Making a Difference

Gene A. Foehl, Media

Gene Foehl of Foehl & Eyre PC has been instrumental in supporting youth court efforts in the City of Chester in Delaware County. Last summer he ran a training program for youth on the law and on youth courts and for years he has donated office space for youth courts efforts. Earlier this year he organized the first Delaware County juvenile justice-based youth court. Foehl has also donated computers and other technology to young people from Chester’s Youth Court who are going to college.

Why do you participate in pro bono work?

I have been blessed by God with a fine and supportive family, a great education and the opportunity to operate my own legal practice and to have direct involvement in many different businesses and nonprofit ventures. These experiences have led me to share what I have learned and earned.

How did you first become involved?

College fraternity community service and law school legal aid, developing an inner-city youth basketball program and taking high school students to trials was the start. I founded Unity Center, an independent nonprofit group initially providing transitional housing for homeless women and children and, later, many different community programs.

Have your pro bono cases dealt with legal issues different from your regular practice areas? If so, how did you adapt?

My primary practice involves commercial transactions and litigation. My pro bono work involves nonprofit organizations, but the housing program took me into marital, custody and governmental benefits; youth court involves criminal and juvenile law and our student center concentrates on education. We lawyers recognize issues and then resolve them.

What have been the personal rewards?

As my classic legal practice ends, I am still looking forward. The Delaware County Bar Association Outreach Committee personal skills classes and common pleas youth court summer internship program offer continued opportunities. By sharing even when I didn’t think I had the time, I met people who taught me that my legal training is valuable in many ways.