

ODBA Awards Scholarship; Hosts Reception with Black Law Students' Association

On September 8, 2001, more than 500 attorneys, corporate executives and community leaders attended the first Oliver W. Hill, Sr. and Samuel W. Tucker Scholarship Dinner sponsored by the Old Dominion Bar Association's Richmond Chapter. The event featured scholarship awards that ODBA initiated to help law students pay for books and expenses. Recipients of the award were first-year law students Barbara Peterson-Wilson of the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond, and Rukia Lumumba, of Howard Law School. The ODBA plans to award a scholarship to one student at each law school in Virginia and the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area as a result of the success of the scholarship dinner.

Among the luminaries in attendance was Oliver W. Hill, Sr., a legend of the American civil rights movement who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1999. In addition to recognizing Mr. Hill's and the late Mr. Tucker's accomplishments, the program featured

remarks from its keynote speaker, famed litigator Willie Gary who spoke of his personal experience in rising from migrant work to an enormously successful corporate practice. He stressed the value of community service and youth mentoring.

On October 18, 2001, the Richmond Chapter of the ODBA hosted a reception with the University of Richmond's Black Law Student Association. African-American law students and scholarship recipient Peterson-Wilson met with role models and legal mentors who work in the Richmond area. In attendance were Oliver W. Hill, Sr.; Judge Gary Hicks of Henrico Circuit Court; Judge Richard D. Taylor, Jr., of the Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court; and Judge D. Eugene Cheek and Judge Birdie H. Jamison, both of the Richmond General District Court—as well as many attorneys from the private and public sectors.

Alexander L. Taylor, Jr., president of ODBA's Richmond Chapter, said, "OBDA's



ODBA keynote speaker Willie Gary with scholarship recipient Barbara Peterson-Wilson.

efforts in awarding scholarships throughout the state and reaching out to law students in our area, with assistance from judges, is very significant. The impact could be invaluable, and it is one way to continue Oliver Hill and Samuel Tucker's legacies."

2002 Law in Society Award Competition Topic Based on 9/11 Tragedy

What is the best way for our nation to root out terrorists and prevent further disasters? The VSB's Law in Society Award Competition, an essay contest sponsored by the VSB Litigation Section, will give high school students across the Commonwealth the opportunity to share their views on this topic when they respond to the contest's hypothetical early next year. Awards will be given to students whose essays show a superior understanding of the value of law in everyday life.

Materials will arrive at Virginia high schools in early January. Prizes are as follows:

- 1st Place:** \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond or \$500 cash
- 2nd Place:** \$750 U.S. Savings Bond or \$375 cash
- 3rd Place:** \$500 U.S. Savings Bond or \$250 cash
- Seven Honorable Mentions:** \$100 U.S. Savings Bond or \$50 cash

For more information on the award competition, visit www.vsb.org/publications/lawinsociety/, e-mail lawinsociety@vsb.org, or contact Jennifer Sparger at (804) 775-0586.



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May 6, 2002

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www.vsb.org/clba

Virginia Attorneys Respond to Pentagon Disaster Victims

Craig D. Bell, a partner in McGuireWoods, L.L.P.'s taxation and employee benefits department, had planned on being at the Pentagon on September 15.

As a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army's judge advocates general corps reserves, Bell was scheduled to teach other military lawyers tax and estate planning, in addition to seeing several clients. Two days after the terrorist attacks of September 11, those plans changed.

Bell, who also heads McGuireWoods' state and local tax and tax litigation groups, was working in his Richmond office on September 13 when he received a call from a lawyer at the U.S. Department of Defense. He was asked if he could help out at the Pentagon Family Assistance Center at the Sheraton in Crystal City to help the families of the 188 deceased employees and airplane victims.

Bell carpooled to Washington with Colonial Heights solo practitioner and fellow JAG reservist Edward A. Robbins, Jr., two days later. Bell expected to stay only a day. He was there until October 12.

Bell led a team of attorneys to give legal assistance to the victims' families. "We really didn't have a clue what we were walking into," said Bell.

He was told to figure out what needed to be done. His team set up shop in a large double room at the Sheraton with only two tables, a couple of chairs and a few wall jacks.

Bell's team was hit with almost every legal question and situation imaginable. The team counseled military personnel and civilians on powers of attorney, probate issues, domestic relations, guardianship and numerous other issues. The team also prepared wills, testamentary and intervivos trusts, advance medical directives and related documents.

After two days of 15-hour shifts, Bell's team had met with 74 families.

Ultimately, he was joined by 11 other army reserve JAG volunteers, and eight Coast Guard attorneys.

Bell also was assisted by other colleagues at McGuireWoods, including Dennis Belcher and Tom Rohman from the Richmond office, and Cathy Hughes, Ron Aucutt and John Jenkins in Tysons Corner. They assembled resource materials on probate in the surrounding states and compiled a list of top lawyers from around the country willing to work at no charge.

By the end of the 27-day excursion, Bell's team assisted 278 families at no charge and helped 55 families find continuous pro bono consultation.

First Year as an Attorney?



Don't miss out! If you weren't at the First Day in Practice Seminar on October 30, you still have an opportunity to buy the book used at the seminar. This valuable information includes segments written by some of Virginia's most distinguished lawyers and judges on:

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IN MEMORIAM

Robert Joseph Burr
Richmond
October 1963–September 2001

Richard W. Corman
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Robert C. Fitzgerald
Huddleston
September 1921–October 2001

Beverly R. Marshall
Gloucester
January 1914–March 2001

Elmer J. Nohta
Richmond
April 1921–October 2001

William Rosenberger
Lynchburg
July 1908–October 2001

Marion Jack See
Ashburn, GA
January 1935–July 2001



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Treasurer
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