

The Campaign
for Endowed
Scholarships
at MCLE

Voices of
the Campaign

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Give a Gift of Scholarship

For the Public Good

The most vulnerable members of our Commonwealth have an acute need for legal services. Think of the battered spouse seeking a divorce, the mentally disabled tenant struggling to avoid eviction from public housing, the refugee seeking asylum—all of them desperately needing specialized legal services so they can overcome their current crises, regain a sense of hope, and move on to productive futures.

Yet much of their need for legal services goes unmet. Despite the commendable efforts of legal services staff attorneys and private practitioners accepting *pro bono* cases, more than half of income-eligible persons seeking representation in Massachusetts are turned away. In large part, the issue is a lack of trained lawyers.

Attorneys who would otherwise be willing to take on *pro bono* matters often lack the specialized training needed for effective representation of low- and moderate-income clients—training in such areas as government benefits, affordable housing, and immigration. Providing this training is MCLE's mission, and it has worked with the Commonwealth's legal services organizations for decades to develop programs and materials addressing these challenges.

The missing link is financial support—scholarships—to ensure that lawyers from both the Commonwealth's legal services programs and volunteer lawyers projects receive essential training. MCLE currently grants nearly 1,300 scholarships annually to legal services staff attorneys, private practitioners accepting *pro bono* cases, and lawyers certifying financial need.

MCLE's scholarship program—a vital component of its mission to educate Massachusetts attorneys and advance the quality of legal services provided to the public—helps makes it possible for hundreds of the state's most vulnerable residents to receive the legal services they so desperately need.

The MCLE Campaign Scholarship Goal

MCLE's ability to sustain its scholarship program at current levels is not assured. After an extensive strategic planning process and development of a long range plan, MCLE has focused on securing permanent, endowed funding for scholarships. In 2005, MCLE launched a campaign with the goal of raising \$2.5 million to endow 1,000 scholarships by 2010. Endowed funds will support each of these scholarships in perpetuity and guarantee that MCLE can continue its support for *pro bono* and legal services representation. Because the professional skills that lawyers learn at MCLE stay with them for their entire careers, the impact of these scholarships is enduring.

Donor Recognition

MCLE recognizes the lifetime giving of individuals, firms, corporations, and foundations in many ways. A gift of \$25,000 or more will establish a scholarship fund in the name of the donor, a colleague, or a loved one. Each gift of \$2,500 will support one scholarship annually and be recognized by a plaque bearing the donor's name on a seat in Milstein Hall. Gifts of \$500 or more are included on MCLE's Donor Honor Roll, which hangs in the vestibule of MCLE's Boston Conference Center and is published in a variety of formats throughout the year.

Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education, Inc. (MCLE), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit institution, has been the leading provider of hands-on seminars and practical reference materials for the Massachusetts legal community for over 50 years. Originally begun as a committee of the Massachusetts Bar Association, MCLE was incorporated in 1969 as a joint venture of the MBA and the Boston Bar Association. In 1976, MCLE merged with the New England Law Institute, bringing to the organization a history of CLE dating from 1953.

For additional information on giving opportunities, please contact Salvatore Ricciardone, Esq., Director of Philanthropy, MCLE, Inc., Ten Winter Place, Boston, MA 02108-4751, 617-896-1596.

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