

**LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**10:00 A.M. Friday, January 17, 2020**

**Baton Rouge, LA**

*Attendees:*

**Jeffrey Coreil**, Co-Chair, Neuner Pate  
**Dona Kay Renegar**, Co-Chair, Veazey Felder & Renegar LLC  
Stephanie Beagh, Louisiana Appleseed  
Miriam Childs, Law Library of Louisiana  
Micah Fincher, Jones Walker LLP  
Sam Ford, Scott, Vicknair, Hair and Checki, LLC  
Ann Gregorie, Baton Rouge Bar Association  
Monique Metoyer, Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office  
Luz Molina, Loyola University College of Law  
Joe Oelkers, Acadiana Legal Service Corp., Lafayette  
Elena Perez, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services  
Sachida Raman, Acadiana Legal Service Corporation  
Lisa Stansky, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services  
Tina Suggs, Frederick A Miller & Assoc.  
Adrienne Wheeler, Louisiana Appleseed

*Guests:*

Pepper Bowen Roussel, LIFT Fellow  
Justin Jack, LSBA Leadership Class  
Virginia Listach, Southern University Law Center  
Alainna Mire, Alexandria City Attorney's Office, LSBA President-Elect  
Chris Pierce, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services Corporation  
LaKendra Sampson, LIFT Fellow

*Staff:*

Amy Duncan, ATJ Projects and Training Counsel  
Linda Johnson, ATJ Technology Counsel  
Joanna Laidler, ATJ Projects Counsel  
Jordan Maier, ATJ Assistant  
Rachael Mills, ATJ Projects Counsel  
Monte Mollere, ATJ Director

- I. Welcome and Introductions** – Jeff Coreil and Dona Renegar, Co-Chairs
- II. Consent Calendar** – The consent calendar was approved as written.

### III. **ATJ Committee Subcommittee and Initiatives Reports**

- a. **ATJ Grant** – Monte Mollere shared information regarding the application process for the ATJ grant (the Louisiana Bar Foundation fund which houses money from the annual dues check-off and other donations). Distributions of up to \$50,000 annually can be made to organizations with 501(c)(3) status for a project that focuses on at least one of the following areas: 1) the advancement and maintenance of statewide technology; 2) the coordination of statewide intake and referral; OR 3) disaster or emergency response. Potential applicants should express their interest in an email to ATJ Director Monte Mollere. Organizations presenting appropriate concepts will be invited to complete and submit a formal proposal to the Louisiana Bar Foundation. Applications are due by February 28, 2020.
  - i. Members noted that the bulk of the grant funding (\$30k annually) ends after next year. Luz Molina suggested creating a report on how the grant money has been used so far, in order to make a case in the future when seeking new funding.
  - ii. Amy highlighted the LIFT Incubator program, a previous recipient of the grant, and this year's LIFT Fellows, LaKendra Sampson and Pepper Bowen, who will partner with SLLS on the Flood Proof Project.
  
- b. **Pro Bono** – Rachael Mills shared information on the new Emeritus Rule created by the Transitioning Lawyers Committee. The rule allows retired attorneys to continue to practice law in a pro bono capacity, while paying discounted bar membership dues.

Jordan Maier notified the Committee that the 2020 Pro Bono and Children's Law Awards nominations are now open through February 7. Committee members were encouraged to nominate deserving attorneys and firms, particularly those from northern Louisiana, via the online nomination portal.

- c. **ATJ Developing Leadership Intern Program** – Luz Molina shared updates on the internship program, now in its fifth year. The program introduces first year law students to access to justice concepts and helps connect the dots between the private bar and public interest work. Luz commended Rachael on her work coordinating the program curriculum.

Amy reported on the January 2020 LSU Apprenticeship Week, a one-week program designed to give law students hands-on legal experience. ATJ worked with Marta Schnabel to design and deliver a course which included a generational poverty simulation by Hope Ministries, client interview skills training, courtroom observation with Judge Hester and Judge Woodruff-White, presentations by Adrienne Wheeler and Amanda Brown, and a follow-up reflection paper.

- d. **IFP Subcommittee** – Jeff Coreil shared the proposed revisions to IFP statutes which resulted from the first meeting of the Louisiana State Law Institute (LSLI) IFP subcommittee. Those include requiring judges to assign reasons for denial of their request either via a hearing or written reason, which would give litigants the opportunity to correct the problem or appeal the decision, and giving the IFP party a right to receive a certified copy of any judgment or order.

The LSLI also proposed introducing an expiration date requiring the pauper to reapply to confirm their status after an undetermined number of months. Members expressed concern that this could further burden low-income litigants. Luz noted additionally that under the current statutes, clerks can already reverse IFP status at any time. The LSLI intends to further review the IFP statutes and potentially propose revisions in addition to those discussed thus far.

#### **IV. Access to Justice Commission Committee Reports**

- a. **JFA Grant** – Amy Duncan shared progress on the Justice For All (JFA) surveys, which are being developed as part of a primary inquiry into the ability of low income Louisianans to access the legal system. One survey will be distributed to legal stakeholders (including members of the Committee) and one will be distributed to nonlegal service providers. End user feedback will also be collected through six community listening sessions across the state. Committee members are asked to take the survey, help distribute it, and suggest locations for community listening sessions (particularly in rural areas).
- b. **Funding Committee** – Adrienne Wheeler shared that Louisiana Appleseed hired lobbyists Haynie and Associates to seek a state appropriation for civil legal aid in Louisiana. Last year civil legal aid received \$500k; this year they are lobbying for \$1 mil. Upcoming efforts include hosting a legislative breakfast in the spring and producing one-pagers on the district-by-district impact of civil legal aid, to be distributed once the legislative committees are set.

Jeff noted that securing a state appropriation would also open up opportunities for more grants. He also reminded members that part of the ATJ Commission strategic plan is to add a second member from the legislature. Commission members are requested to recommend members of the Governor's office for Commission involvement.

Finally, the funding committee is also exploring the expansion of filing fees as an additional source of funding. While many states mandate a filing fee for civil legal aid, Louisiana courts choose whether to mandate it or not.

- c. **SRL Committee** – The SRL Committee is partnering with the LDJA SRL Committee to host the 2020 SRL Service Provider Summit on January 31 at the Jackson Barracks. The audience will include judges, clerk of court staff, and other legal service providers. Joanna Laidler also noted that 2019 Lawyers in Libraries concluded successfully, with 139 events being held in 62 parishes.
  
- d. **Distinguished Pro Bono Fellows** – Several participants and partner organizations have been identified for the 2020 Distinguished Pro Bono Fellows program; others are still encouraged to apply, particularly those in western and northern Louisiana.

**V. Adjournment – next meeting March 20, 2020**