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Lawyers Lend-A-Hand celebrates 20th year

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A group that provides mentors to poor students will honor a husband-and-wife lawyer duo for their commitment to its mission at a dinner tonight.

Lawyers Lend-A-Hand to Youth is holding its annual spring awards dinner and marking its 20th anniversary.

At the dinner, Kimball R. Anderson, a Winston & Strawn LLP partner, and his wife, Karen Gatsis Anderson, will receive the group's Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Philanthropic Award.

The couple is being recognized because they're "committed to our mission of presenting quality mentoring to inner city kids and having a profound impact on their lives," said Timothy S. Tomasik, a partner at Tomasik, Kotin, Kasserman LLC and chairman of the group's governing board.

Kimball Anderson became directly involved by serving as co-chairman of the group's 2011 awards dinner. He has worked on fundraising for the group, and the couple has made significant private donations, though he declined to say how much.

Anderson said he and his wife are grateful for the award.

"But neither the award nor the dinner should be about Karen or I," he said. "It should be about the disadvantaged children who are served by Lawyers Lend-A-Hand to Youth."

Karen Anderson helped open and provides legal advice to The Montessori School of Englewood. She also teaches a trial advocacy and professional responsibility class at the University of Illinois College of Law.

About \$180,000 is expected to be raised at tonight's event with 230 people attending at the Four Seasons Hotel. The events co-chairwomen are Paula Hudson Holderman, Winston & Strawn's chief attorney development



Lawyers Lend-A-Hand to Youth will mark its 20th anniversary tonight and honor Kimball R. Anderson, a Winston & Strawn LLP partner, and his wife, Karen Gatsis Anderson, with the Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Philanthropic Award.

officer, and Sharon E. Jones, CEO of Jones Diversity Inc.

Over the last two decades, Lawyers Lend-A-Hand has awarded a total of \$1.6 million in grants to 124 different programs that helped more than 50,000 impoverished youths. That includes \$90,000 awarded to 13 programs this year, said Genita C. Robinson, Lawyers-Lend-A-Hand's executive director.

Among this year's grant recipients is Minds Matter Chicago, which received \$10,000.

That program provides mentors to Chicago Public Schools high school students starting sophomore year to help prepare them for the ACT test and assist them in navigating the college selection process.

There are currently 136 Minds Matter mentors working with 68 high school students.

Minds Matter Chicago will receive the group's Thomas A. Demetrio Excellence Award at tonight's dinner.

Demetrio, a partner at Corboy & Demetrio P.C., was president of The Chicago Bar Association when the program started in 1994 and was originally affiliated with The Chicago Bar Foundation.

Abraham Lincoln Marovitz, a late U.S. District Court judge, played a major role in launching the group and providing funding. After Marovitz died in 2001, his will left about \$1 million to The Chicago Bar Foundation and many of its related programs, including Lawyers-Lend-A-Hand.

"I would be kidding if I said at the time I knew that 20 years later it would be as successful as it has become," Demetrio said.

If Kimball and Karen Anderson's "dedication can

trickle down and others get involved, Lawyers Lend-A-Hand can only become better and more relevant," he said.

Sonya Olds Som, a managing director at Major, Lindsey & Africa, a legal search firm, was part of the planning committee for tonight's event.

Som, who was in private practice in Chicago from 1999 to 2010, said she understands the importance of young people having mentors. Patricia Brown Holmes, a Schiff, Hardin LLP partner, provided Som with career guidance when she was in private practice.

"Getting mentors in life as early as possible to provide you with good advice and counsel is very important," Som said. "It benefited me by having someone as a sounding board to make career decisions."