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American College of Trial Lawyers

Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project of Peacebuilders International Chosen For 2015 Emil Gumpert Award

Canadian organization to receive \$100,000 to help youth through restorative justice

Irvine, Calif. May 1, 2015 - The American College of Trial Lawyers has selected the Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project of Peacebuilders International (Canada) in Toronto, Ontario as recipient of the 2015 Emil Gumpert Award. The organization will receive the \$100,000 first-place award. The Foundation of the American College of Trial Lawyers funds the \$100,000 first-place cash prize.

Eva Marszewski, L.S.M., Founder and Executive Director of the Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project, will present remarks at the College's October 2015 Annual Meeting in Chicago.

The Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project employs "Talking Circles" or "restorative justice" for conflict resolution of young offenders as an alternative to arrest and criminal charges. All too often, an arrest record leads a youngster to suspension or expulsion from school, unemployment, confinement, and a life of crime.

The proposed Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project seeks to establish the prototype in Toronto for a pre-charge, youth diversion program that will divert youth identified as having likely committed a non-violent offense, who have no prior criminal record, to a community-based diversion program. Diversion is sought instead of charging them with a criminal offense that likely leads to confinement, creation of a criminal record, and failure. Of 500 children referred to restorative justice to date, not a single one has returned to criminal conduct.

The Emil Gumpert Award recognizes programs, whether public or private, whose principal purpose is to maintain and improve the administration of justice. The award honors the late Honorable Emil Gumpert, Chancellor and Founder of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Judge Gumpert dedicated more than 50 years to the legal profession, serving as an eminent trial lawyer, California State Bar President, and trial judge.

The Extra Judicial Measures Pilot Project was chosen from a wide field of applicants from throughout the United States and Canada who are seeking grants to promote projects that have global application and the potential for replication in other locations. Peacebuilders International meets all the College's criteria through its ability to duplicate, encourage and extend its services beyond the jurisdiction of its existing program in Toronto.

Previous Emil Gumpert Award winners have included the *Human Trafficking Court Project of New York's Urban Justice Center*, New York, New York (2014); the *Miller Resentencing Project of the Florida State University College of Law Children in Prison Project* of Tallahassee, Florida (2013); *The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project* of Florence, Arizona (2012); *The Southern Public Defender Training Center*, Atlanta, Georgia (2011); the *Older and Wiser Program* of Neighborhood Legal Services, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2010); *Pro Bono Law Ontario*, Ottawa, Ontario (2009); *And Justice For All*, Salt Lake City, Utah (2008); *The National Center for Refugee and Immigrant Children*, Washington, D.C. (2007); *Legal Aid University*, Boston, Massachusetts (2006); and *Dakota Plains Legal Services*, Mission, South Dakota (2005).

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of the best of the trial bar from Canada and the United States and is widely considered to be the premier professional trial organization in North America. Founded in 1950, the College is dedicated to maintaining and improving the standards of trial practice, the administration of justice and the ethics of the profession. Fellowship in the College is extended by invitation only, and after careful investigation, to those experienced trial lawyers who have mastered the art of advocacy and whose professional careers have been marked by the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, civility, and collegiality.

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