



Staff Memorandum

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Agenda Item #10**

Attached for your review is David Louis Cohen's Vice President report with respect to local bar activities in the Eleventh Judicial District.

To: NYSBA Executive Committee

From: David Louis Cohen, Vice-President 11th Judicial District

Re: Local Bar Activities

There are a large number of local and ethnic bar associations located within the County of Queens.

The largest is the Queens County Bar Association. The QCBA provides numerous programs for lawyers and the community. Continuing Legal Education programs are conducted by most of the substantive committees. Evening programs as well lunch time seminars are available. Most programs are recorded and available on compact discs. An attorney referral program provides the community with low cost initial consultations on all areas of law. The Queens Volunteer Lawyer Project matches pro bono attorneys with eligible individuals who can not otherwise afford legal representation. QVLP's work has been recognized by the NYSBA with the Angelo Cometa Award. The Association also runs a CLARO Clinic in the Civil Court to assist pro se litigants in debt collection matters. The Queens County Bar Association realizing that Queens was at the center of the mortgage foreclosure crisis, created a program to represent defendants in mortgage foreclosure matters. This program relies on both a small paid staff and volunteer lawyers. The NYSBA Foundation has given grants to this program for the last two years. QCBA conducts a number of programs where the bench and the bar get together to discuss issues of common concern. The QCBA sponsors a trip to Albany for high school students. They go to the Court of Appeals, the Executive Chamber and both Houses of the Legislature.

The Queens County Chapter of the NYS Women's Bar Association is very active. They have a mentoring program where young attorneys are able to meet more experienced practioners to gain insight in to a particular area of practice. The Association participates in Dress for Success, an organization that collects clothing suitable for work which is distributed to women seeking employment. The QCWBA enters a team in the "Race for the Cure" raising money for breast cancer awareness. The QCWBA sponsors some continuing education programs alone and in conjunction with other associations. It's Judiciary Night is one of the highlights of the legal community social calendar. Many of its members are active in the State Women's Bar Association and other bar associations. The Latino Lawyers Association of Queens County has been recognized by the

Network of Bar Leaders for its community outreach program “ Street Law”. Members of the Latino Lawyers set up legal clinics “in the street”, to provide free legal advice to the community. They also run programs for the community dealing with immigration law issues. The Latino Lawyers’ annual boat ride is a must attend.

The Brandeis Association is comprised of Jewish lawyers and court personnel. It awards a scholarship to Queens law students; conducts a Law Sabbath; sponsors a Holocaust Memorial Program; runs a breakfast program where speakers of importance to the legal community address members and guests. Its members are active in most other bar associations.

The Catholic Lawyers Guild awards a scholarship to Queens law students; organizes a Red Mass; and has a number of dinner meetings. Along with the Brandeis Association they run a joint dinner meeting.

The Macon B. Allan Black Bar Association joins with other local bar associations by co-sponsoring continuing legal education for its members.

The Columbian Lawyers, comprised of attorneys of Italian decent is also active in Queens County. It co-sponsors continuing legal education programs as well as meetings and an annual judiciary night. It also awards a scholarship to Queens Law Student.

There are also a number of small ethnic and geographic bar associations in Queens County. Most of these are social in nature and provide members with an opportunity to socialize with fellow members of the legal community.