

June 7, 2004 • Issue #45

Funding News

👉 **Washington State Obtains Increased Legislative Funding for Legal Services** - Washington will receive an additional \$1,900,000 from the legislature, bringing its total state appropriation for legal services to \$6,600,000. The publication of the state's first Civil Legal Needs Study and the decision to transfer fiscal agency responsibilities for state funding from non-LSC funded Columbia Legal Services to the LSC-funded Northwest Justice Project helped to generate the bi-partisan support needed to obtain this increase. The effort was strongly supported by the governor, the state supreme court, the entire judiciary, the state bar association, local bar associations, prosecuting attorneys and many others. For more information, contact Sara Zier, Education Manager, Equal Justice Coalition, at equalj@ejc.org or 206/447-8168.

👉 **Maryland Legislature Approves Filing Fee Increase for Legal Services** - On May 26, 2004, the governor of Maryland signed legislation increasing the filing fee surcharge. It is estimated that the increase will generate \$4,950,000 in-revenue for legal services programs in the state. This will bring the total revenue from filing fee surcharges to approximately \$7,250,000 annually. The legislation, which was approved by an overwhelming majority of legislators, was strongly supported by the Maryland Court of Appeals the state bar association, and individual lawyers from around the state, who worked tirelessly to educate lawmakers about the importance of this legislation. For more information, contact Susan Erlichman, Executive Director, Maryland Legal Services Corporation, at serlichman@mlsc.org or 410/576-9494.

👉 **Oklahoma Supreme Court Adopts Mandatory IOLTA** - On May 10, 2004, the Oklahoma Supreme Court signed an order converting the state's voluntary IOLTA program to mandatory status effective July 1, 2004. The move is expected to significantly boost IOLTA revenues and increase the Oklahoma Bar Foundation's financial support of legal services and other law related programs. The effort was strongly supported by the Oklahoma Bar Association and benefited from hours of work by the Foundation's board, volunteers and staff. With the addition of Oklahoma, there are now 28 IOLTA programs that are mandatory, 22 that are opt-out and only two that remain voluntary. For more information about Oklahoma, contact Nancy Norsworthy, IOLTA Director, Oklahoma Bar Foundation, at nancyn@okbar.org or 405/416-7070.

Pro Bono Developments

👉 **Louisiana Adopts Revised Rule 6.1** - The Supreme Court of Louisiana recently approved revisions to Rule 6.1 of the Louisiana Rules of Professional Conduct. The changes to the rule, which address lawyers' professional responsibility to provide pro bono service, became effective March 1, 2004. They are based on the recommendations of the Louisiana State Bar Association Ethics 2000 Committee, with the language based upon Model Rule 6.1 of the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct. The new Louisiana Rule 6.1 encourages lawyers to render at least fifty hours of pro bono service per year, and to provide the majority of this legal service without fee to persons of limited means. A copy of the new Rule 6.1 can be found at <http://www.lsba.org>. For more information, contact Monte Mollere, Access to Justice Director, Louisiana State Bar Association, mmollere@lsba.org or 504-619-0146.

📌 **Montana Amends Rule 6.1** - Effective April 1, 2004, the Montana Supreme Court adopted comprehensive new Rules of Professional Conduct, which strengthened Montana's Rule 6.1. The new rule asks lawyers to provide 50 hours of pro bono service to those unable to pay, and to provide a substantial majority of those hours without fee to persons of limited means or "charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters that are designed primarily to address the needs of persons of limited means." The State Bar of Montana Ethics Committee was responsible for recommending the amendments to the Montana Supreme Court. The language of the new rule tracks the ABA's Model Rule 6.1, including the suggestion that lawyers also make financial contributions to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means. A copy of Montana's Rule 6.1 can be found at: <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mt.us/dscgi/ds.py/Get/File-27482/Rules.pdf>. For more information, contact Betsy Brandborg, Counsel, State Bar of Montana, at betsyb@montanabar.org or 406-442-7660.

Hot On the Web

📖 **Innovative Fundraising Ideas for Legal Services - 2004 Edition** - This publication, produced by the Project to Expand Resources for Legal Services (PERLS) of the ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants, contains an overview of 26 fundraising initiatives for legal services in a user-friendly format. This valuable resource updates and augments information contained in previous editions of the manual. Copies have been distributed to various state and local bar association leaders, IOLTA directors and legal services providers. Additional copies can be downloaded at www.abalegalservices.org/sclaid. For more information, contact Meredith McBurney, Director, PERLS Project, at mm8091@aol.com or 303/329-8091.



WASHINGTON UPDATE

Washington Update

On April 2, 2004, Legal Services Corporation President Helaine Barnett testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State in support of the LSC's budget request of \$352.4 million. The Senate did not hold a hearing. Mark-ups in either the House or Senate may occur as early as June. However, many predict that, as in 2002, mark-ups, if any, may not occur until after the election.

The almost 200 ABA and state and local bar leaders who participated in "ABA Day in Washington" May 5-6, 2004, met with their Members of Congress in support of the LSC's budget request. Participants helped to obtain signatures on a House and Senate letter in support of LSC funding. For copies of the letters, and other up-to-date information on the Corporation, go to the ABA Governmental Affairs Website at http://www.abanet.org/poladv/priorities/legal_services.html or contact Julie Strandlie, Director, Grassroots Operations/Legislative Counsel, at jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org or 202/628-1764.

For more information about specific items, call the contact person listed for that item. To contribute items to future issues of *LEGAL SERVICES NOW*, or for general information about this bulletin, contact Bev Groudine at 312/988-5771, fax 312/988-5483 or e-mail bgroudine@staff.abanet.org.