

## **In The Spotlight with: Attorney James A. Amodio of the Law Firm, Brown and Amodio**

**By** Kate Feeks

In June watch for the next episode of *Law Talk*, hosted by John Celebrezze. This episode features Attorney James Amodio, of the law firm Brown and Amodio, along with Brad Shook, a student at Buckeye High School. This show can be viewed on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) Public Access, Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) Public Access, Channel 21, and Armstrong Cable Access, Channel 37.

In 1982 Mr. Amodio joined the law firm Brown and Amodio. He is a graduate of Hofstra University, New York's largest private college located on Long Island. He earned his law degree from the University of Michigan, graduating with honors. After law school, Mr. Amodio worked for several years at the law firm of Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue. His practice is concentrated in the areas of real estate, business formation, estate planning and contracts. He is also the owner of AFC Title Agency, Inc. which issues title insurance as an agent of Ohio Bar Title Insurance Company.

His estate planning practice offers services from wills and powers of attorney to complex trusts, including irrevocable life insurance trusts and trusts for the benefit of children and grandchildren. In recent years, as mortgage foreclosures in Medina County have accelerated, Mr. Amodio has become more active in assisting individuals in defending foreclosure actions. He belongs to a number of professional organizations, including the Ohio State and Medina County Bar Associations, as well as the Medina County Estate Planning Council. He served as President of the Medina County Bar Association in 1990.

For the past eleven years Attorney Amodio has been involved with a mock trial program for Ohio's high school students. He volunteers as the legal advisor for Buckeye High School's Mock Trial Program. This program is offered by the Ohio Center for Law Related Education (OCLRE), to middle school and high school students. It is designed to improve student critical thinking, reading, writing, public speaking and listening skills. Students learn how to develop an understanding and appreciation for the law, court procedures, and the judicial system. This coming year will be the 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary for the program.

Each fall a new case is released by the OCLRE. "It varies every year. A couple years ago we had a murder case. Each side has two witnesses, two attorneys and there is a bailiff. All witnesses have unisex names. The murder case dealt with a person who had gone off his meds. The question was whether that was the fault of his doctor or someone who should have seen it coming and prevented this murder. It occurred in a video store where the man leaned over, grabbed scissors and stabbed the clerk for no reason" explained Amodio.

The mock trial competition materials include the case, competition rules, case law, rules of evidence and other teaching materials. Each team has 5 to 11 students, with a prosecution/plaintiff and a defense. Each side has two witnesses and two lawyers. "The OCLRE uses people from the public defender's office, state attorney general's office and judges to give input and contribute to the program" noted Amodio.

The local competition is held at the Medina County Courthouse. The trials then move onto regional and state venues.

To learn more about the Ohio High School Mock Trial program watch *Law Talk* throughout the month of June on our local cable network and You Tube.