

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Thomas Edward Spahn, Chair

This year, our committee continued to refine and expand the Law in Society Award competition, sold rights in our award-winning public service announcement campaign to several other state bars, and expanded the statewide speakers' bureau.

With generous funding by the Virginia State Bar Litigation Section, the Law in Society Award competition continues to do well. This year, approximately 300 high school students submitted essays on a hypothetical focusing on zero-tolerance policies for student possession of drugs and weapons in schools. The winning entries came from the cities of Lexington, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Suffolk. For the second year, Sharon Parker (formerly a McGuireWoods secretary and now a teacher in Kuwait) assisted in preparing a teacher's manual that complies with the SOL guidelines. A number of teachers from across the state requested this lesson plan, which we also published on the VSB Web site. We plan to prepare SOL-compliant teacher's manuals in future years, which will greatly increase the usefulness of the Law in Society Award program.

The state bars of New Mexico, Colorado and Iowa purchased the right to use portions of our nationally-recognized public service announcement campaign pictures and text. So far, three states and one foreign country (Canada) have purchased rights to use the campaign. We also made copies of the posters available to new lawyers at recent admissions and orientation seminars and at the VSB booth at the annual meeting.

Jennifer Sparger works with the VSB speakers' bureau, which is Virginia's first statewide speakers bureau. We now have over 400 volunteer lawyers, and requests keep coming from schools (in addition to clubs such as Rotary and Kiwanis) for knowledgeable speakers on various legal topics. Starting with the February 2000 issue of *The Virginia Lawyer*, we have recognized volunteers who have assisted in speaking engagements.

In our role as the bar's advisor on video projects, we are assisting in an update of the VSB's professionalism video and stand ready to assist other sections with any video projects.

Among our current projects, we are considering ways in which we can coordinate with teachers to assist in their explanation to their students of our legal system and lawyers' role in it.

