In 1998, the Chicago Bar Association proudly celebrated a half-century of charitable giving through the Chicago Bar Foundation. Fifty years earlier, in June of 1948, Lawrence Mills, George Woods, and Owen Rall met to discuss ways that the CBA might encourage lawyers to support charitable and educational activities. They had no way of knowing that their brainstorming would result in a charitable foundation with an endowment of over $4 million, volunteer programs serving hundreds of families, annual grants in excess of $300,000, and a stated mission of improving access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. These are the roles the Foundation plays in 1999 as it begins its 51st year of operation.

The articles of incorporation, reprinted on the back of the Foundation's stationery for its first 10 years, listed the following as goals:

1. To foster and maintain the honor and integrity of the legal profession;
2. To improve and facilitate the administration of justice;
3. To promote the study and research of law, the diffusion of legal knowledge, and the continuing education of lawyers;
4. To publish and distribute addresses, reports, treatises, and other literary works on legal subjects;
5. To maintain a law library;
6. To acquire, preserve, and exhibit rare books and documents, objects of art, and items of historical interest having legal significance or bearing on the administration of justice; and
7. To relieve, aid, and assist, as charitable acts, deserving members of the Bar who are ill, incapacitated, or superannuated and in need of aid.

Then Cook County Board President Richard Phelan and Justice for Youth Chair Joel Bellows were flanked by CBA leaders Donald Hubert and Richard Prendergast during a campaign organizing meeting in 1993.
The Foundation's original purposes were oriented to the needs of the legal profession, rather than the needs of the public at large.

In fact, there was considerable discussion among the organizers in the first year or two about raising funds for needy lawyers and the widows of deceased lawyers, acquiring a permanent home for the CBA (to take the place of its rented quarters at 29 South LaSalle), and supporting other activities in which CBA members had a personal interest. At one of the early meetings, though, board member James Oates (Chair of Peoples Gas, Light & Coke Co. and a former partner at Sidley, Austin, Burgess & Harper) asserted that "the public service objectives of the Foundation—not its 'guild functions'—should be kept foremost." Those objectives form the primary role of the Foundation today.

The first application for support by what later came to be called a legal service provider was from the Legal Aid Bureau in 1952. The Bureau, which dated from 1888, was the oldest—and, for many years, the only—agency in the Chicago area that provided free legal services to the poor. From 1922 to the 1960s, the Legal Aid Bureau was under the joint control and support of United Charities and the CBA's Legal Aid Committee. The Foundation approved the application and made its first $100 grant to a legal service program.

Despite this early donation, in the period that followed it, the Foundation was more concerned with building up the endowment than with giving away the money. Grant applications were relatively few and far between, and projects suggested by well-known lawyers or the CBA received most of the attention. These projects included many years of binding U.S. Supreme Court briefs.

The Foundation began doing fundraising events in 1996. In 1998, Jazz Gala co-chairs Walter Kurczewski, Sharon Hackett and Robert Clifford helped the Foundation net $110,000 for direct service programs.

Fifty Years of Bar Foundation Presidents

1948 - 1958 Lawrence C. Mills
1959 - 1960 Edward H. McDermott
1960 - 1962 Richard Bentley
1965 - 1966 Willis D. Nance
1966 - 1967 Len Young Smith
1967 - 1968 E. Douglas Schwantes
1969 - 1971 Thomas J. Boodell, Sr.
1972 - 1973 Russell Bundesen
1974 - 1975 John L. Malone
1976 - 1978 George W. Overton
1981 - 1982 George Kelm
1983 - 1984 Richard William Austin
1984 - 1985 Kenneth C. Prince
1986 - 1987 Esther R. Rothstein
1988 - 1989 Jack M. Greenberg
1994 - 1995 Howard M. McCue, II
1996 - 1997 Thomas H. Morsch
1998 - 1999 Bruce D. Becker
for the CBA library, a project taken over from the Silas Strawn Legal Research Foundation; fundraising assistance for the Association's Centennial celebration, and a number of proposals put forth by various Association committees. In addition, the Foundation made grants of a somewhat more liberal character, including a $10,250 donation for education about law in the Chicago public schools, the support of a DePaul University program for social workers, and, in 1976, the beginning of long relationships with the Illinois Court Watching Project, Lawyers for the Creative Arts, and Chicago Volunteer Legal Services.

In 1968, the Foundation officially changed its name from The Chicago Bar Association Foundation to the Chicago Bar Foundation. The purpose of the change was to avoid confusion and to lend emphasis to the Foundation's evolving independence and role in the community.

In the early days, all of the Foundation's funds were invested in obligations of the federal government. Beginning in the 1960s, the Foundation invested a portion of its funds in high quality common stocks. By April 1976, the aggregate value of the portfolio was about $700,000.

Most gifts to the Foundation in the 1970s and 1980s were general, undirected contributions. A few, however, were made for specific purposes, such as supporting a particular community initiative or honoring a lawyer who had had a unique impact on the profession or the administration of justice. Among the latter was the Maurice Weigle Award, which continues to be awarded annually to

The Chicago Bar Foundation depends on generous firms and individuals to sustain and expand our efforts. We especially thank the following 1999 Anniversary Fellows and Program Sponsors who have already committed to supporting our programs, and look forward to including others in the months to come

**Anniversary Fellows**

Kimball Anderson  
Forrest S. Bayard  
Michael G. Beemer  
Peter Birnbaum  
Wilber H. Boies  
Terrence M. Burns  
Mary Ellen Cagney  
Thomas A. Clancy  
Michael Coffield  
Robert J. Downing  
Kevin P. Durkin  
David W. Ellis  
Andrew Gelman  
Robert A. Glaves  
Jean M. Golden  
Milton Gray  
Dolores K. Hanna  
John J. Held  
David Hilliard  
Austin L. Hirsch  
Roy E. Hofer  
Mary Hutching Reed  
William J. Linklater  
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William Blair & Company
a Chicago lawyer under age 36 who has made a special contribu-
tion to the profession and the community. The first awardee was 
Peter Tomei, a young but influential member of the Illinois 
Constitutional Convention. Other 
awardees over the years have had similar accomplishments.

In 1975, Mrs. Walter H. Moses funded a law school scholarship program in memory of her hus-
band, under which a scholarship is awarded for a three-year period to each of the Chicago-area law 
schools, in rotation. The same deserving student receives the scholarship for all three years, and 
many have become highly successful members of the Bar.

In the 1970s, the Foundation increased its net worth by encour-
gaging CBA members to contribute. In June 1973, the CBA changed its 
semi-annual dues statements to include a section by which mem-
ers could check off a $6 contribu-
tion to the Foundation. The pro-
gram became the principal source of new funds for a number of years. 
In 1980, the foundation hired its 
first staff person, selecting Doris 
Bernstein to serve as Executive 
Director. By the end of the 1988-
89 fiscal year, the Foundation’s 
total endowment stood at $2.4 
million. During that year, it made 
aggregate grants of slightly more 
than $200,000 to community orga-
nizations, legal service providers, 
and various projects to help the poor and improve the administra-
tion of justice. It had most of the 
traditional characteristics of a 
charitable foundation, collecting 
funds and donating them to wor-
thy causes.

A significant enlargement of 
the Foundation’s programs took 
place in 1989 with the employ-

The first Thomas Morsch Public 
Service Award was given to Laurene 
Heyback for her exceptional career 
of public service. Above, CBF presi-
dent Bruce Becker and Executive 
Director Betsy Densmore present 
the unique award and a cash prize 
of $10,000 to Heyback, as award 
sponsor Thomas Morsch looks on.
ment of Elizabeth Densmore as Executive Director, who surmised that the Foundation could not continue to rely on the voluntary check-off as its principal means of support. Densmore warned that the Foundation would have to explore new fundraising initiatives if it wished to preserve its leadership role in the Chicago legal community. On the other hand, the Foundation needed to fill a void in services. Densmore and Bar Foundation Presidents Thomas Howell of Quaker Oats Company, and Howard McCue of Mayer, Brown & Platt suggested using the Foundation's resources to encourage the creation of new programs, promote efficiency, and eliminate overlapping services among legal service providers, government agencies, and the courts.

The first of the new initiatives was sponsorship of the Justice for Youth Campaign in 1992. That was followed shortly by a Volunteer Support Program, which matched volunteer lawyers with legal service providers that need help, and the Lend-A-Hand Program, which provided an avenue for lawyers who want to support tutoring and mentoring for inner-city youth. Thanks to the Demetrio family, the Lend-A-Hand program also began to give annual cash awards to the city's best tutor/mentor programs.

More recently, the Foundation has worked with the Court to establish help desks at high-volume courtrooms throughout the Cook County area to provide volunteer legal assistance to pro se litigants involved with guardianships and domestic orders of protection. In 1995, to manage the increased programming, the Foundation and the CBA jointly hired Linda Rio, a past Weigle Award recipient, as Director of Community Services.
Maurice Weigle Award Winners

The Weigle Award was established 20 years ago by The Chicago Bar Association and The Chicago Bar Foundation to recognize young lawyers. The winner's activities in a given year must have made an exceptional contribution to the well-being and integrity of the profession, the organized Bar and the community.

Nominees must be under the age of 36 at the time of selection. The award, consisting of a plaque and $1,000 cash prize, is presented annually at The Chicago Bar Association’s annual meeting. Weigle winners have a legacy of service and contribution that extends well beyond the year of the award.

1969 Peter Tomei
1970 Carole K. Bellows
1971 Wayne W. Whalen
1972 David C. Hilliard
1973 Peter Sfikas
1974 Richard C. Groll
1976 Devereux Bowly, Jr.
1977 Anne Draznin/Wendy Larsen
1978 Donald C. Schiller
1979 Mary M. Conrad
1980 Andrew R. Gelman
1981 Cynthia Kelly
1982 Eileen Letts
1983 Bruce Becker/Ellyn Fabian
1984 Ruth Ann Schmitt
1985 Bill Elwin/Tom Paprocki
1986 Lee Hugh Goodman
1987 Craig Mousin/Ellen Douglas
1988 Richard Cozzola/Carleen Schreder
1989 James M. Smith
1990 Ruben Castillo
1991 Graham Grady
1992 Lorie Chaiten
1993 Linda M. Rio
1994 Edward Lewis II
1995 Sally McDonald
1996 Mark Wojcik
1997 Kartik K. Raman
1998 Robert A. Glaves

The Foundation’s long-range objective with its active programs is to develop projects that use lawyers’ talents to enhance or complement the services of traditional legal aid programs. Most are jointly managed with the CBA, its Young Lawyers Section, other agencies, or one of the many ethnic and regional bar associations located within the Chicago area. The Foundation’s policy with respect to grants is similar: to provide start-up funds and the imprimatur of the Chicago Bar Foundation to worthy new projects, as well as to encourage innovation by agencies that submit proposals each year.

It is difficult to predict where the Bar Foundation may find itself in 2048 on its 100th anniversary. If the first 50 years are a reflection of the future, the Foundation will continue to evolve and grow, along with the legal profession itself, to serve the needs of the profession and permit members of the Bar to cooperatively discharge their responsibilities to the public and to the rule of law.

Robert Glaves (second from left) received the 1998 Maurice Weigle Award. Glaves is congratulated by Weigle’s granddaughter, Babs Monteforte (third from left) and four past award winners, (left to right) Mark Wojcik, Linda Rio, Ruth Ann Schmitt and Bruce Becker.