

center news

And the Winner Is...2016 Holiday Card Contest Celebration



The Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest and Foundation Relationship Grantee, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts of Massachusetts (VLA-MA), have held their longstanding "holiday card contest." This collaboration invites Boston public school students to submit original artwork, with winning entries chosen to be one of Brown Rudnick's

holiday card offerings. The judging of the artwork took place in Brown Rudnick's Boston office, with 12 participating schools and over 300 art entries!

The 2016 winner titled "Winter Trees" was created by student Kathrine Knuyen, age 7, from the Roger Clap School. Also recognized were 25 additional winners in categories for Artistic Merit, Middle School, High School and People's Choice.

On December 6th, at Brown Rudnick, contestants, their teachers and families, and Brown Rudnick staff, partners and Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation board members gathered to celebrate this year's winners at an awards reception hosted by the contest sponsor, Brown Rudnick's Center for the Public Interest.

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Visit the [Center Website](#)

foundation news

Cover story continued...

The first-place winner had her artwork made into a holiday card, which is used by the Firm and sold by VLA-MA. Every winning student received an award certificate and art supplies.

Created in 2004 to support arts education in Boston Public Schools, the contest has provided an opportunity for educators to engage students in an art enrichment program. The contest was initiated with a grant from the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation and with assistance from the Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest, as well as through the support of the Boston Public Schools.



Middle School Winner
“Untitled”
Melanie Nunez Serena



High School Winner
“A Season Scent”
Lily Granados



Card Winner
“Winter Trees”
Kathrine Nguyen



Artistic Merit
“Untitled”
Paige Robinson

foundation news

Hartford Lunch with the Mark Twain House & Museum

The Center Executive Director Al Wallis, Foundation Board Secretary Doug Cohen, partners, associates and staff gathered in the Brown Rudnick Hartford office to host 2016 Relationship Grantee Mark Twain House & Museum for a special presentation on November 17th.

Participants engaged in a conversation with the 25 sophomore students from Capital Preparatory Magnet School's summer program studying Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. Students discussed the essays they each wrote in response to the question, "What can we learn, if anything, about eliminating racism through Mark Twain and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?"

The mission of The Mark Twain House & Museum is to foster an appreciation of the legacy of Mark Twain as one of our nation's defining cultural figures, and to demonstrate the continuing relevance of his work, life and times.



The Mark Twain House & Museum



foundation news

Mousetrap Event in London

London Foundation Relationship Grantee Mousetrap hosted a team of Brown Rudnick attorneys and staff at a relaxed performance of Mamma Mia! for families of children with special needs.

“A BIG Thank you to Mousetrap for offering this amazing opportunity and to all your sponsors and the cast of Mamma Mia, for their patience and understanding on the night and for making it a special night out as a complete family for the first time!

THANK YOU!”

“We absolutely salute all of you!! We are blown away by the huge amount of time and effort that goes into every relaxed performance. The attention to detail...the sensitivity of all involved and the amazing resource booklets you provide are absolutely incredible.... making sure that the fun and excitement begin way before the performance itself. The staff on the night were so warm and friendly. It was a "golden evening for us all" and my older daughters were able to lose their inhibitions and were clapping and singing away alongside their special needs sister.... the sight was absolutely heart-warming.”

Mousetrap
theatreprojects



foundation news

Send us your
photos!

THE BROWN RUDNICK
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION CORP.
FINANCED BY THE BROWN RUDNICK
CENTER FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

IT'S OUR FOUNDATION



*Pictured above Xue Yi Liao (Sherri)
Brown Rudnick Summer Intern*

What does the Center mean to you? Has a Relationship Grant or Community Grant helped your school, or helped bring an innovative educational program to life? Maybe as a lawyer, your work on a pro bono matter helped make a difference in someone's life. Or, perhaps you participated in a volunteer day organized by the Center that you found particularly fulfilling. Share your experience with us!

You can also post photos to the Brown Rudnick [Facebook](#) page at and don't forget to include #CenterSelfie!

To participate, send your digital photo (with proper photo credit and a brief caption) to [Elizabeth McGeoy](#)

(By submitting your photo you agree that you are responsible for ensuring that you have the right to submit the photos, including authorization for the photos use by the Center and Foundation from anyone appearing in the photo.)



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CENTER FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

grantee news

Children's Friends Garden Grant

In early October Center for the Public Interest Executive Director Al Wallis and Center Coordinator Elizabeth McGeoy visited Children's Friends, a head start program in Providence, RI and recent Foundation Community Grantee. The grant allowed creation of a learning gardening project. Grant applicant Jacquelyn Bell accompanied by colleagues David Caprio, Lisa Ferrucci and Amy Peters gave a tour of the Head Start location and garden project that provided teachers with a hands on learning tool to encourage healthy eating and STEM learning for low income children ages 3-5.

Brussel sprouts, tomatoes and many other vegetables were used in conjunction with related books and learning resources that captured the interest of over 90 students at Children's Friends.



grantee news

Grant Supports Martin Van Buren High School Library

The Foundation awarded a Community Grant to Martin Van Buren High School in Queens Village, NY. The grant will help the school library to purchase a much-needed copy machine to support 1,500 students.

“The addition of a professional copy machine for our library will be greatly appreciated. It will be used to support the students and staff and is going to be a major benefit for the school’s library.” - Gerri Calandro, Martin Van Buren High School’s Library Media Specialist and grant applicant

Grant Helps Richard Wright Public Charter School Expand High School Reading Program

Thanks to the Foundation’s Community Grant, Richard Wright Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. will be able to expand its personalized reading program for students in grades 8-12. The program currently reaches 100 high school students, and the grant will help purchase additional reading licensures and materials for 30 more students.

“The school’s reading program has had great success in the last five years helping to narrow and close the reading gaps among its students. Thanks to the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation, we can close a budgeting gap and help 30 more students become successful readers.” - Helen Compton-Harris, Richard Wright Public Charter School Outreach and Development Administrator and grant applicant



OUR FOCUS

RELATIONSHIP GRANTS

These annual grants seek to improve inner-city education by forming a relationship with a tax-exempt organization that optimally includes providing financial support, pro bono legal representation and volunteer connections.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Created to support front-line educators who often do not have a voice in funding decisions, the Foundation’s Community Grants subsidize small, immediate, concrete projects, which will improve inner-city education.

PRO BONO WORK & VOLUNTEERING

Brown Rudnick seeks opportunities to extend its support of grant recipients through pro bono legal representation and volunteerism.

grantee news

Grant Helps Bring Enrichment Activities to Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School

The Foundation awarded a Community Grant to Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in Washington, D.C. to help fund a student enrichment program coordinated by Communities In Schools of the Nation's Capital (CIS) that includes activities such as robotics, yoga, sewing, painting and athletics.

"We want to help engage our students in enrichment activities throughout the year to spark their interest in learning and help them stay engaged in school year-round. A CIS site coordinator will help organize and implement the enrichment activities at King Elementary School." - Nigel Clavis, CIS Site Coordinator at King Elementary and grant applicant

Grant Helps Staten Island Public School Introduce Ocean-Themed Curriculum to First-Graders

The Foundation's Community Grant will help introduce a year-long ocean theme curriculum to first-grade students at P.S. 22 Graniteville School in Staten Island, NY that incorporates literacy and art lessons. The grant will help purchase books, reading tablets and art supplies for student activities.

"A thematic curriculum helps to engage children in the learning process with a variety of lessons and projects in subjects from art and music to science and math. A common theme keeps student learning focused on a broad concept while touching on specific knowledge and skills throughout. Thanks to the Charitable Foundation, our first-graders can benefit from this experiential learning program." - Brenda Sperling, P.S. 22 Graniteville School first-grade teacher and grant applicant.



grantee news

Grant Supports Robotics Club at Bronx Charter School for Better Learning

The Foundation awarded a Community Grant to Bronx Charter School for Better Learning, Bronx, NY. The grant will support the school's STEM curriculum by helping a student team from the Robotics Club to compete in a FIRST Lego League competition. As participants in this league, students are challenged to research a real-world problem and develop an innovative solution, using Lego robots that they build from kits.

“As an advisor to the Robotics Club, I wanted to provide students with an opportunity to explore STEM concepts, while working as a team in the FIRST Lego League competition. The grant dollars will allow us to provide students with more resources that allows them to build a wider range of robot types and expand their imaginations.” - Alison Stuart, Fifth Grade Teaching Assistant and Robotics Club Advisor at The BBL and grant applicant

All year the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation seeks applications for educational grants to support inner-city educators through its Community Grant Program. Created to support front-line educators who often do not have a voice in funding decisions, the Community Grants subsidize small, concrete projects, which will improve inner-city education within Boston; Hartford; London; Providence; New York; Washington, DC, or Orange County, California within the coming year. The grant applications and an explanation of the program can be found [HERE](#).



[Center Debuts](#)

[New Video!](#)

To learn more about
the Foundation's
Community Grants,
watch the Center's
latest video

[HERE](#)



community involvement

DCF Holiday Gift Drive



Throughout November and December, Brown Rudnick partnered with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to bring joy to 57 children in the Boston area. The Firm's partners and staff generously sponsored these children, by providing them with gifts from the child's holiday wish list. These gifts include everything from clothing and toys to sports items and movie passes.

Thank you to everyone from Brown Rudnick's Boston office who participated!

Lee Denim Day

The Center for the Public Interest would like to thank all staff and partners of Brown Rudnick for participating in this year's Lee Denim Day! Together with generous donations and participation by every Brown Rudnick office we have raised over \$1,075 for the American Cancer Society. For more information please visit <http://www.lee.com/denim-day.html>.

A special thank you to Elizabeth McGeoy, Diana Nelson, Claudia Teitelbaum, Val Jones, Denise Kaer, Jessica Pels and Amy Bull for leading this effort in each office.



New York



Orange County, CA



Hartford, CT



London

pro bono accolades

Bridgeman, et al v. District Attorney for Suffolk County



A Pro Bono/Center Accolade was presented to Brown Rudnick Boston Partner, Elizabeth Ritvo, for her admirable initiative, leadership, and skill in serving on the Boston Bar Association's

Amicus Curiae Committee. Liz provided pro bono representation in the BBA Amicus Brief in Bridgeman, et al v. District Attorney for Suffolk County. This case, recently argued in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, arises from thousands of criminal cases in which drug test results were tainted by a state chemist's inappropriate conduct of the tests. The Firm's client urged the state's highest court to adopt a global process for resolving or reviewing these cases, a large volume of which have already resulted in convictions and incarceration on drug or related charges.

*Since 2001, when the Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest was created, Brown Rudnick has provided more than **120,665** hours of pro bono legal representation valued at approximately **\$52 million** and the Foundation has provided community and relationship grants totaling more than **\$2.75 million** to charitable organizations involved in inner city education.*

pro bono accolades

U.S. Serviceman

Justin Morgan, an associate in Brown Rudnick's Orange County Office, recently scored a huge pro bono win on behalf of a former U.S. serviceman who was discharged from the Army for medical reasons. Justin secured a rare upgrade to the client's discharge status and a return of his enlistment bonus that had been unlawfully seized.

Our client was diagnosed with a mental health disorder while stationed in Germany as an interpreter. His superiors were hostile to his condition and eventually recommended his discharge. Although entitled to an honorable discharge, his discharge status was reduced, causing damage to our client's reputation and difficulty finding new employment. To make matters worse, the Army attempted to collect the \$6,000 reenlistment bonus from the now-unemployed father of four.

The client came to Brown Rudnick through the Orange County Chapter of the Public Law Center. Justin handled the matter from start to finish, including interviews of the client's superiors in Germany (some of whom had left the military), researching the dense Army regulations governing discharge status and enlistment bonuses, and multiple rounds of briefing the issues.

After almost two years, the Army Discharge Review Board voted unanimously to upgrade our client's discharge status to "Honorable," and the Army Board for Correction of Military Records ruled, also unanimously, that the Army's attempts to recoup the enlistment bonus were improper and directed that all funds collected from the client be returned.

Congratulations Justin on your great work and the excellent result for our client!

The client was incredibly grateful:

"Dear Mr. Morgan

I wanted to express my sincere gratitude for your efforts and dedication for my case. I can't tell you how much we appreciate everything you and your office have done for us. It was quite a long and upsetting process and certainly impossible for me to get any result without your help. I am grateful to you that you took all the stress and restored everything for me. Your brilliant legal arguments, knowledge and determination were something that solves my case. Thank you."

Our contact at the Public Law Center was also very appreciative of Justin's efforts:

"Justin,

That is INCREDIBLE! I can't even tell you how difficult it is to get discharge upgrades, and to get the waiver as well is amazing. Wonderful work."

just us

A New Year.

Wishing everyone within reading distance of this newsletter hope, health and happiness in this New Year.

*Let our New Year's resolution be this:
we will be there for one another
as fellow members of humanity,
in the finest sense of the word.*

- Goran Persson

- Al Wallis



BROWN RUDNICK *Holiday Party* 2016

Pictured here, inhabitants of the Boston office's southeastern corridor, location of the Center for the Public Interest.

Please contact Al Wallis or Elizabeth McGeoy to discuss any matters regarding the Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest. Thanks especially to Lisa Murray, and Elizabeth McGeoy for their assistance with this newsletter. And finally, apologies for any errors or unintentional omissions, which may from time-to-time, occur in the Center Quarterly - maybe even this one.

- Al Wallis