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**The Foundation of the Monroe County Bar Association  
Awards \$25,000 in Grants**

**Rochester, N.Y.** – The Foundation of the Monroe County Bar Association today announced the award of eight grants totaling \$25,000 to support charitable and humane programs that benefit MCBA members and our community at large.

Under the leadership of 2008-09 Foundation President, Eugene M. O'Connor, and based on recommendations by the Grants Committee, chaired by Audrey P. Peartree, the Foundation's Board of Directors approved grants for the following projects:

**Rochester Teen Court:**

This grant in the amount of \$7,000 will be used to help fund the Rochester Teen Court under the umbrella of The Center for Youth. Teen Court is a diversion program operated through the City Court of Rochester for young adults who have committed first-time, non-violent crimes. Defendants whose cases are transferred to Teen Court have a disposition of their criminal charges by teen peers acting as prosecutors, defense counsel, court personnel and jurors. A sitting City of Rochester Court judge presides over the proceedings, and teen jurors recommend sentencing.

Teen Court is designed to provide education to youth about the judicial process; promote accountability for their actions; and, reinforce responsibility to society through community service and educational sentencing.

**Judicial Process Commission:**

This \$1,000 grant will be used to help fund an AmeriCorps member who will assist over 200 men and women to reduce the barriers they face when seeking employment due to their criminal convictions. The Judicial Process Commission's Legal Action Project, in partnership with Monroe County Legal Assistance Center's Re-entry Project, provides significant legal services which help maintain the level of representation.

**Rochester Rehabilitation Center:**

This grant in the amount of \$1,000 will support Rochester Rehabilitation Center's Care

Coordination Project in collaboration with the Mental Health Court (MHC). This Project aims to provide intensive care coordination services to clients of MHC in order to reduce client recidivism, increase use of community based services, achieve more successful dispositions by the court, and to support client self sufficiency, rehabilitation and recovery.

### **Monroe County Bar Association & the Monroe County Bar Center for Education:**

The MCBA will use the grants received for the Deaf Equal Access Fund (DEAFund) of the Monroe County Bar Association, Annual Judicial Evaluations, Minority Clerkship Program, Sydney R. Rubin High School Mock Trial Competition and Hardship Fund.

The *Deaf Equal Access Fund of the Monroe County Bar Association* received a grant for \$1,500 to help provide member attorneys with partial reimbursement for the costs of interpreters hired through a collaborative partnership with Lifespan that provides certified interpreters at a discounted rate. The MCBA is committed to promoting equal access for the Greater Rochester Area's 50,000 deaf and hard of hearing citizens and assisting local attorneys in fulfilling their obligations to this unique community according to the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act.

The *MCBA's Annual Judicial Evaluations Program* received a grant in the amount of \$1,500 to partially fund survey costs for the Sitting Judge Evaluation which evaluates judges currently presiding in the City, County, Family, Supreme and Surrogate's Courts of the City of Rochester and County of Monroe and evaluates candidates seeking judgeships for City, County, Family, Supreme and Surrogate's Courts of the City of Rochester and County of Monroe.

The *Minority Clerkship Program* received a grant in the amount of \$7,000 to the MCB Center for Education to fund first year law students with one of the legal service providers for a 10-week summer internship in 2010 and to provide funding of the Program's expenses.

The *Sydney R. Rubin High School Mock Trial Competition* received a grant in the amount of \$1,000 and will use the funds to continue its annual competition. The competition provides an opportunity for high school students to learn about the law and its protocol and procedures, as students from different schools from throughout Monroe County compete against each other in trial competitions. Each year, the tournaments hosts 200 to 250 students representing 18-22 high schools, along with a number of volunteer teacher coaches, attorney team advisors, judges and court personnel.

The *Hardship Fund* received a grant for \$5,000. This program is designed to provide our members with a variety of tangible benefits during the current economic recession. The MCBA has a tradition of supporting its members in need, and this fund is strictly dedicated to assisting members maintain their NYS license and their ability to continue to practice law.

For more information, please visit [www.mcba.org](http://www.mcba.org).

### **About the Foundation of the Monroe County Bar Association**

Founded in 1951, the Foundation is the charitable face of the Monroe County Bar Association, with a mission of supporting the charitable, educational, civic and humane purposes of the MCBA and its

Center for Education. The Foundation is dedicated to assisting the members of our Bar Association in need, assuring access to justice for all, and educating the community about our legal system. The Foundation has long supported civil legal services to the poor including the Empire Justice Center, Volunteer Legal Services Project, Legal Aid Society of Rochester and Monroe County Legal Assistance Center.

**About the Monroe County Bar Association**

The Monroe County Bar Association, originally formed as the Rochester Bar Association, was organized in 1892. What started with just 25 members, has grown to nearly 2,200 law professionals in Monroe County, committed to improving the quality and accessibility of justice; promoting respect and understanding of the law; enhancing professional growth, fulfillment, excellence, collegiality and diversity among its members; and serving as a voice for the law profession. The MCBA is actively involved with both the New York State Bar and the American Bar Associations and is considered one of the premier local bar associations in the country.

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