

LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
2:00 P.M. ★ Friday, January 22, 2016
New Orleans, LA

Attendance:

Marta Schnabel, Co-Chair
Luz Molina, Co-Chair
Erica Andrews, Law Office of Erica Andrews, LLC
Sean Brady, Flanagan Partners LLP
LaWanda Gibson, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.
Linton Carney, The Pro Bono Project- NOLA
Franchesca Hamilton Ackers, Acadiana Legal Services Corp.
Mark Judson, Southwest Louisiana Law Center, Inc.
Brian Lenard, Hammond LA
Jacqueline Maher, Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert, LLC
Clarence Martin, Shotwell, Brown & Sperry
Kathleen McNelis, LA Bar Foundation
Mercedes Montagnes, Capital Appeals Project
Sean Morrison, MS Dept. of Marine Resources
Joe Oelkers, Acadiana Legal Service Corp.
Sara Pic, Louisiana Supreme Court Library
Jonathan Rhodes, Louisiana Civil Justice Center
Tara Richard, LA Appleseed
Lisa Stansky, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Hon. Raymond Steib, Jr., State of Louisiana
Scott Sternberg, Baldwin Haspel Burke & Mayer, LLC
Jane Thomas, Attorney at Law
Laura Tuggle, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Emily Ziober, Attorney at Law

Staff:

Monte Mollere, ATJ Director
Amy Duncan, ATJ Training Counsel
Michael Schachtman, ATJ Self-Represented Litigation Counsel
Rachael Mills, ATJ Project Counsel
Nicole Louque, ATJ Administrative Assistant

Guest:

Simone Boustead, Leadership Class
Leisha Landry, Leadership Class
David Stein, Leadership Class
Pete Kee Sr., Leadership Class

Welcome & Introductions

Marta Schnabel and Luz Molina welcomed the committee members and thanked everyone for attending. The Committee and ATJ Staff had an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Consent Calendar

A motion by Brian Lenard to approve the consent calendar, was seconded by Lisa Stansky, and passed.

ATJ Subcommittee Reports

Gap Assessment - Luz Molina

University of Louisiana at Lafayette Professor, David N. Yarbrough, was hired to conduct an unmet needs study. The study is underway and should be completed in 12 months, ending December 2016. The contract requires that the committee receive quarterly updates from the Professor.

SRL – Kathleen McNelis/Michael Schachtman

Lawyers in Libraries was a huge success. A large portion of the SRL subcommittee work has been to support the self-help centers – brick and mortar, and virtual. They currently have self-help services in 19 out of 42 Judicial Districts.

LCJC is starting a statewide tour “Justice Tour”. They plan to visit the four corners of the state meeting with local bar leaders, have clinics to find out the legal needs. The tour is based on parishes based on poverty level. LSBA will be funding the tour.

Justice Community Issues

ATJ Commission – Marta Schnabel

The Commission met on January 8, 2016 and provided an introduction and education to members regarding the work currently being done in and with the Louisiana Justice Community. Several issues were identified as possible focuses of the Commission’s work:

- In Forma Pauperis
- Civil Justice Community Funding
- Education and Communication About the Civil Legal Services, Need and Efforts
- Examination of Technology as a Mechanism to Increase Efficiency in the Louisiana Justice Community
- Effective Pro Bono Activities and Increasing Volunteer Involvement
- Self-Represented Litigants, Statewide Uniform Pleading and Forms
- Language Access and Litigant with Limited English Proficiencies

Marta anticipates committees will be formed to work on related aspects of these issues.

ATJ Grant Fund

Much discussion was had on the recommendation of the distribution of funds (\$50,000). The requests were submitted by 3 agencies: LSBA \$30,000, LCJC \$20,000 and Acadiana Legal Services \$6,162. Ultimately the decision was made to recommend that the LSBA receive \$30,000, LCJC receive \$15,280 and Acadiana Legal Service receive \$4,720. This recommendation will be made to the Louisiana Bar Foundation to determine distribution at their April 2016 Meeting.

LIFT – Amy Duncan

LIFT is expanding statewide. The goal is to identify unmet legal need in and around the state and work to new attorneys to address those needs. The newest project does just that. Central Louisiana Interface Immigration Center in Alexandria will be providing office space and resources to the newest LIFT fellow, Tinashe Chimwaza. Applications are now open statewide for six openings.

ATJ Leadership Development Internship – Rachael Mills

This program was created to develop the next generation of Access to Justice Leaders. A flyer has been created and distributed to the law schools. The applications are due February 1, 2016. The law schools will conduct initial interviews and submit the top five selected applicants to the sponsoring law firms. Rachael is working on the final details of the schedule for the program which starts May 23, 2016.

Louisiana Court Reports’ Association Pro Bono Project – Michael Schachtman

A small group has been established a working group to organize this program including John Andersen and Judge Paul Bonin in the 24th JDC. They are ready to work with any non-profit organization.

ATJ Re-entry Project – Amy Duncan/ Monte Mollere

The Angola Re-entry program works with inmates convicted of non-violent, non-sexual offenses in two program to provide support, information and advice help ensure a better, more productive transition back to life outside of the penitentiary. As such, re-entry courts have been established to populate the program as well as supervise individuals exiting the program. Courts personnel have found that resolution of relatively insignificant legal issues that appear upon release often are insurmountable for ex-offenders to handle themselves and are a significant impediment to success. Three such legal issues include: child support arrearages, municipal attaches and obtaining legal documentation to reenter the workforce (driver’s licenses, TWIX cards, etc). The LSBA has agreed to work with local entities to help coordinated pro bono activities in the locations where the Re-entry Courts exist.

In Forma Pauperis Update – Marta Schnabel

Last time the committee met issues were identified in the Orleans Civil District Court where recent changes in IFP practice resulted in the litigant being unable to obtain a judgment. Linton reported that since some intervention from the LSBA the problems seem to be resolved. Marta believes this will be an issue explored by the ATJ Commission.

Louisiana Justice Community Conference – Amy Duncan

The theme was Transformative Power of the Legal Profession and Civil Legal Aid. 121 people attended the conference and 65% of those were LSC providers and staff. CINC and LBF Board Trainings were conducted in conjunction with the conference. Because the conference was over budget, staff will have to examine enforcement of late registration fees, failure to cancel room reservation fees and not allowing CLE credit “drops ins.”

Employment/Management Training – Monte Mollere

Laura Tuggles requested management training. Monte Mollere asked if other organizations would be interested. Many seemed interested. Monte and Amy will begin working on speakers for the training. Training would be geared toward midlevel management.

Civil Legal Aid Directory – Linton Carney

One of the ideas resulting from the ATJ Summit was to have a directory of civil legal aid providers for in-house use. A Pro Bono Project intern worked on this over the summer and the final product was sent out by Amy Duncan on January 5, 2016. The directory is a Google document and can be updated by each agency as needed.

New from Justice Community Members

Pro Bono Publico Awards – Nicole Louque

ATJ is now accepting nominations through February 19, 2016. This year we would like to see nominations from all geographic areas in Louisiana. One new criteria has been added to Pro Bono Publico and Friend of Pro Bono Award section, a person or firm cannot receive an award for the same or similar work in consecutive years. Marta suggests looking closely at the criteria for the award to be sure that you put your nomination in the correct category.

Naturalization 101 – Amy Duncan

A Primer for Non-Immigration Practitioners is designed to introduce non-immigration practitioners to the world of naturalization practice. The course is an introduction to immigration terminology, eligibility, requirements, and forms necessary to navigate United States citizenship through naturalization. Registration forms can be found on the LSBA website in the CLE section.

Motion to adjourn