

## **Philadelphia Bar Foundation Completes Successful 2007, Looks to 2008**

*By Elaine Rinaldi, President of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation*

January is named for the Roman god Janus, god of beginnings and endings — a perfect metaphor for the Philadelphia Bar Foundation at this time of year.

In December, the Philadelphia Bar Foundation awarded \$550,000 in grants to more than 30 legal service agencies — a record for the foundation. Combined with additional grants and fellowships earlier in the year, the foundation gave \$650,000 to our legal service community in 2007, a 40 percent increase over year-end grants in 2006.

Our increase was largely attributable to the success of our cy pres program. We raised more than \$235,000 through the receipt of unclaimed settlement funds from class actions. Through the cooperation and partnership of the class action bar and the judiciary, our cy pres contributions, combined with our other fundraising efforts, allowed us to significantly increase our grants and begin to make a larger impact in our community.

In addition to our cy pres success, our Andrew Hamilton Gala and Golf Outing were huge successes. The gala was held at the historic Sherman Mills with more than 400 in attendance. We were honored to have with us Gov. Edward G. Rendell and his wife, U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Marjorie O. Rendell, who presented the Philadelphia Bar Foundation Award to Len Reiser and the Citizens Bank Award to Cozen O'Connor and Saul Ewing. The gala netted \$275,000. If you attended, I hope you had a great time. If you didn't, I hope to see you there next year.

Likewise, our golf outing was held at the ACE Club, a new venue for the Bar Foundation. It was a great course and a fun day. The foundation's golf outing netted almost \$70,000.

As a result of the success of our fundraising efforts, the foundation was able to increase its grants to our grantees significantly, in particular to our smaller legal services agencies that lack development infrastructures to support the critical work they do for those less fortunate in our community. Our grantees are 31 legal services agencies in Philadelphia — organizations that provide legal services to the homeless veteran fighting for his benefits, to the working family facing home foreclosure, to the school child struggling to learn without adequate resources and countless other citizens of Philadelphia in need of legal services. The foundation is one of a limited number of organizations that give unrestricted operating grants that allow our grantees the flexibility to put the funding where they need it most.

Now 2008 begins — and the goals of the foundation are ambitious.

As the primary philanthropic arm of the Philadelphia legal community, the foundation will continue to be both an advocate for our grantees and a partner in giving with our donors. Using its unique position, the foundation will continue to facilitate funding for our public interest community and act as guide and mentor to donors — making sure the legal community's dollars are allocated appropriately and that the funded organizations continue to meet the highest standards of governance and excellence in service.

Last year the foundation expanded its efforts to raise funds outside the legal community through increased corporate involvement. This effort will be continued and developed in 2008. While it's important for the legal community to support public interest legal initiatives, the foundation feels it is equally important to educate and involve our corporate partners in supporting access to justice for the less fortunate of our city.

Although the Philadelphia Bar Foundation's endowment has doubled over five years, we are not satisfied. There will be a strategic effort to increase the endowment through major gifts and planned giving programs in the coming year. We hope you will join us in that effort.

We extend to our generous donors a heartfelt thanks — your generosity did indeed and will continue to make a difference in the lives of so many in our community. We look ahead now to a happy, exciting and hard-working New Year.

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*Elaine Rinaldi is a partner at Cozen O'Connor. Copyright 2008, Philadelphia Bar Association. Used with permission. January 2008.*