

# A Search for Justice

More than 175 civil and criminal attorneys, community leaders, government officials, judges, as well as faculty, staff, and students from Missouri and Illinois universities gathered for the School of Law's second annual conference on access to justice held February 14-15, 2002. Titled "Access to Equal Justice: A Dialogue between the University and the Community to Improve the Delivery of Justice," the conference addressed health care, neighborhood development, domestic violence, crime, and poverty issues, as well as presented innovative university/community collaborations.

"Universities, especially law schools, have an important role to play in improving the delivery of justice to the underrepresented and excluded through research and writing about pressing social problems, through the development of clinics and other partnerships with the community, and through the preparation of a new generation of courageous, creative, public interest advocates," says Professor Karen Tokarz, chair of the conference and director of clinical education.

The opening session, "Social, Medical, and Legal Strategies for Children and HIV/AIDS," featured Cati Vawda, director of the Children's Rights Centre in Durban, South Africa. "The triangle of HIV/AIDS, poverty, and

violence is increasing its stranglehold on children globally and locally," says Vawda. "Our goals for this conference were to educate the community on critical problems of the poor, such as HIV/AIDS; to restore hope to professionals and patients; and to maximize the ways that universities can partner with communities to improve access to justice."

Respondents were Greg Storch, Washington University School of Medicine and founder and medical director of St. Louis Project ARK (AIDS Resources for Kids), and Mary H. Quigley, director of the AIDS Project of Legal Services of Eastern Missouri (LSEM).

In the keynote address for the second session on "The Struggle for Social Justice," Richard Baron, chief executive officer of St. Louis-based McCormack Baron & Associates, challenged conference participants to "step up to the plate to produce graduates equipped to help save our inner cities." Baron has undertaken affordable housing and neighborhood developments across the country.

The following roundtable discussion included Sandra Moore, JD '79, president of Urban Strategies; Joe Squillace, health policy analyst for Citizens for Missouri's Children; Ann Lever, LSEM director of litigation; Missouri Supreme Court Judge Michael Wolff; and Professor Ted Ruger, director of the School of Law's U.S. Attorney Clinic.

The third session on "Envisioning

a Future with Access to Equal Justice" featured Barbara Glesner-Fines, professor of law at the University of Missouri at Kansas City; Donald Wilkerson, assistant United States attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri; Jennifer Joyce, St. Louis City circuit attorney; Trent Mitchell, assistant St. Louis City circuit attorney; John Ammann, professor of law and director of the Civil Clinic at Saint Louis University; Rod Uphoff, the Elwood L. Thomas Professor of Law at the University of Missouri at Columbia; and Professor Peter Joy, director of the School of Law's Criminal Justice Clinic.

Presenters for the closing session, "Celebrating Steps toward Access to Equal Justice," included Storch; Marie Kenyon, Catholic Legal Assistance Ministry, Saint Louis University School of Law; Judge Thomas Frawley, St. Louis City Family Court; Rudy Nickens, vice president of St. Louis 2004; and David Newburger, board member of Paraquad.

The Missouri Legal Services Support Center, the School of Law's Clinical Education Program, and the School of Law's Whitney R. Harris Institute for Global Legal Studies co-sponsored the conference. ♦

Plans are under way for the third annual "Access to Equal Justice" conference at the School of Law on October 9, 2002. Keynote speakers will be Professor Barry C. Scheck, co-founder and co-director of the Cardozo Law School Innocence Project, and Professor Mary Becker of DePaul College of Law, the co-founder of the Illinois Clemency Project for Battered Women.

Keynote speaker Cati Vawda (front row, center) and Professor Karen Tokarz (back row, right) joined other opening session presenters in focusing on social, medical, and legal strategies for children with HIV/AIDS.