

Partners Unlimited Bulletin Board

Spring
2015

D.C. PUBLIC
SCHOOL
PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAM



Charlie Johnson, partner at Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, welcomed people to the School Partnership Luncheon.

More School Partners Goal of Education Project

Recruiting partners for additional schools was a major focus of the Spring School Partnership Luncheon hosted by **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld** on May 21. Expanding the number of school partnerships has been a continuing goal of the Education Project.

"While we are proud that we are meeting DC Public Schools (DCPS) Chancellor Kaya Henderson's challenge to double the number of partnerships," said the Committee's Public Education Director Kent Withycombe. "We know that there are more schools at which partnership activities could make a positive difference for many children."

At the meeting, the DCPS administration was represented by Josephine Bias Robinson, Chief, Office of Family and Public Engagement, and DCPS Director of Community Partnerships Najla Hussein.

"We are excited about what you are doing and what we are going to do together," said Ms. Robinson. "The enrichment and academic resources you provide are vital to the success of our schools."

Value of Volunteers To Students' Success Confirmed by Research

Volunteers can be instrumental in helping millions of American children read more proficiently, reported *The Washington Post's* education writer Emma Brown in a recent article about educational research studies.

According to Robin Jacobs, a research scientist at the University of Michigan's School of Education, "Volunteers can really make a difference. Even if it is only an hour and a half a week, that student's time with somebody focused on the student's particular needs can be really effective."

The Washington Post article cites research from both Minnesota and California. An independent evaluation of the Minnesota Reading Corps, which relies on AmeriCorps service members to identify and tutor struggling students, showed that preschoolers in the program were far more likely to gain the literacy skills they need to be ready for kindergarten than other preschoolers.

The Minnesota Reading Corps began as an experiment with 250 children in 2003, the year after then Minnesota legislator Alice Seagren visited a school that managed to do the seemingly impossible—get all first graders reading at their grade level by year's end.

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Check the Board

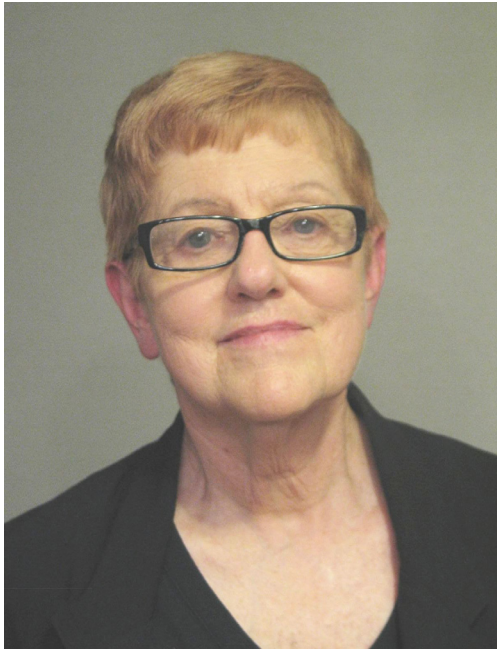
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WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

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

As another school year comes to a close, we are pleased about the increased number of school partnerships, and we are gratified that so many principals have affirmed the importance of these partnerships to their students' development.

We continue to be very grateful for the quarterly school partnership luncheon meetings hosted by **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld**. Charlie Johnson and his colleagues Laura Dunning and Diane Swanson have contributed so much to the School Partnership Program and to their own firm's nearly 20-year partnership with Tyler Elementary School.

We congratulate them and the firm on being recognized with the Vincent Reed Award at this year's Wiley Branton Awards Luncheon for their wonderful longtime school partnership and support for our Program.

Many of you who have been involved in tutoring and reading with students have had moments when you were certain that your efforts were making a difference for these children.

The article on page 1 about the value of volunteers to students' success confirms through research what you have felt. You can now be certain that the time you invest in helping students makes them better readers.

Hogan Lovells has had a partnership with Kimball Elementary School since 2013. However, since the firm launched its new Global Citizenship Policy at the beginning of 2015, its relationship with Kimball has more significance for everyone in Hogan's Washington office.

The new policy calls on everyone at the firm to devote at least 25 hours to citizenship activities. The policy also states that accommodations will be made so that all those who work at the firm can take part in one or more activities as part of their normal duties. We hope this policy is so successful that it is soon adopted by other firms.

Have a wonderful summer, and thank you for all your good work on our school partnerships.

Elinor Hart
Coordinator
DC Public School Partnership Program

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton began working with middle school students in the Shaw area of Washington, DC in the fall of 2011.

Our first effort was to coach students attending Shaw Middle School at Garnett Patterson for the city-wide GeoPlunge Tournament. We found that working with these students was so rewarding that we decided we wanted to continue our relationship with them even after their school closed and they were reassigned to the Middle School at Cardozo's Education Campus.

Academic achievement has been the focus of our activities since the students were reassigned to Cardozo. The "Bring Up Your Grade" program, also known as the BUG program, was spearheaded by Daniella Farmer during the 2013-2014 school year.

This program consisted of providing verbal encouragement and monetary incentives to motivate the students to improve their English grades. Each student who improved a grade during a term was recognized at the school-wide assemblies with a certificate and a prize. Prizes often consisted of \$10 gift cards, mostly to Chipotle, as Chipotle is a personal favorite among many students.

Kilpatrick Townsend also created the opportunity for all students nominated and accepted onto Cardozo's honor roll to enjoy a special lunch to reflect on their accomplishments on a monthly basis. These honors lunches typically consist of a group of students taking a supervised field trip to our office in downtown DC and spending one to two hours engaging in educational games and lunch with staff members (see photo on page 10).

For the past few years, Kilpatrick Townsend has participated in the Washington Lawyers'



Katie Oliver
Paralegal
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton

Committee's Annual Bake Sale to benefit partnership schools and students. Erica Dominitz, Josh Pond and David Cox were among several Kilpatrick Townsend attorneys who contributed to the success of this event.

Funds raised through the Bake Sale allowed the firm to purchase books for Cardozo Middle School's Library. We consulted with Megan Reichelt, the school library media specialist, to determine which fiction books were in the highest demand among the students.

Katie Oliver
Paralegal
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton



Savoy GeoPlunge Team with teacher Mrs. Williams (far left) and coaches Laura Duvall (back row, center), and Arnold Hall (holding trophy).

Students, Volunteers, and Teachers Motivated By Fall and Spring GeoPlunge Tournaments

Three top winners emerged during the fiercely competitive December 2014 and May 2015 city-wide GeoPlunge tournaments, both held at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. In both tournaments, Alice Deal Middle School took first place in the division for students in grades 6-8. In the May tournament, West Education Campus and Hardy Middle School placed second and third in that division.

In the division for students in grades 3-5, the competition was fierce at the May tournament. At the end of the tournament, Eaton and Savoy Elementary Schools were tied. Then Savoy took first place by winning the tiebreaking round. Two teams from Cleveland tied for third place. In December, Bruce Monroe at Park View Elementary School was the winner of the division for elementary grades.

GeoPlunge is an award-winning set of five geography games created by **Arent Fox** attorney Alan Fishel. The games encourage students to learn about U.S. geography, while also learning strategic thinking, communication skills and sportsmanship.

Many law firms coach GeoPlunge teams from their partner schools and sponsor the teams' participation in the tournaments. Three firms—**Beveridge & Diamond**; **Goodwin Procter**; and **Reed Smith**—sponsored and coached three of the winning teams in the December and May tournaments.

Multiple Taste-Off Prizes Won by Pepper Hamilton and Beveridge & Diamond

Cooking for Kids 2015 featured pastries, prizes, and wonderful experiences for DC public school students. On the morning of March 9, a dozen law firms held bake sales at their offices where they raised a record \$9,200 that their partner schools used to support field trips, library books, science materials, a prom, and graduation ceremony.

In the afternoon of March 9, the law firms sent their best cakes, pies, and cookies to the Taste-Off competition at the Washington Lawyers' Committee, where a panel of culinary experts selected the winners.

First place in the Cake division went to Victoria Capatosto at **Pepper Hamilton** for her Chocolate Flourless Cake. Another Pepper Hamilton winner, Ashleigh Shipe, took third place for her Chocolate Chip Pie.

First and second places in the pie division went to Amy Marcos at **Drinker Biddle & Reath** for her Strawberry Rhubarb Pie and to Connie Royal at **Reed Smith** for her Strawberry Cream Pie.

In the Cookie division, Debbie Dahl at **Hogan Lovells** won first prize for her Apple Tartlet. Erika Dominitz at **Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton** took second place with Mom's Famous Brownies. Third



Taste-Off Judges, L/R: Aggie Chin, Pastry Chef at The Grill Room of the Capella Hotel; Frank Ruta, Chef at The Grill Room; and Alex Kramer, owner of Dos Gringos.

place in that division went to Arnold Hall at **Beveridge & Diamond** for his Chocolate, Chocolate Brownie; he also took second place in the cake division for his Honey Bun Cake. Third place in the cake division went to Arteria Bickford at **Epstein Becker & Green** for her Champagne Raspberry Cupcakes.

The culinary experts who selected the Taste-Off winners were Alex Kramer, owner and chef at Dos Gringos in Mount Pleasant; Frank Ruta, Chef at The Grill Room of the Capella Hotel in Georgetown; and Aggie Chin, Pastry Chef at The Grill Room.

Although **Buckley Sandler** did not take part in the Taste-Off, the firm earned a medal for raising over \$4,600 at its bake sale. Other firms participating in the Bake Sale and Taste-Off included **DLA Piper**; **McDermott, Will & Emery**; **Pierce Atwood**; and **Zuckerman Spaeder**.



Cooking for Kids Bake Sale & Taste-Off winners, L/R: Victoria Capatosto from Pepper Hamilton, Debbie Dahl from Hogan Lovells, Stephanie Schlatter from Buckley Sandler, and Arnold Hall from Beveridge & Diamond.



Debaters from Eastern and McKinley Technology High Schools with judges and organizers.

Arent Fox Hosts Debaters from Eastern and McKinley

Should college athletes be paid? What library services are of most benefit to the public? Thirteen high school students from Eastern and McKinley Technology High Schools explored these questions on May 5, 2015, at the offices of **Arent Fox**, with judges from the law firm and the American Library Association, which both sponsored the event.

This debate had several unique features. Instead of the traditional pro and con, each question had three sides. The three sides of the debate on paying college athletes were: (1) universities should not pay college athletes; (2) universities should have the right to pay college athletes, but there should a yearly cap on the amount paid; (3) universities should have the right to pay college athletes, and there should be no cap on the amount.

The format of the debate resembled appellate advocacy. Each debate side had a two-minute opening statement. Following the opening statements, each side then gave a two-minute rebuttal. After the openings and rebuttals, the judges asked questions for 15 minutes. The judges for the question on paying college athletes were: Charlyn Ho, Keith Huffman, and Eli Sheets. These Arent Fox Associates are former college athletes.

While the judges were more focused on provoking a thoughtful, in-depth discussion than in proclaiming a winner, the debate revealed the merits of compensating college athletes.

The question of which library services are of most benefit also had three sides: (1) employment and entrepreneurship; (2) education; and (3) engagement and empowerment. The American Library Association judges found this discussion spirited and stimulating, and were impressed with the arguments of all three sides.

Debate organization and logistics were handled by Alan Fishel, Wesley Gee, and Tina Termei at Arent Fox. Others who helped with the debate were Keith Michael Fiels and Marijke Visser from the American Library Association and McKinley Tech English Teacher Seth Tendler.

"We loved watching students become excited by ideas and engaged in presenting them effectively," reports Tina Termei. "It was a wonderful event. We look forward to doing it again next year. In fact, we're already looking for exciting topics."

New Mock Trial Winner Anacostia High School Coached by Paul Weiss

History was made when a mock trial team from Anacostia High School defeated Banneker Academic High School to win the DC-wide Street Law Mock Trial competition.

Anacostia is a neighborhood school in Ward 8, while Banneker is an application-only, magnet school.

This was the first time in many years that the winning mock trial team was not from one of the application-only magnet schools.

The winning Mock Trial team from Anacostia defended a school principal who expelled a student claiming that the student displayed gang paraphernalia in violation of school policy, instigated a riot during a school-related event, and destroyed school property.

Associates Diana Valdivia, Dwight Draughon, William Williams and Parimal Garg led a group of 15 lawyers from **Paul Weiss** who mentored the Anacostia team, and they had at least one or two lawyers in the classroom for nearly every class for seven weeks.

They also had a practice mock trial at the firm, presided over by Committee Trustee and Paul Weiss partner Patrick Campbell, who took part in mock trial competitions when he was a student at Coolidge High School in Ward 4, and who is now the Chairman of the Board of Street Law, Inc.

(Continued on page 10)



Winning Mock Trial team from Anacostia High School.

Lawyers, Law Students Outperformed By Incarcerated Youth In Street Law Mock Trial

On April 22, 2015, Chief Administrative Law Judge David Simmons of the DC Commission on Human Rights presided over an unusual and highly rewarding trial.

The Judge ruled that a plaintiff's team of ten high school students in the Incarcerated Youth Program (IYP) defeated a team of lawyers and law students in a mock trial that vindicated the First Amendment rights of a high school student who claimed he had been wrongly expelled for leading a protest near school.

In collaboration with a teacher from Georgetown University Law Center's Street Law Clinic, the Washington Lawyers' Committee's DC Public School Partnership Program coordinated the six-attorney mentor team from two law firms who worked with the teacher and the students throughout the year, introducing the students to a broad survey of legal issues and arguments.

Coburn & Greenbaum's Mark Eisenstein, and **Price Benowitz's** Terry Eaton, Jason Kalafat, Sweta Patel, and Shawn Sukumar worked with Education Project Director Kent Withycombe to mentor the IYP students throughout the year.

The mentors also helped the students hone their courtroom skills to prepare for their mock trial in April, which is the culmination of their Street Law course.



Mock trial attorney questions a witness.

(Continued on page 10)



Tyler Elementary School Trashion Fashion "models" with their teachers.

Akin Gump Supports Art Program at Tyler

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld has long been a supporter of parental involvement at its partner school, Tyler Elementary. For many years, refreshments and meals provided by the firm have contributed to significantly increased attendance at PTA meetings at the school.

In early June, Akin Gump joined the PTA in supporting a creative arts showcase. Performances and exhibits involving every child in the school featured music, dance, theater, fashion, and visual arts.

Tyler was also well represented at the DC Student Arts Exhibition for which Akin Gump provided financial support.

The exhibition, in late May and early June, opened with a "trashion" fashion show. Trashion fashion is a creative way to educate both students and adults about the importance of recycling in our environment. The outfits of the "models" from Tyler featured imaginative uses of bottle caps and used paper.

Akin Gump also provided strong support to Tyler for the School Yard project spearheaded by parents that got underway in 2007 and has since transformed an acre of asphalt into a green playground and a number of different outdoor learning areas.

The firm set up a nonprofit organization that made it possible for the parents to raise over \$160,000 in grants and donations. Charlie Johnson from Akin Gump worked closely with the parents to make sure their nonprofit organization complied with the legal requirements of the grants.

Variety of Experiences Provided to Savoy Students By Beveridge & Diamond

Savoy Elementary School's partnership with **Beveridge & Diamond** brings a variety of enriching experiences to students at the school.

Twice a year, Savoy's GeoPlunge teams take part in tournaments at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.

An annual spring trip on the Anacostia and Potomac rivers gives fourth graders the opportunity for hands-on environmental education.

This spring, there will also be a trip to Hershey Park in Pennsylvania.

This past April, Beveridge & Diamond, along with the Greater Washington Urban League made it possible for 27 Savoy students and their families to take part in the Washington Nationals' Black Heritage Day.

The students attended the baseball team's batting practice, collected players' autographs, met with Jackie Robinson scholarship recipients and Screech, the team mascot.

After the pregame activities, the students and their families watched the baseball game on the third-base line, just six rows from the field.

The firm will also be supporting girls softball at Savoy.



Savoy Elementary student at Nationals Park outing organized by Beveridge & Diamond.

Kimball Celebrations Of Positive Behavior Supported by Hogan Lovells

Kimball Elementary School is using the funds raised by **Hogan Lovells** at its Bake Sale in March to provide rewarding experiences for students who earn points for academic performance, good behavior, wearing school uniforms properly, and showing respect for support staff.

Students can earn up to six points per school day. Individual students who earn the highest points have the opportunity to go roller skating, ice skating, or to the movies.

The points that students earn can also count toward the month total for their homerooms.

Each month, there is spirited competition to be the winning homeroom and enjoy a treat organized by the culture team.

These monthly treats, supported by Bake Sale funds and organized by the culture team, included pizza, ice cream parties, and a pie-eating contest.



Kimball third grader Ariana Stone enjoys a pie-eating contest, a reward she earned for good behavior and improved academic performance.



Kilpatrick Townsend volunteers play body scrabble with Cardozo Middle School students who have come to the firm for a monthly lunch for honor students. Pam Gallego is on the far left and Daniella Farmer is the third person from the right.

Lawyers, Law Students Outperformed By Incarcerated Youth In Street Law Mock Trial (Cont'd)

Several students who were reluctant at the beginning of the year to even speak up in class ended up astounding the lawyers and judges at the mock trial with their arguments and their command of the facts and courtroom procedure.

This is the third year that the students in the Incarcerated Youth Program have participated in Street Law.

The IYP is a DC public high school at the DC jail facility where students 16-18 years old can earn their high school diploma.

Many of these students come into the facility with significant learning and social challenges.

New Mock Trial Winner Anacostia High School Coached by Paul Weiss (Cont'd)

Many of the Committee's other School Partnership firms provided attorney mentors for high school Street Law teams: **Venable** for Banneker; **Dickstein Shapiro** for Duke Ellington; **Sutherland** for Bell; **Cleary** for McKinley Tech; **Williams & Connolly** for Dunbar; **Arent Fox** for Eastern; **Coburn & Greenbaum** and **Price Benowitz** for the Incarcerated Youth Program; **Fried Frank** for School Without Walls; **Baker Botts** for Roosevelt; and **Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman** for Luke Moore.

Corporate Advisory Board member **Veris Consulting** provided expert witness preparation guidance for several firm mentors and their partner schools.

In addition, other organizations also provided mentors: **Navy JAG Corps**, and four divisions of the **Department of Justice**.

Education Project Director Kent Withycombe mentored teams at Duke Ellington, the Incarcerated Youth Program, and Luke Moore.



Girls on the Run team from Orr Elementary School. The team was sponsored by Zuckerman Spaeder.

PARTNERSHIPS

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld
Tyler Elementary School

Arent Fox
Randle Highlands Elementary School
Eastern Senior High School

Baker Botts
Roosevelt High School

Beveridge & Diamond
Savoy Elementary School

Bracewell & Giuliani
Brightwood Elementary School

Bryan Cave
Burroughs Education Campus

BuckleySandler
Cleveland Elementary School

Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft
Jefferson Academy Middle School

Carr Maloney
Seaton Elementary School

Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton
McKinley Technology High School

Coburn & Greenbaum
Incarcerated Youth Program

Covington & Burling
Cardozo Senior High School

Crowell & Moring
Plummer Elementary School

Deloitte
Raymond Education Campus

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

Federal Highway Administration
Payne Elementary School

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

FTI Consulting
Tyler Elementary School

Gilbert
Eliot-Hine Middle School

Goodwin Procter
West Education Campus

Hogan Lovells
Kimball Elementary School

Hollingsworth
Garrison Elementary School



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K&L Gates
Bancroft Elementary School

Kelley Drye & Warren
Noyes Education Campus

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton
Middle School at Cardozo Education Campus

Kirkland & Ellis
Marie Reed Elementary School

McDermott Will & Emery
Stuart-Hobson Middle School

O'Melveny & Myers
Washington Metropolitan High School

Paul Hastings
Garfield Elementary School

Paul Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison
Anacostia Senior High School

Pepper Hamilton
Stanton Elementary School

Perkins Coie
Powell Elementary School

Pierce Atwood
Patterson Elementary School

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman
Luke Moore High School

Price Benowitz
Incarcerated Youth Program

Reed Smith
Bruce Monroe at Park View Elementary School

Savills Studley
Hendley Elementary School

Shearman & Sterling
Ketcham Elementary School

Sidley Austin
Thomson Elementary School

Squire Patton Boggs
School Without Walls/Francis Stevens Education Campus

Steptoe & Johnson
H.D. Cooke Elementary School

Sutherland Asbill & Brennan
Columbia Heights Education Campus

Tower Legal Solutions
Turner Elementary School

U.S. Courts for the District of Columbia Circuit
J.O. Wilson Elementary School

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
J.O. Wilson Elementary School

Venable
Kelly Miller Middle School

Veris Consulting
Ludlow Taylor Elementary School

Williams & Connolly
Dunbar Senior High School

Zuckerman Spaeder
Orr Elementary School

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Value of Volunteers To Students' Success Confirmed by Research (Cont'd)

"I was thrilled," said Rep. Seagren, whose push to replicate the success in that school gave rise to the Minnesota Reading Corps.

A study of the Oakland, California-based Reading Partners tutoring program found that tutoring provided a student with about two months of additional development in reading proficiency.

The Reading Partners tutoring program made that difference even though AmeriCorps members and community volunteers who were participating in the program had no training in literacy education.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Venable Foundation

2015-2016 SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP DATES

Saturday, August 22, 2015

DCPS Beautification Day

September/October 2015

Fall School Partnership Luncheon
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld

Thursday, October 1, 2015

John Burke Pro Bono Breakfast
Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

11th Annual Citywide GeoPlunge Tournament
National Portrait Gallery

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