



PHILADELPHIA BAR FOUNDATION

Promoting Equal Access to Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 20, 2009

Contact: Lynne Brown, Deputy Executive Director
215-238-6347

Two Philadelphia Law Firms and Executive Director of Community Legal Services to Receive Prestigious Philadelphia Bar Foundation Awards

Dechert LLP, Berner Klaw & Watson LLP and Catherine C. Carr, executive director of Community Legal Services, will receive two of the awards presented by the Philadelphia Bar Foundation at the 31st Anniversary Andrew Hamilton Benefit, November 21 at Please Touch Museum at Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park. Dechert LLP and Berner Klaw & Watson LLP will receive the Citizens Bank Pro Bono Award, honoring outstanding law firm pro bono efforts, and Carr will receive the Philadelphia Bar Foundation Award, presented to an attorney in the non-profit legal community whose work advances the cause of equal access to justice.

“We believe that good companies make a profit, but that great companies make a meaningful difference in their communities,” said Daniel K. Fitzpatrick, Citizens Bank President and CEO for Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. “Both Dechert and Berner Klaw & Watson exemplify the concept of pro bono services and we are proud to celebrate their level of excellence by presenting them with the “Citizens Bank Pro Bono Award,” said Fitzpatrick.

Dechert has partnered with several public interest legal organizations in Philadelphia to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars of free legal services annually. The firm is also developing practice groups that focus on specific areas of poverty law and provide materials and support for Dechert attorneys volunteering in that area of law.

Despite being a small firm, Berner Klaw and Watson’s attorneys often exceed the 50 hours of pro bono service suggested by the firm’s internal policies. Founding partner Joni J. Berner has set the tone for the firm’s commitment to pro bono by personally performing 500 hours of volunteer work in the past five years.

Long an advocate for the rights of the poor, Catherine C. Carr is a fitting recipient of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation Award. Before taking over the leadership of Community Legal Services – an organization that helps low-income Philadelphia residents obtain equal access to justice by providing them with legal services – Cathy brought numerous precedent-setting class action lawsuits which were used as models for change by legal services programs around the country. Since being named executive director of CLS in 1995, Cathy has provided leadership and vision for her organization and the Philadelphia legal services community at large. As Amy Ginensky, president of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation notes, “Cathy Carr is a role model for every attorney in the public interest and legal services community. This award is well-deserved and long overdue.”

With the presentation of these honors, the Philadelphia Bar Foundation is pleased to recognize the work being accomplished in the legal community to help those most in need.

###