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'Lawyers for Literacy'

Legal trio spearhead campaign to raise dollars for school program, 'My Access'



Chris Easthope, Laura Sagolla and James Cameron, l-r, are chairing the 'Lawyers for Literacy' campaign.

—Legal News Photo by Frank Weir

BY FRANK WEIR
Legal News

Three local attorneys are spearheading a fundraising effort to support literacy initiatives in the Ann Arbor Public Schools.

The "Lawyers for Literacy" campaign is being led by James Cameron, Chris Easthope and Laura Sagolla, all of whom are board members of the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation.

The campaign hopes to raise \$50,000 to support reading and

writing programs in the Schools. In the past year, the Educational Foundation has supported a new literacy program called My Access in the fourth through ninth grades.

"My Access is an award winning Web-based writing program that instantly scores student essays and provides remedial instruction where necessary," Sagolla said. "The word from the schools is that the students are really using it, and I know my own fifth-grader has found those instant scores really motivating."

The Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides funds for special programs in K-12 public education.

"Since the passage of Proposal A in 1994, the funding of Michigan public schools has shifted from being 100 percent supported by local taxes to a state-based formula," explained Cameron, "and in a struggling state economy, our local schools suffer. The Foundation is about making up those short-falls."

Easthope added that the trio "hope to show that lawyers consider literacy to be a crucial component in the life of any community and we are happy to support an effort to improve the abilities of our school children."

The three have sent out fundraising letters to the legal community and stated that their campaign will be continuing through the spring.

They invited anyone interested in the program to visit the Foundation's Web site at:

www.supportannarbor.schools.org.

SBM's Keefe, Michael Burke headline WCBA February meeting

BY FRANK WEIR
Legal News

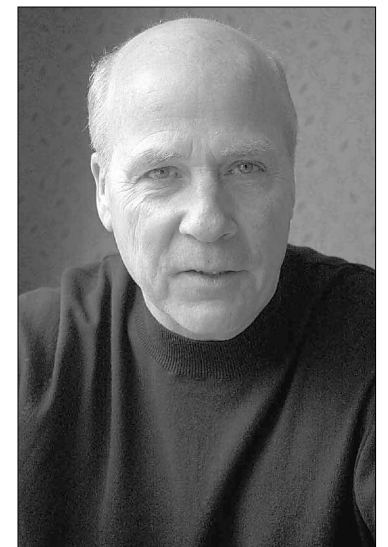
The Washtenaw County Bar Association will be hosting Ronald Keefe, the 73rd State Bar of Michigan president, at its Feb. 28 meeting at Weber's.

The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, dinner and the program to follow.

Keefe will provide an update on State Bar activities including the Judicial Resources Report and initiatives related to the senior lawyers.

In addition, Martha Burkett will be speaking. She is administrator for the Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program, which offers free and confidential consultation for lawyers, judges, and their families deal-

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Michael Burke

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Caminker praises planned expansion of U of M Law School

BY TARYN HARTMAN
Legal News

The Regents of the University of Michigan, the school's governing body, approved in December the first major expansion of the university's top-ranked law school in nearly 75 years.

The school has undergone two significant building projects since its original opening in 1932, but both have been increases in library space.

With an estimated cost of \$102 million, the building plan includes two completely new structures: an academic building that will house classrooms, the school's clinical programs, and faculty and administrative offices, and a Law School Commons.

The expansion will include a significant addition of classroom space, said Dean Evan Caminker.

The faculty and clinical building will be built on Monroe Street, north of the newly-con-

structed Weill Hall, home of the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and west of the new home of the Stephen M. Ross School of Business, making this area of campus a hotbed of recent development.

The commons will rise on the south side of the existing Law Quad and include group study and meeting places.

Caminker said the school has previously done everything it can to effectively utilize existing space without building beyond the confines of the current structure, which made a construction project necessary.

Since its original opening, the law school has seen a substantial amount of growth not only in student enrollment—between 1,100-1,200 students are currently enrolled at the law school, with a first-year class of 350-400 students entering each year—but in the number of faculty and the type of support and administrative offices that didn't exist as part of the original school.

The number of full-time fac-

ulty has quadrupled, forcing the law school to initiate a cap in some years on the number of adjunct and visiting faculty that it can hire because there's simply nowhere to put them, Caminker said.

Teaching methods have also changed dramatically since the early 1930s, when the Law Quad was built, according to Caminker. In addition to traditional lecture classes, Michigan now offers many smaller classes and seminars, necessitating additional spaces appropriate to these classroom formats.

Changes in U-M's law school curriculum have dictated the addition of faculty and opportunities for students to become involved with a variety of clinical programs to better prepare them for their legal careers.

"There are many more areas of law that we feel are part of a complete legal education" that weren't in place in the '20s and '30s, Caminker said.

This includes a Legal Practice Program required for all first-

year students to introduce them to legal writing and other areas of practice, and nine clinical programs, "all of which are designed basically to connect legal education to practical skills that lawyers need," Caminker said.

Caminker said over 50 percent of law students participate in the school's legal clinics. The school also offers traditional law school extracurricular programs like moot court and trial competitions and student law journals.

These additional programs and academic support services require more faculty and staff members to make them run smoothly, furthering the space crunch within the existing school.

Such growth requires more office space for student organizations as well.

"I've been saying 'no' to students for several years who come forward with new and interesting ideas for student journals," Caminker said. "We don't have

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