

Dear VBA members:

I am writing to request your support on behalf of the thousands of men and women serving the Commonwealth through the Virginia National Guard and other branches of the military. Many of these service members need legal assistance and I hope that you will join your VBA colleagues in this *call to action*. You can help in two ways as described below: by supporting a Veteran's Day fundraiser as a volunteer or donor; and, volunteering to provide legal services through the Virginia National Guard Project on a *pro bono* or reduced fee basis.

### **Veteran's Day Event**

Bob Barrett, Vice Chair of the Veterans Issues Task Force and attorney with SpottsFain, and Matt Kapinos, an associate at McGuireWoods, are graduates of the United States Military Academy. They are combat veterans who served our country in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Bob and Matt have organized an effort to assist Virginia's veterans with their legal services needs by raising money to support an existing program at William & Mary Law School, and recruiting additional volunteer attorneys to supplement the cadre of lawyers who already have signed up to provide *pro bono* and reduced fee services through the VBA's Virginia National Guard Project.

Through Jim Meath's Veteran Issues Task Force, Bob and Matt have organized an event to coincide with Veteran's Day on November 11, 2010. The goal is to establish an annual fundraiser ("the Veterans Day Fundraiser") that will be modeled after the VBA's award-winning Legal Food Frenzy. The purpose of the Veterans Day Fundraiser is to raise funds and awareness for the *Veterans Benefit Clinic at the William & Mary Law School*.

### **How to Help.**

Matt and Bob are mobilizing law firms, corporate counsel and legal professionals throughout Virginia to garner support for this effort. The fundraising goal is to raise **\$50,000** to support the VBC. To accomplish the goal, the committee is encouraging firms to hold at least one fundraising event, which could be a "Jean's Day" on Friday, November 12th (the day after Veterans Day), or some other event that will engage lawyers and staff in Virginia law firms. Several law firms already have committed to making donations to supplement the gifts that will be made by their lawyers and staff.

A kick-off event will be held during the first week of November to capitalize on the approach of Veterans Day and to build excitement around these efforts. You can help by contacting Bob Barrett at 804-697-2017, [bbarrett@spottsfain.com](mailto:bbarrett@spottsfain.com), or Matt Kapinos at 804-775-1191, [mkapinos@mcguirewoods.com](mailto:mkapinos@mcguirewoods.com), to volunteer to organize an event in your law firm or to make a donation. Donations are tax-deductible, and are being collected by the VBA Foundation, which in turn will transfer them to the VBC. If you wish to make a direct donation to the VBA Foundation, you may do so through the VBA website (the

vba.org), by telephoning the VBA office (804-644-0041), or mailing a check to the VBA noting that it is for the benefit of the VBC (The Virginia Bar Association, 701 E. Franklin Street, Suite 1120, Richmond, VA 23219).

## **Virginia National Guard Project**

The second focus of the Veteran Issues Task Force's work this year is to recruit additional volunteers for the VBA's Virginia National Guard Project, through which legal assistance is provided to VNG personnel who are returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Last year, the VBA established a statewide list of lawyers willing to provide *pro bono* or reduced fee legal assistance to VNG service members returning from overseas deployments. Later this fall, a large number of VNG personnel who have been deployed, in some instances for more than a year, will be returning to the Commonwealth. Based upon past experience, it is anticipated that many of these veterans will face the grim reality of legal problems that await their return.

Lawyers from the VNG's Judge Advocate General's ("JAG") staff will screen the VNG personnel seeking legal counsel. Matters that are outside of the scope of the JAG officers' duties and expertise will be referred to volunteer lawyers on the VBA list and matched to the appropriate discipline.

As a part of the Veterans Day Fundraiser, VBA and VSB members will be recruited to volunteer their services by adding their names to the volunteer attorney list. Lawyers have volunteered to provide advice in a wide array of practice areas so far, including: bankruptcy, commercial litigation, construction, consumer issues, criminal law, domestic relations, education law, employment, business law, general civil litigation, health care, immigration, intellectual property, juvenile law, landlord-tenant, personal injury, real estate, social security, taxation, veterans disability claims, and wills, trusts and estates.

### **How to Volunteer**

You can add your name to the VNG Project volunteer list by telephoning the VBA office at 804-644-0041, or by sending an email to [BrandenPatrick@vba.org](mailto:BrandenPatrick@vba.org). The information required for the list is: name and contact information, areas of law, geographic areas of the state that you are willing to serve, and whether you volunteering for *pro bono* and/or reduced fee services.

### **Call to Action**

Please join me and the other leadership of the VBA in supporting this worthwhile cause. Please join your colleagues as a volunteer or donor in supporting the ***Veterans Day Fundraiser***, and also by enlisting as a volunteer for the ***Virginia National Guard Project***. Together we can make a difference.

Sincerely yours,

Stephen D. Busch, President  
The Virginia Bar Association

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