

# 2015 Initiatives off to a Great Start



*Volunteers at the free Legal Advice and Referral Clinic in Bayview–Hunters Point*



*Michelle Enchill teaching students about Magna Carta on Law Day*

In December of 2014, during his inaugural speech, incoming president of The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) Timothy Moppin, Kaufman Dolowich Voluck, revealed his 2015 plans for the continuation of “It Starts with a Day” service days in the community. Three have been completed with three more scheduled during the rest of 2015: the Log Cabin garden planting on June 13, School-To-College “Help high school students navigate the college application process” evening in October, and a Legal Advice and Referral Clinic specifically for veterans in November.

## FREE LEGAL ADVICE COMES TO BAYVIEW–HUNTERS POINT

On Saturday, March 28, the Justice & Diversity Center (JDC) of BASF brought expert legal advice and social services to more than thirty clients in Bayview–Hunters Point. Enthusiastic and motivated volunteers, including employees of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius and Hewlett-Packard Company, solo and small-firm attorneys, and volunteers from the community worked together to transform a gymnasium into a bustling legal clinic, conduct client interviews, interpret for monolingual clients, and provide much-needed legal and social services. Clients expressed feeling validated, affirmed, and empowered by the clinic, and especially welcomed by the friendly volunteers.

## MAGNA CARTA: HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE DOCUMENT BEHIND LAWS

Eight hundred years ago, the sealing of Magna Carta took place when barons coerced King John of England into



*From left, BASF President Timothy Moppin, Court Executive Officer Michael Yuen, Judge Donald Mitchell, Presiding Judge John K. Stewart, Judge Gail Dekreon, Judge Edward Torpoco, Judge Monica Wiley, Assistant Presiding Judge Teri Jackson, and Judge Angela Bradstreet*

granting a number of rights and liberties. Magna Carta (Latin: “the Great Charter”) is credited with establishing the rule of law in Anglo-American legal history and is widely viewed by legal historians as one of the founding documents of modern democracy and constitutional government.

On Law Day, May 1, 2015, BASF volunteers took an interactive video and their teaching skills into several San Francisco high schools to educate students about Magna Carta and its language that gave early expression to principles of due process, separation of powers, rights to a fair trial, and the supremacy of the rule of law over the power of kings and other rulers. A mock trial culminated the lesson plan, prompting volunteer Michelle Enchill, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, to admit, “I had my doubts about whether or not a Magna Carta lesson would be interesting to a group of high school students, but they were so engaged. A student approached me and asked, ‘How does someone become a lawyer?’ Wow!”

## MEET THE JUDGES NIGHT: A COMMUNITY FORUM

San Franciscans with questions about the San Francisco Superior Court were invited to attend a May 14, 2015, “Meet the Judges” forum at UC Hastings College of the Law presented by San Francisco Superior Court and BASF.

Presiding Judge John K. Stewart and BASF President Timothy Moppin moderated a panel presentation including judges from five civil departments, as well as representatives from the ACCESS Self-Help Center, Jury Service Department, and BASF’s Lawyer Referral and Information Service. More than ninety attended the event, which included a question and answer session, light refreshments, and time for the public to speak individually with judges.