



# Kelley Drye Volunteers for Justice Resource Center MENTOR Program

December 16, 2010

On December 16, 2010, Kelley Drye led 20 students and two teachers from Hillcrest High School in Queens, New York, on a court visit as part of the Justice Resource Center's (JRC) MENTOR program.

Designated by the American Bar Association as a "Diversity Pipeline Program," MENTOR is collaboration between the legal industry and the school-age population. The JRC pairs leading law firms and corporate legal departments in New York City with local public high schools to support the schools' curriculum efforts and expose public school children first-hand to the practice of law.

The field trip included a visit to Judge Denny Chin's chambers, followed by lunch at the court cafeteria. Most of the participating students were Asian or Asian American and were told of the judge's background and career.

When he was two, Judge Chin came to the United States from Hong Kong. His father worked as a waiter in a restaurant in Chinatown and his mother was a seamstress. Judge Chin graduated from Stuyvesant High School, Princeton and Fordham Law School. In 1994, he became a district court judge and in 2010, President Barack Obama nominated him to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which the Senate confirmed by a 98-0 vote. He is the only Asian American judge with the United States Court of Appeals.

In the chambers, Judge Chin explained the law and the judge's role in ways that the students could understand. For example, using actual toys, he showed why a trademark violation had taken place. He then compared two other toys and demonstrated why in another case, there was no trademark infringement. The judge explained how the law affects many people, discussing intellectual property lawsuits involving several popular artists.

Judge Chin tackled the difficult positions a judge has to take as he discussed "Megan's Law," which requires law enforcement authorities to make information available to the public regarding sex offenders. He explained why judges must be independent and protected from politics and popular opinion. Judge Chin also commented on the sentencing of Bernard Madoff—whether it was fair or not and how it affected the lives of so many.

"We were humbled when the judge told personal stories of his background. The students were shown what they could make of themselves with hard work and perseverance and that the American dream is alive and well."