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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MURTHA CULLINA ATTORNEYS AND STAFF VOLUNTEER TO SUPPORT LITERACY IN HARTFORD**

**HARTFORD, CONN. (March 2, 2007)**...Murtha Cullina LLP is proud of its commitment to the Hartford School System and the Hartford Jewish Coalition for Literacy. Since the fall of 2005, staff and attorneys from Murtha Cullina LLP have been serving as reading mentors at Barnard Brown School in Hartford through a program administered by the Hartford Jewish Coalition for Literacy. Each week, six individuals from the firm meet at Barnard Brown School and read with and to six students in both kindergarten and second grade.

Throughout the area, more than 250 volunteers participate in the Hartford Jewish Coalition for Literacy volunteering in both Hartford and some of the surrounding communities. Murtha Cullina LLP is the first business to commit volunteers to this program to read with the students on a weekly basis. The program within Murtha Cullina arose through its Diversity Committee. "We wanted to do something for the community within which we do business and felt that this was a wonderful program to get involved with," said Irwin Hausman, who is Chairman of the firm's Diversity Committee. He said, "While there are a number of programs that are worthwhile, the firm felt that this particular program had a long and positive impact on the recipients of our services."

The individuals who have participated in the program have all felt that their time was well spent and appreciated by the teachers and students alike. Liz Gioia, one of the attorneys who participates in the reading program, commented that participation in the program "puts a smile on my face for the remainder of the day" on those days that she reads with the students. Recently, a kindergartener was able to read an entire page to Liz and her colleagues, and when finished, was excited about his accomplishment. Madonna Burns, another participant from the firm, said that it was a pleasure for her to be with the children and believes that one-on-one reading help is essential to the overall education of the student.

"From our perspective," said Irwin Hausman, "we would like to see more corporate sponsorship of reading mentors so that the entire business community can participate in this wonderful program." "The time commitment is short, and the benefits long," said Hausman. Anyone interested in participating in the program next year should contact Gale Shapiro at the Hartford Jewish Coalition for Literacy at 860-236-READ (7323).

With 130 attorneys in five offices in Connecticut and Massachusetts, Murtha Cullina offers a full range of legal services. From our base in New England, we are able to serve the

local, regional, national and international needs of our clients. Our practice encompasses litigation and transactional representation of businesses, governmental units, non-profit organizations and individuals. Core practice areas include bankruptcy and creditors rights, business immigration, commercial finance and lending, construction, corporate, environmental and land use, insurance coverage for policyholders, international business, labor and employment, litigation, municipal law, public finance, real estate and trusts and estates. The firm represents clients across a broad spectrum of industry groups and provides specialty legal services to the agricultural, cable television, energy, telecommunications, health care, long term care, motor vehicle, real estate and housing, and retail and hospitality industries.

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