

ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING
10:00 A.M. ★ Friday, September 8, 2017
New Orleans, LA

Attendance:

Marta Schnabel, O'Bryon & Schnabel, Co- Chair
Richard Arceneaux, President, Clerk of Court Association
Hon. Jeffery Cashe, Judge 21st Judicial District
Jeffery Coreil, Pro Bono Partner, Neuner Pate
Christy Kane, Executive Director, Louisiana Appleseed
Hon. Sheral Kellar, Louisiana Workforce Commission
Prof. Virginia Listach, Southern University
Alainna Mire, Alexandria City Attorney's Office
Luz Molina, Loyola University of New Orleans College of Law
Chris Ralston, Officer of the LA Bar Foundation, Partner, Phelps Dunbar, LLP
Deidre Robert, Board of the LA Bar Foundation, Louisiana Department of Justice
Valerie Schexnayder, LSBA Board of Governors, Attorney at Law
Mark Surprenant, Louisiana Legal Services Corp., Adams and Reese
Kimberly Theriot, Corporate Counsel, Conrad Shipyard LLC
Molly Vigour, Corporate Counsel, Canal HR, Inc.
Sandra Vjunovich, Judicial Administrator of the Louisiana Supreme Court
Hon. Lisa Woodruff-White, Chief Judge, East Baton Rouge Family Court

Staff:

Monte Mollere, ATJ Director
Amy Duncan, ATJ Training Counsel
Rachael Mills, ATJ Projects Counsel
Nicole Louque, ATJ Admin. Assistant
Michael Schachtman, ATJ SRL Counsel

Guest:

Donna Cuneo, Executive Director, Louisiana Bar Foundation
Sachida Raman, Acadiana Legal Services
Laura Tuggle, Executive Director, Southeast LA Legal Services

Welcome & Introductions

Marta Schnabel welcomed the Commission members, and attendees introduced themselves. Marta mentioned that the ATJ Commission Orientation was cancelled due to Hurricane Harvey but will be rescheduled as a video conference.

Commission Updates:

Distinguished Pro Bono Fellows – Mark Surprenant

Mark Surprenant provided an overview of the program and presented the applications from fellows and host organizations. Fellow applicants included; Judy Perry Martinez, Valerie Schexnayder, Thomas Gibbs, Hugh Straub and Sarah Campbell. Host applicants included: Louisiana Civil Justice Center and Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. Mark Surprenant made a motion for the Commission to accept all applications and suggested we have a ceremony on January 11, 2018 to welcome the new fellows. The motion was seconded by Sandra Vjunovich and passed.

ATJ Developing Leadership Intern Program – Mark Surprenant

Mark explained the history of the program, and thanked everyone involved for their help in the making the second year of the program successful.

A motion by Luz Molina to accept the consent calendar was seconded by Hon. Sheral Kellar, and passed.

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Marta presented a brief overview of the Commission Committees. Monte Mollere asked that each committee member join a committee, and reminded the group that committee membership may include interested, non-commission members.

Pro Bono Survey – Jeff Coreil/ Monte Mollere

In 2017 Louisiana participated in a Pro Bono survey distributed by the ABA. The goal of the survey was to quantify the amount of pro bono work done in Louisiana, obtain the characteristics of recent pro bono service, and to determine what factors encourage or discourage pro bono services. Jeff Coreil gave an overview of the findings. Rachael Mills will write an article for an upcoming edition of the Louisiana Bar Journal that will summarize the results. Christy Kane mentioned that the survey results show attorneys wanted CLE credit for pro bono, something that is already available when volunteers work through pro bono agencies. It was suggested that attorneys be educated regarding the CLE credit and a rule change to include credit for pro bono work done outside of a pro bono agency may be appropriate.

Pro Bono Summit – Rachael Mills

A Pro Bono Summit is scheduled to be held on January 18, 2017 in Baton Rouge at the Renaissance hotel in conjunction with the LSBA Mid-Year Meeting. A draft agenda was distributed. Cheryl Zalenski, Director of the Center for Pro Bono at the ABA, will join us to discuss the results of the ABA Pro Bono Survey. Rachael Mills asked commissioner to submit the names of individuals they may wish to include on the invitation list. Jeff Coreil motioned that the Commission endorse and participate in the Pro Bono Summit. The motion was seconded by Judge Cash and passed.

Lawyers in Libraries – Nicole Louque

Nicole Louque reminded the group of the purpose of the program. At the time of the meeting 68 events had been planned throughout the state. Christy Kane suggested that the ATJ staff as that the program be approved for CLE credit. Sandra Vujnovich suggested local and federal legislators be invited to the events. Judge Cash would like to see a program set up for pro bono mediation.

State Funding – Chris Ralston

Chris Ralston summarized progress of the Funding Committee. The economic impact study was completed showing that for every dollar spent on civil legal aid in Louisiana there was an \$8.73 economic benefit. Louisiana is one of four states that receives no state funding for civil legal aid. Recently Bar/LBF leadership met with Jay Dardenne to discuss receiving an appropriation for civil legal aid. Christy Kane recently helped facilitate a meeting with Walt Leger to discuss his ideas on individuals that the committees should talk to about funding.

Federal Funding – Laura Tuggle/Sachida Raman

In March the administration's budget included elimination of all federal funding for Legal Services Corporation (LSC) for 2018. In August the House has proposed a budget of \$300M and the Senate \$375M. Sachida reported that recently the House proposed an amendment to increase funding to \$375M. FY2017 funding is \$385 million. ATJ Committee members and staff are

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attempting to meet locally with federal legislators. Much support has been garnered for civil legal aid funding: letters of support signed by Deans of law schools, Fortune 500 companies, large law firms and media campaigns.

Continuum – Monte Mollere/Michael Schachtman

This is an ATJ Program project being developed for the LSBA website. The continuum of services concept suggests matching the most appropriate assistance to the individual's level of need, thereby increasing efficiency. The LSBA receives 400-500 calls per month from individuals wishing to obtain legal assistance. The LSBA website provides numerous resources for individuals which will be coordinated into an easily accessible page to help individuals with legal needs find the most appropriate legal assistance. The page will be an access point from which to view and choose options most appropriate for the individual – ranging from help locating an attorney which someone can pay for, to modest means options, to pro bono and legal service options, to directions to available forms.

Louisiana Bar Foundation – Deidre Roberts

In 2017 the Louisiana Bar Foundation granted more than \$6.7 million for social justice initiatives. The Louisiana Campaign to Preserve Civil Legal Aid works with LBF grantees to adopt the campaign as a fundraising mechanism. Grant applications will open on October 1, 2017. LBF has started a hurricane Harvey disaster fund.

Self-Represented Litigation Committee – Judge Harry Randow

In the absence of committee chair, Judge Harry Randow, Michael Schachtman reported on the committee's request to have consumer debt forms – an answer form and a judicial check list to be approved by the Commission and published as such. After discussion a motion was made that the answer form and the judicial check list be sent to the LDJA SRL Committee for review before the commission endorses them. Motion was seconded and passed. Commissioner Judge Lisa Woodruff-White is chair of the LDJA Self-Represented Litigants Committee and agreed to help shepherd this through the LDJA. Michael reported that this Committee will plan a SRL Summit for Spring 2018.

Modest Means Committee – Sheral Kellar

Sheral Kellar presented this committee's proposal for a modest means directory to the LSBA Board of Governors on August 26, 2017. She addressed several issues of concern expressed by the LSBA Board, and considerable discussion ensued. The Board ultimately unanimously approved the committee moving forward with the project. With a goal to launch the directory in about 60 days, the committee will create a video CLE for attorneys who wish to be included in the directory. The video will explain various aspects of providing services to individuals of modest means and be a requirement of directory participation.

Disaster Response – Monte Mollere

Monte explained that the need for Justice Community response to Hurricane Harvey has not been as great as other recent events, and most interaction has been through the LCJC hotline. The disaster response team is poised for action should there be a need.