

A Day at the Courthouse

By Sarah Crane and
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If you were in a Chicago courthouse on April 24, 2009, you may have seen large groups of scholarly young women touring the building, meeting with judges, or participating in a moot court. All of these eager students and potential future members of the legal community were brought to the courthouses through a program hosted by Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project. Women Everywhere is a non-profit organization comprised of lawyers and judges dedicated to projects benefiting women and children's needs, with a particular focus on education and community service. Women Everywhere's motto slogan is "Together, WE can make a difference!" Due to the efforts and support of those participating in this year's program, including the numerous judges and volunteering attorneys, the impact on the lives of

these young women is sure to be invaluable.

The Education Program is an annual event that was coordinated this year with the Chicago Public Schools with the goal of exposing high school women to the importance of education and the many potential career paths they can choose, including the possibility of a career in the legal field. The program also serves to introduce young women to terrific role models. At the Everett McKinley Dirksen Federal Courthouse, students from Kenwood High School arrived and had a busy day meeting with an impressive collection of women judges. For example, they met Judge Nan R. Nolan who discussed the importance of women and minorities in any profession, and they engaged in a frank and thoughtful question and answer session with Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer,

Judge Geraldine Soat Brown, and Judge Jacqueline P. Cox. The students were able to observe a police corruption trial before Judge Joan B. Gottschall. They also learned, through a discussion with Judge Blanche M. Manning, about the variety of ways to use a law degree.

The Federal District Court was not the only courthouse where young women students had rewarding experiences. At the Illinois Appellate Court, students from Kelvyn Park High School and the Chicago Military Academy were inspired by introductory remarks from Judge Arnette Hubbard who encouraged the young women to stay in school and follow their dreams. Following these motivational opening remarks, the young women heard from representatives from the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, including a survivor of domestic violence, in an effort to bring greater awareness to teen dating violence. Next, the young women had the opportunity to participate in a quiz show game, "Who Wants to be a Wonder Woman?" which allowed them to test their knowledge about important issues that affect them. The young women then worked together to form a legal argument and participated in a moot court before Justice Shelvin Louise Marie Hall, Justice Denise O'Malley, and Justice Scott Neville of the Illinois Appellate Court. The students amazed the judges and themselves by how quickly they were able to think on their feet while making an oral argument. In addition to the Federal and Illinois Appellate Court tours, young women from Chicago Public Schools engaged in educational programs at the Daley Center, Cook County Domestic

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UPCOMING EVENT

Calling On Volunteers for June 12

Women Everywhere is a collaborative effort of eight Bar groups working together to plan and coordinate volunteer activities. Now that the Education Program was a tremendous success, Women Everywhere is on to the next challenge and opportunity to "make a difference!"

Annually, Women Everywhere organizes an Agency Day when hundreds of male and female volunteers spend the day at dozens of agencies that make a difference in the lives of women and children every day, such as domestic violence shelters and other community assistance facilities. The volunteers provide direct services such as painting, building, gardening, cleaning, and leading discussions with agency clients.

All of the Women Everywhere service day activities are prearranged and coordinated by the Women Everywhere Planning Committee and supported by the Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, Black Women Lawyers Association of Greater Chicago, Chicago Bar Association Alliance for Women, Chicago Bar Association Young Lawyers Section Women in the Law Committee, Diversity Scholarship Foundation, Filipino American Bar Association, Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (IDC), Illinois State Bar Association Women and the Law Committee, Intellectual Property Law Association of Chicago, and Women's Bar Association of Illinois.

Women Everywhere hopes that you'll consider joining them on June 12, 2009 for the annual Agency Day. Remember, "Together, we can make a difference!" Please complete a volunteer form at www.wechicago.org or send an email to Sepideh Esmaili at sesmaili@quarles.com. For more information about the Women Everywhere: Partners in Service Project, please contact Women Everywhere Co-Chairs Shital Patel at shitalapatel@hotmail.com or Jacquelyn Pinnell at jpinnell@quarles.com.

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Court, and Cook County Criminal Court.

The Women Everywhere Education Program ended with a lunch event at Petterino's, sponsored by Cooney & Conway and Corboy & Demetrio. During the lunch, the young women learned about other careers as Valerie Warner from WGN News and a FBI agent, Julie Anderson, shared their experiences. In addition, Women Everywhere presented scholarships to three very deserving young women who are heading to college. ■
