

TSIPPI WRAY: VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Tsippi Wray, '85, received the 1988 Minnesota Volunteer of the Year Award given by the Children's Defense Fund for her efforts to educate people about the ways they can help children. Wray says practicing family law made her aware of how harmful to children is the lack of health care, housing, food, money, and education.

Working as an attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, Wray tries to solve the problems of individual families. But she says that what she and the society's other attorneys do "only affects a very thin layer, the veneer of the real problem that goes miles and miles deep."

In an attempt to do more than is possible as a family law attorney, Wray has spoken to church and women's groups and professional organizations about ways they can help children in their communities. In August she spoke to a group of DFL party members about social injustices affecting children.

"I want to educate people about the problems of children because we have to pay attention to those who really suffer and don't have a voice," she says. Wray said she volunteered for the Children's Defense Fund because "we all have a responsibility to do something in our small way to address these problems."

Wray said one of the things she appreciates about her law education at William Mitchell is that the school did not foster intense competition. "Competition

is only one part of the picture," she says. "Winning may mean working in a

collegiate atmosphere of give and take. Most of our practice involves competence, knowledge, and working as members of teams of attorneys, doctors, and investigators."

In March, Wray traveled to Israel, her homeland, for a two-month visit. When she returns, she

plans to continue advocating for children because "this is something I feel strongly about; this defines me for myself." *Tammy Provo*



JARVIS JONES: AFTER THE FIRE

Three years after graduation, Jarvis Jones, '85, is working on one of the largest mass disaster cases in the history of the legal system—the San Juan Dupont Plaza Hotel fire in Puerto Rico, with about 2400 plaintiffs, 250 defendants, and \$1.8 billion in claims.

Jones, an attorney with the Minneapolis law firm of Fetterly & Gordon, which represents the hotel, spent the majority of the fall and summer months in 1988 in San Juan taking depositions in an attempt to reconstruct the facts behind the 1986 New Year's Eve fire at the hotel. Says Jones: "Although the people were nice, the weather was warm, and the spicy food was great, the work was exhausting—I often took three or four depositions per day."

The multi-staged trial, covering each major issue separately, was scheduled to begin in mid-March. During the first stage, the court will determine whether the facts warrant piercing the corporate



veil to hold the shareholders liable for injuries caused by the fire if negligence is determined. Jones says this stage is important for his firm, which wants to keep the hotel's liability within its insurance policy limits.

During the four remaining stages, the

courts will consider products liability, apportion negligence, handle cross-claims, and address third-party claims. The complex pretrial and trial work is managed under an order from U.S. District Judge Raymond L. Acosta of San Juan that is expected to serve as a guide for future judges in disaster litigation.

The trial could take several years to complete, and appeals are likely. "We're in this for the long haul," Jones says.

Jones says he enjoys the challenges of the case and his work as a lawyer. "Ever since I was knee-high, I knew I wanted

to be a lawyer," he says. "I plan to continue to refine my skills in the firm's specialized practice of fire litigation and product liability, working closely with Jim Fetterly, Gary Gordon, and the other members of the firm," he says. *Tammy Provo*