

**LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
Disaster Response
10:00 P.M. ★ Friday, August 24, 2016
New Orleans, LA**

Attendance:

Luz Molina, Co-Chair
Erica Andrews, Law Office of Erica Andrews, LLC
Linton Carney, The Pro Bono Project
Leon Emanuel, Legal Services of North LA
Nicole Gaither, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
LaWanda Gibson, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.
Ann Gregorie, Baton Rouge Bar Association
Mark Judson, Southwest Louisiana Law Center, Inc.
Robert Lancaster, Louisiana State University
Brian Lenard, Hammond LA
Christine Lipsey, McGlinchey Stafford, PLLC
Joe Oelkers, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.
Sara Pic, Louisiana Supreme Court Library
Whit Prottzman, Deepwater Horizon CAO
Sachida Raman, Acadiana Legal Services Corp.
Graham Ryan, Jones Walker LLP
Jonathan Rhodes, Louisiana Civil Justice Center
Tara Richard, LA Appleseed
Jenny Rizzo-Choi, The Pro Bono Project
Lisa Stansky, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Hon. Raymond Steib, Jr., 24th JDC
Jane Thomas, Attorney at Law
Laura Tuggle, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Sharonda Williams, Fishman Haygood Phelps Walmsley Willis & Swanson, LLP

Staff:

Monte Mollere, ATJ Director
Rachael Mills, ATJ Project Counsel
Amy Duncan, ATJ Training Counsel
Nicole Louque, ATJ Administrative Assistant
Michael Schachtman, ATJ SRL Counsel

Guest:

Shawon Bernard, LIFT
Chrissy Cerniglia Brown, Loyola Law School
Mariam Childs, Supreme Court of Louisiana
Patrick Keller, Louisiana Land and Trust
Greg Landry, Acadiana Legal Services Corp.
Virginia Listach, Southern University
Dan Rees, Exec. Counsel for Disaster Recovery
Michael Tassin, LIFT
Candice Watkins, Community Development Disaster
Recovery Unit

Welcome & Introductions

Luz Molina welcomed the committee members and thanked everyone for attending. All attendees had an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Implementation of LSBA Disaster Plan for Legal Assistance

Ann Gregorie – Disaster Leadership Team

The LSBA Disaster Response Plan guides the Louisiana Justice Community in providing appropriate legal assistance after a disaster. The plan is located on the LSBA website and is updated annually through the efforts of Louisiana Appleseed. The plan designates a “Disaster Leadership Team” and the LSBA Access to Justice Program is responsible for coordinating and facilitating response by working with various legal providers around the state.

Graham Ryan – ABA Young Lawyer Disaster Liaison

Disaster Legal Services (DLS) is the ABA organized assistance to low income individuals affected by a disaster coordinated by the Young Lawyers Division in each state. Upon FEMA’s issuance of a letter of intent to activate DLS, the ABA Young Lawyers Division is notified and coordination begins with the state bar association’s Young Lawyer Division which is responsible for working with the entities within the state where the disaster occurred. A Disaster Response Team (DRT) of local and national members is established. The state YLD is responsible for establishing a disaster hotline and getting volunteers into the Disaster Recovery Centers.

In Louisiana, the accomplishment of these two tasks is directed in the LSBA Disaster Response Plan and facilitated by the ATJ Disaster Leadership Team. The Louisiana Civil Justice Center, an established legal hotline and 501 (c) 3, provides disaster hotline services for the ABA Disaster Legal Services Response, and solicitation of volunteers is done by local pro bono programs with support the LSBA YLD.

Jonathan Rhodes- LCJC

LCJC runs the disaster hotline. Currently they are receiving about 10 disaster calls a day. This seems high this early in the disaster. Most legal assistance comes when recovery begins and insurance problems begin. The LSBA website has many resources for volunteers; training videos and manuals.

Civil Legal Aid Providers

Acadiana – Greg Landry, Executive Director

Acadiana has three offices in or close to the disaster area and they plan is to rely on LVL volunteers to cover Lafayette. They have reached out to the Inns of Courts in St. Martin and Iberia Parishes to help with volunteers. Acadiana Legal Services Corporation staff and other volunteers will cover the other affected parishes.

Southwest Law Center – Mark Judson, Executive Director

The Pro Bono Project New Orleans – Jennifer Rizzo, Executive Director

Legal Services of North Louisiana – Leon Emanuel, Executive Director

Organizations reported they have been unaffected by the disaster, they are providing services in these unaffected parishes, and they stand ready to assist if needed.

Loyola Law School - Christy Cerniglia Brown

Southern University Law Center – Prof. Virginia Listashe

The law schools are scheduling a variety of training for students, attorney volunteers and the public. Laura Tuggle with Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (SLLS) suggested how the student services might be used. Luz suggests the law schools meet separately and coordinate student volunteers with the providers.

Southeast Louisiana Legal Services – Laura Tuggle, Executive Director

Laura Tuggle further reported that the SLLS offices in Baton Rouge and Hammond were not impacted by the flooding. Eleven of the twenty parishes that were affected are in SLLS's service area. SLLS Baton Rouge office is coordinating with the Baton Rouge Bar and law schools to assist in Ascension, West Baton Rouge, Iberville and the Feliciana Parishes. The SLLS Hammond office will assist in Tangipahoa, Livingston and St. Helena Parishes. The Greater Baton Rouge Area Foundation has already recognized work to be done on title clearance.

State of Louisiana - Daniel Rees, Executive Counsel for Disaster Recovery

Dan Reese's office has a grant from FEMA to do disaster case management; to guide people in their recovery. They would like help with training for their counselors. Laura's office is working on a flyer that would have basic information like how to make a referral. This might be helpful for Dan. Much discussion was had about the immigration population and what benefits are available to them and if any of the resources are in Spanish. LCJC does have their materials in Spanish and the disaster hotline flyer has a Spanish version.

Baton Rouge Bar Association - Ann Gregorie, Executive Director

Baton Rouge Bar is working to provide volunteer as the DRCs and shelters. They are using Sign Up Genius to solicit volunteers to help staff the Baton Rouge area DRC's. The Baton Rouge Bar is also collecting donations for flood victims and donations can be made on their website. Ann explained that applications for grants from these funds will also be placed on their site.

Louisiana State Bar Association, Access to Justice – Monte Mollere, ATJ Director and Rachael Mills, ATJ Projects Counsel

Volunteer Recruitment - The LSBA is working to recruit volunteers statewide to work with the local programs. Rachael Mills has solicited attorney volunteers and is working with the local services providers to direct volunteer to their programs in the method most convenient to the program.

Online Pro Bono - This is an ABA initiative which will allow those that qualify to ask a legal question online. Rachael is currently working to recruit volunteers and a soft launch is scheduled for August 22nd. The hope is to be ready to advertise to the public beginning September 1st. The attorney involvement is anonymous.

Training - The LSBA will help coordinate free CLE on disaster topics to individuals willing to volunteer. LSBA staff will be in touch with public interest lawyers to develop the topic offerings and a date for the event. The training session will be broadcasted on line and recorded for future

use.

The Disaster Leadership Team will meet weekly and keep the committee informed.

Adjourned