

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Friday, August 17, 2018**  
**Lafayette, LA**

**Attendance:**

Hon. Jeffery Cashe, Judge 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Court  
Jeffery Coreil, Pro Bono Partner, Neuner Pate, Co- Chair  
George “Dave” Ernest III, Hurlburt, Monroe and Ernest  
Hon. James Genovese, Associate Justice, Supreme Court  
Vivian Guillory, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Board of Directors  
Christy Kane, Executive Director, Louisiana Appleseed  
Gregory Landry, Executive Director, Acadiana Legal Service Corporation  
John E. McAuliffe, Jr., Secretary, Louisiana State Bar Association  
Chris Ralston, LA Bar Foundation Board, Partner, Phelps Dunbar, LLP  
Hon. Harry Randow, Judge 9<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court (retired)  
Dona Kay Renegar, LSBA, Immediate Past President  
Valerie Schexnayder, LSBA Board of Governors, Attorney at Law  
Mark Surprenant, Vice-President, Southeast 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

**Guests:**

Richard Arceneaux, President, Clerk of Court Association (proxy)  
Angela Bazile-White, Counsel to Chief Justice Bernette Johnson  
Donna Cuneo, Executive Director, Louisiana Bar Foundation  
Barry Grodsky, President, Louisiana State Bar Association  
Roxanne Newman, Southeast LA Legal Services (proxy)  
Michael Street, President, Louisiana Bar Foundation

**Staff:**

Linda Johnson, ATJ Technology Counsel  
Joanna Laidler, ATJ Assistant  
Rachael Mills, ATJ Projects Counsel  
Monte Mollere, ATJ Director

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Co-Chair Jeff Coreil welcomed Commission members and guests. Attendees introduced themselves.

**II. Consent Calendar – A motion by Dona Renegar to accept the consent calendar, was seconded by Mark Surprenant and passed unanimously**

**III. Louisiana Bar Foundation Report**

Chris Ralston provided a report on the activities of the Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF), including:

- The LBF will update the Economic Impact Study using statistics from the 2018 work of Louisiana civil legal aid providers.
- The Federal Fund Target Interest Rate increase may possibly result in net increases of more than \$1.5M annually in IOLTA revenue.
- The LBF has engaged a consultant to create an integrated civil legal aid technology portal using artificial intelligence.

A request was made by the LBF to create a Technology Committee to explore and recommend technological solutions to improve efficiency and effectiveness of legal services delivery and the justice system. The Commission unanimously voted to create this committee and ATJ Commission Chair Jeffrey Coreil asked LSBA Past President Dona Renegar to chair this committee.

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## IV. Access to Justice Projects, Issues & Initiatives

- a. **Data Collection.** Jeff Coreil, Judge Lisa Woodruff White, and members of the Commission discussed and acknowledged the importance of maintaining and collecting data and the role of the Court in driving changes to the ways that data is collected, recorded and disseminated. Ways that the ATJ Commission and Louisiana District Judges Association can support initiatives to improve data collection were discussed. The new Technology Committee may be asked to evaluate how technology can assist with collection.
- b. **ATJ Distinguished Fellows Program.** Mark Surprenant reported on the Fellows Program. The Commission voted unanimously to accept the following individuals as ATJ Distinguished Fellows and partner organizations for 2019. This Program matches experienced attorneys and judges willing to provide 20 hours per month of pro bono services with civil legal aid organizations. 2019 Fellows are:
  - Terrel Broussard – Southeast Louisiana Legal Services
  - Linton Carney – The Pro Bono Project
  - Frank Neuner, Jr. – Legal Services Corporation
  - Donald North – Southern University Law Center
  - Joseph Oelkers III – Acadiana Legal Service Corporation
  - Judge Harry Randow – Louisiana Access to Justice Commission
- c. **LIFT & Flood Proof Incubator Programs.** Roxanne Newman provided an update. The LSBA's Legal Innovators for Tomorrow (LIFT) incubator program supports new lawyers to build viable and sustainable public interest focused law practices. Through a new collaborative partnership between Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (SLLS), Southern University Law Center, Louisiana State University Law Center, and the LSBA LIFT program, participating attorneys agree to provide pro bono representation in successions and heirship/property title matters to disaster survivors in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and Point Coupee parishes.
- d. **In Forma Pauperis Committee.** Monte Mollere stated that the Commission's IFP Committee reported at its last meeting that it had run into an impasse in its attempts to obtain information or engage in any meaningful discussion with the Clerks regarding IFP issues. With the interest of some Committee members to move forward with litigation and/or pursue legislative efforts, the work of this Committee was transferred to the Access to Justice Committee. Commission representatives agreed to continue to support efforts to educate and work on solutions to the challenges existing in application of the IFP statutes.
- e. **Strategic Planning.** Dona Renegar reported that the Commission is now into its third year and believes a strategic planning session would be valuable to discuss and identify (1) past and current successes and (2) new projects, programs, and areas where the Commission should focus its effort. The Commission agreed to have ATJ Staff Members research the possibilities of conducting strategic planning in the near future.

## V. Access to Justice Commission Committee Reports.

- a. **Building Bridges Committee** – Molly Vigour, Chair provided an update on the work of this Committee, particularly the facilitation of civil legal work in support of re-entry that benefits

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the courts, the Louisiana Department of Corrections, and the Re-Entry Court participants. In the upcoming year, the Committee will focus its efforts on two strategic barriers to reentry. The Committee will also convene a training program to educate legal professionals/ stakeholders on the barriers to reentry and will develop practice manuals for handling identified obstacles.

- b. **Funding Committee** – Committee Chair Chris Ralston related that the Committee successfully lobbied for continued funding at a Federal level for civil legal aid. As one of only three states that does not fund civil legal aid, the Commission continues to educate state legislators on the importance and benefit of a legislative appropriation for civil legal aid in Louisiana. The 2016 Economic Impact Study showed a short and long-term return on investment of \$8.73 for every dollar invested in Louisiana civil legal aid programs.
- c. **Language Access Committee** – Linda Johnson provided an update about the Committee’s work. The Committee has surveyed both interpreters and attorneys on their practices with limited-English proficient litigants. With a study of language access practices of selected states and a review of language access plans, the Committee will complete a report detailing best practice for language access for courts and attorneys. The report and recommendations to improve language access will be submitted to the Commission.
- d. **Modest Means Committee** – Monte Mollere explained that the Modest Means Directory is a listing of attorneys willing to offer legal services at a reduced, flat-fee or sliding scale rate to individuals who are considered “the working poor.” The Commission discussed the best ways to promote the directory to the legal profession, including advertising to law students and promoting the directory at the Judicial Conference.
- e. **Self-Represented Litigants Committee** – Judge Harry Randow reported that with the success of the earlier SRL Summit, the committee has scheduled a similar event to take place in Natchitoches, Louisiana on November 2, 2018. Sessions will provide resources and direct assistance to courts and organizations serving self-represented litigants. This includes a review of best-practices, distributable materials, training resources, new technologies, form templates, funding opportunities, and much more. The LSBA’s “Find Legal Help” portal which directs individuals to legal access will be highlighted. <https://www.lsba.org/public/findlegalhelp>

## VI. Access to Justice Committee Subcommittees

### a. Pro Bono

- (i) **National Pro Bono Week/Lawyers in Libraries** – Rachael Mills reminded the Commission that the ATJ Committee coordinates events for National Pro Bono Celebration October 22-27, 2018. “Lawyers in Libraries” events will be planned for each parish. Last year 73 events were held and over 700 individuals received legal information and advice in libraries throughout the state. Assistance with local media was solicited.
- (ii) **Pro Bono Summit** - Rachael Mills provided a report about the successful Pro Bono Summit which occurred on May 22, 2018. The event was hosted by the Louisiana Supreme Court and held in conjunction with the LSBA Pro Bono Publico and Children’s Law Awards.