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Foundation Profile

presented by **Michael P. Maguire, Foundation President**
March 2014

What is the Foundation?

The **Foundation of the American Board of Trial Advocates** is dedicated to preserve the Constitutional vision of equal justice for all Americans and our civil justice system for future generations by sponsoring and fostering youth civics education, professional education and training of skilled trial lawyers.

The **ABOTA Foundation** is...

- ... the educational arm of ABOTA.
- ... comprised of **Fellows** who support the Foundation financially.
- ... managed by the Board of Trustees.
- ... a separate 501(c)(3) corporation aligned with National ABOTA.

"Justice for Every Generation"

The **mission** of the Foundation of ABOTA is to support the purposes of the American Board of Trial Advocates to preserve the constitutional vision of equal justice for all Americans and preserve our civil justice system for future generations.

To achieve the mission, the Trustees of the Foundation will dedicate themselves to accomplish the following:

1. Provide civic education including the history and value of the right to trial by jury.
2. Elevate the standards of legal professionalism, integrity honor and courtesy.
3. Lead efforts to support the work of the Foundation.

Professional Education

Masters In Trial Series — *training attorneys in the art of trial advocacy*

These nationally recognized educational programs are conducted nationwide by ABOTA members under the direction of the Foundation. In 2014, we will sponsor and assist in 17 Masters In Trial and other Masters series programs around the country.

ABOTA National Trial College at Harvard Law School — *training trial attorneys*

The first ABOTA National Trial College was held on the campus of Princeton University in 2010. In 2012, moved our venue to the campus of Harvard Law School and hope to go forward working with Harvard on an every other year basis. Classes are taught by accomplished ABOTA trial lawyers. With a robust 2:1 student to faculty ratio, we will accept 36 students for the National Trial College, which will take place June 22-27, 2014, at Harvard Law School.



Foundation Profile

Civility Matters — *teaching expectations of civility and professionalism*

This is an excellent and well-received educational program with materials. ABOTA Chapters and members present in law schools and local bars throughout the nation teaching *Why Civility Matters*. We have a ready-made toolkit and there are several ways to present. Many laws schools have now adopted the curriculum. There is a push led by the co-chairs of our Professionalism, Ethics and Civility Committee (Bill Smith, David Casselman and Don Winder) for the American Bar Association (ABA) to recommend it to become a mandatory part of the curriculum in all ABA accredited law schools.

International education — *spreading the message and concept of civil jury trials*

We have sponsored, created and presented programs in locations throughout the globe, including Prague, Czech Republic; Riga, Latvia; Lisbon, Portugal; Florence, Italy; Belfast, Ireland; Rome, Italy; Seoul, Korea; Tokyo, Japan; Madrid, Spain and Rabat, Morocco. This year we will conduct a Master in Trial in Berlin, Germany Sept. 4-6, 2014. These program conferences sometimes include a demonstration of a **jury trial** (a concept foreign to certain cultures) and follow-up seminars/discussions about comparative law, due process, etc. Many times we are presenting to (and with the help of) top national legal officials like Attorneys General, Ministers, Supreme Court Justices, professors, lawyers, law students and occasionally regular citizens.

Youth Education

Justice by the People — *middle school civics lessons focusing on the right to jury trial*

ABOTA created and provides teachers free lesson plans for youth civics education. Justice by the People arose from an idea of then ABOTA National President Ron Rouda (San Francisco) in 1998 that led to the creation of Make Your Case, an interactive video trial game where students compete against each other as trial lawyers in a civil case. Justice by the People has expanded to include 10 lesson plans in addition to Make Your Case.

In 2006, we partnered with Scholastic, Inc., the largest educational publisher of K-12 educational materials in the United States, and have since reached millions of middle school students by making these materials readily and widely available free of charge to thousands of teachers on www.Scholastic.com. Our funding provides for updates, promotions and pushes from the website to reach teachers throughout the year and make a particular push ahead of Constitution Day each year.

In 2014 we are revising and upgrading the lesson plans to meet Common Core State Standards (CCSS), recently adopted in 45 states. If we fail to do so, Justice by the People will become obsolete to today's educators.



Foundation Profile

Teachers Law School — *providing teachers a crash course in the justice system*

Teachers Law Schools (TLS) began in 2009 as the brainchild of ABOTA member David Halpern. They have grown throughout the nation in various formats. Texas sponsors about 30 teachers annually for a 2 1/2 day mini college on the law presented by top lawyers and state supreme court, appellate and federal judges. TLS programs have expanded to several other states. The program has developed into a single-day, in-service teacher training for civics/social studies teachers in collaboration with school districts and state superintendents.

In 2014 we are focused on making Teachers Law School both easier for ABOTA chapters to present to their local school districts/teachers and more relevant to teachers given the adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 45 states. We are working on creating a standard half-day curriculum in CCSS lesson plan format and other outlines of topics of interest to teachers focused on civics education and jury trials. Local chapters will have a ready-made toolkit with half-day curriculum and can choose from a selection of outlined topics or present their own homegrown topics the other half day.

James Otis Lecture Series — *providing Constitutional topics for youth scholars*

James Otis, Jr., was arguably the most influential lawyer of his time. In a pre-Revolutionary War trial, James Otis' argument against the Writs of Assistance that "A man's house is his castle" inspired a young law student and future President, John Adams, who later wrote, "Then and there the child Liberty was born." This concept was the bedrock of America's pursuit of independence. The James Otis Lecture Series has been adapted in various states to provide more local education about the law and history of the law in America. The lectures are often held at state capitol buildings and having the best high school scholars sitting in the legislative seats with lectures from Supreme Court and Appellate justices and law professors.

The ABOTA Foundation supports organizations aligned with our mission

Constitutional Rights Foundation; National High School Mock Trial Championships; and other state mock trial competitions

The Foundation sponsors several high school mock trial competitions. High school students form teams of "attorneys, witnesses and court personnel" and compete against other teams in mock trials judged by actual judges and attorneys. This results in regional, state and eventually a national competition. ABOTA members sit as judges of the competition. Given the limits on our funding abilities, we are presently considering funding on a matching basis with local ABOTA chapters and regional chapters.

iCivics

We partnered with iCivics and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on producing *We the Jury* that teaches civics to students in an entertaining, interactive online game where the students participate as jurors and make decisions analyzing testimony and weighing evidence. Teachers are supported with materials and plans aligned with the Common Core Standards.



Foundation Profile

Journalist Law School, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles – *teaching legal concepts to improve the quality of legal reporting*

We have provided financial support to the Journalist Law School at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles to provide journalists with a better foundation from which to frame legal issues in their reporting and provide them resources to check on the law and the accuracy of their stories.

Open Forum for Civic Education for Our Youth — *Austin, Texas, Oct. 11-12, 2013*

The Foundation hosted key curriculum decision makers in civics education, including leading civics educators, state superintendents and state government policy makers. The conference discussed the state of civics education today, what can be done about improving it, available programs, and best practices nationwide. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was the keynote speaker.

Civics Education: Why it Matters to Democracy, Society and You — *Harvard Law School, April 1, 2013*

Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justices David Souter and Sandra Day O'Connor as well as several leading professors and educators from around the country presented on the critical need to improve the state of civic education in the United States.

National Council for Social Studies Conference — *Boston, Nov. 21-24, 2014*

The Foundation will:

1. Present a vital session attended by 500-600 social sciences and civics teachers on Closing the Gap in Civic Education. This will feature Teachers' Law Schools and civic efforts in Montana at the native American reservation, Miami-Dade County Teachers' Law Schools and Houston Teachers' Law School.
2. Present a workshop featuring the Teachers Law School program.
3. Have a booth featuring the Foundation civics education programs (Justice by the People, Teachers Law Schools and James Otis Lecture Series) and ABOTA in general.

National Center for State Courts

The ABOTA Foundation contributed toward their 2013 civic education booklet series promoting civic participation, including sitting as jurors with the right to jury trial featured prominently aimed at high school students.