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Talk to
a Lawyer.

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DECEMBER 2012

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Schmidt Kramer sponsors essay contest

Schmidt Kramer sponsored the 2011-2012 UCP Central PA/Schmidt Kramer Attitudes Essay Contest. The purpose of the contest is to reduce attitudinal barriers (and increase understanding) between people with and without disabilities, and at the same time recognize the writing skills and instinctive insight of the young people in our community. Each writer was encouraged to think about the challenges experienced every day by people with disabilities and about the barriers created by people with negative attitudes towards those with disabilities. Some essays created new ways of thinking or talking about people with disabilities, and some criticized the stereotypes that have historically limited people with disabilities. Above all, the essays illustrated the amazing insight and compassion of the authors. As one of this year's winning essayists wrote: "A positive attitude is the starting point to achieving the life you want."

UCP staff and board members volunteered their time to review the essays and judge the contest. Extraordinary essays were received this year! The students really seemed to kick it up a notch, with judges across the grade levels reporting on how much they enjoyed reading them. Of course, that made scoring them a bit more challenging... *we ended up with a record number of tie scores this year.*

All essay participants received a Certificate and a small token of appreciation. The top three winners in each age category received cash awards and Certificates of Excellence that are presented at school assemblies and award programs by UCP staff and attorneys from the law firm of Schmidt Kramer.

Congratulations to the winners, and to all the students and schools who participated. We would also like to extend our thanks to the volunteer judges who gave of their time to read and score this year's essays. To view all photos of the winners, go to:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ucpcentralpa/sets/72157631548115844/detail/>.

Dress for Success Gala

Schmidt Kramer was a sponsor of the 2012 Dress for Success Gala held on Friday, October 19, 2012, at the Harrisburg Hilton. **Joe Chapman** and his wife **Shonda**, **Melissa Leininger** and her husband **Bryan**, **Tom Cook** and his wife **Laurie Kile, M.D.**, **Jessica Kurtz**, **Vellia Gaston**, and **Amyra Wagner** attended the event on behalf



of Schmidt Kramer. The mission of Dress for Success is to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support, and the career development tools to help women thrive in the workplace and in life.

We take your family's safety and security personally.

UCP/Schmidt Kramer Golf Tournament

Schmidt Kramer sponsored the **26th Annual UCP/Schmidt Kramer Golf Tournament** on Monday, August 6, 2012, at the Carlisle Country Club. We were joined by 115 golfers this year (69 sponsor golfers and 46 individuals). The tournament netted nearly \$35,000 this year, a 12 percent increase over our budgeted revenue. The course looked fabulous and golfers enjoyed the new “Guess Your Yardage” game, along with the perennial favorites: Par 5 Advantage, Par 3 Game of Chance, and Hole in One. Thanks go to our Honorary Chair **Rory Ritrievi**, president and CEO of Mid Penn Bank, and our special guests, **Ron Jaworski** and **Mike Quick**. We also want to thank all the sponsors, advertisers, committee members, and the staff of Schmidt Kramer for their help and support. The 2013 event is planned for Monday, August 5.

Skydiving attorney

On September 30, 2012, Schmidt Kramer attorney **Jessica Kurtz** participated in her first skydiving adventure outside of Philadelphia. Jess plummeted from a perfectly good airplane traveling at approximately 14,000 feet above ground level, free-falling for approximately 45 seconds before parachuting her way safely back to the ground. Exercising a personal injury attorney’s due diligence, Jess carefully scoured the liability waiver before jumping.



Talented attorney

Schmidt Kramer attorney **Thomas S. Cook** (*third from left*) plays the mandola with the Harrisburg Mandolin Ensemble in his spare time. The group recently performed at the Midtown Scholar Bookstore and the Harrisburg Kipona Festival in September featuring original jazz and swing tunes.

Schmidt Kramer named among the Best Law Firms

Schmidt Kramer has been named among the “Best Law Firms” for 2013 by U.S. News Media Group and Best Lawyers. Schmidt Kramer received top ranking for three of its practice areas: medical malpractice law, personal injury litigation, and workers’ compensation law. The firm’s Tier 1 recognition in the three practice areas means it was among the highest-scoring firms in the region. The high ranking received by Schmidt Kramer shows that the firm has a unique combination of excellence and a wide breadth of expertise in the practice areas.

The *U.S. News—Best Lawyers* “Best Law Firms” rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in their field, and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process.

Our attorneys honored by peers

Congratulations to partners **Scott B. Cooper** and **Gerard C. Kramer** for being selected by their peers as “Best Lawyers in America 2013” for their work in the practice area of *personal injury litigation—plaintiffs* and to attorney **Thomas S. Cook** for his work in the practice area of *workers’ compensation law*.

Lee National Denim Day

On Friday, October 12, 2012, the staff of **Schmidt Kramer** participated in the Lee National Denim Day, which supports breast cancer research programs. The staff put on their favorite jeans and made a donation to help raise funds for the fight against breast cancer.

ATTORNEY NEWS

► **Scott B. Cooper**, a partner at Schmidt Kramer and president of the Pennsylvania Association for Justice, received a citation from the Judiciary Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for his service in representing injured victims before the Committee. Cooper, right, receives the citation from committee member Representative **Brandon Neuman**, D-Washington.



► Schmidt Kramer partner **Scott B. Cooper** with Pennsylvania's first elected female Attorney General **Kathleen Kane**. Also, Scott with **President Clinton** at the same event.



► On October 12, 2012, partner **Scott B. Cooper** spoke at Widener Law's Symposium on the Legal Implications of the Sandusky Scandal. Scott spoke about how to establish the civil liability of Penn State and the Second Mile through their own records and e-mails.



► On October 23, 2012, and October 30, 2012, partner **Scott B. Cooper** spoke at the 19th Annual Pennsylvania Bar Institute's Auto Law programs in Philadelphia and Conshohocken on "Uninsured and Underinsured Motorist Arbitration Issues."

► Congratulations to partner **Scott B. Cooper** for being appointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to a term on the Pennsylvania Appellate Rules Committee.

► Partner **Scott B. Cooper** spoke at the Pennsylvania Bar Institute Seminars on September 11, 2012, in Philadelphia and on September 19, 2012, in Mechanicsburg regarding the "Basics in Auto Cases," particularly auto policy coverages and provisions.

► Attorney **Melissa Leininger** was a speaker for an NBI seminar regarding Social Security Bootcamp, which took place in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., in August of 2012.

► Partner **Scott B. Cooper** was co-counsel and achieved a significant appellate victory in the Pennsylvania Superior Court in *Smith v. Rohrbaugh*, which overturned and reversed a prior court ruling that prevented injured victims from possibly receiving the full amount of a verdict awarded by a jury. With the victory, and thanks to Scott's efforts, people injured by someone else's wrongdoing or negligence will recover full compensation for their losses as decided by a jury and not have it possibly reduced by other sources.

► In September, attorney **Thomas S. Cook** spoke to the Central Pennsylvania Paralegal Association as part of their monthly educational Lunch and Learn Program. Tom discussed workers' compensation law and cases, and told stories about his 30 years of workers' compensation legal experience. The paralegals in attendance reported that the program was not boring.

► On July 31, 2012, at the Dauphin County Courthouse, attorney **Joe Chapman** spoke to lawyers, paralegals, and court reporters on trial technology. He was invited to lecture on trial technology by one of the court reporters who was involved in the case which resulted in **Terry Hyman's** verdict in excess of a million dollars. The seminar not only explained the methods of presenting trial exhibits electronically, but compared software designed for the traditional Windows platform on a laptop with new software that is available for an iPad. Schmidt Kramer lawyers remain on the cutting edge of technology, which will further their clients' success. **Lara Antonuk** actually operated some of the technology during the presentation as part of the training she receives through her clerkship at Schmidt Kramer, while she is a law student at Widener. The program was well attended and well received.

► The educational wing of the Pennsylvania Bar held a seminar on August 23, 2012, to address truck accident cases after the onset of the new joint and several liability law. Attorney **Joe Chapman** was the moderator, and partner **Scott Cooper** planned the course held in Philadelphia. Our two attorneys brought together trial lawyers from the defense and plaintiff sides to first of all present a case file Joe wrote, and then watch a Philadelphia jury deliberate and value the case. Approximately 50 lawyers participated and attended, and it was a meaningful exercise that provided great insight into how a jury works. Your Schmidt Kramer lawyers are consistently working to develop their skills and knowledge to better serve those injured across Pennsylvania.



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The information included in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for professional legal advice. For your specific situation, please consult the appropriate legal professional.

STAFF CORNER



Everyone at **Schmidt Kramer** would like to welcome **Sherrie Mehring** to the firm. Sherrie's first day at Schmidt Kramer was August 29, 2012. She is the bookkeeper for Schmidt Kramer and a graduate of Shippensburg University. She enjoys reading, walking, and spending time with her family and friends. She resides in Mechanicsburg, Pa., with her husband Chris and her daughter Peyton.



Embry Alice Gaston

NEW ARRIVAL: Receptionist **Vellia Gaston's** daughter, **Montikka**, welcomed **Embry Alice Gaston** into the world on September 12, 2012, at 1:36 a.m. Embry weighed in at 4 pounds, 14.6 ounces and was 17 inches long. Congratulations and best wishes to the Gaston family.



Sherrie Mehring

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: The following staff members had birthdays since our last newsletter: **Sherrie Mehring** on September 7, **D. Joseph Chapman** on September 12, and **Janice Harmon** on September 21.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE!

