The Virginia Law Foundation ... promotes through philanthropy the rule of law, access to justice, and law-related education.
The VLF Celebrates Forty Years of Philanthropy

by James V. Meath, president of the Virginia Law Foundation, and Manuel A. Capsalis, immediate past-president of the Virginia Law Foundation

It is with great pride that we welcome you to this issue of *Virginia Lawyer* magazine. The Virginia State Bar has graciously dedicated the issue to the Virginia Law Foundation. We are thankful for this great honor.

The Virginia Law Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Virginia’s legal profession. It uses its endowment to fund worthy projects in three crucial areas: the rule of law, access to justice, and legal education. Next year the foundation celebrates forty years of philanthropic work. The organization has provided more than $23 million in grants during its history.

One of the components of the foundation is its Fellows Committee. There are more than 400 fellows of the Virginia Law Foundation, representing the top 1 percent of lawyers and retired judges in the commonwealth. These are men and women who have achieved excellence in the profession while demonstrating leadership and a selfless commitment to the betterment of their communities. The fellows of the Virginia Law Foundation are celebrating thirty years of leadership and commitment in 2014.
In the pages that follow, you will read about the philanthropic efforts of the foundation. We hope you will be struck by the good work that has been done by the funds that the foundation has provided to grantees. Lives have been changed, futures have been formed, and the commitment that our Founding Fathers made to justice for all has been furthered. That said, there is more need now than ever for the Virginia Law Foundation to raise funds and continue its philanthropic mission.

We hope that you enjoy this special issue of *Virginia Lawyer* and find the articles instructive and compelling. We also hope you agree that there is something very special about being a Virginia lawyer — a sense of history and of civic duty to the commonwealth and its people. Supporting the foundation’s philanthropic pursuits enables us to touch the lives of thousands of Virginians our individual good work could not possibly reach.

Members of the Virginia Law Foundation board gathered at the Virginia State Bar annual meeting in June. Pictured on page 29 are, standing (left to right): John D. Epps, president-elect; Raymond M. White, executive director; James V. Meath, president; G. Michael Pace Jr.; Irving M. Blank, vice president; Manuel A. Capsalis, immediate past president; William L. Schmidt; The Honorable Paul F. Sheridan; Yvonne C. McGhee, secretary; George Warren Shanks, Fellows Committee chair; Stanley G. Barr Jr.; J. Page Williams; David P. Bobzien, CLE chair; and F. Anderson Morse. Seated (left to right): John M. Oakey Jr.; Karen A. Gould, treasurer; Lucia Anna “Pia” Trigiani; Cynthia E. Hudson; and Angelica D. Light.
I cannot help but believe the reason most of us chose the law as our life’s work is to help make a difference in the administration of justice in our communities while bettering the lives of our clients, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

Practicing law provides us with a unique opportunity to be good people and a special platform for doing great things. Accordingly, among the many reasons I am especially proud to join the Virginia Law Foundation (VLF) as its executive director is it gives me a chance to be good and do great in important ways.

In fact, the VLF gives us all a wonderful opportunity to share our collective passion for the multitude of causes the foundation supports, while also sharing ourselves in ways that mean so much to so many and that can also be uncommonly fulfilling.

For example, throughout our first forty years as the philanthropic arm of Virginia’s legal profession and the parent organization of Virginia CLE, the VLF has provided sizable grants to a number of critical law-related projects across the commonwealth, including:

One Barn at a Time
(Being Good and Doing Great)

by Raymond M. White
The VLF gives our legal community a chance to be good and do great as we try to make a difference in the lives of those without meaningful access to justice, and in the lives of those who may somehow feel that they have been left behind by the rule of law.

What personally grounds me in this concept comes from a simple story about my late father-in-law, John Bartel.

A dairy farmer from the time he was in his teens, Mr. Bartel loved his work more than life itself. Still, the ups and downs of family farming brought him to a point where he eventually had to sell several acres at a time simply to pay the bills. And if that wasn’t enough, one summer night as the bills continued to mount, up the hill and out of nowhere a flame shot through the sky as the barn he helped build years ago burned to the ground. There was nothing left; this was the only time my wife had ever seen her father cry.

That next morning, as word of the fire spread across the county, a small army of farmers got off their tractors, left their milking parlors, and stopped bailing hay. They grabbed hammers and saws, and started carting lumber in dusty pickup trucks as they gathered together to do whatever it was going to take to rebuild that barn.

They worked day and night to rebuild that barn, and when they were done, with hardly a word spoken, as none were needed, they patted my father-in-law on the back and made their way home. They didn’t need thanks; they didn’t need praise; they didn’t need a front page story telling the world how special they were. To them, what they did wasn’t special. They were simply good people doing something great — because that’s who they were.

This story matters so much to me because it shows the goodness of who we really are as a people, and how that goodness shines through when given a chance. It represents how we rise to the occasion for all the right reasons, and this is precisely what the VLF represents to me.

Our system of justice is second to none. But is it perfect? Let’s just say I think we all might agree there are still a few more barns that need to be rebuilt along the way to that perfection. That is why I am here, why I am writing this piece, and why I hope you find a way to join with us as the VLF crosses the commonwealth to help rebuild the occasional barn that needs fixing.

Yes, the VLF will always be there to support our own, and it is comforting to know that in the past we have been able to count on so many of you to be in there with us, hammering away until the job is done.

We are particularly proud that over the course of our forty-year history we have provided more than $23 million in grants to promote the rule of law, access to justice, and law-related education. We are prouder still that beginning last year we embarked upon an ambitious plan to expand our outreach to better assist even more Virginians with critical legal needs.

To that end we believe that through passion, people, and partnerships we can continue to make a difference, and along the way we are looking to old and new friends who share our passion and who would like to join with us — to stand together like those dairy farmers did — whether through financial donations, donations of time, or donations of expertise, so together we can fix what needs fixing as we strive to perfect our legal system, and help our communities and neighbors one barn at a time.
With its beginnings in the Virginia Bar Association, and with the generous financial support of the Virginia Law Foundation, the Rule of Law Project is starting its fifth year, and now involves all state-wide bar associations and a growing number of local ones, some for the fourth and fifth time. We continue to expand our website offerings (www.ruleoflaw-vba.org), which provide on-line teacher resources, training materials, reading lists, and lesson plans for teaching the origin, meaning, and importance of the rule of law in society, together with training materials for volunteer bar members.

We created a Lawyer Advisory Committee to establish relationships with more local bar associations for the purpose of organizing Rule of Law Day in every community in Virginia on an annual and sustainable basis. We have also created a Teacher Advisory Committee comprising educators and administrators in Virginia and other states. The purpose of this committee is to advise us about educational content and to create additional online materials for classroom use.

Working together, we will assure that Virginia is recognized as the leader in rule of law education nationwide.

The Rule of Law Project in the United States and the World

Created at Roanoke College in 2012, the Center for Teaching the Rule of Law (www.thecenterforruleoflaw.org) is a think-tank, research, scholarship, and training institute for rule of law education. It also serves as a forum for discussion about the relationship between the rule of law and society, nationally and internationally. The center is the vehicle by which the Rule of Law Project will be introduced to other states and countries. It is an independent Section 501(c)(3) educational charitable organization supported by private donations. The center received its first grant, of $50,000, this spring from the Foundation for the Roanoke Valley. These funds help support scholarship, programming, and operations. Other grant requests are outstanding. The center has an audacious goal of raising $10 million within three to five years to fully endow its program.

We held the initial meeting of the center’s board of directors on August 27 at Roanoke College. The members of the board of directors include: Kathy Mays Coleman, Senior Justice Lawrence L. Koontz Jr., Justice Cleo E. Powell, Diane M. Strickland, Guy K. Tower, and Anthony F. Troy.

None of the board members are required to raise money for the center. Their willingness to serve and the guidance they provide is greatly needed and appreciated.

Roanoke College has graciously donated office space and technical and operational support for the center. The college’s reputation as an excellent liberal arts institution provides the perfect platform to engage students, faculty, staff, and the community in the center’s activities, and for teaching our
Law and Society class. The center will have two student interns to assist in research and writing projects on rule of law-related subjects. We are working with several college organizations on a series of co-sponsored programs for this academic year.

In addition, we have expanded our curriculum to include “The Rule of Law and the Environment,” a topic of increasing national and international importance. Our environmental education curriculum will be led by Maggi Pace, our new director of Environmental Education and Social Media. Maggi is a Wake Forest University graduate with a major in biology, and a master’s degree in environmental education from Slippery Rock University. She began her new position on September 1. The other members of our staff are: H. Timothy Isaacs, vice president of education; John S. Koehler, director of communications; and Nancy H. Pace, administrative assistant.

We are bigger than we look. As a result of our relationship with the National Council of the Social Studies, the largest association of civics, social studies, and history teachers in the U.S., we are working on rule of law projects in Brookfield, WI, and Howard County, MD). Through our involvement in the National Council of Bar Presidents, we also helped start a rule of law initiative in Florida spearheaded by the Jacksonville Bar Association in its public schools. We expect schools in more states to adopt the Rule of Law Project this year.

At the invitation of the World Justice Project (www.worldjusticeproject.org), we participated in World Justice Forum IV at The Hague in July. We also participated in World Justice Forum II in Vienna in 2009 and Forum III in Barcelona in 2011. This year’s participants included more than 600 people from 100 countries. We presented each of the four days of the forum and led group discussions on the topic “Youth and the Rule of Law.” Our involvement led to requests to provide rule of law education in Jamaica, the Philippines, and Burundi and closer to home in Texas. In addition, we expect to be included as the rule of law education component in a new U.S. Department of State program that hosts delegations from other countries.

Our existing relationships also continue to expand:

**Virginia Department of Education** — Patricia Wright, Superintendent for Public Instruction, will again endorse the Rule of Law Project for inclusion in all public schools. We have received this endorsement each year since our beginning.

**The Virginia Consortium of Social Studies Specialists and College Educators (VCSSE)** — We have been invited to present at the last three VCSSE annual conferences in Williamsburg. This year, the annual meeting will be held in Roanoke in October, where we have been invited to speak and will sponsor a teacher reception.

**American Bar Association Commission on Civics Education** — The Rule of Law Project continues to be designated as a “best practices” program for all state bar associations.

**Legacy International** — This spring, Legacy asked us to present the Rule of Law Project to a group of twenty-two Indonesian secondary school exchange students and their teachers. These students were very engaged and extremely well versed in the relationship between the rule law and democracy, exceeding the understanding of most American students.

**The Virginia Holocaust Museum** — We are pleased the Rule of Law Project and rule of law education will continue to be part of the offerings of the Virginia Holocaust Museum in its program again this year.

**Big Brothers and Big Sisters/Oliver Hill House/Roanoke City Public Schools/Roanoke Bar Association/Rule of Law Project** — This fall, these organizations will collaborate to provide after-school educational programs at the Oliver Hill House for students ages 7 to 12 in four inner-city elementary schools.

Center staff and Roanoke Bar Association members will teach students about the rule of law and citizenship. This is a perfect example of relationships that develop to address a need and improve communities. We are proud to be part of this effort. The center will be meeting with national representatives of Big Brothers and Big Sisters about using the Oliver Hill House experience as a pilot project for similar ones across the country.

I will end with my favorite story from this past semester. The Moton Museum is the former public school in Farmville that closed its doors to students during the “massive resistance” era in Virginia in the 1950s and ’60s. A new school, Prince Edward Academy (now called the JB Fuqua School) was created for white students while a generation of black students was denied a public education. Later, Prince Edward County recreated and integrated its public school system. The former Moton School became the Moton Museum, under the strong leadership of Lacy Ward Jr. Moton is a sobering yet hopeful reminder of a part of our history during which the rule of law was suspended and the concept of equality did not include everyone.

With the wonderful help of members of the Prince Edward County Bar Association, we held Rule of Law Day in Roanoke and Remains of Counsel to the Firm.

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The Nuremberg Courtroom Exhibit in the Virginia Holocaust Museum at 2000 E. Cary St. in Richmond is an exact replica of the Palace of Justice where the Nuremberg Trials were held following World War II into the spring of 1949. The exhibit contains memorabilia, videos, and photos of the trials. The enormity of the crimes committed by the Nazis were put before the court and witnessed by the entire world as the first trials of a vanquished army and the greatest example of the rule of law in history.

In 2006, Jay Ipson, the founder of the Virginia Holocaust Museum, thought that a permanent exhibit depicting the Nuremberg Courtroom would be a unique addition to the museum and an impressive testament to justice and the rule of law. The original courtroom in Nuremberg, Germany, had been substantially changed, was only open to visitors on weekends, and was rumored to be scheduled for demolition by the city. Ipson secured the original plans for the courtroom and began fundraising to build a replica of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice. I volunteered to raise funds for the project.
At the Virginia State Bar Council meeting in April 2007, I met Jon D. Huddleston, who was then on the board of the Virginia Law Foundation (VLF) and the Virginia State Bar Council. We happened to sit next to each other on the bus taking council members to dinner. During the ride, I told Huddleston about the Nuremberg Courtroom project and its need for funds. He told me that he was trying to get the VLF to change the grant-giving process so that fewer but larger grants would be made to get a greater impact from the grants. That chance meeting led to a great friendship between our families and a wonderful marriage between the Law Foundation and the Holocaust Museum. Huddleston was successful in his efforts to change the grant giving process at the VLF and the museum was approved for a $100,000 grant. A memorandum of agreement between the two entities was executed in August 2007. That marriage has endured and grown over the years. The Nuremberg Courtroom Exhibit is permanently displayed at the Virginia Holocaust Museum and is managed by the Nuremberg Courtroom Committee that is made up of eight members, four of whom are selected by the museum and four of whom are selected by the foundation. The committee also selects the annual recipient of the Rule of Law Award.

While the courtroom exhibit has only existed for a few years, it has been the scene of many memorable events and is an impressive tool to teach the rule of law. Past recipients of the Rule of Law Award have included Henry King, a prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials; Senator John W. Warner; Justice Gabriel Balch, who was the prosecutor of Adolph Eichman and later a member of the Israeli Supreme Court; and in 2013, Roderick B. Mathews and Murray J. Janus, who were great Virginia lawyers and the living essence of the rule of law, as well as devoted members of the Nuremberg Courtroom Committee.

The dedication of the exhibit on Law Day, May 1, 2008, was the culmination of an extraordinary day in the history of the museum, the VLF, the Richmond bar, and the State Bar. Through the efforts of Mathews, the museum was selected as one of the sites for the World Justice Project. On May 1, 2008, the day-long international program focused on the rule of law and culminated in the dedication of the courtroom exhibit. Madam Justice Rosalie Abella of the Supreme Court of Canada delivered the keynote address and there was not a dry eye in the audience. The courtroom exhibit has been used by the general and legal communities as a means to see that democratic values, rights, and institutions designed to ensure that justice is not only seen to be done, but is done. It has also allowed us to trumpet justice and promote tolerance by reminding people of the injustice and intolerance of the Holocaust.

Thousands of visitors, including many students and teachers, have visited the exhibit and taught the lessons of the Nuremberg Trials. The visual reminders of the world’s response to the Nazi atrocities are invaluable in the understanding, appreciation, and application of the rule of law.

The mission of the Virginia Law Foundation is to promote, through philanthropy, the rule of law, access to justice, and law-related education. The mission of the Virginia Holocaust Museum is to promote tolerance through education. Rarely have two institutions and their missions so perfectly coincided.

Irving M. Blank, a personal injury attorney with Paris Blank LLP in Richmond, is a former president of the Virginia State Bar. He is a fellow of the Virginia Law Foundation and the American College of Trial Lawyers. He is a member of the John Marshall Inn of Court, the Virginia Association of Defense Attorneys, and the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association. He was a member of the Virginia Bar Association commission that developed the Virginia Principles of Professionalism, an aspirational set of standards for attorney conduct.

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Farmville on April 27. For the first time, students, teachers, and administrators of the two schools came together to talk about their history. The day included remarks by Justice Cleo Powell, Lacy Ward Jr., and local officials, followed by breakout sessions to discuss the presence and absence of the rule of law in our history, and its enduring nature as the basis for hope, justice, fairness, stability, and equality for all people.

Everyone involved left with a greater appreciation for the need to be constantly reminded about how democracy is supposed to work. It was a magnificent day, one we hope to recreate from year to year. This experience, as much as any other so far, makes clear the importance of what we do.

With the encouragement, participation, and support of members of the bar, we are making a difference to teachers, their students, and to the communities in which they live. Together, we will help create new generations of citizens who understand that without enlightened and active citizen participation, democracy is not sustainable.

As we plan for another busy and exciting school year, let’s always remember what Abraham Lincoln told us: “Teach the children so it will not be necessary to teach the adults.”
VLF Grant Has Powered Critical Virginia Capital Defense Training

by David I. Bruck

The death penalty is probably the single most controversial and divisive feature of our criminal justice system. The disagreements between those who support the death penalty and those who would curtail or abolish it roils many narrower differences over how the criminal justice system should operate.

But death penalty supporters and opponents all agree on at least one thing: no one should be convicted of a capital crime or sentenced to death because of inadequate legal representation. Capital defense attorneys have long contended (with a lot of evidence to prove the point) that the quality of the defense provided by court-appointed attorneys often explains more about who lives and dies in the American system of capital punishment than do the facts of the crimes charged. From the other side of the issue, the importance of adequate defense representation is equally clear. George W. Bush oversaw more executions as governor of Texas than any state’s chief executive in American history up until that time, but in 2005, as president, he devoted part of a State of the Union Address to announcing that his administration intended “to fund special training for defense counsel in capital cases” because, as he put it, “people on trial for their lives must have competent lawyers by their side.”

It was in this spirit, seventeen years ago, that the Virginia Law Foundation began providing funding to support the Virginia Bar Association’s (VBA) fledgling Capital Defense Workshop (CDW). The impetus for the CDW was Virginia’s adoption, in 1992, of minimum experience and training requirements for lawyers who wished to be considered for appointment in capital cases. Since that first VBA Capital Defense Workshop in November 1993 the CDW has developed into Virginia’s best-attended criminal defense training program, and has provided up-to-date information and creative new ideas from Virginia and national leaders in the capital defense field. This annual day-and-a-half program always includes sessions on forensic science, ethics, and legal and legislative developments, and frequently explores such topics as how to negotiate life-saving plea agreements, how to recognize mental impairments in clients, and how to respond with sensitivity and compassion to murder victims’ families.

At the time of that first Capital Defense Workshop, the U.S. Supreme Court had only recently held, in two cases arising from Virginia, that seemingly minor procedural errors by court-appointed or volunteer lawyers could forfeit forever their condemned clients’ ability to have their constitutional claims heard by any court. Those rather draconian procedural rules are, if anything, even less forgiving today than they were in 1993, so the need to equip court-appointed lawyers with the knowledge and skill to navigate the complexities of capital trial litigation is as great as it ever was.

To be sure, in recent years national capital defense training programs have emphasized more intensive, “bring-your-own-case” training methods that engage existing defense teams with their own pending cases in small workshops. In fact, the modest federal funding that the Bush and Obama administrations have provided for capital defense training since 2005 have gone mainly to support such targeted, “bring-your-own-case” programs around the country (including two in Virginia so far). But as long as Virginia retains the death penalty, there will be a need for at least one large capital defense CLE each year to introduce new lawyers, and re-introduce experienced ones, to recent legal and scientific developments and to current best practices in death penalty trial defense. The Virginia Law Foundation’s steady, generous support for such a program, and the faithful work of the Virginia Bar Association in administering it, have met this pressing need for more than twenty years, and continue to do so now.
Times are challenging, and changing. Recent studies indicate that 80 percent of civil legal needs go unmet in Virginia. Given that one million Virginians live in poverty, and 48 percent of those will encounter a legal problem each year on average, legal aid organizations have 480,000 potential clients in the commonwealth, just in 2013. With budget cuts, legal aid staff is dwindling, and so is its ability to serve underprivileged Virginians. In the current conditions, legal aids can only handle about 35,000 cases a year, for the benefit of nearly 87,000 people. That means almost 400,000 Virginians each year do not have access to the services of a lawyer on civil matters.

The good news is pro bono lawyer volunteerism is on the rise. More attorneys than ever appreciate the need and obligation to give back, and they are looking for paths of service.

The Solution: JusticeServer
The best ways to attack the legal aid crisis are to provide more volunteer pro bono lawyers, improve efficiency to stretch legal aid lawyers’ capability, and develop a centralized organization for the delivery of services around Virginia. JusticeServer provides all of these and more.

At the Supreme Court of Virginia’s 2010 Pro Bono Summit, leaders at Capital One pledged to build for legal aid a state-of-the-art information management and case referral system. Capital One began leading a collaborative project team composed of members of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation (GRBF), the Central Virginia Legal Aid Society (CVLAS), the Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC) and the Virginia Bar Association Pro Bono Task Force. This core team deconstructed the current processes of civil case intake, case management, and case placement with private bar volunteers. The result was the creation of JusticeServer, an online case management and pro bono opportunity matching system.

With an internet connection, legal aid staff can now screen client eligibility, provide legal service, and collect required case information on the JusticeServer system — tripling functionality for less cost. From JusticeServer, staff can track case activity, attach documents or pleadings, or even e-mail the client. Supervisors can track individual and team productivity, and monitor the status of cases. Any data entered into JusticeServer can be tracked, tallied, and analyzed through a robust reporting feature.

Besides being a legal aid nerve center, JusticeServer is also a lawyer recruitment tool, a case referral system, a website, and a virtual law library. Through its Pro Bono Portal, www.justiceserver.org, JusticeServer provides a centralized location for any interested attorney, law student, or paralegal to register and create a profile of pro bono interest (practice area and location). The profile is used to filter the available cases of interest and to trigger e-mail notifications about case availability.

JusticeServer allows participating legal aid and nonprofit organizations to send cases to the Pro Bono Portal in one easy step. The portal provides levels of secure information for the volunteers to browse opportunities, perform the conflicts check, evaluate the case, and accept the pro bono engagement. The Pro Bono Portal allows legal aid to exchange all client information and relevant documents with the volunteer online, and vice versa.

Current status:
Only Virginia has this technology. A JusticeServer pilot is underway in central Virginia. Thanks to the generosity of the Virginia Law Foundation with a $100,000 grant to the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, the core team collaborative partnership can continue to enhance the pilot version and expand to other pilot regions, with full deployment throughout Virginia by 2015.

With technology advances, the commonwealth can operate as one region. As
the world shrinks, organizations such as the Virginia Bar Association and the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation can rally and deploy lawyers statewide. With the expansion of JusticeServer, we can make initiatives like distance lawyering, virtual pro bono law firms (Firms In Service), and centralized deployment of specialized law projects realities in the commonwealth.

We thank the Virginia Law Foundation for being justice servers, and partnering in this groundbreaking solution to improve access to justice for hundreds of thousands of Virginians.

Endnote:
1 The active members of the Core Team are: Alexandra S. Fannon (executive director, GRBF), Alex R. Gulotta (executive director, LAJC), Kathleen D. Caldwell (senior attorney, LAJC), Phillip T. Storey (attorney, LAJC), Dan Epstein (finance, LAJC), Stephen E. Dickinson (executive director, CVLAS), Martin D. Wegbreit (senior attorney, CVLAS), Bill Burnet (senior business analyst, Capital One), and Michele Deane (senior project manager).

Alexandra S. Fannon is executive director of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation. She previously was an assistant city attorney for City of Richmond, representing various city departments in all levels of courts and administrative hearings and providing legal counsel on issues ranging from constitutional to public relations. She has been on the board of directors of the Metropolitan Richmond Women’s Bar Association, the board of directors of local nonprofit CARITAS, and the Local Government Attorneys’ Standing Pro Bono Committee.

1. Pete Johnson of Hunton & Williams and Scott Oostdyk of McGuireWoods were co-chairs of the Virginia Bar Association’s Pro Bono Committee when the JusticeServer project began.
2. John G. Finneran Jr., general counsel and corporate secretary of Capital One Financial Corporation, brought a team of experts to the project.
3. The Capital One team (l–r): IT Director Andy Schwarz, Michelle Deane for supply chain management, Brent Timberlake from the legal department, Elizabeth Wood in communications, and Bill Burnet from operations.
4. Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli presents JusticeServer T-shirts to Alex Gulotta (left) and Steve Dickinson, at a luncheon following an April 2012 Pro Bono Summit. The shirt portrays Gulotta’s comparison of the old Legal Aid case management system to a plastic picnic knife — not effective for getting the work done.
Public Service Internship Program: An Investment in the Community and Future Lawyers

by Dana M. Fallon

Each year since 1990 the Virginia Law Foundation has provided public service internship stipends to selected students at Virginia law schools. In 2013, Virginia’s eight American Bar Association-accredited law schools received $5,000 each to fund public service internships during the summer. This important program supports universal access to legal representation and enables law students to work at law-related public service jobs. It also encourages young lawyers to consider careers in public service and to be mindful of the importance of pro bono work. Interns work under the direct supervision of an attorney at an organization in Virginia. These organizations serve a variety of legal needs of the citizens of the commonwealth and provide access to legal services that might otherwise not be available. Some examples of the groups that Virginia law students serve include the Community Tax Law Project, Community Mediation Center, Refugee and Immigration Services, the Office of the Virginia Attorney General, as well as numerous commonwealth attorneys’, legal services, and public defenders’ offices.

The statistics are impressive, with more than $1.2 million provided to more than 400 law students since 1990. But, the numbers alone do not speak to the real impact of the program. These stipends increase the awareness of public service legal opportunities available in the community. Additionally, the stipends allow some students to take on this type of service work who could not otherwise consider an unpaid summer position.

Dan Monahan, a student at George Mason University School of Law, spent last summer at the Fairfax County Public Defender Office. It was a challenge that helped him build professional skills while providing him the chance to make a greater impact on the community. “Without the financial support from the Virginia Law Foundation, I would not have had this opportunity. The grant helped ease the uncertainty about providing for additional support to care for my daughter while I worked,” he said. Monahan’s biggest fear was that if his daughter got sick or when her preschool was closed he would have to take off work, not only reducing the amount of time he had to give back, but also affecting his ability to be a contributing member of the team. “Being an adult law student with a family, I work hard to balance and prioritize the things in my life. The VLF grant went a long way in eliminating a potential conflict in my developing legal career. As a result of my summer grant, I never had to worry about choosing between family and career because the financial support I received meant I would be able to provide both with quality care.”

Malvina Hryniewicz graduated from George Mason in 2010 and currently works at the Office of Special Counsel. Her VLF internship gave her a better perspective on law school and the practice of law. “I first found law school extremely difficult due to the stress of classes and the pressure of grades,” she said. “At the time, I associated the law with competition and academic success. But my time at the Immigration and Refugee Appellate Center showed me that the law could be used to help individuals who were suffering and needed protection. I learned to use the law as a tool to assist real people facing tremendous and unthinkable problems.” With the VLF scholarship opportunity, Hryniewicz realized how lucky she was that her biggest stress in life was law school grades rather than trying to seek a safe place to live. “My experience made me remember that attorneys can make big differences.”

All the participating law schools and students are grateful for the support of the VLF, and especially all members of the bar who support the Public Service Internship stipend program. The efforts of all involved make an immediate and real difference in the lives of Virginia citizens. To find out more about the VLF’s law related education grant programs go online at http://virginialawfoundation.org/grantprogram.htm.

Since 1990, the Virginia Law Foundation Public Service Internship Program has provided more than $1.2 million to give more than 400 students at Virginia law schools the opportunity to learn more about public service while serving low-income clients. Interns from 2012 include Washington & Lee students William Beecher, Jan Fox, and Patrick Sweeney, all class of 2014.

Dana M. Fallon is the director of Alumni Services at George Mason University. She is a 1999 graduate of George Mason University School of Law. Until December 2007, she was a partner at Ritzert & Leyton PC, specializing in administrative and regulatory law related to institutions of higher education. Prior to attending law school, she was an assistant director of residence life at Marymount University.
The 2013 Oliver Hill/Samuel Tucker Pre-Law Institute (HTI) continued to affect the lives of young people by nurturing their interest in the legal profession. About thirty students participated in the institute this year — twenty new and ten returning — aged 13 to 21. The 2013 HTI class included students from all over Virginia, one from Maryland, and one from Ohio. These students were also from diverse racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Held on July 7–12, 2013, at the University of Richmond, the institute drew distinguished individuals from the legal profession, dedicated and committed to increasing diversity in the legal profession. Judges Roger L. Gregory of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, James R. Spencer of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Justice Cleo E. Powell of the Supreme Court of Virginia spoke with the students who toured their courthouses. Delegate Jennifer L. McClellan of the Virginia General Assembly visited the students and led a mock session on how bills become laws, after which the students toured the Virginia Capital. Richmond City Sheriff C. T. Woody and Tony Pham, general counsel of the Richmond City Sheriff’s Office, gave the students an unforgettable tour of the city jail and spent time answering the students’ questions.

On the first evening of the institute, the students participated in an invaluable networking event. Several legal and non-legal professionals volunteered to interact with the students and exchange contact information. The students learned firsthand the art of networking. For personal and professional development, the students also participated in an etiquette dinner facilitated by a professional. This program allowed the students to understand fully the importance of dining etiquette and protocol, and how they will continue to play an important role in their lives as they pursue further education and their careers.

Throughout the week, the students prepared for a mock trial held on the last day of the institute. Session topics included opening statements, closing arguments, direct and cross examination, and evidence. We thank Raymond M. White, executive director of Virginia Continuing Legal Education, for the extensive and comprehensive training he provided. The students also had the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of a panel of admissions officers from Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond, and from professionals representing traditional and alternative legal careers.

The 2013 HTI class graduated in style at the end of the week. Families and friends attended the graduation. The banquet’s keynote speaker, Douglas B. Smith, director/assistant general counsel at Capital One, addressed the realities of the legal profession, inspiring the students on how they can each play their role in standing out and succeeding.

We have no doubt that in less than ten years the 2013 HTI class will represent our profession well.
On my first day at Virginia CLE I was asked an excellent question by one of our staff members: “What makes you want to take a job like this?”

While it was something I’d never asked myself, I knew the answer right away. Having practiced law for fifteen years, I knew the awesome responsibility of having a client on the other side of the desk — it was something I took very seriously. I knew the look — the look that said I was the most important person in a client’s life, or in the life of a loved one. And my look hopefully told them I’d do all I could to get them the best outcome possible, and that I felt confident in my ability to do so.

Whether it was defending a loved one accused of a crime; helping a divorcing parent get as much parenting time as possible; or helping a musician, a writer, actor, or a small business person navigate contracts that could change their lives, those moments made me realize that attorneys who cheat themselves out of meaningful continuing legal education actually cheat more than just themselves. For attorneys to do their job properly, and to sleep well at night (I know you know what I mean), it’s incumbent upon us to make sure we really know our stuff.

So as for my answer: I want to be an important part of Virginia CLE as we help attorneys gain the requisite skill, confidence, and professionalism so they never feel they are letting their client down … or letting themselves down.

I also want to help give our legal community what we need to enhance the administration of justice across the commonwealth, and I want to help lawyers sleep well at night.

You may know that Virginia CLE has been in existence since 1960 and continually strives to be the top quality provider of educational materials to help meet the continuing education needs of the Virginia legal community, and to help Virginia attorneys practice proficiently, competently, professionally, and ethically throughout their careers.

You may also know that we are the Virginia State Bar and Virginia Bar Association sponsored CLE provider in Virginia. We are a not-for-profit, receiving no state funds or dues. We strive to be financially self-sufficient by generating revenue to cover both operating expenses and long-term capital needs while offering the fairest prices possible to our customers.

But one thing about Virginia CLE many attorneys may not know is that we are a proud branch of the Virginia Law Foundation (VLF) tree. And that some of our finest faculty members and highly valued CLE committee members are CLE fellows.

In fact, in addition to its philanthropic endeavors, the VLF supports legal education at all levels and in many ways, including within the legal profession, through Virginia CLE, and in the community to consumers, educators, young adults, the elderly, visually handicapped, and others through educational videos, pamphlets, presentations, and workshops.

This broad commitment to education is one of the many things I find so appealing. Now in my current role as executive director of both organizations I hope to forge an even stronger bond between the VLF and VACLE.

As the strength of the VLF in so many ways rests on our collaboration with other organizations such as the VSB and the VBA, so does the strength of Virginia CLE. Now is clearly the time for us to strengthen ourselves from the inside out, to take stock of what we do, why we do it, and what we want to do into the future. It is also the time to use this strength to join in collaborations across all of Virginia’s legal service organizations to be sure we can and will fully support every attorney who sits behind a desk — and the client sitting across from them.
It is said that the privilege of public service is its own reward. I know of no better example of this than the honor bestowed upon those of us who have served as stewards for the Virginia Law Foundation. As the philanthropic arm of Virginia’s legal profession, over the last thirty-nine years the foundation has granted almost $24 million throughout our commonwealth to promote and protect the rule of law, improve access to justice, and support law-related education.

The VLFF’s history of grant-making in addressing the legal needs of our fellow Virginians is simply astounding. As the articles within this issue of Virginia Lawyer wonderfully illustrate, the foundation has supported and sustained countless legal projects large and small, statewide and local. As the foundation prepares to celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2014, and for all that is has achieved, it is clear that there is much more work to do and many challenges ahead. With those challenges, however, comes great opportunity. The foundation will continue to make a critical difference, and its unrealized potential is enormous.

We are members of the only self-regulated profession in the commonwealth. The Preamble to the Rules of Professional Conduct sets forth the duties attendant to the practice of law and that go well beyond the ethical considerations in the representation of our clients. Along with the license to practice, each of us carries the unique responsibility of our learned profession. The preamble reminds us that a lawyer is a “public citizen having special responsibility for the quality of justice. . . As a public citizen, a lawyer should seek improvement of the law, the administration of justice and the quality of service rendered by the legal profession.” It is my respectful opinion that no organization is better poised to meet this glorious responsibility than the Virginia Law Foundation. As a long-time board member and now as a past-president, I have been blessed with the opportunity to see the good works of the foundation firsthand. It has been truly inspiring to work with so many dedicated colleagues.

Thank you for the honor of service.