

Press Release

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Contact:

Kelli McWhorter
Director of Membership Services
(816) 474-4322
kmcwhorter@kcmba.org

17th Annual LEAP Luncheon to Benefit Operation Breakthrough

The 17th Annual Mardi Gras Luncheon will be held on March 8 by the Foundation for Lawyers Encouraging Academic Performance (LEAP), celebrating Kansas City's local legal profession's commitment to public service. LEAP is a not-for-profit foundation established in 1994 to provide needy children with mentoring services. It is comprised of a unique, joint professional effort of the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section of KCMBA, the Eastern Jackson County Bar Association, the Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City, Lawyers Association of Kansas City, Young Lawyers Section of the Lawyers Association, Jackson County Bar Association, Hispanic Bar Association, the Asian American Bar Association, Kansas City Lesbian, Gay and Allied Lawyers, and the Association of Corporate Counsel Mid-America Chapter.

Each year, LEAP's fundraising efforts culminate at its annual Mardi Gras luncheon held on Fat Tuesday. Operation Breakthrough is currently LEAP's primary recipient. Since its inception, LEAP has raised more than \$900,000 for various Kansas City charities. The 2010 LEAP luncheon was highlighted by the presentation of a check for \$75,000 to Sister Berta Sailer, which was raised and donated by area lawyers, judges and organizations. The donations are used for much-needed supplies and equipment for Operation Breakthrough.

Being honored at the Luncheon for their continued commitment to LEAP and Operation Breakthrough are LEAP's 2011 King and Queen, Steven Soden and Suzanne Block.

Musical entertainment for this year's event will be provided by some of the children of Operation Breakthrough—always a crowd favorite. A raffle containing more than a dozen prizes, including wine, gift certificates and other unique items will also be given away.

Founded in 1971, Operation Breakthrough's mission is to help children who are living in poverty develop to their fullest potential by providing them a safe, loving and educational environment. The center also strives to support and empower the children's families through advocacy, referral services, and emergency aid. Operation Breakthrough provides service for the children and families of the inner city of Kansas City, Missouri, including day care, meals, Children's Mercy Clinic, dental services, speech therapy, play therapy, housing assistance, food and clothing, and social services.

**** We invite the media to attend this special event.** If possible—please contact Kelli McWhorter at the KCMBA office if you plan to attend. Kelli can be reached by calling (816) 474-4322 or by e-mail at kmcwhorter@kcmba.org. *The event starts at noon at KCMBA Headquarters located at 2300 Main Street, Ste. 100 in Kansas City, Missouri.*