

## Finkelstein & Partners shares dangers of texting and driving with Cornwall students

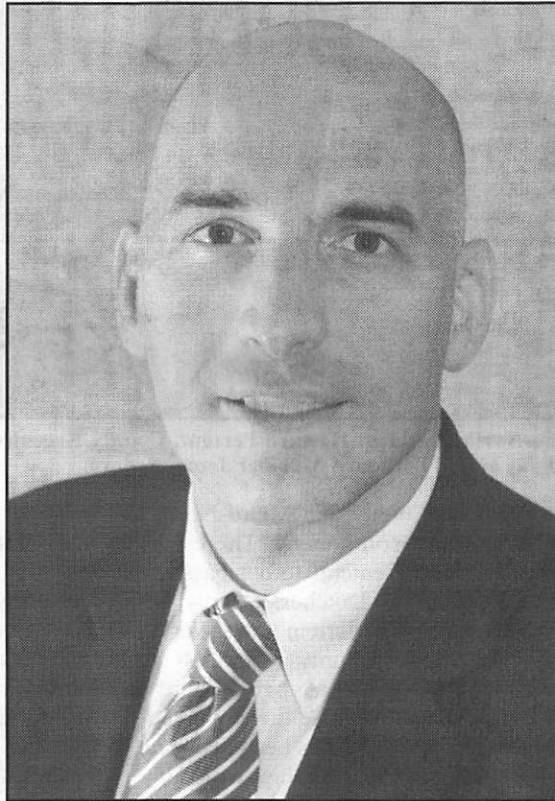
Commit to quit - don't text and drive was the urgent message attorney Kenneth Fromson left with nearly 500 seniors and juniors at a recent program at Cornwall High School. Fromson, a partner at Finkelstein & Partners LLP, one of New York State's largest personal injury firms, spoke to the students about the dangers of texting while driving as part of the law firm's active community relations program.

Finkelstein & Partners has teamed up with Cumulus radio stations to build awareness among people of all ages, and especially young people, about the deadly consequences of texting while driving, also known as distracted driving.

"First and foremost," Fromson said, "texting while driving is illegal in New York and 28 other states across the nation. Is there anything going on that's so critical it can't wait until you can safely pull over or arrive at your destination?" asked Fromson.

"According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), it is the under-20 age group with the greatest proportion of distracted drivers," said Fromson. "Of all drivers younger than 20 involved in fatal crashes, 16 percent were reported to have been dis-

traced while driving. That's why it's so important that we make them understand



Attorney Kenneth Fromson of Finkelstein & Partners LLP.

now, while they're still learning to drive, that texting, and other distractive activities, including messing around with

friends, is not only dangerous, it can kill," continued Fromson.

To illustrate the serious nature of the issue, Fromson shared the following facts with the Cornwall students, all of whom were of driving age:

- 20 percent of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving. (NHTSA)
- According to a recent survey nearly half of people under the age of 24 admitted to texting while driving
- Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)
- Using a cell phone while driving, whether it's hand-held or hands-free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent. (University of Utah)

The students who participated in the Commit to Quit program were invited to

create a poster to share the lessons they learned with their fellow Cornwall students. The winning poster will be displayed throughout the school.

"Texting while driving is an exceptionally serious issue, especially for our young people," said the firm's managing partner, Andrew Finkelstein. "We're proud to be able to use the resources of our firm and the knowledge of our attorneys to communicate the issues of distracted driving. If our Commit to Quit Texting While Driving program prevents even one accident, saves even one life, then it served its purpose," continued Finkelstein.

For more information about the Commit to Quit Texting while Driving program visit the Community Relations pages of Finkelstein & Partners website at [www.lawampm.com](http://www.lawampm.com). To arrange for the Commit to Quit program at your school or community organization, contact Danielle Mackey at [dmackey@lawampm.com](mailto:dmackey@lawampm.com).

## Plan for a great 2012

conducts her business. When she first started working as a professional organizer she would have five or six

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working with your clients, why would you want to be in the office organizing paper-



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## The future of Metro-North discussed as power changes in Dutchess County

Dutchess County Executive William R. Steinhaus hosted a meeting recently with County Executive-elect Marcus J. Molinaro and Metro-North President Howard Permut and MTA Board of Directors member James Sedore as part of continuing transition efforts as County Executive-elect Molinaro prepared to take office this week.

"The conversations we have had around the table over the years with top Metro-North officials have been very productive and resulted in many great outcomes on both Hudson and Harlem lines, such as the Poughkeepsie Train Station redevelopment, expanding parking at New Hamburg and Beacon, the platform and related updates at the eastern Dutchess stations, LOOP Commuter Bus Connections, and much more," Steinhaus

said. "One of my own personal favorites is the New York Yankee Stadium station that welcomes thousands of Dutchess County Yankee fans traveling to the Bronx."

Metro-North has seen tremendous growth in Dutchess County, with ridership numbers more than doubling since 1983, and Metro-North President Howard Permut credits the positive working relationship



From left to right: Metro-North President Howard Permut, County Executive-elect Marcus Molinaro, County Executive William Steinhaus and MTA Board Member James Sedore.

## Small business innovation research awards nominations sought by SBA

The U.S. Small Business Administration is seeking nominations for awards honoring the critical economic role small businesses play in federally funded research and development through SBA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

Three awards will be given, one for companies that have participated in the SBIR/STTR programs, one for individuals who advocate on behalf of the programs, and a third "Hall of Fame" award recognizing companies that have an extended period of extraordinary success

nated by the SBA in cooperation with 11 other federal agencies with large external research and development budgets.

The awards are presented to companies and individuals that are beacons of promise and models of excellence in high technology. Typical of past award winners are a Maine company that created a self-propelled and eco-friendly "AquaPod" for sustainable aqua-culture. A previous Hall of Fame award winner that won numerous SBIR grants – a major west coast chip manufacturer – started with a staff of 35 and has expanded to a global work force of 17,500.

between the County and Metro-North as an important component. "There have been vast improvements to our passenger service offering in Dutchess County, both on the Hudson and Harlem lines. Working with Dutchess County officials and departmental staff has been such an important part of those improvements. Each of our successes has been dependent on a successful relationship with all of you," said Permut.

As County Executive, Molinaro will follow Steinhaus and serve as the Chairman of the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council (PDCTC). Metro-North is a represented member of the PDCTC, so a positive working relationship is important as decisions are made about transportation funding availability.

"Metro-North has tremendous value

coming into our community to enjoy all that Dutchess County has to offer and bringing tourism dollars into our local economy. I look forward to continuing and enhancing the successful working partnership with Metro-North and continuing our efforts to improve the quality of life for county residents," Molinaro said.

Other participants in today's meeting included Commissioner of Planning & Development Kealy Salomon, Assistant Commissioner Eoin Wrafter and Assistant to the County Executive William O'Neil.

"My regular meetings with the top officials at Metro-North, along with our volunteer MTA Board Representative Jim Sedore, have kept an open line of communication and has allowed everyone the opportunity to ensure important priorities for Dutchess County and for Metro North are well aligned. I am confident County