American Bar Association

NATIONAL TASKFORCE ON STAND YOUR GROUND LAWS

Midwest Regional Hearing

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2013

American Bar Association

321 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 75207
MESSAGE FROM

Leigh-Ann A. Buchanan & Jack Middleton, Co-chairs
ABA National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws

Page
5

MIDWEST REGIONAL HEARING ANNOUNCEMENT

7

HEARING SCHEDULE (COPIES AVAILABLE ON SITE)

9

WITNESS BIOGRAPHIES

15

ABOUT THE TASK FORCE

18

ABOUT THE COALITION ON RACIAL & ETHNIC JUSTICE

REGIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE
May 2, 2013

Welcome to Chicago and the Midwest regional hearing of the National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws. Created by the American Bar Association’s Coalition on Racial and Ethnic Justice, the Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, Council for Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, and the Section on Individual Rights & Responsibilities, this Taskforce will serve as an independent leader on the legal analysis and social critique of the impact of state Stand Your Ground laws.

During today’s public hearing, you will hear official testimony from a diverse selection of featured Chicago community leaders and regional stakeholders who will offer distinct perspectives and open the dialogue on the many issues concerning the utility and impact of Stand Your Ground laws, which have significantly expanded the contours of self-defense law in over half of jurisdictions in the United States.

The Taskforce will receive testimony on a variety of issues, including:

1. The utility of Stand Your Ground laws from legal and policy perspectives;
2. The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on public safety;
3. The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on traditionally marginalized communities and racial and ethnic minorities; and
4. The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on law enforcement and the prosecutorial function.
The Midwest regional hearing marks the first of a series of regional hearings in jurisdictions across the United States at which the Task Force will receive testimony for its assessment and consideration in publishing the report of its findings. This report will summarize the comprehensive legal study undertaken by the Task Force and make recommendations concerning the utility of enacted state Stand Your Ground laws as well as their impact on the criminal justice system, affected communities, and individual liberties. We hope that this report will serve as an important guide to state and federal policy makers, government agencies, and organizations throughout the United States. Our next hearings will take place June 6, 2013 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and August 9, 2013 San Francisco, California.

We thank you for your support of the work of the Task Force. We would like to give particular recognition to the Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice for hosting this Midwest regional hearing.

Leigh-Ann A. Buchanan, Co-chair
Jack Middleton, Co-chair
National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws
National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws to Hold Midwest Regional Public Hearing in Chicago

FOR IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION
Contact: (312) 988-5408; rachel.patrick@americanbar.org

Recently formed by American Bar Association entities, the National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws will hold its Midwest regional public hearing on Thursday, May 2, 2013 at the American Bar Association, 321 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60654. The Task Force was convened principally to review, analyze, and assess the utility of the recently enacted state Stand Your Ground laws as well as the potential impact these laws may have on public safety, individual liberties and the criminal justice system.

Expert witnesses drawn from local and regional community and government stakeholders, law enforcement, prosecutors, public and private criminal defense attorneys, and legal academicians will testify on the impact of Stand Your Ground laws in the Midwest region, where several states that have enacted similar expanded self-defense statutes. Topics will include:

- The utility of Stand Your Ground laws from legal and policy perspectives;
- The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on public safety;
- The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on traditionally marginalized communities and racial and ethnic minorities; and
- The impact of Stand Your Ground laws on the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on law enforcement and the prosecutorial function.

WHO: ABA National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws

WHAT: Midwest regional public hearing regarding the impact of Stand Your Ground laws on the community, public safety and the criminal justice system

DATE: Thursday, May 2, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. — 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: American Bar Association, 321 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60654

This hearing is free and open to members of the public and press. For more information on the May 2, 2013 Midwest regional hearing in Chicago, or the National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws, generally, please contact: Rachel Patrick, Staff Director, ABA Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice, at: (312) 988-5408 or via email at: rachel.patrick@americanbar.org.

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The ABA National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws is hailed as the prevailing independent leader on the legal analysis and social critique of the impact of state Stand Your Ground laws which exist, to some degree or another, in over half of jurisdictions in the United States. The American Bar Association-affiliated Taskforce is uniquely qualified to analyze the impact of Stand Your Ground laws and the implications the expansion of the justified use of deadly force by these laws has on protecting the integrity of the criminal justice system as well as individual liberties, particularly those of systemically vulnerable constituencies.

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With nearly 400,000 members, the American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law.
WITNESS BIOGRAPHIES

KARINA AYALA-BERMEJO

Karina Ayala-Bermejo currently is the General Counsel and Vice President of Human Resources for Metropolitan Family Services (MFS). As GC and VP of HR she is responsible for all legal and human resources aspects for MFS. Prior to MFS, she was with the City of Chicago for nearly three years most recently as the First Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Human Resources (DHR). She also served as DHR Managing Deputy Commissioner and DHR Acting Commissioner. Prior to the City, she spent seven years as the Director of Community Services for the Chicago Bar Association (CBA) where she encouraged attorneys to take on pro bono work and collaborated with the bar and various divisions of the Circuit Court of Cook County on initiatives to improve the justice system. She also served as the first Executive Director of the Sun Times Judge Marovitz Lawyers Lend-A-Hand to Youth Program, a foundation that mobilizes the legal profession around the importance of mentoring youth. She was instrumental in securing a $2 million dollar cy pres award, the largest in Cook County’s history for Lawyers Lend-A-Hand. Prior to joining The CBA, Ms. Ayala-Bermejo was an attorney in the Litigation Division of the Chicago Board of Education for 4 years handling labor and employment matters.

HON. DOROTHY BROWN

Dorothy Brown is currently serving her fourth term in the elected office of Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois. As the official keeper of records for all judicial matters brought into one of the largest unified court systems in the world, Clerk Brown has brought revolutionary changes to the operations of the Circuit Court Clerk’s Office since she first took office in 2000. Major projects and services developed under Clerk Brown’s leadership include but are not limited to: Electronic Filing, a mobile app: “Court Clerk Mobile Connect,” an Online Traffic Ticket Payment System, Mortgage Surplus Search, SmartForms (Online Order of Protection service), Smart Kiosks (court information terminals), and DMS (Imaging Document Management System). Clerk Brown has transformed the Clerk’s Office and diligently keeps it in pace with the rapidly changing needs and expectations of court users. Clerk Brown says she consistently seeks to deliver new and enhanced services at the Circuit Court Clerk’s Office because the citizens of Cook County deserve the best and “it’s the right thing to do.” Clerk Brown holds a MBA from DePaul University; a law degree from Chicago-Kent School of Law; and she is a Certified Public Accountant.
JACK CUTRONE

Jack Cutrone was appointed Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Executive Director in October 2009 after serving as the agency’s general counsel for almost four years. ICJIA is not only the State Administering Agency for Illinois but also home of the state’s Statistical Analysis Center, ICJIA’s Research and Analysis Unit. Mr. Cutrone has made integration of the two functions a priority for the agency. The Statistical Analysis Center assists in the drafting of grant proposal requests, developing performance measures, promoting the use of research-based practices by grantees and throughout the Illinois criminal justice system, and within available resources, conducting long-term outcome evaluations of some ICJIA grants. Mr. Cutrone also serves on the Illinois Sex Offender Management Board, Illinois Violence Prevention Authority, Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council, the Redploy Illinois Executive Steering Committee, the Sentencing Policy Advisory Council, and the Risk and Needs Assessment Task Force. Prior to his state service, Mr. Cutrone was a trial and appellate attorney in both the public and private sectors for 33 years, including serving as deputy chief of the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Special Prosecutions Bureau. He also has served as an author for the Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education and has taught on a part-time volunteer basis at area law schools and at bar association seminars in substantive law and trial practice. Mr. Cutrone is president of the National Criminal Justice Association, the Washington, D.C., based federal advocacy group that focuses on developing and implementing national policy to improve criminal justice and public safety throughout the country. Mr. Cutrone received a bachelor’s degree in political science from Loyola University Chicago and a juris doctorate from the Loyola University Chicago School of Law.

REV. STANLEY L. DAVIS, JR.

Rev. Stanley L. Davis, Jr. is the co-Executive Director of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC), as well as Executive Director Emeritus of the Chicago and Northern Illinois Region of The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) now named the Chicago Center for Cultural Connections.

Rev. Davis was the Executive Director of the Chicago and Northern Illinois Region of The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) from February 1984 through December 2003. NCCJ, founded in 1927 as The National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a civic non-profit human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry, and racism in America.

For 25 years, Rev. Davis worked on behalf of young people. He pioneered services for troubled adolescents at local, state, and national levels as an executive of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. He is the founder of Youth Outreach Services of Chicago, which celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2010 and is now one of the largest youth serving agencies in Illinois.
ELLEN DOUGLASS

Ms. Douglass has been admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois since her graduation from Northwestern University School of Law in 1977 when she started working for the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. She has been in the private practice of law since 1984 as a partner at a small firm and since 1997 as the principal of the Law Offices of Ellen E. Douglass with its offices in downtown Chicago. A seasoned litigator and advocate, Ms. Douglass has represented both public and private corporations in a variety of including employment law, municipal law and general commercial litigation. She also has an extensive probate litigation practice. Active in both bar association and community/civic organizations, Ms. Douglass is one of the Vice Presidents of the National Bar Association. Founded in 1925, the NBA represents a network of approximately 44,000 primarily African American lawyers and judges and over 80 affiliates in cities through the United States and internationally.

JOHN A. FAIRMAN

John A. Fairman is a private attorney specializing in Civil and Criminal Litigation. He has spent years in public service in Chicago, Illinois and Washington, D.C., with both the state and federal government.

Mr. Fairman has personally handled hundreds of civil and criminal cases and has built a reputation for always seeking Fairness and Justice in the courtroom. As a former Prosecutor, John served as a Cook County Assistant State’s Attorney in their Felony Review and Municipal Jury Trial Sections. In 2006 he was responsible for prosecuting all 5th District Municipal jury trial court cases and successfully tried and won every case that he prosecuted. During his tenure on Capitol Hill, Mr. Fairman worked with the Judiciary Committee and was the Lead Congressional staff member for the Enron Debacle of 2002 for the 18th Congressional District of Texas, where he helped write legislation to change the United States accounting laws.

LEE GOODMAN

Lee Goodman has been an attorney for nearly 35 years and is the organizer of the Stop Concealed Carry Coalition, which opposes legalizing carrying of concealed guns in public. The Coalition has among its members numerous institutions, clergy, public officials, and more than 2,700 private individuals.
NGOZI C. OKORAFOR

Ngozi C. Okorafor was recently appointed Procurement Counsel for the Illinois Department of Central Management Services, where her practice includes advising upon all phases of procurement and government contracts matters. She previously held other legal counsel roles with the State of Illinois and has been associated with large law firms and corporate nonprofits.

Ms. Okorafor was installed as President of the Black Women Lawyers Association on July 11, 2012. Ms. Okorafor has served as Black Women Lawyer Association of Greater Chicago, Inc. ("BWLA") Parliamentarian since 2000, where she has ensured that the BWLA By-Laws and governing documents have been complied with; drafted the BWLA Voting Procedures; overseen BWLA annual elections; and addressed parliamentary procedural matters as needed. Having served on the BWLA Board of Directors for twelve consecutive years, Ms. Okorafor has undertaken several leadership endeavors, which include founding the Advocacy & Legislative Committee as well as the International Law Committees; serving as Mentoring Committee Chair (coordinating the inaugural Lawyer-To-Lawyer Mentoring Program); serving as Membership Committee Chair (issuing the inaugural membership questionnaire); and supporting BWLA programming where needed.

MARTIN PEREZ

Martin Perez is a Senior Attorney with The Law Offices of Teresita Marsal-Avila in Chicago, IL. Martin practices law in the area of Immigration Law. Martin practices before the Chicago Immigration Court, as well as before numerous Immigration Courts throughout the country. Martin focuses on deportation and removal defense, as well as family based immigration and naturalization issues. Martin focuses a substantial amount of his work on the analysis of criminal convictions as they pertain to the various forms of immigration relief. Martin was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 2002 and the US District for the Northern District of Illinois in 2008. Martin received his BA in Political Science and his JD from Southern Illinois University.

Martin has interned with the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and been a staff attorney with the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. He is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. Martin frequently lectures on numerous Immigration and Naturalization Law issues, including with respect to deportation and removal issues, the effect of criminal convictions for immigration purposes, as well as various other legal matters.

KAREEM PONDER

Kareem Ponder is Sr. Director of Human Capital and Education Programs. His major objective is to incorporate the Chicago Urban League into strategic collaborations with other community organizations in the fields of education, mentoring, and family reunification. He also selects, assigns, directs, and evaluates the performance of direct reports; oversee management development and training programs which support the development of family support, violence prevention and education programs within urban communities.
The key programs for Human Capital and Education include the Male Involvement Program (MIP), Urban Youth Connection, Ex-Offender, YIEP, Nulities, Urban Scholars and Project Ready. Kareem’s advocates to create alliance program models with other community organization, legislators and clergy for the empowerment of the African American community to sustain positive change.

MARIO A. SULLIVAN

Mario A. Sullivan is partner at Johnson & Sullivan, Ltd. in Chicago, Illinois. He counsels clients on a wide range of issues relating to real estate, landlord/tenant, creditor bankruptcy, employment, contract law, business formation, and estate planning. Mr. Sullivan is a member of the Chicago Bar Association (CBA), the Illinois State Bar Association, and the American Bar Association (ABA). In addition, he is a member of the National LGBT Bar Association (LGBT Bar) and Lesbian and Gay Law Association of Chicago (LAGBAC).

Mr. Sullivan serves as 2012-2013 Chair-elect for the ABA Young Lawyers Division (YLD) and will Chair the Division in the 2013-014 bar year; a Board Member and Co-Chair of the Program Committee for the LAGBAC; a Board Member to the LGBT Bar; and a member of the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) Alumni Network Leadership Council.

DAVID WILL

While serving as an assistant public defender for the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender, Mr. Will established a reputation for aggressively and thoroughly representing and counseling clients who were accused of offenses ranging from misdemeanor charges to murder. Mr. Will built his reputation on his commitment to active advocacy, educating and mentoring clients, and conducting in-depth investigations.

Beyond the courtroom, Mr. Will champions causes and has developed programs that support veterans and youth. While assigned to Judge Kirby at the Leighton Criminal Courthouse, he helped to establish the Youthful Offenders Program. This program is designed to interrupt the criminal-thinking cycle and effect changes in attitudes, thinking and behavior by focusing on education and building skills. Similarly, Mr. Will was instrumental in creating the Veteran’s Court Call, which is a solutions-based program designed for individuals who have served in the United States military and have become involved in the criminal-justice system. Mr. Will’s contributions and efforts with regard to veterans have been publicly acknowledged and praised by Governor Pat Quinn.

REV. DR. JANETTE C. WILSON

Rev. Dr. Janette C. Wilson currently serves as the Senior Advisor to Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr. Rev. Janette C. Wilson began her career as a chemist, which led to various teaching positions at all levels – from elementary school to college – in the Chicago area, to the legal profession and finally to Christian ministry. Her employment record is as diverse as her educational background. Dr. Wilson has
taught schools, served as an environmental chemist, a pump engineer, trial lawyer (for 15 years), hosted a weekly cable television broadcast (for 15 years), administered a union based medical center (for 8 years) and been engaged in the struggle for civil and human rights all of her life. Dr. Wilson has served as Associate Pastor of Grace Calvary United Methodist, and Cosmopolitan Community Church, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry for the 1st Baptist Congregational United Church of Christ in Chicago and currently the Associate Pastor of Leadership Development and Strategic Planning for the Providence MB Church. She recently served as the 1st African American female Dean of the Doctor of Ministry Program for United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Dr. Wilson is employed as the Manager of School Climate for the Chicago Public Schools. She organized the volunteer legal clinic for the National Rainbow PUSH Coalition Inc. and became its first volunteer director for a number of years. Prior to her employment with the Chicago Public Schools, Rev. Attorney Wilson was the Acting General Counsel for Chicago State University. Prior to that, she was Executive Director of Operation PUSH. In this role, she implemented day-to-day operations of the organization, created community development networking programs, and created local and national voter registration and education seminars, and introduced alternative sentencing programs in cooperation with various religious organizations. Rev. Wilson spent most of her adult life as a civil rights advocate. She has utilized her investigative skills developed during her years as an environmental scientist, her negotiating skills developed while practicing as a criminal defense attorney and her conscience as a Christian, to assist minorities in receiving social justice and economic parity. Rev. Wilson’s commitment to youth is unquestionable. She has spent her adult life hiring, mentoring, employing, and establishing internship programs for youth.
American Bar Association Entities
Create National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws

The American Bar Association’s Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice (COREJ), the Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, Council for Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, the Young Lawyer’s Division and the Section on Individual Rights & Responsibilities have created the National Taskforce on Stand Your Ground Laws to review and analyze the recently enacted state Stand Your Ground laws that have received increased attention for their apparent adverse impact on public safety and the criminal justice system.

The Task Force will be comprised of members drawn from ABA entities, law enforcement, government, state prosecutors, public and private criminal attorneys, academic experts and other legal experts. Members of COREJ, Leigh-Ann Buchanan and Jack Middleton, will serve as the Co-Chairpersons of the Task Force. A complete roster of the Task Force members will be released in early 2013.

On February 8, 2013, the Task Force and its partners held its southwest regional public hearing, the first for four national public hearings, during the ABA Midyear Meeting in Dallas, Texas. In addition to the public hearing, the first meeting of the Task Force took place on February 10, 2013.

The Task Force will embark upon a comprehensive legal analysis of the impact of the Stand Your Ground statutes which have dramatically expanded the bounds of self-defense law in over half of the jurisdictions in the United States. The multidisciplinary study to be conducted by the Task Force will be national in scope, incorporating criminological and social science methodology and perspectives, to assess the utility and necessity of existing and proposed Stand Your Ground laws across the United States.
The scope of the analysis the Task Force intends to undertake will encompass several areas that directly and indirectly impact the criminal justice system.

**THE PRINCIPAL CHARGES OF THE TASK FORCE**

The principal charge of this Task Force will be to review existing state Stand Your Ground laws and all available qualitative data regarding the impacts of such laws to support the development of recommendations concerning the prudence of modifying or repealing these laws as well as the effect of such legislation on public safety, traditionally marginalized communities, racial and ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged societal cross sections. In fulfilling this charge, the Task Force will endeavor to:

1. Evaluate the construction of Stand Your Ground laws through the lens of traditional criminal law principles to gauge the propensity for misapplication in operation due to missing or imprecisely articulated procedural safeguards, mandatory statutory presumptions of reasonableness, lesser thresholds of proof at early procedure stages, the absence of proportionality requirements, and absence of guidelines to be applied to circumstances involving unarmed individuals.

2. Analyze existing data compilations, including state records, national and state-level reports and published data concerning the measurable impact of Stand Your Ground laws on crime rates, including fluctuations in homicide rates, with the objective of identifying and extrapolating quantitative support for indicators of ways in which Stand Your Ground laws may adversely impact the criminal justice system and the diverse population of constituents with which it interacts. Further, The Task Force will undertake a review and assessment of existing reports and studies of law enforcement agencies, governmental agencies, public documents and private publications that focus exclusively on examining the ramifications of Stand Your Ground laws.

3. Assess the unique impact of Stand Your Ground laws on the law enforcement and prosecutorial function, including the potential endangerment of law enforcement personnel due to expanded circumstances wherein civilian use of deadly force maybe found justified in addition to the propensity for exploitation of Stand Your Ground protections by criminal offenders and vigilantes.

4. Conduct a fact-based investigative review of Stand Your Ground laws by examining the effects of racial or ethnic bias, implicit and explicit, on the perception of threat precipitating the use of force, including deadly force, in circumstances to which Stand Your Ground laws apply. The Task Force will also examine the extent to which Stand Your Ground laws perpetuate imbalance across racial and socio-economic lines within the justice system. Indeed, the National District Attorneys Association posits that
one such negative consequence of this legislation is its “disproportionately negative effect on minorities, persons from lower socio-economic status, and young adults/juveniles.”¹

5. Conduct a series of four public hearings in regions across the country which will encompass states that have enacted Stand Your Ground statues. The regional public hearings will enable the Task Force to measure community awareness of Stand Your Ground laws, perceptions of equality in enforcement and application of Stand Your Ground law, opinions concerning of the utility of Stand Your Ground laws, and reactions to individualized experiences involving interactions with Stand Your Ground laws. Each regional public hearing will solicit participation from community stakeholders, affected individuals, justice system participants, legal academicians and other legal experts.

6. Prepare a final report and recommendations that will: (i) detail the Task Force’s research and analysis undertaken, (ii) concisely summarize the testimony elicited at the corresponding public hearings, and (iii) state the official policy that the Task Force recommends the ABA adopt and actions that the ABA should undertake to preserve justice as it relates to Stand Your Ground laws.

The ABA is uniquely qualified to analyze the impact of Stand Your Ground laws and the implications the expansion of the justified use of deadly force by these laws has on protecting the integrity of the criminal justice system as well as individual liberties, notably, ethnic and racial minorities.

For more information on the ABA National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws, please contact Rachel Patrick, Staff Director, ABA Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice, at (312) 988-5408 or via email at rachelpatrick@americanbar.org.

¹ Steven Jansen & M. Elaine Nugent-Borakove, Expansions to the Castle Doctrine: Implications for Policy and Practice, 6 (2007), available at http://apainc.org/files/DDF/Castle%20Doctrine.pdf, at 12-13 (outlining concerns raised by leading law enforcement officials, criminologists, and other criminal justice stakeholders at a symposium convened by the National District Attorneys Association’s American Prosecutors Research Institute).
A presidential Task Force on Minorities in the Justice system was created in 1992 in the aftermath of the Rodney King disturbances. Shortly thereafter, a report was issued with recommendations by the Task Force. In 1994 the Task Force was re-named the Council on Racial and Ethnic Justice (now the Coalition or COREJ). The Coalition was designed to implement the recommendations and develop partnerships among community groups, civil rights organizations, businesses, religious organizations, and bar associations for the purpose of eliminating racial and ethnic bias in the justice system. Its primary goal is to serve as a catalyst for eliminating racial and ethnic bias in the justice system with a focus on systemic change.

COREJ (1) assists with the development of educational programs; (2) provides public forums for dialogue between legal institutions and non-legal groups; and (3) provides technical assistance and advice on how to implement specific programs, strategies, and partnerships that eliminate racial and ethnic bias.

Since its inception, COREJ has been on the cutting edge of social justice issues. It has focused on a number of substantive and diverse issues such as racial profiling, access to the justice system, overrepresentation of juveniles of color, indigent defense, racial profiling and the war on terrorism, teen violence, the impact of foreclosures on communities of color, voting disenfranchisement and the impact of technology, election protection, injustices and discrimination in Tulia, Texas and restoring justice and equity by providing strategies for disaster preparedness and response that reduce patterns of discrimination and unfairness in the delivery of disaster aid and services e.g. Katrina Project.

RECENT PROGRAMS

- National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws, Midwest Regional Hearing, Chicago, IL
- Know Your Foreclosure Rights: There’s Hope (August 2012, Tampa, FL)
- Do or Die: Analysis of the Stand Your Ground Statutes (August 2012, Chicago, IL)
- Justice Equality and A More Perfect Union: Community Recovery and Restoration After A Crisis (February 2012, New Orleans, LA)
- Raising The Bar on Foreclosure Prevention Efforts – Implementing Pro Bono Programs To Help Michigan Homeowners, Hosted by Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago- Detroit Branch (October, 28, 2011, Detroit, MI)
- HELP! I Need A Housing LIFELINE! (October 29, 2011, Detroit, MI)
- The War Against Foreclosures: Combating Foreclosures and Mortgage Crisis in Communities of Color (July 31, 2011, Baltimore, MD)
- Combating Foreclosures and the Mortgage Crisis in Communities of Color (February 12, 2011, Atlanta, GA)
- Stop Teen Violence: Time To Deliver (August 7, 2010, Golden Gate Law School, San Francisco, CA)
- Stop Teen Violence: Time To Deliver (May 3, 2010, Youthville Detroit, Detroit, MI)
- Stop Teen Violence: Time To Deliver (November 20, 2009, Chicago State University, Chicago, IL)
SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

- Joint Project with the 10CORE Law Student Organization on Foreclosure

  - Overrepresentation of Juveniles of Color in the Juvenile Justice System

  After an alarming number of national studies and reports revealed evidence that there is an overrepresentation of juveniles of color in the juvenile justice system and the justice system, the Coalition implemented a two-prong attack on the problems confronting juveniles of color. The first prong focuses on strategies that prevent young people of color from being trapped in the justice system; and the second prong focuses on strategies that divert young people of color and prevent their initial entrance into the juvenile justice system. A complete listing of juvenile justice programs sponsored by COREJ is attached.

Election Protection Project

COREJ developed a partnership in conjunction with the Lawyers' Committee and five ABA sections, divisions and entities to remove barriers to the electoral process for citizens of color who sought to participate in the 2004 election. COREJ, along with the Section of Individual Rights & Responsibilities and the Election Law Committee renewed their partnerships for the 2008 Elections and broadened the scope of the Project.

The goals of the 2008 Election Protection Project were: (1) Safeguard voters’ rights before, during and after Election Day by giving voters the information and resources they needed to cast meaningful ballots; and (2) Provide a comprehensive support system for eligible voters across the country that included support for registration programs, developing voter education materials, and providing direct legal assistance to protect the rights of voters. A primary goal for COREJ was to train volunteer lawyers who worked with voters on a national and local level to monitor polling places, educate voters, facilitate dialogues with state and local election officials, provide legal support to poll monitors and help answer the Lawyers’ Committee Hotline.

The three primary ABA Partners for the Election Project developed a plan for recruiting volunteer lawyers and law students and the major activities began in June 2008. An Election Protection website was launched on the ABA website.

  - Katrina Project

  The goal of the project was to educate, conduct outreach and coordinate resources and services across the country to assist those survivors that received disparate treatment in the midst and aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. These goals were accomplished by holding a national conference and three CLE programs, conducting outreach, and publishing a Report.

NATIONAL CONFERENCES

  - Third National Conference – “Making the Invisible Visible: A Dialogue About Lessons Learned In the Aftermath of Katrina”

Conference Overview: The Coalition brought together approximately 200 judges, lawyers and their clients, health care workers, social workers, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, high school, college and law students, community groups, religious organizations, public and private leaders, survivors, responders and others who have devoted time to assisting victims of Katrina. The primary goals of the Conference: (1) conduct a productive dialogue among the survivors, planners (commissioners), and the participants; (2) produce a Report which identifies the type of problems that might emerge due to race
and ethnicity, how to avoid inequities based on race and ethnicity, and how to mitigate the problems; and (3) assist the survivors of Katrina with the rebuilding of their lives, restore justice and provide equity and respect to those victims that have been treated unjustly.

**Educational Programs:** Three successful panel presentations have been presented (1) ABA Midyear Meeting in Chicago, 2006 titled “Equity for Racial & Ethnic Survivors of Katrina;” (2) a jointly sponsored program with the National Bar Association as a Webcast Program “Hurricane Relief Seminar,” March, 2006 in Chicago; and (3) “Surviving Together; Healing Together” COREJ convened this special panel of experts in New Orleans to provide an in-depth status report of the communities that suffered disproportionately economically, legally, educationally and medically from Hurricane Katrina.

**Report:** The Final Report of the Conference contains specific recommendations from the speakers, participants and survivors. The Report titled “Making the Invisible Visible: A New Approach to Disaster Planning and Response,” contains an analysis of issues ranging from communications and language skills, to resource allocation, to pre-existing economic and social inequities. A number of excellent recommendations were received from the Conference. The recommendations were included in the Report that was issued in August 2007.

**Second National Conference on the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on the Justice System**
In March 2002, the Coalition held a highly successful conference in Baltimore. The conference was diverse, intergenerational, interactive and action-oriented. Recommendations from the Conference were used as blueprints for COREJ programs and projects. A report is available on the Conference.

- **First National Conference on the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on the Justice System**
In Los Angeles, CA 1999, after holding two "think tank" meetings, COREJ convened an extraordinary conference. Two reports are available: Report on the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on the Justice System provides a brief overview; and the Draft of the National Conference Proceedings with Recommendations.

Several major follow-up projects were developed from the 1999 conference:

1. Enhancing Access to the Justice System through Technology: Would Technology Have Changed the Outcome of the Vote in Florida?
2. Data Collection Project on Color/Racial Profiling: The Tulia, Texas Project
3. Friends of the Council

Honorable Michael Hyman, Chairperson
Rachel Patrick, Director
Rachel.Patrick@americanbar.org
Deidra Franklin, Program Assistant
Deidra.Franklin@americanbar.org
Website: [www.americanbar.org/corej](http://www.americanbar.org/corej)
Eastern Regional Hearing  
June 6, 2013  
Philadelphia, PA

Western Regional Hearing  
August, 9, 2013  
San Francisco, CA

CALL FOR TESTIMONY

If you have an interested in providing written or live testimony for any of the regional Taskforce hearings, please contact:

Rachel Patrick, Staff Director  
Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice, 321 N. Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60654  
(312) 988-5408  
E-mail: rachel.patrick@americanbar.org