

# UPDATE

VOL. 10, NO. 2

FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

FALL 2004



*L/R: John A. Payton, Jr., Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP receives the Wiley A. Branton Award from The Honorable James Robertson, Judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.*

## Committee Hosts 2004 Branton Awards Lunch

On June 8, the Washington Lawyers' Committee and nearly 1000 supporters gathered at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel for the 36th Annual Wiley A. Branton Awards Luncheon. The Committee's annual signature event honors attorneys, clients and civil rights leaders for their contributions to the cause of equal rights.

Stuart J. Land, a partner in the law firm of **Arnold & Porter LLP**, and John A. Payton, Jr., a partner with the law firm of **Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP**, jointly received the 2004 Wiley A. Branton Award for serving with distinction as Committee Co-Chairs and demonstrating tireless efforts to promote civil rights. The presentation to Stuart Land was made by Arnold & Porter retired partner Brooksley E.

*continued on page 16*

## Cracker Barrel Suits Settled

On September 9, a settlement was announced in the Committee's longstanding Cracker Barrel litigation, resolving the claims of the NAACP and over 100 African Americans who alleged racial discrimination in the service at dozens of Cracker Barrel Restaurants around the country. The settlement, which involves lawsuits in four states, follows by four months the settlement of a pattern-and-practice case against Cracker Barrel by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The private-party public accommodations cases were brought by the Committee and a team of national law firms led by **Crowell & Moring LLP**. Major

*continued on page 16*

### Inside this issue ...

Major Settlements .....	1, 5, 7, 14
Director's Corner .....	2
New Cases .....	6, 7, 14
Wiley A. Branton Outstanding Achievement Awards .....	8-12
John Burke Memorial Fund .....	5
Arrivals .....	15-16



**Roderic V.O. Boggs**

Executive Director  
Washington Lawyers' Committee  
for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs

This issue of the Committee's **Update** recognizes the contributions of three special individuals to the work of the Washington Lawyers' Committee and the cause of civil rights. Two of them—Stuart Land and John Payton—were recipients of the Wiley Branton Award at this year's Wiley Branton Luncheon, the third—John Burke—served as counsel for

the Committee for nearly 30 years and was twice the recipient of a Committee Outstanding Achievement Award.

In their service as Committee Co-Chairs both John Payton and Stuart Land played instrumental roles in helping to build a solid foundation for the Committee's expanding programs. In addition, their leadership has contributed significantly to the exemplary *pro bono* records of their respective law firms. Both exemplify a unique capacity to combine exceptional commitment to public service with the successful practice of law in a major national law firm.

John Burke, whose untimely death is noted on page 5 of this issue of the **Update**, leaves behind a legacy of extraordinary service to the Washington Lawyers' Committee. Soon after commencing his work with the Committee as a young associate successfully arguing his first case in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on behalf of a Committee

client, John accepted the assignment of Committee Counsel. It was a post in which he served with distinction for nearly 30 years. His exceptional judgment, common sense and self-deprecating humor were evident in all of the many assignments he undertook on our organization's behalf. We could not have asked for a better advisor, and I could not have had a finer colleague and friend.

The Committee is honored to announce that a memorial fund has been established in John's name to support the Committee's goal of *pro bono* service. In furtherance of this objective, we have renamed our annual breakfast the John Burke Pro Bono Breakfast. We deeply appreciate the generous commitment of funds already provided by many of John's colleagues and friends to support this initiative. Additional contributions toward the John Burke Memorial Fund at the Washington Lawyers' Committee are also most welcome.

### Howrey Partner Robert Bruskin Joins Committee As Senior Counsel

On September 20, **Howrey Simon Arnold & White** announced their support for the creation of a senior counsel position at the Washington Lawyers' Committee. Robert M. Bruskin, a senior partner at the firm has been appointed to fill this newly created position. Mr. Bruskin, who has handled *pro bono* cases for the Committee since 1999, will work closely with Howrey attorneys involved in the Committee's *pro bono* cases and other matters.

Mr. Bruskin is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, where he was Editor of the Georgetown Law Journal. He received his bachelor's degree from the City College of the City University of New York. Mr. Bruskin clerked for the Honorable Timothy Murphy of the Superior Court for the District of Columbia. His government service has included work as a U.S. Navy engineer, as a patent examiner for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and as Assistant Director of Research for the Federal Judicial Center. Mr. Bruskin's long career at Howrey Simon Arnold & White included litigation of complex commercial disputes before federal, state, regulatory and arbitration tribunals.

In commenting on the Howrey decision, Committee Co-Chair Ben Wilson noted, "The Committee is enormously grateful to Howrey Simon for its exceptional generosity in supporting this new position. We believe it will greatly enhance the Committee's ability to advance the cause of civil rights in our community and serve as a model for other firms who share a commitment to public service."

# History of the Washington Lawyers' Committee

From its inception in 1968, the Washington Lawyers' Committee, a 501(c)(3) organization, has seen its basic mission as mobilizing the resources of the private bar to address issues of discrimination and poverty in our community. The primary motivating force behind the creation of the Committee and its counterparts in other cities was the publication of the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. This report identified discrimination and poverty as the root causes of the riots that had erupted in cities around the nation during the late 1960's and in Washington, D.C. in April 1968 following the assassination Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Over the past 35 years, the Washington Lawyers' Committee has expanded from a small staff addressing a limited number of issues on an *ad hoc* basis to a larger organization operating six projects that address a broad range of civil rights and poverty issues. As part of its growth, the Committee has constantly evolved to meet new community needs and the emergence of new civil rights constituencies.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Project**

The Committee's first program was its Equal Employment Opportunity Project. This project was established in 1971, when the Washington area was beginning the construction of its Metro system and Congress was about to enact major new legislation providing federal, state and local workers with their first meaningful protections against employment discrimination. Working with a coalition of community organizations, the Committee initiated

an extensive litigation campaign challenging denials of training and job referrals by unions and contractors throughout the region. In addition, major lawsuits were filed seeking enforcement of affirmative action plans covering federal and local government construction projects. Committee cases, co-counseled by over a dozen area law firms, won precedent-setting victories against many of the region's largest unions and contractors, opening significant employment opportunities for thousands of African-American workers.

During the same period, the Committee began a special outreach campaign directed at minority and women federal employees. Working with employee task forces at scores of agencies, the Committee provided representation in dozens of major cases winning many of the first judgments upholding the claims of federal workers under the newly enacted provisions of the 1972 Civil Rights Act. Over the past 35 years, the Committee has built on this early record to bring class actions affecting over 20 federal agencies, and dozens of private sector defendants, securing millions of dollars of back pay and damages, and injunctive relief for thousands of workers.

In addition to its successes in class action litigation, the Committee takes special pride in its role in winning a set of landmark appellate rulings upholding the use of paired testers to investigate denials of equal employment. The Committee's success in these cases brought on behalf of the Fair Employment Council of Greater Washington paved the way for the use of tester-generated evidence in a number of other jurisdictions.

## **Fair Housing Project**

In the mid-1970's, the Committee established its Fair Housing Litigation Project to address denials of equal housing opportunity. Shortly thereafter, it played a key role in working with a coalition of local clergy to create the Fair Housing Council of Greater Washington.

Over the past 20 years, the Committee has represented the Council and over 100 individuals in dozens of cases that have established a national standard for effective advocacy and secured hundreds of thousands of dollars and broad injunctive relief for victims of housing discrimination. The Committee has won notable victories in cases involving denials of residential sales and rentals, redlining practices by lenders and insurance companies, and discriminatory advertising practices. By litigating one of the first challenges to discrimination against families with children, the Committee contributed directly to the passage of new federal legislation providing explicit protections in this area. In many of its cases, the Committee has worked with the Fair Housing Council in that organization's groundbreaking efforts to utilize paired testers to investigate allegations of discrimination.

## **Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project**

In 1978, the Committee initiated a new project to address the pressing needs of immigrants and refugees in the D.C. area. Prior to this time, no legal services program in the area offered significant legal services to this growing community. Over the

*continued on next page*



## WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE

past 25 years, the Committee's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project has drawn on the support of more than 1,000 volunteers to provide *pro bono* representation to ever larger numbers of newcomers from dozens of countries.

Committee assistance has focused on matters of political asylum and a multitude of challenges to restrictive immigration laws. On two occasions, the Committee has enlisted teams of local firms to prepare comprehensive policy papers on legal issues affecting the Latino community.

In recent years, the Project has begun to devote increasing resources to assisting newcomers facing denials of basic civil rights due to their national origin. As part of this effort, the Committee has filed a number of cases challenging denials in employment and housing. It has also made a special effort to assist groups and individuals targeted for abuse following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

### Public Education Projects

In 1978, the Committee established its first program to assist parents seeking to improve the quality of public education in the District of Columbia. As part of a pilot program, more than a dozen major law firms offered general counsel assistance to parent groups at local schools in the Anacostia region of the city. Two years later, these parents and the Committee were instrumental in the creation of Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools, the city-wide advocacy group which has led the fight for educational reform in the city for more than 20 years.

In support of Parents United, the Committee and countless volunteers from area law firms have prepared dozens of significant policy papers on major educational issues

and successfully litigated a number of landmark cases affirming the rights of public school students and their parents. Among the most important victories was a case mandating enforcement of the D.C. Fire Code, which assured millions of dollars for basic school building repairs and renovation, and a decision requiring basic nursing services at schools in the city and medical staffing at interscholastic athletic events.

Over the past eight years, the Committee has administered a highly successful partnership program linking area law firms with local D.C. schools. Today, more than 40 of these partnerships provide tutoring, mentoring, and an array of other enrichment services to over 10,000 D.C. public school children. The success of this program has led a number of participating firms to establish similar programs in other cities where they maintain offices.

### Public Accommodations Project

Some of the Committee's most important work has come in the field of public accommodations. Beginning in 1988, with a major case against Holiday Spas Health Clubs, the Committee has played a major part in over a half-dozen national cases challenging a widespread pattern and practice of denying service to persons of color at major hotel and restaurant chains, including Denny's, and Adams Mark Hotels. Several years ago, the Committee achieved a major settlement in such a case against a large Avis-Rent-a-Car franchise in South Carolina.

### Disability Rights Project

In 1991, the Committee began a special program to assist individuals seeking to enforce their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act

of 1990. Working closely with a new community organization—the Disability Rights Council of Greater Washington, the Committee has won a series of important victories opening access to movie theater chains, banks, restaurants, and grocery stores, as well as many other retail establishments. Also, the Committee has assured accessible voting machines and polling places, 911 phone access for the deaf community and interpreter services for deaf individuals dealing with the local courts and police.

### Special Projects

The Committee has over the years handled significant matters on an *ad hoc* basis and special projects for limited periods of time. Perhaps the most significant individual case—*Runyan v. McCrary*—was a successful challenge in the United States Supreme Court under Sec. 1981 of the 1866 Civil Rights Act to the racially discriminatory admissions policies of a Virginia nursery school. Special Committee projects over the years have focused on securing meaningful treatment for narcotics addicts, providing quality child care for low-income parents, representing African-American servicemen in challenges to their less than honorable military discharges, and providing supplemental instruction to hundreds of minority students about to enter area law schools.

The Committee's achievements over the past 35 years are largely attributable to the thousands of lawyers from over 100 area law firms who have given so generously of their *pro bono* time and financial contributions.

The Committee's record is also a direct reflection of the skill and dedication of the talented men and women who have served with distinction on its staff.

## John Burke Memorial Fund Established



John L. Burke, Jr.

It is with great sadness that the Committee notes the death of its Counsel and Trustee John L. Burke, Jr. John died on June 26, 2004, after a gallant battle with brain cancer.

For over 30 years, John worked closely with the Committee on an array of significant assignments. His association with the Committee began in 1974, when he joined Committee staff in representing Walter Day, an African-American employee of the U.S. Public Health Service, in one of the first race discrimination cases under the 1972 Civil Rights Act challenging a denial of promotion. John represented Mr. Day at trial and later successfully argued an appeal in his case that resulted in a landmark decision upholding the rights of federal employees to broad back pay and injunctive relief.

Over the past 25 years, as a partner in the firms of Arent Fox; Wald, Harkrader & Ross and Foley Hoag, John served as Committee counsel, providing exceptional service and support on numerous corporate and strategic matters. His excellent judgment and advice were invaluable and his good humor and warm spirit will be sorely missed.

The Committee is pleased to announce that it has established a memorial fund in John's name, the proceeds of which will be used to support the cause of *pro bono* service to which he contributed so much. Marc Fleischaker of Arent Fox has agreed to serve as the Chair of this fund. In recognition of John's service, the Committee has renamed its annual breakfast the John Burke Pro Bono Breakfast. Contributions to the John Burke Memorial Fund are encouraged and may be made through the Committee's web site at <http://www.washlaw.org/secure.htm>.

## Public Accommodations

### D.C. Residents Denied Taxicab Service Obtain Settlement

In September 2004, District of Columbia residents who live in Southeast D.C. took a major step forward in obtaining equal access to transportation throughout the city. Plaintiffs in *Mitchell et al., v. Diamond Cab Co.*, who had been denied taxicab service and brought suit claiming they were victimized by Diamond Cab Company's pattern and practice of refusing to provide taxicab service to residents of Southeast D.C., reached

*continued on page 17*

### Fourth Circuit Ruling Favors Equal Rights Council Over Staples

The Washington Lawyers' Committee recently achieved a major victory in a race discrimination case brought on behalf of Jesse Williams when the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a district court's decision that had granted summary judgment to defendant Staples.

Jesse Williams, an African-American man, brought the case against Staples when evidence

*continued on page 18*



# Disability Rights

## Lawsuit Filed Against Discount Retailer

On June 21, the Disability Project filed a lawsuit against National Wholesale Liquidators on behalf of two individuals with disabilities and the DRC. Assisted by a dedicated team from the law firm of **Hunton & Williams**, the Project seeks to make this important retail chain accessible to shoppers who use wheelchairs.

When plaintiff James Sanders needs a new vacuum cleaner or runs out of cleaning supplies, he would like to go to the store closest to his home with the best prices. For Mr. Sanders, that store is National Wholesale Liquidators in Northeast Washington, D.C. Mr. Sanders explains, "The store is only six or seven blocks from my home. I would like to go and shop there and see what they have." But for Mr. Sanders, a trip to National Wholesale Liquidators is difficult, if not impossible. Mr. Sanders uses a wheelchair, and his local National Wholesale Liquidator store, like many others in the chain, is extremely inaccessible.

The barriers faced by shoppers using wheelchairs at National Wholesale Liquidators are twofold. The most prominent and offensive problem is that many of the stores have entrances that are completely inaccessible because of cart corrals with locked swing gates. These cart corrals protect shopping carts from

being taken off the premises. But conversely, they also keep people who use wheelchairs from entering the premises. Frighteningly, they can also keep these shoppers from exiting the premises quickly in an emergency situation. Even if customers with mobility impairments are able to find a store employee willing to unlock the cart corrals, they still encounter difficulty shopping at National Wholesale Liquidators. Cluttered aisles and poorly placed displays impede access to merchandise in the stores for these shoppers.

Over the last few years, National Wholesale Liquidators has become an important retailer in our region. It has recently opened six stores in the D.C. metropolitan area, focusing on locations in Northeast D.C. and Prince George's County. National Wholesale Liquidators is a chain of 46 discount stores, with home offices in New York.

Upon receiving the complaints from several National Wholesale Liquidator customers with disabilities, the Disability Rights Council of Greater Washington (DRC) surveyed thirty-two National Wholesale Liquidator stores throughout seven states. Over 70 percent of the stores surveyed had cart corrals that made the entrances inaccessible to people using wheelchairs. In addition, over 80 percent of the stores had barriers in the merchandise aisles making it impossible for a person using a wheelchair to shop. Sixty-nine percent of the stores surveyed had inaccessible restrooms.

## Access to Metrobus Sought

On June 18, the Disability Rights Project filed an administrative complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation on behalf of the DRC and three of its individual members, alleging that the WMATA has discriminated against people with disabilities in its Metrobus operations.

The complaint alleges that WMATA has discriminated by failing to properly maintain their bus lifts, properly train their drivers on assisting individuals with disabilities and operation of their lifts, and by treating the complainants in a hostile and discriminatory manner, in violation of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The complaint seeks a finding that WMATA has discriminated on the basis of disability; an order to train staff and promulgate policies and procedures for the provision of appropriate bus lifts and assistance; an order that these policies include notice to individuals with disabilities of these rights; damages and attorney fees.

Disability Rights Council (DRC) members were frustrated at being passed by one Metrobus after another with lifts that are broken or drivers who do not want to bother lowering the lift. They were also tired of crawling up the steps of Metrobuses because the lifts are broken, or being trapped for hours and miles past their stops on buses with inoperable lifts.

*continued on page 18*

## Fair Housing

### Equal Rights Center and Sky Properties Reach Settlement

The Equal Rights Center and Sky Properties, LLC, have settled a fair housing lawsuit with an agreement to better educate landlords and tenants in the Washington metropolitan area about fair housing laws and practices and to advance the cause of fair housing.

In conjunction with this agreement, Sky Properties, through its insurer, has made a payment to the plaintiffs and agreed to work with the Equal Rights Center to insure compliance with applicable laws.

**Jones Day** served as co-counsel with the Committee on this matter.

### Company Sued For Refusing To Rent To Section 8 Tenant

In February 2004, the Washington Lawyers' Committee and co-counsel **Hogan & Hartson** filed suit against Barac Corporation, an apartment management company, on behalf of Cherry Brown, a Washington resident who was denied housing because of Barac's policy of refusing Section 8 vouchers. Ms. Brown received a Section 8 voucher in February 2003, after almost nine years on the waiting list. Responding to a newspaper notice advertising apartment vacancies, Ms. Brown contacted Barac about renting an

apartment. Barac's rental agent informed Ms. Brown that Barac did not accept housing vouchers.

Subsequent investigation by the Equal Rights Center confirmed that Barac had a policy of refusing to rent to Section 8 voucher holders. The case is currently in litigation.

Many Washington residents with low incomes rely on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 housing vouchers to obtain safe and decent housing for their families. The D.C. Human Rights Act prohibits landlords from discriminating against potential tenants on the basis of their source of income. However, many Section 8 recipients report being turned away by landlords who claim they have already met their "quota" of Section 8 tenants or who simply refuse them outright.

### Accessibility Sought In Over 700 Virginia Apartments

In three cases filed with the Virginia Fair Housing Office alleging violations of design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act, the Washington Lawyers Committee on behalf of the Equal Rights Center has entered into conciliation discussions with the apartment builders, architects and owners.

The cases involve violations in over 700 units. The Fair Housing Act requires that new multifamily housing

include specific design features to allow accessibility by persons with disabilities. Examples of violations include non-accessible routes between individual units and the garage, non-accessible community clubhouses, and doors that are too narrow to allow passage by persons in wheelchairs.

### Equal Rights Center Appoints Acting Executive Director

In June 2004, the Board of Directors of the Equal Rights Center (ERC) appointed ERC board member Rabbi E. Bruce Kahn as the organization's Acting Executive Director.

The ERC, one of the Washington region's leading civil rights advocacy organizations, was created in 1999 with the merger of the Fair Housing Council and another civil rights agency, the Fair Employment Council. The ERC has a long history of working with the Washington Lawyers Committee to battle discrimination in the areas of housing, lending, public accommodations and employment.

Rabbi Kahn has been deeply involved in social justice issues throughout his life. He and other area clergy formed the Fair Housing Council more than 20 years ago to combat housing discrimination and fight for integrated communities. His civil rights advocacy has involved serving as a tester with Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)

*continued on page 18*

# WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE

## 2004 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



L/R: Stuart J. Land, Partner, Arnold & Porter, 2004 Wiley A. Branton Award recipient; Brooksley E. Born, Retired Partner, Arnold & Porter.



L/R: David J. Cynamon, Co-Chair, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Dennis Hayes, NAACP, General Counsel, 2004 Alfred McKenzie Award recipient.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Carolyn P. Weiss, Staff Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Roland Schroeder, Counsel, Shearman & Sterling LLP.

### Equal Employment Opportunity

#### *Shearman & Sterling LLP*

Shearman & Sterling provided exceptional representation to client Timothy Anderson, an African-American bank executive who was discriminatorily denied a senior vice president position and then, after complaining, was subjected to a campaign of retaliatory harassment that culminated in his wrongful discharge. After successfully defeating the defendant's motion for summary judgment, Shearman & Sterling went on to represent Mr. Anderson in court-sponsored mediation, during which the parties reached a confidential agreement on mutually acceptable terms.

#### *Step toe & Johnson LLP*

Step toe & Johnson, along with the Committee, brought suit on behalf of an African-American electric lineman at Southern Maryland Electric Company who had been fired unjustly after 22 years of service. Discovery revealed a widespread pattern and practice of discrimination against African-American employees. Step toe attorneys successfully negotiated a consent decree that provided for a substantial monetary payment to our client, requires the company to institute a program of mandatory diversity training, and adopt a streamlined program of investigating discrimination complaints by an outside discrimination compliance officer, with all complaints being personally reviewed by the president. The injunctive relief includes measures to increase the numbers of African Americans in management positions. Step toe generously donated to the Committee 100% of its share of the attorneys' fees.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Carolyn P. Weiss, Staff Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Theresa A. Queen, Attorney, Step toe & Johnson LLP; Thomas M. Contois, Attorney, Step toe & Johnson LLP.



FALL 2004 UPDATE  
**2004 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

**Fair Housing**

***Jenner & Block LLP  
and  
Tycko, Zavareei & Spiva LLP***

An outstanding team of attorneys from Jenner & Block LLP and Tycko, Zavareei & Spiva LLP successfully litigated a ground-breaking fair housing lawsuit against the District of Columbia. The lawsuit challenged a housing code enforcement initiative that threatened to displace a large number of Latino immigrants living in the Columbia Heights neighborhood, an area of the city that has undergone rapid gentrification in recent years. The firms' attorneys served as co-counsel with the Fair Housing and Immigrant and Refugee Rights Projects of the Committee. A twelve-member jury unanimously concluded that the District's housing code enforcement practices had a negative disparate impact on Latinos and violated the Fair Housing Act. The jury awarded seven affected tenant households almost \$200,000 in damages.

**Public Accommodations**

***Crowell & Moring LLP  
Covington & Burling  
Piper Rudnick LLP  
Shaw Pittman LLP***

***Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP  
Wiggins, Childs, Quinn & Pantazis, P.C.***

Over the past two years, Crowell & Moring LLP; Covington & Burling; Piper Rudnick LLP; Shaw Pittman LLP; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP; and Wiggins, Childs, Quinn & Pantazis, P.C. have served as counsel with the Committee in a series of cases alleging a pattern and practice of racial discrimination in the treatment of African-American customers by Cracker Barrel Restaurants. The plaintiffs in these cases are over 100 African-American customers and the NAACP. With the full support and cooperation of the Committee and its volunteer firms, the Department of Justice entered



*L/R: Hassan Zavareei, Partner, Tycko, Zavareei & Spiva LLP; Reed N. Colfax, Fair Housing Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Eliza T. Platts-Mills, Staff Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Denise L. Gilman, Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; James A. Trilling, Attorney, Jenner & Block LLP; Bruce V. Spiva, Partner, Tycko, Zavareei & Spiva LLP.*



*L/R: Eric Bachman, Attorney, Wiggins, Childs, Quinn & Pantazis, P.C.; Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Robert L. Wiggins, Jr., Shareholder, Wiggins, Childs, Quinn & Pantazis, P.C.*



*L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Carolyn P. Weiss, Staff Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Jeffrey E. Greene, Attorney, Crowell & Moring LLP; Meredith R. Weinberg, Attorney, Shaw Pittman LLP.*

## WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE 2004 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

into a far-reaching consent decree with Cracker Barrel, requiring the company to adopt major changes in its policies and procedures for dealing with complaints of discrimination. These changes include the retention of an independent monitor and strong measures to investigate future allegations of discriminatory conduct. The combined efforts of the team of firms in simultaneously pursuing extremely hard-fought litigation in four states and the result obtained by way of the Justice Department decree represent one of the finest examples of civil rights advocacy in the Committee's history.

### *Hogan & Hartson LLP*

As part of an ongoing effort to address the issue of pervasive racial discrimination in taxi cab service in the District of Columbia, Hogan & Hartson worked with Committee staff to prepare and issue a comprehensive report—*Service Denied: Taxicab Discrimination in the District of Columbia*—documenting the nature of the problem and setting out an extensive set of recommendations for addressing it. The report served as a catalyst for a hearing held before the D.C. Council at which firm lawyers provided testimony. Legislation encompassing the primary reforms recommended by the report is in preparation. Concurrent with its legislative advocacy, the firm has also pursued administrative complaints against several cab companies and drivers challenging discriminatory service to African-American patrons.

### **Disability Rights**

#### *Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP*

This firm won a major and precedent-setting victory in an ADA trial upholding the rights of many Florida voters with disabilities to cast a secret ballot for the first time in their lives. Voting equipment that permits independent and secret voting by individuals who are blind or have manual impairments is readily available, but new equipment purchased by Duval County in Florida was inaccessible. This landmark federal district court decision requires that 20 percent of the County's polling places have at least one voting machine that is accessible to people who are blind or who have manual impairments by the August 2004 primaries.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Stanley J. Adelman, Partner, Piper Rudnick LLP; Raj Shah, Attorney, Piper Rudnick LLP.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Lesley Whitcomb, Attorney, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Caroline Brown, Partner, Covington & Burling.

FALL 2004 UPDATE  
2004 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

## Immigrant and Refugee Rights

### *Holland & Knight LLP*

Holland & Knight worked to obtain relief for a juvenile political asylum seeker from Guinea with mental retardation. Immigration authorities abandoned the client, Malik Jarno, in rural jails for nine months before allowing him to appear before an Immigration Judge to ask for asylum, and revealed confidential information about him to the Guinean authorities whom he fears. Mr. Jarno was also beaten by prison guards while held in immigration detention at a jail in Farmville, Virginia. The Holland & Knight attorneys pursued constitutional and tort claims against the immigration authorities and the Farmville jail and its officers. Despite an outstanding litigation effort, the case was unsuccessful. However, additional Holland & Knight attorneys worked successfully to free Mr. Jarno after almost three years of detention and to reopen his asylum case.

### *Williams & Connolly LLP*

A team of attorneys from Williams & Connolly successfully litigated innovative refugee claims in Immigration Court to obtain asylum for the members of an Egyptian family. The family feared that two of their daughters, who are United States citizens, would undergo female genital mutilation if the parents were forced to return to Egypt, taking the children with them. The mother had originally filed an extremely compelling asylum case based on the fact that she had undergone female circumcision. However, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service refused asylum and referred the case to Immigration Court because of her failure to meet the deadline for filing an asylum claim, which is one year after entry into the United States. The Williams & Connolly attorneys showed that an exception to the filing deadline was applicable and that the family merited asylum based on the mother's experience as well as the risk that her two young daughters would similarly undergo female genital mutilation if taken to Egypt.



L/R: Reed N. Colfax, Fair Housing Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Tara Hammons, Attorney, Hogan & Hartson L.L.P.; Eliza T. Platts-Mills, Staff Attorney, Washington Lawyers' Committee.



L/R: Ari N. Rothman, Attorney, Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP; E. Elaine Gardner, Disability Rights Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Danielle Oddo, Attorney, Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP; Douglas Baldrige, Partner, Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP.



L/R: Jennifer M. Mason, Attorney, Holland & Knight LLP; Denise L. Gilman, Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Malik Jarno, Client; Christopher Nugent, Attorney, Holland & Knight LLP.



# WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE 2004 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



L/R: Denise L. Gilman, Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Ana C. Reyes, Attorney, Williams & Connolly LLP; Zoe S. Poulson, Attorney, Williams & Connolly LLP; Robin E. Jacobsohn, Partner, Williams & Connolly LLP; Frank J. DiStefano, Attorney, Williams & Connolly LLP.



L/R: Susan E. Huhta, EEO Project Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Karen C. Daly, Attorney, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP; Eric J. Mogilnicki, Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP; A. Stephen Hut, Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP; Brian Siebel, Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence; Dennis Henigan, Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence.



L/R: Roderic V.O. Boggs, Executive Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; Stanley J. Samorajczyk, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, 2004 Vincent E. Reed Award recipient.

## Special Programs

### *Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP*

Over the past four years, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr has worked with the Committee and the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence on a lawsuit challenging the marketing and distribution practices of 25 gun manufacturers. The plaintiffs in this case are the District of Columbia and nine individuals (either victims or surviving members of their families) who were victims of gun violence in the District of Columbia. On April 29th, the firm secured a major decision from a unanimous panel of the D.C. Court of Appeals upholding the constitutionality of the District's Strict Liability Act. This decision, which marks an important victory, paves the way for the case to move forward and will likely encourage other cities and states to enact similar legislation.



L/R: Melanie K. Gerber, Counsel, Patton Boggs LLP, 2004 Vincent E. Reed Award recipient; Roderic V.O. Boggs, Executive Director, Washington Lawyers' Committee; John L. Oberdorfer, Partner, Patton Boggs LLP, 2004 Vincent E. Reed Award recipient.

## Immigrant and Refugee Rights

### Report on Unfair Juvenile Justice Proposals Released

On September 16, 2004, the Washington Lawyers' Committee and the law firms of **Foley & Lardner LLP** and **Piper Rudnick LLP**, joined by the National Council of La Raza, released a new report on Latino youth in the District's juvenile justice system.

The report, *District of Columbia Responses to Youth Violence: Impact on the Latino Community*, found that Latino youth appear to be overrepresented in the D.C. juvenile justice system. It called on the D.C. Council to reject, when they take a final vote this month, the harsh juvenile justice proposals to combat gang violence. The proposals would make it easier to transfer youth to the adult criminal justice system and punish parents of delinquent children. The groups recommended that the D.C. Council seek effective alternatives to detention and intervention programs that have a proven record in preventing crime.

"This is a momentous report. It's the first of its kind in the District to offer a thorough analysis of the juvenile justice policies in D.C. and the impact these have on the Latino community," said Denise Gilman, Director of the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. For more information on the report, contact the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project at (202) 319-1000, ext. 120.

### Committee Investigates Columbia Road Raid

The Committee's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project, with the support of a number of Latino community groups, is demanding that the Department of Homeland Security and D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) conduct an investigation into a raid that took place on June 23, 2004 on Columbia Road, NW, in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

The June 23 operation was presented as a criminal action directed at a fraudulent document ring. However, federal immigration officials led the action, and as many as ten people were detained solely on immigration charges and were placed into deportation proceedings.

By law, local law enforcement officials in the District of Columbia may not engage in enforcement of the civil immigration laws. Yet, community members report that MPD officers were actively involved in the raid. The Project has urged MPD to investigate whether its officers violated the prohibition on local involvement in immigration enforcement.

The Project has also raised concerns regarding the possibility that federal officials engaged in racial profiling during the June 23 action. Witnesses present during the operation have stated that federal officials appeared to be detaining at random young Latino men found on

the blocked-off area. Individuals of other races and national origin groups circulating in this blocked-off area were not detained.

### Project Focuses On Cameroon, Offers Annual Asylum Law Training

Cameroon, a West African country, formed from the union of French and British colonies, has become one of the leading sources of asylum applicants seeking the assistance of the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. Statistics from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services confirm that Cameroon is among the top ten countries from which asylum applications are received in the United States.

The Project's volunteer attorneys are currently involved in efforts to gain asylum for nine persons who fled Cameroon after experiencing detentions and torture because of their involvement in political groups opposing the government. During the last year, attorneys from **Alston & Bird, King & Spalding, Steptoe & Johnson, Swidler Berlin Shereef Freedman** and **Winston & Strawn** have won asylum for clients from Cameroon.

One of these successful cases will be highlighted at the Project's annual political asylum law training. The all-day training will be held on Thursday, October 14, 2004, at the

*continued on page 18*

## Equal Employment Opportunity

### Construction Company Faces Gender Discrimination Claim

On August 30, the Committee and co-counsel filed a gender discrimination charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of a female employee who worked for a construction clean-up company. The employee is a recent immigrant from El Salvador.

The employee was working for the company at the Pentagon when her supervisor began sexually harassing her. Like many other vulnerable newcomers, the employee initially suffered in silence. Then, the harassment turned into attacks. Over a period of several days in April 2004, the employee's supervisor sexually assaulted her on two occasions. The employee reported the case to the police, and a criminal conviction was obtained against the supervisor. Shortly thereafter, the EEO and IRR Projects of the Committee and co-counsel filed the EEOC complaint against the employer.

This case is significant in that it seeks to recognize the employment rights of immigrants, and to hold federal contractors accountable for the actions of their employees.

**Victor M. Glasberg & Associates** serve as co-counsel with the Committee in the case.

### Pregnancy Discrimination Suit Settled

A woman who was discharged after informing her employer that she was pregnant, has won a favorable settlement of her pregnancy discrimination case against the employer.

In May 2002, two days after the employee informed her employer of her pregnancy, she was told that her hours would be cut, her pay reduced, and that she would be terminated on her last day at work prior to giving birth. When the woman complained that this was discriminatory, she was fired immediately.

This case is significant because pregnancy discrimination cases are not common. In addition, the case demonstrates that pregnancy discrimination will be litigated as vigorously as other forms of discrimination.

**Shea & Gardner** served as co-counsel with the Committee in this matter.

### EEO Intake Program Relies On Law Firm Evaluations

The EEO Intake Program has, for many years, relied on the assistance of attorneys in the private bar for determining whether potential matters are appropriate for litigation.

The Committee's resources are limited and the attorneys who agree to provide these evaluations are offering an invaluable service to the Committee in determining how best to allocate their resources.

In the past year, several attorneys and firms have assisted the Committee in this manner. For example, **Covington and Burling** attorneys helped the Committee to complete the evaluation of a claim on behalf of an HIV-positive claimant who had been terminated from his job with a local university. Similarly, lawyers from **Kator, Parks & Weiser** assisted in our evaluation of a claim on behalf of a female surgeon who had been denied tenure and discharged by her employer. Attorneys from **Steptoe & Johnson** helped us evaluate claims on behalf of an individual with dwarfism who was terminated by his federal employer.

Other firms and individual attorneys have offered their services in evaluating claims over the past year. They include attorneys from **Terris, Pravlik, & Millian; Dewey Ballantine; Albo & Oblon; Glasberg & Associates; Groom Law Group; and Pillsbury Winthrop.**

If you or someone in your firm is interested in assisting the EEO Intake Program with case evaluations, please contact Kehinde Ijaola at [kehinde\\_ijaola@washlaw.org](mailto:kehinde_ijaola@washlaw.org), or dial (202) 319-1000.



## Public Education

### Committee Joins Education Reform Initiative

The Washington Lawyers' Committee's Education Projects and its client, Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools have joined in a collaboration with other community organizations, parents, teachers, funders and business leaders to engage school system and governmental officials in planning for meaningful improvements in student achievement in the D.C. public school system. This effort is being led by a number of prominent local foundations, including Fannie Mae Foundation and Kimsey Foundation.

### Committee Partners With Washington Revels

The Public Education Legal Services Project (PELSP) has entered into a special arrangement with the Washington Revels, a leading Washington performing arts group that produces annual holiday performances, festivals, workshops and classes throughout the year. The Revels uses traditional music, dance, processions, drama, and poetry to create participatory performance and educational events. With limited resources available for arts in our schools, this arrangement will provide

an opportunity for participating schools to attend performances, have guest artists work with students and possibly perform in Revels' major holiday production.

### Project Seeks New Partnerships

The PELSP invites area firms interested in establishing a school partnership to contact Project Director Iris Toyer at the Committee for more information. To date, there are 45 partnerships with D.C. public schools. The Project seeks to add five new firm/school partnerships in the coming year.

## Arrivals

### Howard B. Jacobson

Howard B. Jacobson recently agreed to serve as general counsel to the Washington Lawyers' Committee. He is a partner at **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld** specializing in labor and employment law, employee benefits, tax, and corporate finance.

Mr. Jacobson received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, and his law degree from Harvard Law School. Prior to joining Akin Gump, Mr. Jacobson

served as attorney-adviser for Chief Judge Theodore Tannenwald Jr., of the U.S. Tax Court, and practiced with a tax speciality firm. He is active in community affairs and is a past president of the Epilepsy Foundation of the National Capital Area.

### Isabelle M. Thabault

Isabelle M. Thabault recently joined the Washington Lawyer's Committee as Director of the Fair Housing Project. Previously, she worked for over 25 years in the Civil

Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice where she litigated major civil and criminal civil rights cases. From 1991 to 2003 she served as Deputy Chief of the Housing and Civil Enforcement Section at the Department of Justice where she supervised cases alleging discrimination in housing, lending and public accommodations. She has been an instructor with the National Institute of Trial Advocacy and George Washington University and is a volunteer mediator with the D.C. Small Claims Court.

*continued on next page*

### Kehinde A. Ijaola

Kehinde Ijaola began work this summer with the Committee as the EEO Intake Paralegal. She received her B.A. in June 2004 from the University of Chicago. During 1997-1998 and 2000 Kehinde served a Legal Assistant Internship in the Criminal Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey in Newark.

### Jasmine-Simone Miller

Jasmine Miller recently joined the Committee as the new EEO Litigation Paralegal. She received her B.S. in May 2004 from Boston University College of Communication. During her final year at Boston University, Jasmine was an Intern for the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government's Women and Public Policy Program in Cambridge, MA.

### Virginia L. Simmons

Virginia L. Simmons joined the Washington Lawyers' Committee in mid-September as the Disability Rights Project Paralegal. She received her B.A. in May 2003 from Georgetown University. Prior to joining the Committee, Virginia was an investigator/paralegal at Stein, Mitchell and Mezines.

*Cracker Barrel (continued from front cover)*

support was provided by **Shaw Pittman LLP, Piper Rudnick LLP, Skadden Arps, Covington & Burling, and Wiggins Childs Quinn & Pantazis P.C.**

Local counsel support was provided by **Ferguson, Stein, Chambers, Adkins, Gresham & Sumter, P.A.; Gardner, Willis, Sweat & Goldsmith; Kaplan, Brewer, Maxey & Haralson, P.A.;**

**Law Offices of Grant Morris; and Kennedy Covington Lobdell & Hickman, LLP.**

In commenting on the settlement, Washington Lawyers' Committee Co-Chair and **Shaw Pittman** partner David Cynamon stated, "We are very pleased with this settlement. The work of the coalition of firms assembled by the Committee to work on these cases is an exceptional achievement of which the Committee is very proud."

The lawsuits alleged that Cracker Barrel engaged in a pattern and practice of discriminatory treatment against African-American customers and implemented conscious policies designed to, among other things, provide preferential seating to white customers; segregate African-American customers from white customers by seating Black customers in the back of the restaurant (commonly the smoking section); and refusing to provide African Americans with service or providing notably inferior service to that afforded white patrons.

The settlement followed by four months a May 3, 2004, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, announcement that it had filed a complaint against Cracker Barrel in federal district court in Georgia, and simultaneously entered a consent decree with Cracker Barrel to resolve the complaint. The Washington Lawyers' Committee and its co-counsel worked closely with the Department of Justice in its investigation of Cracker Barrel.

The Department of Justice complaint alleged that Cracker Barrel engaged in a pattern and practice of discrimination against African-American patrons in violation of Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in at least 30% of Cracker Barrel stores

in seven specific states, as well as elsewhere, and that Cracker Barrel managers directed, participated in or acquiesced to the discrimination.

The consent order required Cracker Barrel to hire an outside auditor to oversee the implementation of effective nondiscrimination policies and procedures. It will also require the development of new training programs to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures, and the creation of an enhanced system to investigate and resolve customer complaints of discrimination, including severe discipline for Cracker Barrel employees found to have discriminated against any patrons.

*Branton Luncheon (continued from front cover)*

Born. The Honorable James Robertson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, presented the award to John Payton.

Washington Lawyers' Committee Co-Chair and **Shaw Pittman** partner David J. Cynamon presented the Alfred McKenzie Award to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Dennis Hayes, the NAACP's General Counsel, accepted the award on behalf of the civil rights organization that for nearly a century has worked in the vanguard of every aspect of the struggle for civil rights.

This year, the Committee presented the Vincent E. Reed Award to the law firms of **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP** and **Patton Boggs LLP**, for the firms' commitment to the public schools of the District of Columbia and the children who attend them. The award is given in the name of Dr.

Vincent E. Reed, the distinguished educator whose encouragement was directly responsible for the Committee's decision to establish its public education support programs. Iris Toyer, Director of the Committee's Public Education Legal Services Project presented the awards.

Fifteen other law firms were recognized at this year's luncheon with Outstanding Achievement Awards for their successful *pro bono* legal work on behalf of the Committee's clients. For more information about the law firm awardees and their achievements, see pages 8-12.

Stuart J. Land, during a distinguished 45-year career, served as chair of Arnold & Porter's D.C. Bar and ABA award-winning *pro bono* program. As a Washington Lawyers' Committee Executive Committee Member since 1973 and its Co-Chair between 1976 and 1978, Stuart contributed enormously to the Committee's success and growth, advocating for programs in public education reform and immigrant rights. He has encouraged new law firms to support the Committee, and led his own firm to join the Committee in successfully representing the Fair Employment Council of Greater Washington in the first case to recognize the standing of testers in an employment discrimination case. More recently, Stuart has worked closely with the Committee's Public Education Projects to advocate for public education reform in the District. He encouraged his firm to create a model Loaned Associate Program, whereby firm lawyers are assigned to work with area public interest organizations for six-month periods. The Committee has been the beneficiary of three such fellows. In accepting his award, Stuart Land noted his special debt of gratitude to lawyers such as Wiley Branton, John

Douglas and Bob Wald, with whom he had worked on Washington Lawyers' Committee matters over the years. He also thanked Arnold & Porter for "all of the support it has extended to me in my *pro bono* efforts throughout my career."

John A. Payton, Jr., since joining Wilmer Cutler & Pickering in 1978, has litigated several important cases challenging racial discrimination in the D.C. construction industry. He served with distinction as a Washington Lawyers' Committee Executive Committee and Board member for over 25 years and as a Committee Co-Chair in 1996 and 1997. His achievements extend well beyond his work with the Committee to include his service as Legal Coordinator of the Free South Africa Movement and his advocacy before the U.S. Supreme Court in *Richmond v. Croson* and recent University of Michigan cases, including *Gratz v. Bollinger*, to preserve affirmative action as a means of redressing historic discrimination and encouraging diversity. In his remarks, John Payton paid tribute to Wiley Branton as a true hero, referring to him as "not just a great lawyer, but a great lawyer who used his skills to change our country."

The Committee's annual Branton Awards Luncheon is named in honor of Wiley A. Branton, Sr., a civil rights lawyer of the 1950's who served with distinction in government, as Dean of Howard Law school, and as leader in several highly respected civil rights organizations. He served as a Co-Chair of the Washington Lawyers' Committee in 1987 and 1988. Since 1989, the Wiley A. Branton Award has been bestowed annually on a member of the legal community whose lifetime efforts on behalf of civil rights advocacy exemplify the deep commitment of Wiley A. Branton, Sr., to the idea of equal justice in our society.

*Diamond Taxicab (continued from page 5)*

agreement on the terms of a settlement with the company.

The plaintiffs, two residents of Southeast D.C. and the Equal Rights Center, had brought suit under federal and D.C. law, alleging discrimination based on race and place of residence, and had won summary judgment on their D.C. Human Rights Act race discrimination claims against the company earlier this year.

As part of the settlement, Diamond Cab Company agreed to take critical steps towards eradicating the practices that served as the basis for plaintiffs' cause of action, including requiring its officers, employees, and agents to abide by all applicable federal and District of Columbia laws prohibiting discrimination in taxicab service; requiring its operators, dispatchers, and drivers to provide taxicab service to all on an equal basis within the taxicab service areas regulated by the D.C. Taxicab Commission; providing training sessions for its officers and employees; posting complaint procedures and sanctions for violating pertinent laws and procedures; keeping written records concerning complaints of discrimination; and setting up a progressive disciplinary program that includes the potential for suspension of drivers, dispatchers or operators found to have discriminated within the service area.

The company will remain under a three-year consent order with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to ensure compliance with the agreement.

Co-counsel in the case was **Crowell & Moring.**



unused wheelchair securement systems and lack of training and discourteous bus drivers. Such problems result in an inability among the community of people who use wheelchairs to be able to rely on bus service in the District. Individuals have been trapped on buses for hours, stranded at bus stops for hours, have been late to work, exposed to harsh weather and injured as a result of the failure of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to ensure operable lifts and trained drivers.

Staples (continued from page 5)

indicated the office supply chain had a policy of accepting out-of-state checks from white customers but not African-American customers. In 2001, Mr. Williams attempted to buy a printer cartridge at a Staples store in Winchester, Virginia. He tried to pay with a personal check, which displayed his Maryland address, and was told by the cashier that the store did not accept out-of-state checks. Mr. Williams later learned that a white colleague had visited the store the same day and was able to make a purchase using an out-of-state check. The Equal Rights Center sent testers to the store and found that the store accepted out-of-state checks from the white but not from the African-American tester.

A Virginia district court granted defendants a summary judgment in April 2003. In a published, unanimous opinion, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed and remanded the decision. The case is scheduled for trial in November 2004 in the Western District of Virginia.

Metrobus (continued from page 6)

The DRC received and documented many such complaints from bus riders who use wheelchairs. The complaints concerned the refusal of bus drivers to lower bus lifts, inoperable bus lifts, inoperable or

Equal Rights Center (continued from page 7)

in Richmond and protesting for freedom for Soviet Jews in front of the Russian Embassy, a non-violent protest activity that landed him in Petersburg Federal Penitentiary for 12 days. For 21 years, he was the senior rabbi at Temple Shalom in Chevy Chase, Maryland. He also served as a Navy chaplain in the Naval Reserve Chaplain Corps from 1974 to 2002.

"I am excited about my role with the ERC, and our partnership with the Washington Lawyers' Committee," said Rabbi Kahn, "The Washington Lawyers' Committee has represented the ERC in many important cases over the years, and I am excited about having the Committee by our side as we continue our efforts to bring equality to all persons."

Asylum Training (continued from page 13)

D.C. Bar. The training is open to volunteers who agree to accept two *pro bono* matters. There is a charge of \$25 for the comprehensive manual used at the training. Pre-registration is required. For more information, please contact the Project at (202) 319-1000, ext 120. To register, see [www.washlaw.org/pdf/political\\_asylum\\_training2004.pdf](http://www.washlaw.org/pdf/political_asylum_training2004.pdf).

# Committee Structure

## Staff

Roderic V.O. Boggs  
*Executive Director*

Robert M. Bruskin  
*Senior Counsel*

Paula Jones  
*Executive Assistant*

## Development

Da'aga Hill Bowman  
*Director of Foundation Outreach  
and Public Information*

## Administration

Karen Stillitano  
*Director of Administration*

Rochelle Jones  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Thelma Goodwin  
*Assistant Bookkeeper*

Renee Brandon  
*Receptionist*

## Equal Employment Opportunity Project

Susan E. Huhta  
*Project Director*

Warren K. Kaplan  
*Staff Attorney*

Carolyn P. Weiss  
*Staff Attorney*

Brandi Brown  
*Intake Project Director*

Jasmine Miller  
*Paralegal*

Kehinde Ijaola  
*Intake Paralegal*

## Fair Housing Project

Isabelle M. Thabault  
*Project Director*

Eliza T. Platts-Mills  
*Staff Attorney*

Richard Ritter  
*Senior Attorney*

Laura Sahramaa  
*Paralegal*

## Disability Rights Project

E. Elaine Gardner  
*Project Director*

Virginia L. Simmons  
*Paralegal*

## Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project

Denise L. Gilman  
*Project Director*

Ruth Spivack  
*Paralegal*

## Public Education Reform Project

Mary M. Levy  
*Project Director*

## Public Education Legal Services Project

Iris J. Toyer  
*Project Director*

## Committee Governance and Development

The Committee today operates with a staff of approximately 25, including six project directors and six staff attorneys. They are supported by several senior lawyers and loaned associates from cooperating firms. In addition, the Committee regularly benefits from the services of a number of junior attorneys holding fellowships from local and national law firms and nonprofit organizations.

The Committee is governed by a 40-member Board of Directors. Board members are drawn from leading area law firms and they are led by two Co-Chairs. The Directors and Co-Chairs are supported by a 90-member Board of Trustees and a team of Firm Representatives from nearly 100 participating law firms.

The Committee's operating budget is expected to be \$2.5 million for 2005. Funding for this budget is expected to come from a combination of law firm and individual giving, foundation funding, and the proceeds from the Annual Wiley A. Branton Luncheon, as well as attorneys' fees and gifts of fees received in Committee litigation. The Committee's 2003/2004 Funding Drive concludes September 30, 2004. It is expected to provide approximately \$900,000 in law firm, individual and event funding. Nearly 100 firms and over 720 individuals have contributed to this total. Foundation funding is expected to provide approximately \$300,000 by the end of the foundation fundraising year, which concludes December 31, 2004.

As the Committee begins its year-end funding cycle and announces its new campaign, it will make a special effort to secure increased funding through a year-end appeal to law firm partners and associates. In addition, it will also be initiating a campaign to secure endowment funding for its general support and specific projects.

Individuals and firms interested in providing support for the Committee and in participating in its fundraising efforts should contact Da'aga Hill Bowman, Director of Foundation Outreach and Public Information at (202) 319-1000, ext. 155. Contributions to the Committee may also be made online at [www.washlaw.org](http://www.washlaw.org).

## Board of Directors

David J. Cynamon, Co-Chair  
Benjamin F. Wilson, Co-Chair  
David R. Berz  
James N. Bierman  
Quinton V. Bowman  
Daniel H. Bromberg  
Thomas W. Brunner  
Lovida H. Coleman, Jr.  
Margaret Feinstein  
Ronald S. Flagg  
Marc L. Fleischaker  
Mary E. Gately  
Karen T. Grisez

Joseph M. Hassett  
Peter B. Hutt II  
Robin E. Jacobsohn  
James W. Jones  
Anne M. Kappler  
Andrew T. Karron  
John C. Keeney, Jr.  
Wilma A. Lewis  
Ignacia S. Moreno  
John A. Payton, Jr.  
John Townsend Rich  
Jeffrey D. Robinson  
George D. Ruttinger

Matthew D. Slater  
Richard W. Snowdon III  
Mark A. Srere  
Leslie M. Turner  
Denise A. Vanison  
Roger E. Warin  
Steven M. Wellner  
Melvin White  
Lewis S. Wiener  
Thomas S. Williamson, Jr.  
Alan M. Wiseman

### Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs UPDATE

**David J. Cynamon**  
**Benjamin F. Wilson**  
*Co-Chairs*

**Roderic V.O. Boggs**  
*Executive Director*

**Susan E. Huhta**, *Project Director*  
*Equal Employment Opportunity Project*  
**Isabelle M. Thabault**, *Project Director*  
*Fair Housing Project*  
**E. Elaine Gardner**, *Project Director*  
*Disability Rights Project*  
**Denise L. Gilman**, *Project Director*  
*Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project*  
**Mary M. Levy**, *Project Director*  
*Public Education Reform Project*  
**Iris J. Toyer**, *Project Director*  
*Public Education Legal Services Project*

**Da'aga Hill Bowman**, *Director*  
*Foundation Outreach and Public Information*  
**Paula Jones**, *Administrative Assistant*

11 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 319-1000 (VOICE) • (202) 319-1010 (FAX)  
(202) 319-1075 (TDD) • WWW.WASHLAW.ORG

### CORPORATE & FOUNDATION CONTRIBUTORS

The Washington Lawyers' Committee acknowledges the following corporations and foundations for their contributions and commitments this year:

**Bank of America Foundation**  
**Black Entertainment Television, Inc.**  
**The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation**  
**Children's Charities Foundation**  
**Community Foundation of the National Capital Area**  
**D.C. Bar Foundation**  
**D.C. Chartered Health Plan, Inc.**  
**Dimick Foundation**  
**ExxonMobil Foundation**  
**Fannie Mae Foundation**  
**Freddie Mac Foundation**  
**The Hanley Foundation**  
**Health Right, Inc.**  
**The Herb Block Foundation**  
**Corina Higginson Trust**  
**Kiplinger Foundation**  
**Anthony Lucas-Spindletop Foundation**  
**George Preston Marshall Foundation**  
**The Meyer Foundation**  
**Reich Family Foundation**  
**The Washington Post**  
**George Wasserman Family Foundation**