

# Justicia

## Newsletter of the Judicial Process Commission

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April-May 2010

**SPECIAL ANNUAL EVENT!**

**Judicial Process Commission**

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Luncheon  
Downtown United Presbyterian Church  
121 N. Fitzhugh St., Rochester**

*June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Noon - 2PM*

### **"Ordinary Injustice: How America Holds Court"**

Amy Bach, local lawyer and journalist/author talks about her research into the nation's justice system and her resulting book, shedding much-needed light onto the realities of what can happen to accused and victim alike. "How ordinary people are treated should matter to all of us," says Bach. It matters to her and it matters to the Judicial Process Commission.

### **Special Awards for Community Activism**

#### **Founders' Award:**

*Isabel Morrison, Lifetime advocate for justice to many disenfranchised peoples, current JPC Board member & Elder at Downtown Presbyterian Church; served as President of the Genesee Ecumenical Ministry & liaison to JPC when it originated in the early 1970's.*

#### **Justicia Awards:**

*Sally Dodgson, Board member & Spiritual Director of Church Women United, has championed prisoners, immigrants & urban youth, now in Rochester's Northeast, where she continues a ministry to the poor through her American Baptist Church which*

*Quality Council & playing a leadership role on Mayor Johnson's Anti-Violence Work Team.*

*Valerie White-Whittick, Mentor Coordinator, Judicial Process Commission, Board member & Personal Ministries Director at Jefferson Ave. Seventh Day Adventist Church. She is a graduate of RIT & retired from Xerox who also has 13 years of experience with prison ministry.*

***Tickets: \$30 Individuals / Registration and prepayment required by Friday, June 4th; To reserve:***

*send a check payable to Judicial Process Commission at 285 Ormond St., Rochester, NY 14605; or email reservation to [info@rocjpc.org](mailto:info@rocjpc.org) and mail check; or email reservation and donate online at [www.rocjpc.org](http://www.rocjpc.org)*

*To reserve a table, be a sponsor, or buy an ad in our program, contact John Perry Smith,*

*[jps@totalinformation.com](mailto:jps@totalinformation.com)*

***Catered by The Eclectic Café!***

## TOP SIX REASONS (AMONG MANY)

### **Six Reasons to Come to JPC's Annual Luncheon on June 9**

By Mary Boite



Once again, it is our pleasure to invite all of you to join us and many other supporters of the work of the Judicial Process Commission, at our annual "Food and Fundraising" luncheon at the Downtown Presbyterian Church.

We always try to provide excellent food, this time by a fine and local business, the Eclectic Café! We also try to offer you an informative, timely and interesting theme and speaker; in locally based author/journalist/lawyer Amy Bach we believe we are continuing this tradition. Her September 2009 book ***Ordinary Injustice: How America Holds Court***, has already garnered considerable publicity and interest, both locally and nationwide.

### ***Amy Bach speaking on "Ordinary Injustice" - Reason Number One***

Eight years of field reporting on the justice system in the U.S. led to "discouraging and appalling facts", according to an article written by Jim Memmott in the Democrat and Chronicle. The fact that average citizens, whether accused or victim, often lose their basic rights in our justice system, is one of the reasons that organizations like JPC are so necessary. The lack of political will, the lack of funding, need for more court-appointed attorneys, an overcrowded system - any or all of

served, the accused may be in prison for years even for relatively minor offenses, the taxpayer foots the bill, whole communities suffer, the police feel helpless to prevent crime, lawyers are burnt out ... We get the picture.

Amy Bach graduated from Brown University in 1991 and took a job as a features writer in Arizona, then became a reporter for The American Lawyer, covering the legal industry. This prompted a path to Yale Law School and a master's degree program for journalists who write about the law. From there she went on to Stanford for a law degree in 1998. After returning to journalism in a job writing on the legal system for The Nation magazine, she was shocked to learn about the inside of the "take-a-number" justice system in Georgia, which prompted more research, which led to ...

When her future husband, Dr. John Markman came here as a specialist in pain management at the University of Rochester Medical Center, she moved here with him. The birth of her son has really cemented her ties to the city, and our community is happy she is here. We at JPC welcome her and look forward to hearing her talk.

***Isabel Morrison, Founders' Award - Reason Number Two***

The Attica Uprising in 1971 inspired Isabel Morrison, current and past JPC board member, to put her faith into action in the name of injustice. In the mid 1970's Episcopal Bishop Spears appointed her the Ecumenical Officer of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester. This launched a long career that included membership in Church Women United, the NYS Council of Churches, and the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (where she served as the first woman and lay president). Isabel represented the GEM Board on the JPC board during its founding years. She helped develop programs that would challenge the abuses detected in the criminal justice system. Through GEM Isabel helped found the Jewish-Christian Commission, work that she continues today as a board member of the Interfaith Alliance of Rochester.

In the 1970s Isabel also participated in the early years of the Peace and Justice Education Center's various programs. In 1981 the Downtown United Presbyterian Church hired Isabel as Coordinator of Action of Church and Community Together. She added the Sanctuary Movement, and dipped her finger into issues she continues to pursue today: racism, housing, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender rights. She also was involved in Mutuality in Mission, a faith-based organization to establish relationships between churches in Latin America and churches in Monroe County. The Committee for Middle East Peace was another involvement.

One of the Judicial Process Commission's original founders, Lois Davis, who received the first "Founders' Award" at our

### ***Sally Dodgson, Community Activist Award - Reason Number Three***

Sally Dodgson, compelled throughout her life to defend those among us without a voice, has been a member of the JPC for many years. Sally's work against injustice, which she says has been "forever," has found its way into many pockets of the Rochester community. Her connections to the Colgate Divinity School are many: graduate, Director of Public Relations, volunteer. Now "retired," Sally contributes to her church, the American Baptist on Clover Road in Brighton, in countless ways. She supports Burmese refugees, hundreds of whom live in Rochester. She also contributes time to the Freedom School in the Beechwood Neighborhood where her church is involved in many projects. She also works with the Brighton Churches Coalition for Habitat.

Sally has filled several positions in Church Women United, where she supports the Task Force on Courts and currently serves as their Spiritual Director. For ten years, she rarely missed the monthly vigil against the death penalty organized by JPC and the Reconciliation Network, trudging through rain and snow to make her point. From her formative experience as a missionary in India for twenty-five years to her current championing of the poor, from antiwar activism to women's rights, Sally has accepted the challenge for which we honor her, bringing justice to those who deserve and lack it.

### ***Elaine Gallina Spaul, Community Activist Award - Reason Number Four***

Elaine Spaul, PhD, JD is a native Rochesterian who returned to her hometown in 1976 to raise her family and support her community. An educator, lawyer, elected official, speaker and writer, most of all she is a youth advocate who describes herself as having had remarkable opportunities both personally and professionally. Many know her as the Vice-President of Rochester City Council; it is her position as Executive Director of the Center for Youth in Rochester which she describes as "the most important work" she has done, as she administers a youth-centered organization founded more than 38 years ago by a group of teenagers. The legacy of those original youth and their dreams of having a place for kids to go where they would be free to express their opinions and share their dreams, continues to drive its mission and philosophy.

She recently launched Project Safe Place, a community wide initiative which offers immediate and safe alternatives to youth ages 12 - 21 years. Last month, with the leadership of CDS and the support of the City of Rochester, Dr. Spaul also assisted in the reconstitution of Rochester Teen Court.

She sits on several boards and has been appointed to various positions in the educational, political and not-for-profit world,

2003, are good examples.

Her January Executive Leadership Award from the National Network 4 Youth for her advocacy for homeless youth was one of numerous awards in recognition of her advocacy and caring. Her energy and enthusiasm are awe-inspiring.

***Valerie White-Whittick, Community Activist Award - Reason Number Five***

Valerie has an impressive work and volunteer resume, and although her work at JPC confirms her many organizational and people skills, her manner remains open, friendly and completely unassuming and down-to-earth.

Retired from a corporate career in Xerox, she continues to work both at JPC and in her community, mostly through her passionate involvement with the Seventh Day Adventist Church here. No doubt her management skills at Xerox have contributed to her activities as Church Bible Study Instructor, Prison Ministry Program Coordinator, and JPC Mentor Coordinator, but it is her caring and compassion that continue to inspire admiration in all who work with her.

Val has worked with hundreds of men and women through the past thirteen years of Prison Ministry, assisting them while incarcerated and post-release, to become stable and employed. She provided food, clothing, transportation and guidance/direction to women who attend the Salvation Army Drug Rehabilitation Program, was trained as a certified Social Services Care Provider who was a foster mother for her great-niece for five years. She was also the Jefferson Avenue Seventh Day Adventist Personal Ministry Director, organizing well attended community outreach programs. The six-week Daniel and Revelation Seminar she organized was attended by over 300 people.

Her broad interest in health issues led her to a three week stint in Nairobi, Kenya in a humanitarian project to provide data in support of a cervical cancer research study among Kenyan Women.

Finally, as Mentor Coordinator with us, Val trains community volunteers to mentor individuals who are in the county, state, or federal correctional institutions. This includes designing, updating and presenting training curriculum for them as well as organizing quarterly two-day training seminars, interviewing and assigning mentors and providing ongoing, daily support to them in resolving mentoring concerns/questions. At our lunch, we will be happily recognizing her work and her many talents.

***Friends, food and supporting the work of justice through JPC - Reason Number Six***

We know that many of you work, volunteer and enjoy many

community of justice here in our area and your support and purchase of a luncheon ticket are vital to the continuance of this work. *We cannot do it alone; that's why it's called "community work."*

We also ask you to print, copy and circulate the flyer from this issue, talk to your friends, and tell other members of your church or organization who may know our speaker and honorees, to buy a ticket and come to meet us! If you are already a JPC supporter in the Rochester area, your invitation is in the mail. I'm anxious to see you all.

## A CHALLENGE FOR US ALL

### **Anonymous Donor Issues Challenge!**

By Mary Boite



The Board has recently learned that an incredibly generous donor has offered JPC the possibility of \$12,000 - \$13,000 per month for the balance of this calendar year. This is contingent on us, **on all of us**, raising the matching amount from other sources. This year has given us new directions, as we plunge into the Women's Project, and new anxieties as we continue to struggle to help all the men and women who enter our doors for what they hope will be a new lease on life.

This wonderful person has shown us all that people do care about the lives of others, and want to do something concrete to help our community. We know that all of you also care, and we invite you to take up that challenge this year. If we accomplish this goal and receive this pledge, the staff and volunteers will be able to just concentrate on the work of helping our clients re-enter the workforce, their families and society.

As you think about your giving this year, remember the people who benefit from our program and think about living in a safer society because of the work of JPC. Let's show our anonymous donor that we appreciate the offer and are rising to the challenge! We accept checks or money orders and of course, you can now just hop onto our website and donate electronically!

## ARTICLE HEADLINE



The **JUDICIAL PROCESS COMMISSION**  
285 Ormond Street  
Rochester, NY 14605

585-325-7727; [www.rocjpc.org](http://www.rocjpc.org); email: [info@rocjpc.org](mailto:info@rocjpc.org)

*We welcome your letters and Justicia article submissions by e-mail or postal mail.*

### **VISION**

The Judicial Process Commission envisions a society with true justice and equality for all.

**Director, Pennsylvania**  
We do this by: providing support services for those involved in the criminal justice system; educating the public; advocating for changes in public policy.

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