2007 Annual Report

The knowledge to speak responsibly, the courage to speak freely
Message from the SPLC

Dear Friends,

The student speech story that occupied the headlines in 2007 was the Supreme Court’s decision in *Morse v. Frederick*. But beyond that case were the hundreds of unheralded cases in which the Student Press Law Center did what it does best: help students negotiate favorable outcomes when their rights are threatened.

When Erika Morrison of SUNY-Purchase was arrested for the “crime” of taking news photos of a campus drug raid, SPLC attorneys and pro-bono referral counsel became involved, and all charges were dismissed. When Grambling State University refused to let students distribute their newspaper, The Gramblinite, on school grounds, SPLC lawyers helped the editors successfully overcome the ban.

To be sure, student rights received a setback with the *Morse v. Frederick* decision, which gave high school administrators additional, and ill-defined, leeway to penalize on-campus speech. But the intervention of the SPLC and other concerned organizations helped keep the ruling narrowly limited, so that the core First Amendment protection of student speech remains intact.

Decisions like *Morse* renew our conviction that the SPLC has a critically important role to play, not just in fighting censorship but in helping to build public awareness that student journalism is real journalism, and that it has value worthy of preserving.

We continue that important work in 2008 under new leadership for the first time since 1985. Mark Goodman, who led our organization to nationwide prominence in his 22 years as executive director, departed in 2007 for an endowed professorship at Kent State University.

Our new executive director, Frank D. LoMonte, has seamlessly maintained our momentum. The SPLC board unanimously selected him after a nationwide search and he has brought inexhaustible energy and many valuable ideas from his long career in journalism and law. SPLC’s public face has changed, but our core priorities remain constant. And with your support, SPLC will always be there to continue equipping young people with the skills and knowledge they need to publish responsibly and freely.

Rosalind Stark
Chair, SPLC Board of Directors
Board of Directors, 2007-08

(Organizations affiliations are for purpose of identification only)

Javier J. Aldape
The E.W. Scripps Company
Chicago, IL

Caesar Andrews
Detroit Free Press
Detroit, Mich.

A.J. Bauer
Patriot Ledger
Quincy, Mass.

Jerry Ceppos
University of Nevada
Reno College of Journalism
Reno, Nev.

Shawn Chen
Associated Press
Washington, D.C.

Virginia Edwards
Education Week
Bethesda, Md.

Angela Filo
Eastside College Prep School
East Palo Alto, Calif.

Maureen Freeman
Newseum
Washington D.C.

Robert Garcia
ABC News Radio,
New York City, N.Y.

Richard Goehler, Esq.
Frost Brown Todd LLC
Cincinnati, Ohio

Kathleen Kirby, Esq.
Wiley Rein
Washington, D.C.

Tonda Rush, Esq.
American PressWorks Inc.,
Arlington, Va.

Rosalind Stark,
Radio and Television News Directors
Foundation (retired)
Reston, Va.

Mark Stodder
Dolan Media
Minneapolis, Minn.

Reginald Stuart
The McClatchy Company
Silver Spring, Md.

Mark Witherspoon
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

Frank D. LoMonte, Esq.
Executive Director
Student Press Law Center,
Arlington, Va.

From left to right: Tonda Rush, Chair; Rosalind Stark, A.J. Bauer and Reginald Stuart.
Meet Frank D. LoMonte

Answering the Call, Both Big and Small

Henry Rome called our office on my second day at work at the Student Press Law Center. A 16-year-old junior at Conestoga High School in Berwyn, Pennsylvania, Henry was bursting with excitement over a story he'd discovered with help from a confidential source: an illegal sports gambling ring at his high school in which student-athletes may have taken part.

In the weeks that followed, we talked Henry through every step of the newsgathering and publishing process — where to look for police and court records, what to say when the prosecutors claimed they couldn't release information about minors, and how to respond if confronted with a demand to reveal his confidential source. The story was terrific, and it scooped the local media in Henry's community.

This is the heart of what the Student Press Law Center does, 50 times a week, 2,500 times a year. We take the calls nobody else will take, and we spend the time to get the answers right. Too often, the calls are from teachers and students whose futures are in jeopardy because they refuse to back down in the face of unlawful censorship.

I left my law practice to take on this challenging position because I believe that the future of newsgathering is endangered by a "perfect storm" of negative federal court rulings at a time of economic restructuring in the news organizations that have always led the fight for a free, uncensored press.

As director, I will place high priority on teaching students how to use legal tools to do substantive journalism that helps keep their schools accountable, and then holding up the best student journalism to a wider public audience. Only if we convince the public and the judiciary that the censorship of student speech will snuff out serious, meritorious journalism will we turn the tide of case law that is eroding young people's ability to write meaningfully about what matters to them.

When I look at the miraculous work of the SPLC’s staff and volunteers, I cannot help but see a bright future, because I cannot imagine where journalism would be without an organization like the Student Press Law Center. I welcome the input, energy and ideas of all of SPLC’s friends as we take the case for the importance of student journalism to new audiences.

Frank D. LoMonte, Esq.
SPLC Executive Director
A Record of Service

SPLC continued its long tradition of providing responsive and timely service when people needed up-to-date information and assistance. SPLC attorneys presented training workshops for students and teachers at more than 30 schools, colleges and conferences, spanning 15 states and the District of Columbia. And SPLC referral counsel were able to resolve some tricky legal predicaments for their pro-bono clients.

Despite some setbacks in the courts, SPLC had another active and productive programming year:

- The Center worked with volunteer legal counsel from Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP in New York to obtain dismissal of charges against a student photographer arrested for taking a photo of a student being carried from a dorm on a stretcher after a drug raid.

- The Center joined other First Amendment organizations in a successful letter-writing campaign to prevent the “de-publication” of a favorable court decision in Smith v. Novato, a California appeals court opinion that school officials violated the free speech rights of a student editorial writer.

- SPLC helped The Lantern at Ohio State overcome distribution limitations around Ohio Stadium, over the objections of administrators who wanted only “official” university publications to be displayed.

- SPLC lawyers aided the Missouri State University Standard in obtaining open records about textbook sales that the university tried to keep secret.

- We added two new educational presentations to our website splc.org: (1) Freedom of Information Law for High School Student Journalists, a primer about how FOI laws can help journalists obtain access to specific types of records and meetings, and (2) Reporter’s Privilege for High School Student Journalists, an introduction to the laws and techniques that can help students confronting tough choices about protecting confidential sources, and unpublished notes or photos.

- With support from the Newspaper Association of America Foundation, we began a continuing series of podcasts that gives lively, topical information about new legal developments, and about the resolution to recurring questions posed by callers to the SPLC attorney hotline.

- SPLC used its website, media interviews and speaking appearances to help give context and explanation to the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in Morse v. Frederick, a student speech case that gives high school administrators added latitude to censor when a student’s speech is reasonably interpreted as promoting drug abuse. Confusion about the scope of Morse has increased the call for SPLC’s expert guidance, to clarify what the Court did – and didn’t – decide.

“SPLC is a valuable resource for young journalists. The guidance and expertise it provides are more critical than ever. With the press facing challenges on so many fronts, it’s comforting to know SPLC is out there fighting for First Amendment causes.”

Caesar Andrews, Executive Editor, Detroit Free Press
I n the summer of 2006, I was removed from my position as the longtime adviser of the Viking News at Ocean County College in Toms River, N.J. when the student newspaper published several stories that included comments critical of the college's administration. My students and I believed we were censored by intimidation.

After the administration’s attempt to fire me, the students and I were in almost daily touch with the Student Press Law Center. When my students wanted to sue the college for infringement of their First Amendment rights by the firing of their adviser, the SPLC helped secure free legal representation for them through its Attorney Referral Network. With support from the SPLC, my students filed a lawsuit that resulted in a federal judge reinstating me to my position.

Now, I am back at work, and my students say my return has been essential to the student newspaper’s production. It is critical that all of us who work with student journalists teach them about their rights and responsibilities, support them in the exercise of those rights and responsibilities and help them and everyone else understand the importance of what they are doing. It also is vital that we maintain a strong SPLC and that we ensure knowledge of its existence and purpose is available for all who are involved in student media.

Awards and Honors

SPLC and its outgoing director, Mark Goodman, were honored by a number of leading educational and First Amendment organizations during 2007, recognizing the Center’s 34 years of service to the cause of student free speech.

These included:
- The First Amendment Award from the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.
- The Reid H. Montgomery Distinguished Service Award from College Media Advisers.
- The Gerald M. Sass Award for Distinguished Service to Journalism and Mass Communication from the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication.
To Inform and Serve

The SPLC provides student journalists and their advisers with a vast array of resources to meet their needs. SPLC publications, legal assistance and internship opportunities are among the tools students rely on to learn about their legal rights and responsibilities and to defend their press freedom.

Here is just a small sampling of what we offer in our efforts to inform and serve:

- The SPLC Report: a three-times yearly news magazine with information on changes in student media law and challenges to student press freedom.

- The SPLC website, www.splc.org, is a comprehensive source of information, resources, products, links, and the latest happenings in the world of student press law.

- LegalAlert: a monthly e-mail newsletter reporting the latest press law cases and controversies from across the nation with SPLC analysis.

- Law of the Student Press: our comprehensive handbook on the laws, policies and court decisions affecting student media.

- SPLC Attorney Referral Network: case-by-case referrals to more than 150 lawyers across the country who offer their services free to student journalists who need legal representation.

- SPLC Media Law Presentations, SPLC Test Your Knowledge Quizzes, and SPLC Podcasts.

- SPLC News Flashes: a free subscription-based e-mail news service that provides breaking news stories on legal issues facing the student press across the country.

- Covering Campus Crime: the SPLC’s detailed guide to obtaining records about crime on college campuses.

- SPLC Legal Analysis Packets: for classroom lessons or media staff handbooks. These popular reprints include topics such as libel, invasion of privacy and a wide variety of freedom of information issues.

- The SPLC Internship and Fellowship Programs offered nine internships and a fellowship each year for journalism students and recent graduates, allowing them to build a strong foundation in First Amendment Advocacy.
2007 Contributions

A major announcement at the start of 2007 told of the successful completion of the SPLC’s first-ever endowment campaign. Thanks to the generosity of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation’s challenge grant, the SPLC made its three-year target and qualified for the full Knight Foundation match of $1.25 million.

Special thanks go to the endowment campaign’s honorary chairs, Floyd Abrams, Caesar Andrews, Soledad O’Brien, the late Charles O’Malley and Greta Van Susteren. We also thank the many news media companies, corporations and individuals who participated in this important effort.

The Student Press Law Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. For more than 30 years we have relied upon the generosity of foundations, corporations and individuals just like you.

Thanks as well to the foundations and organizations that contributed to the annual support of the SPLC’s programs. They are:

**Freedom Fighters ($10,000 or more)**
- American Society of Newspaper Editors
- College Media Advisers
- Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation
- Journalism Education Association
- McCormick Tribune Foundation
- Newspaper Association of America Foundation
- Park Foundation
- Scripps Howard Foundation
- Yellow Chair Foundation

**Student Voice Champions ($5,000 to $9,999)**
- Karen L. and Norman Bosley (NJ)
- National Scholastic Press Association

**Free Press Protectors ($1,000 to $4,999)**
- Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Newspaper Division
- Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Scholastic Journalism Division
- Candace Perkins Bowen (OH)
- John Bowen (OH)
- College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers
- Virginia Edwards (MD)
- Thomas and Sonja Eveslage (PA)
- Mark Goodman (DC)
- Illinois College Press Association
- Journalism Association of Ohio Schools
- Kansas Scholastic Press Association
- Frank LoMonte (VA)
- New York Newspaper Foundation

With appreciation . . .

The excellence and responsiveness of SPLC’s services depends on the work of a devoted staff of employees and interns. We thank all those whose efforts made 2007 a successful and productive year:

Isaac Arnsdorf
Moriah Balingit
Maggie Beckwith
Michael Beder
Abbie Gibbs
Adam Goldstein
Sunjha Hattin
Mike Hiestand
Tim Hoffine
Erica Hudock
Brian Hudson
Jenny Redden
Scott Sternberg
Jared Taylor
Judy Wang
Sam Wilder

The SPLC thanks the volunteers who serve on the SPLC Attorney Referral Network, SPLC Advisory Council and Steering Committee.
In the course of my investigation into gambling at my high school, the SPLC provided invaluable information about criminal law, student discipline rights, public record law and prior review. Their friendly and expert staff even offered to set up contact with a prominent local lawyer — and all at no charge.”

— Henry Rome, managing editor, The Spoke
Thanks to these schools and dozens of others, SPLC raised more than $2,800 in the inaugural year of the Your Voice, Your Freedom drive to help promote advocacy on behalf of students’ First Amendment rights. Each school’s publications staffs received a pizza party to show SPLC’s appreciation for their students’ energy and enthusiasm in supporting the cause of free speech.

Your Voice, Your Freedom is a student-driven program that challenges college and high school journalists to tap their creativity to help fund the not for profit work of the SPLC.
Special Thanks

America's leading journalism education and newspaper organizations are in the forefront of supporting the work of the Student Press Law Center, not just by donating money but by helping SPLC attorneys stage the educational programming that reaches thousands of appreciative students and teachers each year. These partners are due a special thanks for their efforts in making sure young people have the latest and best legal research at their fingertips:

Associated Collegiate Press
National Scholastic Press Association
Journalism Education Association
College Media Advisers
American Society of Newspaper Editors
Newspaper Association of America Foundation
Society of Collegiate Journalists
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers
Western Association of University Publications Managers

First Amendment Friends
($100 to $499)

Helen F. Silha (MN)
Rebecca Sipos (VA)
Timothy D. Smith (OH)
Karrie Smythia (MO)
Theresa Solomon (NJ)
Staples High School (CT)
Rosalind and Martin Stark (VA) (in memory of David Adams)
South Carolina Scholastic Press Association
Southern Interscholastic Press Association
Southern University Newspapers (NC)
Taylor Publishing Company (TX)
Thomas Jefferson High School (VA)
The Eyrie and The Falcons (VA)
The Orange and Black (CO)
The Rock (CO)
Bob and Judith Trager (CO)
Erik Ugland (WI)
Karen Veselits (NJ)
Virginia Association of Journalism Teachers and Advisers
David Wallner (WI)
Mark Webber (TX)
Wenatchee High School (WA)
Stephen J. Wermiel (MD)
Wilma Wirt (VA) (in memory of Ted Smith)
Roxanne Zell (MI)
Financial Statements

Balance Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>420,656</td>
<td>399,815</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>24,176</td>
<td>23,668</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>4,828</td>
<td>1,699</td>
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<td>Deposits</td>
<td>3,281</td>
<td>3,281</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>2,521,649</td>
<td>1,660,035</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td>2,974,590</td>
<td>2,008,498</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>3,481</td>
<td>1,477</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued salaries and benefits</td>
<td>2,568</td>
<td>21,911</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td>6,049</td>
<td>23,388</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td>2,968,541</td>
<td>2,065,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>2,974,590</td>
<td>2,088,498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statement of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>1,258,940</td>
<td>788,976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>168,190</td>
<td>176,965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>17,405</td>
<td>22,046</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>2,240</td>
<td>7,925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other revenue</td>
<td>7,760</td>
<td>178</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total revenue</strong></td>
<td>1,454,535</td>
<td>996,090</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Program services</td>
<td>375,222</td>
<td>323,783</td>
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<td>Supporting services</td>
<td>175,882</td>
<td>174,340</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td>551,104</td>
<td>498,123</td>
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<td><strong>Change in net assets</strong></td>
<td>903,431</td>
<td>497,967</td>
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<td>Net asset at beginning of year</td>
<td>2,065,110</td>
<td>1,567,143</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</strong></td>
<td>2,968,541</td>
<td>2,065,110</td>
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</table>

From the Audited Financial Statements reported by Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman, an independent certified public accounting firm, for the year ending December 31, 2007. Copies of the entire financial statement may be obtained from the SPLC.