

When We Are At Our Best



By Thomas L. Cuni

The Cincinnati Bar Foundation will soon be 50 years old. Its accomplishments over the years have reflected the best that we can be as a profession. The CBF has remained true to its original promises. It has encouraged knowledge; it has increased the public's understanding of the legal system; and, it has encouraged respect for the law.

The CBF has made grants to the Children's Defense Fund, to the Cincinnati Child Health Law Partnership, to the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence, and many other worthy efforts — the most well known of which is the Out of the Crossfire program — to improve the lives of the citizens of this community.

The CBF's goal to improve the quality of the administration of justice has been served by grants to support Mock Trial competitions; grants to provide text books and training by UC Law students to high school students; grant programs to encourage disadvantaged children to pursue college educations; and several other similar projects.

The goal of the CBF to help provide affordable legal services to those in need has been evidenced by its assistance to the Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation. The goal of the CBF to foster professionalism and civility has not been overlooked. The publication of the Lawyers Trust Account Book is its most recent gift to the legal community.

Everything that I have listed involves grants and initiatives in 2008. My list is only a partial list for the year (see page 22). The grants in 2008 totaled more

than \$211,000. The CBF has grown into a splendid public charity that is big enough to have an impact on the community but small enough to be flexible and quick in addressing community needs that are often overlooked by larger organizations. Visit the Cincinnati Bar Association's website at www.cincybar.org and select Cincinnati Bar Foundation on the home page. You will find a truly impressive list of goals and accomplishments.

The CBF has a Board of Trustees which is separate from that of the Cincinnati Bar Association. It has its own President, John D. Holschuh Jr., and its own director, Rene McPhedran. The people who serve the CBF today, and those who have served it in the past, have devoted a considerable amount of time and effort to raising the funds needed to support the CBF's goals. Those who serve the CBF have also devoted a considerable amount of time and effort to the selection of recipients for grants. The grants given by the CBF clearly reflect the stated goals of the organization. Those who have worked to make the CBF such an excellent charity have remained true to the goals of the organization.

In the process of achieving its goals as an organization, the CBF has provided

thousands of the citizens of this community with positive encounters with attorneys. The good publicity for the legal profession, while not necessarily a goal of the CBF, is an additional benefit. In the South such an outcome would be referred to as a "lagniappe," that is, a small gift given in appreciation.

The CBF is worthy of your generosity. You will know that your gift will be used wisely and well. The annual 50/50 Campaign is a great opportunity to continue your support for the CBF. If you have not contributed in the past to the 50/50 Campaign, it is a very good way to begin your support. The minimum contribution requested is \$50, and the CBF publicly recognizes firms which have 100 percent of their attorneys participate.

This organization represents what we as attorneys are when we are at our best.

On Nov. 12 the CBF is sponsoring an entertaining event, Cincinnati Bar Idol, at the Blue Wisp Jazz Club, which will feature musical acts by local attorneys. It will be fun and a painless way to contribute to the good work of the CBF. See page 23 for more information and see you there. ☐

Cuni is 2009-10 president of the Cincinnati Bar Association.

Cincinnati Bar Foundation Mission: Promoting justice and changing lives through the law.
Cincinnati Bar Foundation Purpose: With the desire to serve the legal profession, the justice system and the Greater Cincinnati community, the Cincinnati Bar Foundation concentrates grant-making efforts in the following four areas:

- Encouraging knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the law in the community, particularly with young people.
- Improving the quality and administration of justice in all its facets.
- Supporting the delivery of legal services at an affordable cost for the poor, elderly and otherwise disadvantaged.
- Fostering professionalism and civility in the practice of law.