

The Bar Around The Corner: Oneida County Bar Association



ONEIDA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

Name of Association:

Oneida County Bar Association

Address /Phone:

258 Genesee Street, Suite 302 Utica, NY 13502; (315) 724-4901

Website: www.oneidacountybar.org

Founded: Incorporated 1906

Number of Members:

Approximately 450

Brief association vision: The association works to maintain the honor and dignity of the profession; promote suitable reforms and necessary improvements in the law; facilitate the administration of justice; elevate the integrity, professional competence and courtesy in the legal profession; positively influence the community's quality of life; and cultivate a spirit of good fellowship among members.

What is your association's favorite meeting location? Fort Schuyler Club, Utica, and an attorney's room in the Oneida County Courthouse.

What is your association's most popular event? This year, the association hosted several Law Day activities, including the State Bar's LYC Regional Mock Trial Tournament. Devery Anderson from Salt Lake City, Utah, spoke about the Emmett Till case at the county courthouse and the Utica Public Library. We also hosted the 10th annual Legal Line, where 12 volunteer attorneys answered approximately 300 calls in 90 minutes while on the evening news. A panel of attorneys discussed their experiences with civil rights. Attorneys, public officials and members of the judiciary attended the Law Day luncheon, where Hon. Hugh C. Humphreys, judge emeritus of 6th Judicial District, spoke about civil rights and the practice of lynchings. In conjunction with the MidYork Library System, a selection of civil rights books and videos were available to be borrowed from the library.

What is your association's goal for next month? Next year? Increasing membership and visibility in the community. We will support the local United Way at Utica's Saranac Thursdays, with volunteers serving beverages to the public. We are planning a welcome reception for Justice Erin P. Gall and Justice Patrick F. MacRae of the Oneida County Supreme Court. We are working on a re-dedication event for the Oneida



Winning Team—Oneida County Bar Association (OCBA) President Elizabeth S. Fortino, right, presents an award to students from the Thomas R. Proctor High School as county finalists in the Region II 2012 Mock Trial Competition during the OCBA's Law Day Luncheon in May.

County Courthouse to mark the recent renovations. We also recently gave a donation to the Ride for Missing Children.

If your association had no budget restrictions, what project / initiative would you first take on? We would host a free trip for our members to be admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court and give each newly admitted attorney the NYSBA practice series as a resource. Add office staff so that we could do more community outreach.

How has your membership over the years helped to improve your association? Each member regularly shares his or her unique talents with the association, which makes us stronger. For example, members maintain our website, volunteer in the community or mentor a newly admitted attorney. ♦

The Bar Around The Corner is a project of the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders, www.nyscbl.org.