

2008-2009  
**Annual Report**



Hennepin  
County

Bar  
Foundation



The charitable arm of the  
**Hennepin County Bar Association**

# President's Message

Dear members of the bench and bar:

It has been another great year for the Hennepin County Bar Foundation, which is especially encouraging in this difficult economic climate. It has been a tremendous honor to serve as this year's president, and to help the Foundation continue the good work done over the last forty-one years through donations from HCBA attorneys, law firms and companies in the legal field.

Our Board of Directors, the Bar Benefit, and Golf Committees, and the fantastic staff of the Hennepin County Bar Association have all worked together to fulfill the mission of the foundation: to achieve equal justice for all citizens of Hennepin County by improving the administration of justice, increasing public understanding of the law, and facilitating the delivery of legal services.

The first step in fulfilling our mission is raising money. We kicked off our fundraising year on August 11, 2008 with the Charity Golf Classic, once again held at the beautiful Burl Oaks Golf Club in Minnetrista. This year's event provided an excellent opportunity for lawyers to relax and connect with one another, while also raising \$18,000 for the foundation—a record setting amount. Join your friends and colleagues on August 10, 2009 for the next Charity Golf Classic.

Next up was the Attractive Nuisance Tour on October 3, 2008 at the Fine Line Music Café. This was the sixth annual ANT—a benefit concert of rock bands that have at least one lawyer

member. The foundation is very grateful to receive half of the proceeds from the event. This year, over \$18,000 was raised for the foundation through sponsorships, ticket sales, and a silent auction. Over the past few years, ANT has raised more than \$100,000 for the foundation. This fall's ANT will be held at the Fine Line Music Café on October 9, 2009 and promises to be a great show.

In November, the foundation launched a new fundraising initiative in response to the continued decline in donation check-off participation as part of the annual dues statements.

We sent every HCBA member a letter and a brochure about the foundation. While donations resulting from this campaign were not as high as we would have liked, it did serve the purpose of promoting awareness of the foundation and the important work of its grant recipients.

Our final fundraising event was the annual Bar Benefit held on March 10, 2009. This year's event netted \$103,000 for the HCBA—setting a record

for the highest amount ever raised in the event's 29-year history. Volunteer Lawyers Network raised almost \$15,000 through its silent auction and raffle. This year's event was lively and well-attended, and a tremendous success. It is a tribute to our county's legal community that so many organizations and individuals continued to support the foundation and our grant recipients when cuts are being made in so many areas.

Of course, the Bar Benefit also provides a wonderful opportunity for Hennepin County attorneys to socialize and honor the three very deserving recipients of this year's pro bono publico awards. Honorary Chair, former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice James H. Gilbert, presented awards to Irene Opsahl for distinguished service, Bill Fisher for the private sector, and Susan Ledray for the public sector. As always, Joy Hamilton and the rest of the HCBA staff put together a fabulous event. I would also like to thank Courtney Ward-Reichard for again chairing the Bar Benefit Committee and contributing so much to this great event.

Once the money is raised, of course, the fun part is giving it away. This year's Board of Directors received many applications for a record level of grants from extremely worthwhile organizations. Many of the organizations that received grants from the Bar Foundation are well known, such as Volunteer Lawyers Network. However, one of the great benefits of the Foundation is its ability to fund lesser-



## OFFICERS, 2008-2009

President: Christina Szitta  
Vice President: Richard Pins  
Secretary: Marshall Lichty  
Treasurer: Andrew Mohring

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The **MISSION** of the Hennepin County Bar Foundation is to achieve equal justice for all citizens of Hennepin County by:

**IMPROVING**  
the administration of justice

**INCREASING**  
public understanding  
of the law

**FACILITATING**  
the delivery of legal services



known programs to help support vital services. The chart included with this report lists all of our worthwhile grant recipients.

The Foundation's total amount of grants awarded remained the same as last year, due largely to the tremendous efforts of the Board of Directors and the HCBA staff to raise funds during this difficult year. It is incredibly gratifying to be able to assist so many worthwhile organizations in our community.

In addition to raising and giving away money, I am proud to report that the foundation played an important role in moving the Call For Justice initiative forward. Hennepin County does not currently have a single intake line for people seeking legal services at no or reduced cost. For a number of years, a task force has been working to establish and support a wide-reaching legal referral system by partnering with United Way 2-1-1 and their established referral system, as well as a pilot project to provide brief legal advice over the phone to callers in selected areas of the law. In conjunction with the Ramsey County Bar Foundation, the foundation agreed to form a non-profit LLC and pledged a challenge grant to get Call For Justice up and running. Thank you to all of the task force members for working to provide this valuable service for the residents of Hennepin County.

It has been my honor and my pleasure to serve as the president of the Bar Foundation this year, and I look forward to the foundation's continued success in the years to come. Thank you to Larry Buxbaum, Joy Hamilton, Joseph Satter, Liz Kelley, Sharada Lakhan and the rest of the HCBA staff for their commitment and hard work in support of the foundation. Thank you also to the many Board members who have given of their time, both in raising funds and making the important decisions regarding grants. Thank you, finally, to all of the individuals and organizations that donated to the foundation, allowing the foundation to support so many worthwhile grant recipients.

Thank you,  
Christina Szitta

## Introducing Your 2009-2010 HCBF Leadership

### Board Members

Hon. Stephen C. Aldrich  
Paul Floyd  
David Forro  
Jewelie Grape  
Hon. Thomas L. Johnson  
Jeremy Johnson  
Marshall Lichty  
Kate MacKinnon  
Glen McCluskey  
Sonia Miller-Van Oort  
Andrew Mohring  
Chris Morris  
Steve Pincus  
Richard Pins  
Hon. Miriam Rykken  
Joan Schulkers  
Tim Shields  
Christina Szitta  
Michael Unger  
Mary Vasaly  
Courtney Ward-Reichard  
Laurence R. Buxbaum  
*Executive Director*

### HCBF Appointees to the Advisory Board (Affiliation Agreement)

Andrew Mohring  
Michael Unger  
Courtney Ward-Reichard

## 2008-2009 HCBF Grant Recipients

GRANT POLICIES AND APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT: [WWW.HCBA.ORG](http://WWW.HCBA.ORG)

### Battered Women's Legal Advocacy Project

(\$1,000) To support the 2009 Annual New Laws Training in Hennepin County, which addresses all aspects of domestic violence related law.

### Children's Law Center of Minnesota

(\$5,000) To support the Forgotten Children Project, which provides representation to Hennepin County state wards.

### Civil Society

(\$4,000) To support legal services and public awareness for trafficking victims in Hennepin County.

### Community Mediation Services

(\$3,000) To expand the number of CMS mediators of Somali descent, provide continuing training to CMS mediators and court partners on Somali culture and tradition, and conducting community outreach.

### Conflict Resolution Center

(\$3,000) To further develop and implement the victim/juvenile offender restorative practices. Including the goal to increase the number of bilingual and ethnically diverse mediators, to market the program more effectively in publications that serve diverse and immigrant communities.

### Council on Crime and Justice

(\$2,500) To support the implementation of the Criminal Records Assistance Project, building on prior and present expungement activities.

### Division of Indian Work

(\$3,000) To support the American Indian Legal Advocate at the Hennepin County's Domestic Abuse Service Center in culturally sensitive activities.

### HCBA Language Line

(\$2,500) To fund the use of an interpreter-based relay and communication resource to improve service to individuals with limited English skills.

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## 2008-2009 HCBF Grant Recipients

### **HCBA LINC**

(\$5,000) To support the implementation of the Leaders Impacting the Nonprofit Community program, that trains legal professionals in the skills necessary to be effective professionals on nonprofit boards.

### **Immigrant Law Center**

(\$4,000) To partially fund the New Beginnings Project, which provides full legal services and support to immigrant victims of crime and violence.

### **Indian Child Welfare Law Center**

(\$3,000) To support the Indian Children's Stability Program, which helps at-risk Indian children experience safety and stability while preserving their familial and tribal connections.

### **Innocence Project**

(\$1,500) To support outreach, education, and advocacy to help achieve the objective of improving the justice system, by investigating all cases with provable claims and pursuing them until innocence is established or all doors for redress are shut.

### **Korean Service Center**

(\$2,000) To provide legal advice to low-income and immigrant Korean families and individuals in the Hennepin County area and to offer culturally sensitive legal clinics to the Korean community; to empower the Korean community to reduce intimidation by the legal system and process.

### **Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers**

(\$5,035) To support continued advertising in *The Hennepin Lawyer* and for a Program Services Expansion Project to contract with professionals for services for individual and group therapy.

### **Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis (Immigration Law Project)**

(\$1,000) To support the Immigration Law Project and, specifically, its work with immigrant victims of abuse and crime, including juvenile victims.

### **LegalCORPS**

(\$1,500) To assist LegalCORPS in its work advising and representing small businesses and nonprofits in Hennepin County.

### **Loan Repayment Assistance Program of Minnesota**

(\$3,000) To support an education loan repayment assistance award to an attorney providing legal assistance to low-income and disadvantaged Hennepin County families and individuals.

### **Minnesota AIDS Project**

(\$1,000) To support MAP's legal service, which strives to eliminate barriers in order to maintain the health and financial security of individuals living with HIV and to secure the support of their families and communities.

### **Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans**

(\$3,000) To provide support to the VETLAW (Veterans Employed Through Legal Advocacy Work) program to obtain and retain employment and housing.

### **Minnesota Justice Foundation:**

(\$4,000) To support the Law School Public Service Program, providing law students with volunteer service opportunity.

### **Resource – Employment Action Center**

(\$3,000) To support the Young Dad's program, which educates fathers about the legal processes in order to help fathers build lasting relationships with their children in custody and visitation contexts.

### **Restorative Justice Center**

(\$2,000) To support efforts to build capacity, sustain programming, and expand availability of neighborhood restorative justice to all of Minneapolis based on a three year plan.

### **The Advocates for Human Rights**

(\$3,000) To support ongoing legal services to low income asylum seekers living in Hennepin County.

### **Legal Rights Center**

(\$5,000) To support the core Defense and Advocacy program, which provides personalized, community-based, and prevention-oriented, criminal and juvenile legal defense representation.

### **Tubman**

(\$3,000) To support Tubman's legal services in Hennepin County, including legal representation, advice, information, and advocacy for low-income clients and underserved populations.

### **Volunteer Lawyers Network**

(\$40,000) To support general operations to allow VLN to continue its mission of advising and representing economically disadvantaged people in Hennepin County with legal problems.

### **Volunteers of America – Minnesota (MAO Legal Services)**

(\$1,500) To support MAO's subsidized legal services program, which provides elder law advice and representation to qualifying clients at no cost or at reduced rates to achieve independent living.

