

Constitution Day speaker to compare U.S., Russian jury trials

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"A Jury of Your Comrades? Reflections on Russian and U.S. Jury Trials" is the topic for this year's Constitution Day speaker at Alfred University. Mark W. Bennett, deputy chief Appellate Court attorney, Appellate Division, Fourth Department, Rochester, will speak at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 19, in Kenyon-Allen Rooms, Powell Campus Center on the Alfred University campus. His talk is open to the public, free of charge. A door prize will be awarded. He will be looking at the jury trial experience in Russia since 2003, and the United States under the respective constitutions, and comparing the process and results. Bennett, 42, is a native of Ogdensburg, NY, and a graduate of St. Lawrence University in 1991 with a degree in economics. As an undergraduate, he studied in Moscow at the Plehanov Institute of the National Economy in 1990-91. He received his master's degree in international relations and his law degree from Georgetown University in 1997. After working as a commercial litigator for the law firm Clifford Chance Rogers & Wells, LLP, in Washington, DC and New York City from 1996-2000, Bennett joined Nixon Peabody, LLP, in Rochester, NY, from 2000-2003. Since 2001, Bennett has been involved with the Russian American Rule of Law Consortium (RAROLC), which describes itself as a "group of legal communities working together to develop legal institutions and the rule of law in both the United States and Russia." He travelled to Russia annually between 2002 and 2007 to participate in seminars on jury trials, commercial law, civil litigation, trial tactics, attorney and judicial ethics, and alternative dispute resolution.