



NEWS RELEASE

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ABOTA FOUNDATION RECEIVES TEXAS BAR FOUNDATION GRANT FOR NATIONAL TEACHERS LAW SCHOOL

DALLAS (June 8, 2016) — The Foundation of the American Board of Trial Advocates received a grant of \$10,000 from the Texas Bar Foundation to support the National Teachers Law School, a professional development program for social studies educators from across the country.

Forty-five leaders in civics and law-related education will attend the National Teachers Law School (NTLS), presented in partnership between the ABOTA Foundation and the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. The Texas Bar Foundation’s generous support will facilitate the attendance of four Texas educators to this program, which will take place Sept. 30 – Oct. 1.

- Gretchen Gaskins – Houston
K-12 District Social Studies Coordinator, Alief ISD
- Mellessa Denny – Amarillo
Director of Forensics and Communications Teacher, Amarillo ISD
- Jose J. Saenz – Edinburg
Social Studies Specialist, Region One Education Service Center
- Debbie Keen – Frisco
Legal Studies Teacher, Frisco ISD

In 2009, Austin became the founding location of the Teachers Law School, which provides teachers with a crash course in the legal system. The law school is designed for middle school and high school government, social studies, history, law and civics educators. It exposes teachers to presentations on topics aimed at giving teachers the tools to help their students better understand and appreciate the value of the American civil and criminal legal systems and the role those systems play in students’ lives and society.

“An appreciation of civics and our constitutional form of government is fundamental to meaningful citizenship and self-governance — concepts that we cherish and must protect,” said Carlyle H. Chapman, Jr., 2016 ABOTA Foundation President. “The NTLS will offer another basis upon which our teachers may rely in presenting civics to the youth of our nation.”

The NTLS will take this program further by fostering a meeting of the current and future voices in social studies curriculum and instruction and members of the legal community. During this two-day event, educators will hear from esteemed members of the judiciary, historians and other legal experts. At the conclusion of the program, the ABOTA Foundation will coordinate with participants to expand the reach of the Teachers Law School at the local level.

Since its inception in 1965, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$16 million in grants to law-related programs. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitably funded bar foundation.

The American Board of Trial Advocates, founded in 1958, is an organization dedicated to defending the American civil justice system. With a membership of more than 7,500 experienced attorneys representing both the plaintiff and defense bars in civil cases, ABOTA is uniquely qualified to speak for the value of the constitutionally-mandated jury system as the protector of the rights of persons and property. ABOTA is headquartered in Dallas and has more than 1,400 Texas members from 16 chapters.

The ABOTA Foundation was established in 1992 to provide education to the American public about the right to trial by jury and to promote the professional education of trial attorneys.