This workshop was held at the 2018 Equal Justice Conference in San Diego, California.

Title:

The Disaster is Gone -- so Are My Volunteers! Strategies for Pro Bono Engagement During the Response and Recovery Process.

Presenters:

Pablo Javier Almaguer, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid Inc, Edinburg, TX
Jeffrey R. Baker, Pepperdine University School of Law, Malibu, CA
Michael Hofrichter, Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program, Houston, TX
Elizabeth A. Hom, The State Bar of California, San Francisco, CA
Karen Korr, San Diego County Bar Association, San Diego, CA
Moderator: Andrew VanSingel, American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, Chicago, IL

2017 was the costliest year on record for disasters at $306 billion. The response of the legal aid and pro bono community was monumental; however, as the long-term legal needs of disaster survivors begin to surface, volunteer engagement begins to decline. This panel will discuss strategies for pro bono engagement before, during, and long after the disaster, by utilizing technology, law students, the media, and existing resources.
The Disaster is Gone—
So Are My Volunteers!

Strategies for Pro Bono Engagement
During the Response & Recovery Process
Presenters

Moderator
Andrew VanSingel – ABA Young Lawyers Division

Panelists
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Karen Korr, San Diego County Bar Association
Agenda

• About the DLS Program
• Planning / Recruitment (Elizabeth)
• Immediately after (Michael)
• Post disaster (Pablo)
• Integrating law students (Jeff)
• Telling the story (Karen)
• Roundtable discussion
Disaster Legal Services

• The ABA’s touchstone public service
• YLD serves as exclusive coordinator of legal services for disaster survivors
• Coordination between numerous legal and non-legal agencies
Disaster Legal Services

• Provides FREE legal assistance “low-income” persons affected by a presidentially declared major disaster
• Volunteers assist with a wide range of legal issues
• Needs are both immediate and long-term
2017 California Wildfire Disaster Legal Services Response

• Planning for the legal services response following disaster
  – Bay Area Resilience Collaborative
  – Who should be involved?
  – Building collaboration and trust
2017 California Wildfire Disaster Legal Services Response

• Convening and Coordination
  – Conference calls, emails, Google drive

• Recruiting pro bono attorneys, interpreters, law students, and others
  – Outreach to local bar associations, specialty/identity bar associations, law firms and corporations, law schools
  – Trainings and samples, support and mentorship
2017 California Wildfire Disaster Legal Services Response

• Plugging volunteers into opportunities
  – Hotline
  – Clinics
  – Research projects

• Keeping volunteers engaged
  – Email updates
  – Engage in non-disaster related pro bono
  – Encourage support through donations to local providers
Disaster Pro Bono Recruitment - HVLP

• HVL is the Pro Bono arm of the Houston Bar Association.

• In 2017, we placed over 1,000 cases with almost 700 volunteer attorneys.

• That’s in addition to recruiting volunteers for walk-in clinics, Disaster Recovery Centers, Resource Fairs, and other events.
Disaster Recruitment - HVLP

- I am interested in volunteering at walk in legal advice clinics.
- I am interested in volunteering for brief legal information/services at recovery shelters.
- I am interested in handling Pro Bono cases for Disaster victims.
- I am interested in other opportunities as they may arise.

Post Harvey, 645 total volunteers who used the Disaster signup form:

- 368 Clinic volunteers
- 454 Shelter volunteers
- 250 Case volunteers
- 342 Other opportunities volunteers
How to Recruit & Retain volunteers during disaster recovery efforts

Use of in-house resources

Access to Large Firms

Small Firm or Solo practitioner
Integrating Law Schools/Students
Free Legal Assistance Available to Disaster Victims

San Diego Legal Community Comes Together to Provide Legal Aid to Wildfire Victims

October 30, 2007 07:18 PM Eastern Daylight Time

SAN DIEGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Attorneys throughout San Diego County have joined forces to provide free legal services for the thousands of families whose lives have been affected by the recent wildfires throughout the county.

“Following the 2003 Cedar Fires, we learned that many legal questions arise from disasters of this magnitude, and San Diego’s legal community is ready to respond and help our neighbors as efficiently as possible, so that they may begin to rebuild.”
Telling the Story

• Media Alert vs. Press Release
  Local Media Outreach
    – Creating Your List in Advance
    – Local Community Calendars
    – When to Connect and How Often

• Businesswire/PR Newswire/Other Distribution

• Social Media – Unpaid and Sponsored Posts
Questions?

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