

**LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING  
9:30 A.M. ★ Thursday, September 20, 2012  
New Orleans, LA**

**Attendance:**

Marta Schnabel, Co-Chair  
Luz Molina, Co-Chair  
Jamie Campbell, Southeast LA Legal Services Corp.  
Linton Carney, The Pro Bono Project – New Orleans  
LaWanda Gibson, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.  
Ann Gregorie, Baton Rouge Bar Association  
Alma Jones, Legal Services of North LA, Inc.  
Franchesca Hamilton-Acker, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.  
Hon. Sheral C. Kellar,  
Richard Leefe, Leefe, Gibbs, Sullican, Dupre & Aldous, LLC  
Brian Lenard, Southeast LA Legal Services Corp.  
Kathleen McNelis, LA Bar Foundation  
Lindsey Meador, Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, APLC  
Joe Oelkers, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.  
Rachel Piercey, The Pro Bono Project –

New Orleans

Lisa Stansky, Southeast LA Legal Services Corp.  
Bradley Tate, The Shaw Group Inc  
Judith Wenger, LA Civil Justice Center

**ATJ Policy Committee Members:**

Ben Politz, Booth Lockard Politz LeSage & Odom, LLC

**Guests:**

Cristin Fitzgerald, YLD ABA liaison

**LSBA Staff:**

Linda Johnson, ATJ Technology Counsel  
Monte Mollere, ATJ Director  
Katie Mozier, ATJ Administrative Assistant  
Jonathan Rhodes, ATJ Training Counsel  
Michael Schachtman, Self-Represented Litigation Counsel

**Welcome & Introductions**

Marta Schnabel welcomed the crowd and thanked everyone for their participation.

**Consent Calendar**

There was a motion to approve the consent calendar, it was seconded, and the consent calendar was approved.

**ATJ Subcommittee Updates**

*Disaster Planning Subcommittee* – Ann Gregorie reported on the Hurricane Isaac disaster response. The new full disaster subcommittee had not met prior to the storm. The disaster leadership team met over conference call and is performing exactly how the disaster plan designed. Cristin Fitzgerald is the ABA YLD disaster chair and has been in constant contact with FEMA. Five DRCs (disaster resource centers) have been designated in Belle Chase, Plaquemines Parish, St. Bernard Parish, St. John Parish and St. Tammany Parish, where volunteers are providing legal services. Southeast Legal Services has taken on two of those DRCs, providing volunteers. Flyers have been distributed with the appropriate DRC information for each area. Christy Kane with Appleseed has provided updates to our disaster manual. Jonathan Rhodes put

together a 2-hour CLE program to educate volunteers on the most common issues faced by storm survivors. Judith Wenger of the LCJC has been coordinating the hotline and providing resources to storm survivors.

*ATJ Training Report* – Mr. Rhodes discussed the disaster training webinar with the committee. The training materials have been recorded and posted to the LSBA website. The training is recommended, but not required to staff the DRCs. Ms. Schnabel suggested that the committee look at the disaster plan two-three months out to tweak it as needed. She always suggested that if the webinar will be used in the future as an annual training tool, it may be helpful to reach out the local bar associations and allow them to charge for the CLE as a fundraising mechanism. Ms. Kane suggested that the updates of the disaster manual be congruent with the offered CLE.

*Funding Subcommittee* – Joe Oelkers reported that the funding subcommittee has spent the last year focused on keeping a spotlight on the issue of dwindled legal funding in front of the members of the legislature and executive branch to try to makes some progress. He stated that the committee needs to figure out a fresh approach, while also keeping the issue in the forefront. Mr Oelkers suggested that the funding subcommittee revisit the efforts of the LSBA as a whole to try to influence the LSC appropriation in Washington, DC. A 26% reduction, on top of over 20% reduction, in LSC funding is about to go into effect in 2014. Ms. Schnabel added that the ATJ Committee, the ATJ Policy Committee, the LSBA, etc. have been sounding the alarm for a while now by meeting with the Supreme Court and sending the Bar leadership to ABA Day in Washington, DC. The Baton Rouge response is that the Feds are taking care of this issues; the Federal response is that it is a local issue. IOLTA funds are not increasing. Louisiana Bar Foundation is also looking at ways to increase funding.

*Gap Assessment Subcommittee* – Luz Molina is the new chairperson of the Gap Assessment Subcommittee. The subcommittee confected a survey last year that went out to legal service providers for the types of calls they receive. The big issue has been custody transfers for kids entering school every year- a need which has not been met. The other big issue that came up from the survey was getting deposits back to renters. These issues will be added to the list which already includes community property and debt consolidation. The subcommittee will look at what solutions can be provided for these issues. The subcommittee would also like to collect more diverse data from last year’s survey- whether the issues are seasonal or regional. The other goal is to really define what is considered a “gap.” Beyond the actual areas of law where there is a gap in services, there are larger issues, given the poverty and lack of funding, that the subcommittee wants to looks at (i.e. the Hispanic population which are not legally acculturated.) Sheral Kellar suggested that the issues of custody should be forwarded to the ATJ Policy Committee because of its similarities to the IFP issue- that is, there are many school districts having different requirements, although the law is the same. Brian Lenard stated that two districts (Orleans, and 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC) are going to start ordering mediation in family law cases, leaving uncertainty of what the structure is going to be to address the needs of people who cannot afford to pay a mediator.

*Pro Bono Subcommittee* – Linton Carney reported on Celebrate Pro Bono Week, which will be held October 21-27, 2012. Informational sessions, a day of service, various proclamations

from governing authorities, and other events will be held in order to promote pro bono work and to recognize pro bono service that volunteers do across the state. The Louisiana Bar Journal, as well as the Bar Briefs, will run a feature on Celebrate Pro Bono Week in the following months. In addition, the “Do Well, Do Good, Do Pro Bono” program reached out to newer members of the bar who were not employed full-time to help get them apprenticeships and skills to achieve full-time employment. The strategic planning meeting will be held as a part of the Louisiana Justice Community Conference the second week of October. The Pro Bono Project’s main fundraiser, the Justice For All Ball, will be held on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

*SRL Subcommittee* – Kathleen McNelis reported that the subcommittee is looking at several issues including the uniform forms for SRL. The subcommittee would like to identify judges around the state who could assist in developing more universal forms. Data collection out of Louisiana is still difficult to retrieve. Michael Schachtman gave an update on the self-help resource centers running in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Staffing and structural changes were made last summer for the Orleans Parish self-help desk. A website for the 9<sup>th</sup> JDC (Alexandria, www.9thJDCselfhelp.com) is in development, as well as a mobile site/application. Judge Randow is seeking approval from the rest of the judges in his area. The LCJC will provide assistance via telephone. Mr. Schachtman solicited suggestions from committee members for judges who would be interested in development of these centers. The subcommittee is also working on a statewide operational handbook, in addition to an IFP brochure.

*Technology Subcommittee* – Jane Thomas updated the committee on several issues. The subcommittee surveyed over twenty nonprofit legal service providers on their training preferences and skill levels regarding software applications this past summer. The subcommittee continues to review those responses. They are also looking into new technologies that could be helpful to legal service organizations, and are developing a rating system of those technologies to recommend to those organizations. Another goal of the subcommittee is to assist those organizations with searching for grants and potential partners.

### **Other Matters**

*Training* – Mr. Rhodes reminded the committee of the upcoming Louisiana Justice Community Conference, which will be held October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The 2-day conference will offer 9 CLE credits. Two new pre-conferences have been added- disability law and CINC (child in need of care). The theme is Bridging the Gap, with professionalism and ethics panels.

### **ATJ Policy Committee Report**

Ms. Schnabel stressed the need for new leadership within the ATJ Committee, and urged committee members to look into what types of subcommittee work they can get involved in as well as ways to come into leadership.

### **Adjournment**

There was a motion to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned.