



The Virginia Law Foundation promotes through philanthropy the rule of law, access to justice and law-related education

Whittington W. Clement
PRESIDENT

DATE: July 16, 2010

David P. Bobzien
PRESIDENT-ELECT

TO: Virginia Local Bar Association Leaders

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VICE PRESIDENT

FROM: Mike Pace and Tim Isaacs,
VBA Rule of Law Project Coordinators, and
Whittington W. Clement, VLF President

Guy K. Tower
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SUBJECT: The Virginia Law Foundation has allocated \$25,000 for 10 grants of \$2,500 to local bar associations that adopt the VBA Rule of Law Project

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The Virginia Law Foundation and The Virginia Bar Association Rule of Law Project offer your bar association an exciting opportunity. The VLF will award ten grants of \$2,500 to local bar associations that adopt the VBA Rule of Law Project in their school divisions during the 2010-'11 academic year.

Mary Ann Delano
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

These funds may be used to reproduce classroom materials, host training sessions for volunteer lawyers and judges, provide "The Law Rules" wristbands to all students and other participants, and generate media attention for this important and timely educational initiative.

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The VBA Rule of Law Project, created in 2009, is a free program for middle school students in Virginia, funded by grants from the Virginia Law Foundation. This web-based program inspires students to become active citizens by giving them a better understanding of the rule of law as the basis for the rights we enjoy and responsibilities we share as Americans.

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The VBA Rule of Law Project website (www.ruleoflaw-vba.org) contains a summary of the project, the course curriculum, resources for teachers, training tools for volunteers, press coverage and announcements, two videos ("The Law Rules" and a simulated classroom discussion), and a list of protocols for planning and implementing the project. The website

provides local bar associations with the tools necessary to train volunteer lawyers and judges to work collaboratively with educators to teach the rule of law to students.

In preparation for having rule of law classes this fall and next spring, we ask all local bar associations to form a standing rule of law committee comprised of at least three members to work with corresponding committees of local school representatives. This works best if the lawyers and teachers meet once at the end of the summer or just after school starts to visit the website together; watch the two online videos; talk about the curriculum; gather information on the number of civics/social studies classes, teachers and students in each school; and select a date or dates for the classes.

With this information, your committee can recruit volunteers. Each volunteer will be given the contact information for his or her teacher so they can start talking and planning. We have developed form calendars and templates to make this easy.

We used this process during the pilot program in the Roanoke Valley in February 2009, when 60 volunteer lawyers and judges, together with a similar number of civics teachers, taught all 2,100 middle school students in Salem, Roanoke County and Roanoke City on the same day. The committee members made new friends, had fun, and look forward to working together from year to year.

This also provides a significant public relations opportunity for your bar association and local school divisions. Once your day is selected, the press release we have prepared can be adapted for your local newspaper, TV, and radio stations with a request to cover the day's activities. Stories about your lawyers and judges working with teachers to give students a better understanding of the rule of law is a powerful way to publicize your good community service work.

We hope your bar association will host the VBA Rule of Law Project this fall or spring. A dozen school divisions have already taught classes and more are planning to do it again this coming year. With the generosity of

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the \$2,500 grants offered by the Virginia Law Foundation, this is an easy way for your bar association to bring this project to your community. We invite your bar association to join the fun. If you do, we believe it will be one of the most satisfying experiences of your professional career.

Attached is the VLF's grant application. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Thanks for your service, time, and talent. We look forward to receiving your grant application and working with you to host the VBA Rule of Law Project in your local schools.



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Whittington W. Clement, Esq.
President, Virginia Law Foundation

Attachment: VLF Grant Application Form

cc: Members of the Board of the Virginia Law Foundation
Members of the Board of The Virginia Bar Association