment is an essential element in McDermott's partnership with Bowen. In December, the firm sponsors an annual holiday party for the school's 2nd grade.

April McPherson, who coordinates Foley & Lardner's school partnership program, with students from Wilkinson Elementary School.



Every spring, McDermott treats the class to an end-of-year outing. This year, it was a trip to Glen Echo. Our tutoring program is fun," says Cathy. "It's rewarding to see Sherise and her classmates improve, and we enjoy doing it."



McDermott Will & Emery tutor with a student from Bowen Elementary School.

GWAC Tutors Share Insights From Program At Malcolm X

The Greater Washington Area Chapter of the Women's Division of the National Bar Association (GWAC) has learned a lot about tutoring during ten years of weekly sessions at Malcolm X Elementary School. Three GWAC tutors provided the following insights:

"I have found that even with the most nominal assistance, kids are willing and able to learn. Often I find myself incoherently explaining some part of math or English and despite my ramblings and inconsistencies and stumbles, they are still able to figure it out - and then tell me what was wrong with my explanation." —Aliya Wong

"Take time to talk to your students about their extra-curricular activities, different interests and goals. They respond to you better when you show a genuine interest in them as people." —Elizabeth Thomas

"I believe that the tutoring experience needs to incorporate some creativity and fun, as well as real-life examples in order to be effective." —Angela Clark



Charles Morris, Kitchen Coordinator, IKEA Food Service Department, College Park, Maryland; Iris Toyer, Director, Public Education Legal Services Project; Warren Brown, lawyer and owner, Cakelove Bakery and Café, Washington, D.C.; Tobi Printz-Platnick, Program Officer, Cafritz Foundation

Five Law Firms Win Prizes In 6th Annual Taste-Off

The Sixth Annual *Cooking for Kids Bake Sale* the morning of June 13 raised funds for six schools. That afternoon, the quality of the pastries made picking the *Taste-Off* winners a real challenge for judges—Warren Brown, owner and master baker of CakeLove and Charles Morris, Kitchen Coordinator for Ikea Food Service Department in College Park, Maryland. This year’s entries were so impressive that the judges requested the recipes for several of them.

The top winner in the Pie Division was a lime meringue pie baked by Diana Vidutis from **Winston & Strawn**. A key lime pie baked by Christie Bloomquist from **Reed Smith** took second place in that division.

A crystallized ginger spice cookie created by Elizabeth Carder of **Reed Smith** took first place in the Cookie Division. Second and third places in that division went to an oatmeal chocolate chip cookie from **Steptoe & Johnson** and a brownie from **Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson**.

First place in the Cake Division went to **Reed Smith** for Ginger Dontis’ cocoa cake with mocha frosting & espresso beans. A banana cream caramel cake with cream cheese frosting from **Steptoe & Johnson** and a carrot cake from **Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson** took second and third place honors.

Foley & Lardner Takes 3rd Graders Out To Baseball Game (cont’d)

graciously signed the Wilkinson welcome banner for the children. “It was great to see the kids march into the stadium as VIP’s and see their faces light up when they met the coaches and got autographs,” said Irwin Raji, Senior Counsel.

Despite the chilly weather and winter coats, the children and Foley attorneys and staff enthusiastically cheered on the winning home team. Partner Jay Freedman said, “The enthusiasm of the kids never waned and it was a real joy to be part of this experience with them.”

This field trip to the ballgame is one of many activities Foley & Lardner provides as part of the firm’s long-standing partnership with Wilkinson Elementary School. Volunteers from the firm also tutor 3rd graders (see page 8).

“We have a deep and fulfilling partnership with Wilkinson school, and we cherish the relationship we have forged with the students there. It is a great source of pride to be able to share this history-making experience with them,” said Rick Weiss, managing partner of the firm’s Washington office.

Wilkinson students at the National’s home opener with Foley & Lardner tutors—Sharon Thomas (in a parka) and Don Workman (wearing a hat).



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 & Giuliani

Van Ness Elementary School

Covington & Burling

Cardozo Senior High 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

Howrey Simon Arnold & White

Bancroft Elementary School

F I R M S C H O O L S

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,
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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

Stephoe & 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
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Amidon Elementary School

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

J.O. Wilson Elementary School

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Young Lawyers' Division**

Banneker and Ballou Senior High Schools

Weil, Gotshal & Manges

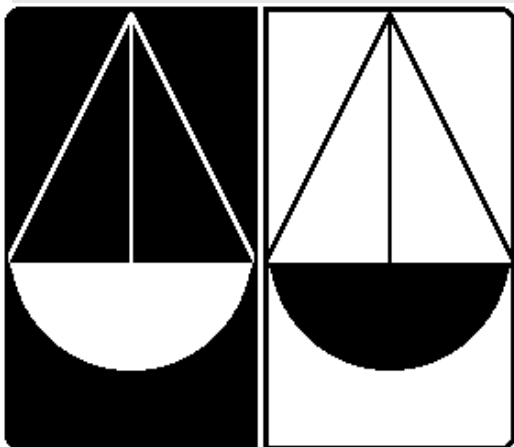
Seaton Elementary School

Williams & Connolly

Dunbar Senior High School

Winston & Strawn

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Published by the
Washington Lawyers' Committee
for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs

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Inspired Teaching at Tyler Supported by Akin Gump (cont'd)

According to the principal, this program has had a very positive impact. Both teachers and students are working harder. One very concrete result is the school's first literary magazine published at the end of the school year. Every student made a contribution to the magazine, and Joan Adams from Akin Gump was privileged to have one of her poems included in the publication.

Bracewell Holds Big Book Parties for 1200 Children (cont'd)

"Sponsoring children's literacy in this kid-friendly way will continue our tradition of aspiring to make life a little better for children who deserve some extra attention."

Big Book Parties are becoming a Bracewell tradition. In 2003, the firm also sponsored Big Book Parties at Van Ness in Washington as well as at schools in five Texas cities.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs acknowledges the following foundations, corporations and law firms for their generous contributions to the Public Education Legal Services Project:

Bank of America Foundation
Black Entertainment Television, Inc.
Bracewell & Patterson
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
D.C. Chartered Health Plan, Inc.
Children's Charities Foundation
Dimick Foundation
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