

Appleseed This Week

eNewsletter - March 11, 2010



A nonprofit network of 16 public interest justice centers in the U.S. and Mexico, Appleseed is dedicated to building a society in which opportunities are genuine, access to justice is universal and equal, and government advances the public interest.

Celebrating Pro Bono in Chicago

Appleseed and the Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice will co-host a celebration of pro bono commitment, "Organizing for Social Change in Chicago," on March 25. The program and evening reception will be held at the Art Institute of Chicago, where Appleseed will honor three outstanding pro bono leaders. [Click here for details.](#)

Roger Pascal, partner at *Schiff Hardin LLP*, will receive the Unsung Hero Award for his commitment to pro bono legal work and dedication to public service. In addition, Appleseed will present the Corporate Leader Award to William Von Hoene, Jr., Executive Vice President at *Exelon Corp.*, for his exemplary leadership in promoting pro bono work in the corporate legal community.

Appleseed will also honor *Kirkland & Ellis LLP* with the Pro Bono Champion Award for the firm's leadership in promoting and practicing pro bono work. For more information, contact Nakia Kelly at 202.347.7960 or nkelly@appleseednetwork.org.

Heir Property: Model Law Update & Volunteer Training in GA

The national Uniform Law Commission's Drafting Committee on the Uniform Partition of Inherited Property Act will meet March 26-28 to finalize its draft of proposed uniform state legislation concerning the means for selling or dividing heir property, land that has been passed down from generation to generation without a valid will.

One of Appleseed's key pro bono partners in Louisiana and Alabama, *Adams and Reese*, is generously hosting a reception for the drafting committee and other ULC officials. Appleseed and its pro bono partners have been comparing laws in 22 states to early drafts of that legislation, with Heir Property Program Director Craig Baab serving as an official observer of the committee. The Uniform Partition of Inherited Property Act will be considered for approval by the ULC in

July 2010.

Meanwhile, Appleseed Centers continue local efforts to help heir property owners protect and claim the full value of their land. As part of the Atlanta Bar Association's Pro Bono March Madness campaign, Georgia Appleseed last week introduced its Heir Property Attorney Training Manual during a Continuing Legal Education course.

The manual, soon to be posted on [Georgia Appleseed's website](#), is designed to train non-real estate attorneys to work pro bono to help heir property owners secure clear title to their homes and land, thereby gaining access to the property's financial value and eliminating the threat of unfair dispossession. The March 3 course attracted 28 attendees; presenters included Crystal Baker, Georgia Appleseed's Heir Property Project Manager and UGA Law Cousins Fellow, as well as Avril McKean Dieser, chair of the Young Professionals Council, whose signature project is heir property.

Also presenting was Shunta Vincent McBride of *DLA Piper*. The firm was instrumental in producing the manual and is one of the Center's leading pro bono partners.