

# Bar president happy with pro bono effort

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The almost-final tallies are in, and the Cleveland Bar Association fell a little short of its ambitious goals for its new United Way-style pro bono project.

But bar association President David Kutik said he is pleased with the results and confident that last year's efforts will be a launching pad for future campaigns.

Kutik, a Jones Day partner, announced the program in June when he was installed as bar association president. He called on law firms to pledge hours for pro bono, or donated, legal work in 2005, to create dedicated pro bono budgets and to adopt pet projects.

Kutik was hoping that by the end of 2004 the group would have pledges from at least 50 firms or corporate legal departments, covering 2,500 attorneys, for 100,000 hours of pro bono work. What he got was about 35 firms or legal departments, 2,000 attorneys and 70,000 hours. Additional pledges are still trickling in.

"We set a goal to have a goal, but it was just a guess because we've never done anything like this before," Kutik said. "We're very happy with these hours and



**Kutik**

with where we are. And we think that, based on our record of success last year, we'll have even more success in later years."

If anything, he said, the bar's numbers undercount the pro bono hours being worked by

Greater Cleveland firms. Many lawyers either don't want to fill out the paperwork to get into the project or they don't want publicity, he said.

Among efforts being launched as part of the pro bono program are 36 free legal clinics that the bar association, in conjunction with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, will sponsor around the region in 2005.

Other notable successes, Kutik said, include an increase in attorneys, to 80 from 20, who will take part this year in the homeless assistance program sponsored by the bar and the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless.

C. Lyonel Jones, executive director of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, called Kutik's achievements "remarkable."

"Our experience has been that once these things get going, they continue to build," Jones said. "This is not a one-time shot."

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