

# Bench ABE AMERICAN BAR ENDOWMENT *Insuring your life's needs. Advancing your life's work.*



# PRESS Volume 3 Issue 4 Newsletter

www.abendowment.org  
information@abendowment.org  
1-800-621-8981

## IDENTITY THEFT – A REAL THREAT

It's in the newspapers and many of us know someone who has had this happen – identity theft. When it does happen a person's bank and retirement accounts can be drained and major purchases of cars and boats are made using your identity. The ultimate effect is that your finances and credit rating are ruined, something that can take years to repair.

The ABE understands the possible threat of identity theft and we have taken steps to assure your personal information is kept secure.

It may seem cumbersome ABE requires when you to put any change of

address in writing, accompanied by your signature; however, the most common way that identity theft begins is through a change of address. We don't want this to happen to you.

Anytime a change is requested for any aspect of your insurance program the ABE needs to verify that the changes are being requested by the person who holds the account. This ensures that we are not facilitating an unauthorized change.

We want to thank you for your patience in our efforts to protect your personal information. If you have any questions, please contact us at 800-621-8981.

## NEED MORE THAN 24 HOURS IN A DAY?

Life in the fast lane – that seems to reflect the way we all lead our lives today! Time is the one thing that everyone wishes they had more of. How can the American Bar Endowment help alleviate this pressure?

ABE has a portfolio of programs that are overseen by a Board of Directors consisting of ABA member attorneys. The Endowment offers six insurance plans (Term Life, Accidental Death & Dismemberment, Disability Income, Excess Major Medical, Hospital Money and Office Overhead Expense) and a donor advised fund. These plans are designed to meet the needs of attorneys and their busy lives. They are quality programs, with a unique charitable giving aspect.

The insurance plans are designed to generate dividends, which we request members donate back to the Endowment. Members who donate their dividend or experience credits are eligible for a charitable contribution tax deduction on their individual tax returns (no check writing required). Donations are used to improve



Reneé Leskiw  
Executive Director

the justice system by funding grants for legal education, public service and research.

To simplify your charitable giving, the ABE added the Charitable Gift Fund (donor advised fund) to its portfolio of products. The minimum initial contribution of \$10,000 can be made at the most advantageous tax time for you. The tax deduction is in the year the gift is made to ABE. An account is established and named by the donor, whom may then recommend grants be made from their account to other charities at a time convenient to them. ABE assumes the administrative burden of making and tracking those distributions.

To get more information on any of our insurance or charitable products, visit our website at [www.abendowment.org](http://www.abendowment.org) or call 1-800-621-8981.

## Who's Who at the ABE?



Hi! My name is Chaka Bradley and I am the new receptionist here at the ABE. Prior to this position I worked in the mail room and in the Information Services Department. I have been part of the ABE staff for one year now.

My primary responsibilities are answering members' calls at the switchboard and sending the certificates of insurance to our members when their coverage is approved.

Another responsibility of mine is providing courtesy calls to our members during the insurance reinstatement period. I call members if their coverage(s) lapse and assist them in the reinstatement process. I also assist other ABE staff members as needed.

I enjoy talking to members from all parts of the country and look forward to assisting you in any way I can.

If you should have any questions regarding your ABE insurance plans, please feel free to call your personal insurance representative anytime at:

1-800-621-8981

or email us at:

[information@abendowment.org](mailto:information@abendowment.org).

# I CONTRIBUTE MY DIVIDENDS EVERY YEAR...

## HOW IS THE MONEY USED?

Each year the ABE makes grants to support hundreds of research, public service and educational projects in the field of law through the activities of the ABA's Fund for Justice and Education (FJE) and the American Bar Foundation (ABF).

The Endowment's unique role in the ABA family is to "Fund the Future" of the legal profession through continued financial support to the FJE and ABF. (See below for further details on some specific programs ABE grants have supported.)

**In order to "Fund the Future" we need your help and support.** Member participation in our insurance plans is the life blood of the Endowment. Without your support and the dividend contributions made by participating members, we would not be able to continue the current level of grants established over our nearly 40 year tradition of grants to the ABF and the FJE.

Examples of two of the projects funded by the Endowment through the FJE and the ABF are outlined below. If you are interested in finding out about other funded programs, please call the FJE at 312-988-5927 or the ABF at 312-988-6606.

### **C**enter on Children and the Law

In 1978, the Young Lawyer Division created the *ABA Center on Children and the Law*. Supported by the ABE by dividend contributions from insured members, the Center has grown into a full-service technical assistance, training, and research program addressing law and court-related topics affecting children, including child abuse and neglect, adoption, adolescent health, foster and kinship care, custody and support, missing and exploited children, and children's exposure to domestic violence.

Samples of the projects the Center has focused on are:

***Parental Involvement Practices of Juvenile Courts* report.** The report describes research identifying and examining ways courts involve parents in juvenile cases, such as: providing notice of court proceedings to each parent; requiring parental attendance at court hearings compelling parents to participate in parenting education and occasionally ordering sanctions against parents.

***Keeping Kids Out of the System: Creative Legal Practice As a Community Child Protection Strategy* published with the support from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.** This book describes family situations that may need intervention assistance without the involvement of child protective services such as HIV, substance abuse, help with public benefits, and child neglect.

***Representative Payment and Kids briefing/best practices pamphlet for juvenile and family courts co-produced in collaboration with the ABA Commission on Legal Problems of the Elderly and with support from the State Justice Institute.*** The pamphlet addresses best practices for Social Security Administration's Representative Payment Program. Together with a 2-hour model training curriculum, it is intended to educate judicial personnel on this little-known topic and enhance coordination and mutual assistance between state court systems and the SSA's Representative Payment Program.

For more information on the Center on Children and the Law, please contact the FJE at 312-988-5927.

### **A**BF Researcher Laura Beth Nielsen Receives Award

American Bar Foundation Researcher **Laura Beth Nielsen** is this year's co-winner of the Law and Society Association's Article Award for her article entitled "Situating Legal Consciousness: Experiences and Attitudes of Ordinary Citizens about Law and Street Harassment," *Law & Society Review*, (2000), 1055-1090. This study was supported by the ABE dividend contributions from insured members. Ms. Nielsen's article explores the legal consciousness of ordinary citizens concerning offensive public speech as a phenomenon whose legal status has been vigorously

debated, but which has received little empirical analysis. Drawing on observations in public spaces from three Northern California communities and in-depth interviews with 100 subjects recruited from these public locations, Nielsen analyzes variation across race and gender groups in experiences with offensive public speech and attitudes about how such speech should be dealt with by law.

Among these respondents, white women and people of color are far more likely than white men to report being the targets of offensive public speech. However, white women and people of color are not significantly more likely than white men to favor its legal regulation. Respondents generally oppose the legal regulation of offensive public speech, but they employ different discourses to explain why.

Subjects' own words suggest four relatively distinct paradigms that emphasize the first amendment, autonomy, impracticality, and distrust of authority. Members of different race and gender groups tend to use different discourses. These differences suggest that the legal consciousness of ordinary citizens is not a unitary phenomenon, but must be situated in relation to particular types of laws, particular social hierarchies, and the experiences of different groups with the law.

To learn more "Situating Legal Consciousness" or about other research projects of the ABF, please contact Abbie Willard, Director of External Affairs, at 312-988-6500.