October 28, 2016

Dear Anti-Poverty Roundtable Participants:

On behalf of The ABA’s Commission on Homelessness & Poverty and our colleagues from the ABA Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice, welcome to Collaborate to Advocate: Lawyers and Communities Working to End Poverty. I am thrilled that all of you are able to participate in this event, particularly our colleagues from the ABA Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice!

The Commission thanks everyone who helped to make this event possible. We thank the dozens of experts who are participating today—representing some of the finest programs in the region—who will share their perspective and insight throughout the dialogue. This roundtable will include many bar leaders as well as ABA members and liaisons from across the country, each with his or her own voice and area of expertise. We are grateful for this enthusiastic local and national participation.

This convening, which brings together experts from throughout Oklahoma City, is part of a multi-year initiative aimed at identifying and promoting best practices for eliminating legal and justice system-related policies, practices and procedures that unfairly perpetuate or worsen the harmful effects of poverty. Working with stakeholders from the state and local government, service provider, religious, academic, political and legal communities, the Commission will host additional anti-poverty roundtables in a diverse set of communities—ranging from urban areas in large cities, smaller cities, suburban communities and counties, and rural areas—to reflect the broad range of geographies where poverty exists. We have held roundtables in Miami, Chicago, Houston, San Diego, San Francisco, Charleston, DeLand, FL and Alabama (Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma), and we look forward to jointly convening with the Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice a program tomorrow morning in the Chickasaw Nation—as well as future programming related to farmworkers in South Florida in February, 2017.

Today’s discussion will be highlighted on the Commission’s site at www.ambar.org/homeless under the tab for Collaborate to Advocate: Lawyers and Communities Working to End Poverty. We look forward to not only supporting your efforts as you continue the dialogue, but also highlighting your success to other communities as we implement this initiative.

Best regards,

Ted Small
Chair, American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness & Poverty
**Background:**

Nearly 50 million Americans now live below the federal poverty line. Recent societal, economic and political events (economic meltdown, mortgage foreclosure epidemic, Trayvon Martin, Hurricane Katrina, Ferguson, Missouri, Michelle Alexander’s “The New Jim Crow,” 9/11, the “school to prison pipeline,” unaccompanied minors coming across the border, etc.) have given rise to unprecedented public awareness of income inequality in America, the number of children living in poverty and the disparate treatment and impacts of the law and justice systems on communities of color and populations that face other barriers and obstacles to justice, such as disability, limited English proficiency, immigrant status and other factors.

**Initiative Goal:**

Identify and help promote and implement best practices for eliminating legal and justice system-related policies, practices and procedures that unfairly perpetuate or worsen the harmful effects of poverty on low-income people and communities, including obstacles and barriers to public benefits, employment, housing, treatment and services needed by people experiencing homelessness or living in poverty.

**Working Definition of Poverty:**

Poverty is a state or lived experience caused and perpetuated by various, often compounded, factors such as:

- Inadequate economic resources and opportunity to build assets, including employment, adequate income and assets to meet basic human needs such as food, housing, clothing, etc.;
- Insufficient access to social resources such as healthcare, justice and education;
- Weak political standing and limited opportunity for meaningful association and engagement;
- Isolation and lack of cultural identity support;
- Inability to hold institutions and individuals accountable for fair and equitable behavior;
- Disparate treatment based on poverty compounded by other forms of structural unfairness and disparity based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, indigenous identity, national origin, etc.
Manifestations of Poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness;
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems;
3. Food inadequacy;
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes;
5. Inadequate education outcomes;
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage;
7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises;
8. Lack of personal and physical safety;
9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity; and
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure.

Implementation: Anti-Poverty Roundtables, Toolkit for Communities Seeking to Develop and Operationalize Local Anti-Poverty Agendas, and the ABA Online Quilt of Community Anti-Poverty Discussions
The goal of each roundtable is to bring together 10-15 community stakeholders who are interested in identifying, promoting and implementing best practices for eliminating policies, practices and procedures that unfairly perpetuate or worsen the harmful effects of poverty on low-income people in that particular local community. To connect other communities with the national anti-poverty discussion, the Commission will encourage the designation of at least one panelist in each community who is willing to develop an edited summary of the ideas exchanged and proposed new programming for posting to a Commission-moderated online blog entitled, “Operationalizing A New Anti-Poverty Agenda: An Online Quilt of Community Discussions.” This online blog would allow each roundtable to share its diverse perspective on the most pressing manifestations of poverty within their community as well as its proposed solutions. With the addition of notes from each roundtable, the Commission would add a patch to the national Online Quilt in order to bring together diverse patterns of anti-poverty ideas. These shared ideas could be implemented by other communities who in turn share their own strategies for combatting poverty, creating a resource for all communities to use in removing the practices, policies and procedures that worsen or perpetuate poverty. Additionally, in furtherance of its goal of educating the bar and the general public about homelessness and poverty and the ways the legal community can collaborate with other stakeholders to assist those in need, the Commission is developing a resource entitled: Toolkit for Communities Seeking to Develop and Operationalize Local Anti-Poverty Agendas, in which the Commission will compile a wealth of ABA policy and programming knowledge into a series of “blueprints for action” that are cross-disciplinary and specifically address each of the identified Manifestation of Poverty areas.
Collaborate to Advocate:
An Anti-Poverty Community Roundtable
Friday, October 28, 2016
8:00 AM to 11:30 AM
City Rescue Mission
800 West California Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK

Agenda

8:00 AM – Continental breakfast will be served during a casual networking opportunity

8:30 AM – Welcome and Introductions

8:45 AM – Overview and Discussion: What does poverty look like in Oklahoma City?

- Data and statistics
- Existing resources
- Greatest challenges

Participants will be asked to share their perspectives on the data presented and discuss their views on existing resources and greatest challenges with regards to poverty and homelessness in Oklahoma City.

9:15 AM – Collaboration and Implementation: Innovations and Solutions

How do providers, organizations, advocates, lawyers, the criminal justice system, etc. currently collaborate to address poverty in Oklahoma City?

- What have we learned from recent experiences?
- What are the best practices you’ve identified and implemented?
- How would you and your organization like to collaborate further? What challenges or barriers impair your ability to collaborate and implement new solutions?
- How do you measure and report success? (e.g., metrics, data collection efforts, statistics and reporting methods)
10:15 AM – How can we collaborate across racial lines to better educate the public and public officials about the reality of race and poverty today?

10:45 AM – What’s on the horizon for Oklahoma anti-poverty initiatives, and what can the ABA do to support your efforts?
   ▪ What are your next steps?
   ▪ Who/what will it take, and how will you get there?
   ▪ How can the ABA and the legal community support local anti-poverty initiatives?

11:30 AM – Concluding remarks
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems
3. Food inadequacy
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes
5. Inadequate education outcomes
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage
7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:

- Richard Klinge, Senior Director of Advocacy and Legal Services, for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Cell 405-200-9867. rklinge@ccaokc.org.

- Damon Britton, Senior Director of Family Support Services. 405-523-3000. dbritton@ccaokc.org.

Organization Website and Mission:
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Mission: To provide help and hope to all through the Catholic tradition of service.

Website: http://catholiccharitiesok.org/

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:

Through our Immigration Legal Services (ILS) we assist persons eligible for family based immigration legal services.

Through our Sanctuary and Holy Family Home programs we offer wrap around services to address the needs of homeless women and children. Holy Family Home offers supportive residential care and community-based services to homeless women and their children. Our Sanctuary
facilities in Oklahoma City and Norman provide a facility where homeless women and their children can have access to shower/laundry facilities, food, counseling and comprehensive social services.

Through our Family Hope program, CCAOKC offers Case Management services that build partnerships with families in crisis by eliminating barriers to success and providing emergency assistance as needed. In conjunction with this program, Transitional housing is potentially offered.

Through our Crisis Pregnancy Services, CCAOKC provides counseling and social services for parents experiencing unplanned pregnancies.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:

- We provide wrap around case management services to people in poverty. Case managers address the barriers to self-sufficiency and develop a plan to overcome those barriers.

Barriers and Challenges:

- Lack of resources is the number one barrier.
- For purposes of this discussion, one barrier is that clients can’t afford to hire a quality attorney to assist them in landlord/tenant issues. Our clients get taken advantage of by unscrupulous landlords.

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.

We work with Legal Aid whenever possible.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

1. **Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness (supportive housing)**
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems
3. **Food inadequacy (day shelter & food baskets)**
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes
5. **Inadequate education outcomes (Whiz Kids)**
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage
7. **Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises (day shelter)**
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
9. **Stigma and lack of personal dignity (day shelter)**
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Larry Bross
City Care
2400 General Pershing Blvd, OKC, OK 73107
(405) 609-2400

Organization Website and Mission:
www.citycareokc.org
Breaking barriers for OKC’s most vulnerable by providing food, shelter & sanctuary for homeless, supportive housing for low-income, tutoring/mentoring/life skills building for inner-city children.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
~Pershing and Westlawn supportive housing programs for low-income, disabled homeless.
~Homeless Day Shelter provides breakfast and lunch, Mon.-Fri. and food baskets for low-income and elderly each Friday
~Whiz Kids Oklahoma Tutoring/Mentoring focuses on literacy for at-risk, inner-city elementary youth.
~CityCare organization established in 1992

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
Some Housing First model/some sober living-more than 90% of clients are able to remain stably housing.

Barriers and Challenges:
Incarceration of mentally ill instead of treatment programs.

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.
Yes. At the Day Shelter in conjunction with Homeless Alliance resource center
Statement of Services

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9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:

Tom Jones
City Rescue Mission
405-517-3101 cell
405-232-2709 x. 112
tjones@cityrescue.org

Organization Website and Mission:
www.cityrescue.org
To lead our community by serving the homeless and near homeless with help, hope and healing, in the spirit of excellence, under the call of Christ.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:

City Rescue Mission provides services to individuals to not only care for them while they are homeless but to equip them to live strong independent living once they leave the Mission. In this we address all the manifestations of poverty.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:

The Bridge to Life Recovery Program has a 78% success rate of completion. 98% of the individuals that City Rescue has assisted in obtaining affordable housing are still housed.
Barriers and Challenges:
The available affordable housing units in the OKC Metro area are becoming difficult to find.

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.

We have a great working relationship with different judges, attorneys and Probation Officers. We also collaborate with Trinity Legal here in OKC.

If I Ruled The World:
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information: Dan Straughan, Executive Director, The Homeless Alliance

Organization Website and Mission: www.homelessalliance.org “Rallying our community to end homelessness.”

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
The Homeless Alliance plays a unique role in central Oklahoma’s work to end homelessness:
- Community Capacity Building -- Facilitating collaboration among all faith-based, government, and nonprofit agencies working with the homeless.
  - Educating the broader community about homelessness.
  - Coordinating community response to emerging homeless issues.
  - Conducting research including the annual Point in Time Count of the homeless, needs assessments, surveys, and focus groups with stakeholders and the homeless.
  - Developing community standards for homeless shelters and case management services.
  - Incubating new initiatives.
- Journey Home - OKC -- Coordinating the efforts of 31 government, faith-based and nonprofit agencies housing Oklahoma City’s veterans and chronically homeless citizens.

In addition, we operate the WestTown Homeless Resource Campus, overseeing the operations of a comprehensive resource center, day shelter, and single-room-occupancy housing complex.

- Resource Center -- a "one-stop shop" with comprehensive case management services from 15 different government, faith-based and nonprofit agencies participating in a broadly collaborative program housing homeless and at-risk families with children using the coordinated case management model developed by the Homeless
Alliance. Managing 4 federal housing grants.

- Day Shelter -- Oklahoma City's only day shelter, providing food, showers, computers, employment services, a kennel and case management services to an average of 275 guests daily.

- WestTown Apartments - 20 SRO housing units for clients of the broad community collaboration, Journey Home-OKC

And finally, we host and maintain the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for Oklahoma City, Norman, and rural Oklahoma agencies serving the homeless. The system is the information technology solution for more than 50 agencies with 160+ programs serving the homeless.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**
- Using the Housing First model to house more than 500 chronically homeless and homeless veterans with our 31 partners in the Journey Home (Zero:2016) initiative.
- Bringing the national best practice Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) to OKC as the standard intake/assessment tool for all Continuum programs
- Operating OKC’s only low-barrier day shelter
- In partnership with Mental Health Association developing truly affordable housing for very-low-income individuals and families

**Barriers and Challenges:**
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of “developers’ mandates” to require inclusion of affordable housing for new developments
- Lack of landlords willing to rent to high-barrier tenants
- Failure to invest appropriately in mental health treatment services
- Failure to invest appropriately in substance use treatment services
- Failure to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act
- Criminalization of poverty

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
Yes. Legal Aid maintains an office on our WestTown campus to provide civil legal assistance to clients and guests.

**If I Ruled The World:**
**Statement of Services**

Please complete this template to describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty highlighted by the Commission below. Templates will be circulated to the Commission and other roundtable participants prior to the program to provide background information and context in an effort to allow for more time to delve deeper into the critical issues and best practices. Templates will ultimately be posted on the Commission website in an effort to highlight the excellent work of your organization. Please feel free to attach/hyperlink documents.

**Ten Manifestations of Poverty:**

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10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

**Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:**

Cheryl Guffey, Co-Founder/Director
The HUB Mission Ministry, Inc
201 N. Trade Center Ter.
Mustang, OK 73064
405.706.8764
info@thehubmm.org
www.thehubmm.org

**Organization Website and Mission:**

www.thehubmm.org
The HUB Mission Ministry, Inc., is a volunteer-run charity following Christ’s command to lead the broken and lost to a life of wholeness and abundance in Him. (John 10:10) The HUB is a donation depot for top-quality donations of furniture, household items, clothing and groceries, which are provided to over 120 other faith-based charities in central Oklahoma. Our volunteers also assist partner charities with redistribution of unusable and inappropriately-placed donations of all kinds.

**Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:**

The HUB assists every type of faith-based charity, from providers of food and clothing to mentorships that provide transitional housing to people leaving prison and homelessness.

One challenge of charities that provide transitional housing assistance is that families being housed leave empty-handed at the end of their stay. The HUB provides mentorship partners with everything needed to fully furnish transitional homes while families are guided into independent living. When residents graduate, they may take these items with them.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**

The HUB is a 100% volunteer run ministry located in a small store in Mustang. Low overhead expenses and our organizing, sorting and packaging systems enable us to make a powerful impact on the community. Since January, 2016, we have provided 2,600 volunteer hours and delivered 37,000 top-quality items, at an estimated value of $410,000. Every $1 donated to The HUB yields $25.00 in goods and services to local faith-based charities.

**Barriers and Challenges:**

The HUB’s one challenge is having warehouse and processing space together in one location. We currently handle furniture and oversupply/backstock at 2 separate offsite storage units, which makes it difficult to retrieve inventory. Ideally, we would be located a larger processing facility with warehouse and loading areas in the back.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**

The HUB Mission Ministry is one of the few approved charities where community service hours can be completed for the drug courts and probation offices in Canadian County. Cleveland and Oklahoma Counties also refer offenders to The HUB. These volunteers are exposed -- sometimes for the first time -- to the Christian standards of selflessness and excellence, which results in building confidence in the volunteer and an appreciation of the various ways in which local charities serve the impoverished.

**If I Ruled The World:**

Donors would treat "Charity" as God did when He gave His greatest Gift to a fallen world.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Greg Beben, Staff Attorney for Homeless Project
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc.
2901 Classen Blvd, Suite 112
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
(405) 488-6821

Organization Website and Mission:
www.legalaidok.org
To be a partner in the community making equal justice for all a reality.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc. (LASO) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that provides civil legal assistance to low-income persons throughout Oklahoma. LASO priorities include improving clients’ access to justice, preserving/obtaining housing, protecting consumers, promoting health and economic security, ensuring safety of clients and their families, and addressing the needs of populations with special vulnerabilities. In 2014, the Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable drafted a “Toolkit” detailing the ways in which LASO and other legal services organizations around the nation can enhance strategies for serving vulnerable and underserved populations: www.justice.gov/atj/legalaid.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
LASO meets its priorities through a variety of approaches. First, LASO maintains a statewide application hotline where clients can apply for services. Second, LASO staffs a number of outreach and embed projects where attorneys meet clients in the community to educate and offer services. For example, an
attorney is available to homeless people in Oklahoma City at multiple shelters. Last, LASO works with community partners and accept referrals for services from those agencies on behalf of their clients. LASO measures success by whether or not one of the prioritized goals on behalf of the client and also what kind of impact that outcome may have on the broader community.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
Barriers and challenges include lack of resources. LASO cannot represent everyone who qualifies for services.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
Aside from direct advice and representation through LASO staff attorneys, LASO partners with private attorneys across the state who provide pro bono services to LASO applicants. In addition, LASO organizes a pro se divorce clinic weekly at the Oklahoma County courthouse.

**If I Ruled The World:**
LASO would eliminate poverty; ensure everyone had access to housing, education, employment, and health care; and make equal justice a reality for all.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Neighborhood Alliance of Central Oklahoma
C/O Georgie Rasco, Executive Director
1236 NW 36th St.
OKC, Ok. 73118

Organization Website and Mission:
www.nacok.org

“To create safe, beautiful and healthy neighborhoods for ALL!”

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
Although we work with over 400 neighborhood associations in OKC, the majority of our time is spent helping the low to moderate income neighborhoods lead safer, healthier and more social lives, as neighbors.

1.) Strong Neighborhood Initiative (SNI): In conjunction with the City of OKC, Neighborhood Alliance is entrenched in three low income neighborhoods for a 5-7 year commitment. The City is bringing millions of dollars to fix infrastructure, build and/or repair housing stock, etc. NA role is to assure the residents of each of the 3 are always in the planning seat and leading the directions and decisions on how the money is to be spent in their neighborhood. We are the watchdogs to assure gentrification does not occur and we foster leadership and organization among the residents. Our goal is to empower the residents to sustain the programs that were
created in their neighborhood by SNI as well as know who and how to ask for future help that might be needed.

2.) **Crime patrol/Crime Watch:** We work very closely with OCPD to create neighborhood driven crime reduction programs, especially in low income neighborhoods.

3.) **Organizational/Leadership Training:** We mentor any neighborhoods on how to use the existing City systems to lower neighborhood crime, fix infrastructure, get rid of drug houses, improve their schools, help Seniors age in their own homes and create trust between neighbors and community resources.

4.) **Basic Housing Rehab Assistance:** During the year we recruit groups of youth, adults, corporations, etc. to help rehab the homes of low income persons that for whatever reason do not qualify for the more traditional home rehab programs in our community. Single moms under the age of 55, people who may not have clear title of the home, people who are actively receiving code violation tickets and could possibly lose their home if repairs aren’t done immediately.

5.) **Southside Neighborhood initiative:** We have a full time bi-lingual Hispanic Community Organizer on staff who focuses on the people and neighborhoods of the inner Southside areas. She can help gain residential trust easier than a non-Hispanic, and she works to make sure Hispanics are recognized on City Boards and Committees so the Hispanic needs are heard.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**

Strong Neighborhoods Initiative has been very successful and the first time City of OKC has implemented a large improvement program while allowing the citizens to lead the project directions. All 3 Neighborhoods have seen dramatic decrease in crime, better interaction with their local schools and neighbors looking out for other neighbors.

**Success Story:** On elderly neighbor told us that a young, single Mom had moved into a rental home across the street from her. She invited them to the Neighborhood Association meeting and they came. A couple of weeks later the young Mom came over in a panic and asked her elderly neighbor if she could please give her a ride to work. On the way, the young Mom explained her car broke down and she could not get it fixed until next week when she gets paid.

The elderly neighbor made arrangements for different neighbors to get the young Mom to work for the next few days and then she got her car fixed. A week later the kids showed up with fresh baked cookies and told their neighbor that their Mom’s boss had told her she would be fired if she missed work, but because of the neighborhood rallying around her she was able to keep her job. Which kept them from losing their home and possibly having to go to a shelter.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
There is fear of The City and therefore a lot of low income persons don’t apply for the rehab programs, etc. for fear that the City will take their home away from them. Immigrants are fearful that Immigrations Services will come remove them from their home. Trust is a hard and long fought for trait. Our Community Organizers spend months and even years in a neighborhood, visiting on front porches,
going to graduation ceremonies and delivering birthday cakes, etc. before residents finally trust that the programs we are recommending really can help them.

Another barrier is that there are way more needs than what we can provide. It is hard to pick and choose who has the worst hard luck story and therefore our resources go there.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**

Yes, the SNI Program contracts with Legal Aide to help homeowners who don’t have clear title to their home. We have also referred neighbors to pro-bono lawyers for help with property disputes among neighbors, and gaining more time on Code Violation Tickets before the City takes action.

**If I Ruled The World:**

People would live by the rule that living in a safe and beautiful neighborhood is a responsibility, not a right. Neighbors would come out of their houses, meet each other, offer help when needed and support each other. The neighbors would provide the first safety net for people to get back on their feet by offering day care, food, clothes, rides, and possibly jobs so their neighbors can stay in their homes. The municipality would just take for granted that residents know more about their neighborhood needs than anyone else and therefore residents should ALWAYS be at the planning table. All neighborhoods would be valued and treated fairly and more resources would be available to those neighborhoods that have bigger issues. And EVERYONE would have a safe place to call home!!
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Stacey Ninness, President/CEO, Neighborhood Services Organization
sninness@nsookc.org/405-236-0413

Organization Website and Mission:
www.nsookc.org

Mission: Transforming lives and encouraging independence through safe, healthy homes, dental care and nutrition

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
#1: Homeless families of either a pregnant women or mother’s with multiple children reside in one of NSO’s transitional living apartments. Many families were living in shelters or on the streets before coming to Martha’s House or Gatewood. They arrive to a fully-furnished, cozy apartment that immediately feels like home. Volunteers donate furniture, sheets, towels and dishes for the families to take with them after their stay. Families can participate in the program for up to two years. Residents must be either in school or employed full time to qualify for this program.

The NSO Carolyn Williams Center is a unique program which provides transitional living in a 17-bed, dormitory-style complex for homeless young men between 18-23 years old. Many of the youth come directly from foster care or youth shelters. They receive help finding jobs, take weekly life skills classes, share chores and learn how to live independently to ensure their future self-sufficiency. Young men can live at the Carolyn Williams Center for up to two years.
Homeless, single adults with a mental illness find shelter and safety at Palo Duro I and II. These 2 buildings with a total of 36 units offer residents a permanent place to call home. Each apartment has a kitchen, bathroom and combination living room and bedroom. Residents also have access to on-site laundry facilities, dedicated green space, a common area and a full-time case manager.

#4: NSO’s Women, Infant and Children (WIC) income-based program provides nutritional education, supplemental foods and assistance to mothers with infants. The largest in the state of Oklahoma, the NSO WIC clinic serves about 5,000 participants per month. WIC makes free nutrition education and supplemental foods available during the critical phases of growth and development.

Oklahoma ranks 45th out of 50 states for individuals visiting the dentist on an annual basis. (2014 Oklahoma, State of the State’s Health Report) Missing or rotten teeth can hold a person back from developing personal relationships, being employed or advancing in a job. Poor oral health can lead to other health issues. For example, persons with gum disease are twice as likely to suffer from coronary artery disease. These are but a few reasons why NSO is so passionate about providing this critical service to the community. With no income requirements and all clients paying the same low fees, our licensed staff dentists see over 3,000 people each year and complete over 8,000 procedures each year, filling a desperate community need.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
- permanent supportive housing
- low-cost care

Barriers and Challenges:
- funding
- transportation
- cost of software

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.
No not at this time.

If I Ruled The World:
I would ensure that all individuals would receive affordable housing, with access to affordable healthcare!
Statement of Services

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7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:

Jerod Shadid
Oklahoma City Planning Department, Community Development Division
Jerod.shadid@okc.gov
(405) 297-3608

Organization Website and Mission:

https://www.okc.gov/departments/planning/programs/homelessness

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
The Community Development Division of the Oklahoma City Planning Department serves as the lead for the Oklahoma City Continuum of Care (CoC). In that role, we administrate all of the City’s federally funded homeless services programs, develop policy and help build collaboratives among service agencies to create sustainable solutions to homelessness in Oklahoma City. As part of this effort, we also work with fellow Community Development staff to locate affordable housing resources.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
In 2012, the Oklahoma City CoC began emphasizing a housing first approach with its chronically homeless citizens. Chronically homeless individuals have been on the street for at least a year and tend to have a wide range of health issues that must be addressed. A housing first approach emphasizes moving these individuals directly from the street or shelter into housing and providing services once the individual is housed. Since 2012 this initiative has also broadened to Oklahoma City’s homeless veteran...
community and local service providers and government organizations have housed over 800 individuals and maintained a retention rate of over 90%.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
Programs are at or approaching capacity and affordable housing is in short supply.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
Yes. Legal Aid of Oklahoma County is a member of the Oklahoma City Continuum of Care and we currently contribute to funding for two of their programs: one that provides assistance to victims of domestic violence who are homeless and one that provides legal services to any homeless individual/family.

**If I Ruled The World:**
I’d like to think conversations like this wouldn’t be necessary in that situation.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems
3. Food inadequacy
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes
5. Inadequate education outcomes
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage
7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Laurie W. Jones
800 N. Harvey Oklahoma City, OK 73102
405.208.5354
ljones@okcu.edu

Organization Website and Mission:
http://law.okcu.edu/
The mission of Oklahoma City University School of Law is to prepare students to become responsible professionals through a rigorous program of instruction that focuses on students’ intellectual and professional development and enables them to become leaders in law, business, government, and civic life; and to contribute to the improvement of law and legal institutions through research and scholarship.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
The School of Law has an Innocence Project that provides legal representation to incarcerated individuals who have a viable claim of wrongful conviction and an American Indian Wills Clinic that provides wills and basic estate planning documents for tribal members; houses Oklahoma Lawyers for Children (OLFC), a non-profit organization that pairs volunteer lawyers with children involved in abused, neglected, and deprived legal proceedings; sponsors and staffs the Pro Se Waiver Divorce Docket Project that provides legal representation to low-income pro se divorce litigants and resources for domestic violence victims; has a student poverty law organization and a public interest law group that provide community service; an Eastside Wills Project
that provides estate planning documents and financial planning advice to members of eastern Oklahoma City churches; and provides various pro bono opportunities for students to mentor low income youth and to address manifestations of poverty.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**
The Innocence Project secured two exonerations in May 2016; the American Indian Wills Clinic, OLFC, the Pro Se Waiver Divorce Docket Project, and Eastside Wills Project have served thousands of clients.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
Secure and stable funding for clinics and pro bono projects is a challenge. Barriers include lack of transportation for clients to service locations and means to communicate services to potential clients.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
Yes. Lawyers, law students, judges, and courthouse staff are involved with all of the projects. Several of the projects work closely with other legal service providers such as Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Indian Legal Services.

**If I Ruled The World:**
Equal access to a top-notch education, healthy and nutritious food and water, adequate health care, safe shelter, and employment opportunities would be available to all people.
Statement of Services

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information: The Oklahoma Policy Institute
907 S. Detroit #1005
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74120
Facebook: Oklahoma Policy Institute
Twitter: @okpolicy

Organization Website and Mission: okpolicy.org
OK Policy promotes adequate, fair, and fiscally responsible funding of public services and expanded opportunity for all Oklahomans by providing timely and credible information, analysis, and ideas.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
In our efforts to promote equitable, responsible, and sustainable fiscal and economic policies, we address the following manifestations of poverty through our work:

- Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems
- Food inadequacy
- Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes
- Inadequate education outcomes
- Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage
- Isolation from community and political infrastructure

We collaborate with two national networks of state-level policy research organizations: The State Priorities Partnership and the Economic Analysis and Research Network. We also play a leading role in two Oklahoma coalitions: Together OK (TOK) and the Oklahoma Assets Network (OAN). Together OK is a nonpartisan coalition of businesses, organizations, and citizens coming together to advocate for responsible budget and tax policies. The OAN is a diverse coalition of individuals and organizations that promotes measures to help all Oklahomans build stronger financial foundations. Our national and state level networks expand our reach in addressing the six manifestations bulleted above.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
Our strategy is to influence public policy and empower citizen to be engaged through comprehensive research, concise information, and great charts. We engage lawmakers and citizens through:

- Our daily “In The Know” news digest for email subscribers, policy briefs and reports, and the OK Policy blog (which features guest contributors as well as OK Policy research staff)
- Our OK Policy sponsored events like the Fall Policy Boot Camp, the annual Budget Summit, the Budget Breakfast, and other presentations in front of varied audience about the issues we cover
• Our TOK events led by grassroots leaders throughout the state of Oklahoma and mobilizing TOK members around important issues
• Our online resources for lawmakers, partner organizations, and everyday Oklahomans
• Our opportunities for college students to get direct experience in public policy while learning through our Summer Policy Institute, Research Fellowships, and paid internships
• Our testimonies at the state capitol and tracking bills during legislative session

**Barriers and Challenges:**
There's a continuing budget crisis in our state. Years of shrinking funding have undermined Oklahoma’s most important public investments in education, public health and safety, and other core services. At the same time, Oklahoma families are living in an economy marked by limited access to good-paying jobs, persistent poverty, and lack of upward mobility, even before a weakening oil and gas industry made the situation worse. It is important that our lawmakers understand the urgency of fixing the state budget and creating better jobs and opportunities for all Oklahomans.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
We don't work extensively with legal services organizations, but we do collaborate with them when possible. For instance, we are working with the TU law school clinic on a project related to legal fees and fines. Many legal services organizations within the state receive our information and have attended our events.

**If I Ruled The World:**
Poverty and inequality (of all forms) would not exist and public services would be adequately funded.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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5. Inadequate education outcomes
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7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:

Organization Website and Mission:

www.positivetomorrows.org

Mission: Educating homeless children and their families to break the cycle of homelessness.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:

Positive Tomorrows currently works to address all 10 manifestations of poverty. As Oklahoma’s only elementary school specifically serving homeless students, over 100 pre-k through fifth grade students receive a quality education every year while their parents get the support they need to create a better life. We do this in three main ways:

1. We remove barriers to learning like hunger, transportation and lack of basic necessities.
2. We support families to help them improve housing, employment, and income levels
3. We provide each child with a robust, differentiated education and access to extracurricular activities

We give homeless children and families the hope and dignity to overcome their circumstance. Our ultimate goal is not to serve every child for Pre-K through fifth grade, but to get students academically and socially caught up, while helping their families become stable at home so that they can go back into public school and be successful.

Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:

Positive Tomorrows has received the highest level of accreditation by AdvancED, has been selected to become an Oklahoma A+ Demonstration school (the OKA+ Program focuses on multiple learning styles and arts-integration), and we are a United Way Partner Agency.
We also take a trauma-informed approach to teaching. All of our staff members are trained on how to work with children and families in a way that does not further the trauma they have experienced in their lives. We strive to create a therapeutic learning environment.

As a 501©3 we publish our financials publicly every year, and we undergo an audit by an independent firm. All of this information is made public so that stakeholders know their funds are being used appropriately.

Lastly, our programs are outcomes-based, and each department is tracking progress and outcomes that are also published in our annual report.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
As an organization, one of the greatest barriers we face is that we simply cannot serve the need in our community. With over 7,000 homeless students in central Oklahoma alone, this year we have already turned away 53 children due to a lack of space in our facility. We need more resources to serve more students.

We also see systematic barriers to success our clients face. One of the greatest barriers to success for our families is finding a job and obtaining housing for those parents who have a criminal record, because many employers simply will not hire them. We also see housing deposits that are set at higher rates for clients with criminal records, making housing more difficult to obtain.

Incarceration is another issue our families struggle with. Many of our students have at least one parent incarcerated. This is often for non-violent or drug-related offenses, but we’ve even had parents in jail for overdue, unpaid parking tickets. For a family struggling to afford food, a parking ticket can cause everything to fall apart.

Domestic violence is also a leading cause of homelessness, and we serve many students who are fleeing these dangerous situations. Often a protective order is in place, which can make school records more difficult to obtain. We also must use greater security precautions in our school as perpetrators of violence are often searching for these children, in spite of the protective orders that have been filed against them.

Lastly, we’ve worked with a handful of families struggling with their immigration status. Often their children are citizens, but parents are not. As a result they are scared to access services for fear of deportation, or they simply do not quality for certain services.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**

We currently serve families participating in the Remerge program, which is a diversion program for non-violent, female offenders who have children. We collaborate with the YWCA Oklahoma City, where families can obtain assistance filing protective orders. We refer our families to Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma when necessary and have worked with attorneys to assist families struggling with their immigration status. This year, we hosted a parent group discussing tenant rights.

**If I Ruled The World:**

1. There would be enough affordable housing to meet the demand.
2. There would be enough family shelter accommodations to meet the need.
3. There would be some way for Positive Tomorrows to receive a measure of state funding for the educational services we provide.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Positive Tomorrows
Jennifer Marshall, LCSW
Director of Family Support
(405) 556-5082
jmarshall@positivetomorrows.org

Organization Website and Mission:
www.positivetomorrows.org

Mission: Educating homeless children and their families to break the cycle of homelessness.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:

Positive Tomorrows currently works to address all 10 manifestations of poverty. As Oklahoma’s only elementary school specifically serving homeless students, over 100 pre-k through fifth grade students receive a quality education every year while their parents get the support they need to create a better life. We do this in three main ways:

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3. We provide each child with a robust, differentiated education and access to extracurricular activities

We give homeless children and families the hope and dignity to overcome their circumstance. Our ultimate goal is not to serve every child for Pre-K through fifth grade, but to get students academically
and socially caught up, while helping their families become stable at home so that they can go back into public school and be successful.

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Positive Tomorrows has received the highest level of accreditation by AdvancED, has been selected to become an Oklahoma A+ Demonstration school (the OKA+ Program focuses on multiple learning styles and arts-integration), and we are a United Way Partner Agency.

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As a 501©3 we publish our financials publicly every year, and we undergo an audit by an independent firm. All of this information is made public so that stakeholders know their funds are being used appropriately.

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As an organization, one of the greatest barriers we face is that we simply cannot serve the need in our community. With over 7,000 homeless students in central Oklahoma alone, this year we have already turned away 53 children due to a lack of space in our facility. We need more resources to serve more students.

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Incarceration is another issue our families struggle with. Many of our students have at least one parent incarcerated. This is often for non-violent or drug-related offenses, but we’ve even had parents in jail for overdue, unpaid parking tickets. For a family struggling to afford food, a parking ticket can cause everything to fall apart.

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Lastly, we’ve worked with a handful of families struggling with their immigration status. Often their children are citizens, but parents are not. As a result they are scared to access services for fear of deportation, or they simply do not qualify for certain services.
Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.

We currently serve families participating in the Remerge program, which is a diversion program for non-violent, female offenders who have children. We collaborate with the YWCA Oklahoma City, where families can obtain assistance filing protective orders. We refer our families to Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma when necessary and have worked with attorneys to assist families struggling with their immigration status. This year, we hosted a parent group discussing tenant rights.

If I Ruled The World:

If I ruled the world, there would be more interaction and collaboration across class structures. There would be more affordable housing and more jobs paying a living wage (above our current minimum wage). We would have an increase in communities in which everyone has equal access to the resources needed to live a vital and sustainable life.
**Statement of Services**

**Ten Manifestations of Poverty:**
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

**Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:**
Poverty Law Group, Oklahoma City University School of Law
Aimee Phillips, President
alphillips@my.okcu.edu

**Organization Website and Mission:**
Website: none
Mission: The purpose of the Poverty Law Group is to educate and support law students interested in understanding and combating the underlying causes of poverty by providing students with opportunities for the following: guest speakers, service in the Oklahoma City community, peer discussions, and connections to organizations and attorneys who work to correct the injustices of poverty.

**Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:**
The Poverty Law Group is a new law student organization founding in September 2016. The group is still defining the direction it will be taking to address the manifestations of poverty in our community, and we are actively gathering ideas and community connections.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**
n/a

**Barriers and Challenges:**
n/a

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
We are in the process of gaining connections with lawyers and organizations that would be willing to serve as guest speakers and/or mentors for law students interested in this area of law.

**If I Ruled The World:**
Then I would work for economic equality, and I would hope that there would no longer be a need for this commission, because all people would be provided housing, competent representation, food, healthcare, education, employment at a living wage, access to crisis resources, safety, a recognition of each person’s inherent dignity, and a voice for each individual in the community.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
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10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Carmen Clay, Rainbolt Family Service-Learning Chair
clayc@casady.org, 405-520-1325 (cell)
9500 North Pennsylvania, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73120

Organization Website and Mission:
Casady School:
Casady School develops excellence, confidence, and integrity in students and prepares them with the skills and knowledge that serve as the foundation for success

Casady Service Learning Program:
The mission of the Service Learning Program is to cultivate well-educated, responsible, compassionate individuals who make a difference and become entrepreneurs of peace and social change.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
Food inadequacy: Yearly canned food drive, student facilitated, benefiting the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.
Homelessness: Yearly, student facilitated, drive benefiting the Homeless Alliance
Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes: Yearly drive for Infant Crisis Services, and a Walk-A-Thon benefiting Children’s Hospital
Inadequate education outcomes: Mentoring and tutoring programs with Boys and Girls Club at Memorial Park. We have had reading programs with Britton Elementary and the Middle Division is having a reading buddies program with Johnson Elementary. We are about to begin new mentoring programs, one with Stanley Hupfeld Academy, at Western Village and another with Johnson Elementary and Special Care-Buddies Program- pairing Casady students with children with developmental and physical disabilities.
Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
The creativity and care of the students keep on moving our donation numbers higher and higher every year.

We are at the beginning of our mentoring and tutoring programs. The number of students wanting to volunteer is encouraging.

Barriers and Challenges:

Time for sustainable action. Funding to meet the needs. Transportation to and from mentoring sites

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.
No

If I Ruled The World: Human Dignity will be prioritize and we will work on zero hunger and poverty to give peace a change.
**Statement of Services**

**Ten Manifestations of Poverty:**
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
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**Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:**
Amy Pepper  
The OU Legal Clinic  
300 Timberdell Road  
Norman, OK 73019  
(405)325-3702  
(405)325-7758, facsimile  
appepper@ou.edu

**Organization Website and Mission:**
Our website is under construction  
We have a dual mission:  
1. To provide law students with a framework to learn the ethical practice of law using a client centered model.  
2. To provide quality free legal services to low-income clients

**Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:**
Civil Clinic  
We provide free legal services to indigent persons in cases in Cleveland and McClain Counties. Additionally, we represent clients in tribal court if the involvement arises out of a case we handle in state court. Included in the types of cases we handle in the civil clinic are cases where we help protect clients’ access to public benefits (housing, disability, food stamps, TANF), their parental rights (which are disproportionately at risk), and their safety (cases involving domestic abuse).

Criminal Defense Clinic
The Criminal Defense Clinic provides representation in the area of criminal defense in District Court in Cleveland and McClain County and Norman Municipal Court. The Clinic represents those charged primarily, although not exclusively, with misdemeanors.

The Clients fall into the gap between defendants charged with crimes who can afford to retain counsel and those few who have lawyers provided through the Oklahoma Indigent System. In our area the court appointed attorneys are usually reserved for those who are incarcerated. Our clients are usually the working poor charged with alcohol or drug crimes or petty property crimes. They are usually able to post a bond to be released from jail with a small down payment and a promise to pay a bonding company the balance. But they are unable to retain counsel.

**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**

**Barriers and Challenges:**

Our main challenge is monetary. Our student enrollment is affected because we do not pay our interns—they pay for the credit hours they receive. Often our students are feeling some of the same budgetary issues our clients experience, although not on the same scale. We lose enrollment to private firms and state agencies who are able to pay their interns and often provide them with fewer job responsibilities.

For our clients, even with no-cost legal representation they are unable to pay other costs required in their cases. These include the fees for drug, alcohol, and custody evaluations, DUI and parenting schools, counseling, Victim Impact Panels, court and service costs, fines and court fees. Criminal Defense Clinic clients with driving violations are unable to meet the financial requirements of the Department of Public Safety to have driving privileges restored after suspension. Clients who have to miss work to attend court, classes or counseling sessions end up losing their jobs putting them further into the poverty spiral and making it harder for them to climb out.

The cycle of state involvement and poverty is rarely broken with the added expenses of court involvement.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**

As a legal service provider, we routinely collaborate with other attorneys as opposing counsel, including Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma. In addition, we support LASO in its initiative to provide statewide legal services to the same population we serve locally.

Our clinic works through the Cleveland County Bar Association and local lawyers to advocate for policy changes to reduce the impact of criminal charges on families dealing with poverty. We advocate for both our clients and the community as a whole for changes in the criminal justice system. We try to educate our Judges about the levels of poverty in our community and in our clients to facilitate understanding.

We provide the defense services for the children in the Cleveland County Juvenile Drug Court. The Court tries to coordinate the available services and resources of the community to help the young substance abusers and their families.
If I Ruled The World:

The criminal justice system would be supported by taxes and not with the current system of “user fees”. The private evaluations, schools, counseling and rehabilitation would be provided on a sliding scale according to ability to pay. Alternatives to incarceration would be studied to determine best practices and incarceration would be reserved for those we are truly afraid of rather than those we are mad at.

The civil justice system would truly be the place where all persons are treated equally without regard to social status or income bracket.

And, in the perfect world, there would be no need for the OU Legal Clinic to make a distinction in handling cases for persons who cannot afford access to the legal justice system.
Dr. Michael Businelle is an Associate Professor and researcher in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City.

Over the past 13 years his research has focused on testing novel treatments and reducing health disparities in socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. He earned his PhD in Clinical Psychology from Louisiana State University in 2007 and he completed a 2.5 year, NCI funded, postdoctoral fellowship in Cancer Prevention Research at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2009. His postdoctoral training primarily focused on using ecological momentary assessment (EMA) techniques and advanced statistical methods (e.g., structural equation modeling) to identify mechanisms through which socioeconomic disadvantage influences smoking cessation. Since 2011, he has conducted 4 studies at homeless shelters (3 in Dallas, 1 in OKC). To date, his research team has published 18 research papers primarily focused on health and health behavior change among homeless adults. In his most recent study (Summer 2016), Project Advance II, his research team collected data on health, health behaviors, and criminal justice involvement in 610 adults who receive services at OKC shelters.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

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8. Lack of personal and physical safety
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10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Pamela Sanford    psanford@ou.edu
Master of Social Work    work: 405-325-7569
Licensed Clinical Social Worker    cell: 405-620-3726
University of Oklahoma Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, Faculty Field Liaison

Organization Website and Mission:
http://socialwork.ou.edu/

“The Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work advances relevant and high quality knowledge and values of social work practice useful in preparing competent social workers who can elevate the status of people, populations or communities that experience considerable vulnerability and injustice within Oklahoma and the broader society.”

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
The profession of social work is devoted to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression. These goals are accomplished through the promotion, restoration, maintenance and enhancement of the social functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

The Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work is dedicated to offering classroom and experiential learning that prepares students to practice as professional social workers. Competence is measured in 13 areas that include sensitivity to diversity, social justice and privilege, and the development of cultural competence. The curricula and practicum (internship) experience teach students how to apply these concepts as they work to alleviate the inequities in housing, medical care, employment, safety and all of the areas in which we serve are most vulnerable.
**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**

Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work students have been placed in numerous agencies that take an active role in combating poverty. There have been specific groups of students that embark on projects to address a neighborhood or need within an organization. One example is the current project led by Dr. Shane Brady and Dr. David Moxley; entitled the “South Side Initiative” it seeks to actively engage the Southern Oaks neighborhood in positive youth development. This project uses a community organizing model that engages neighbors and local resources in the process. [Facebook: OKC South Side Initiative](#)

As a social worker in the field until one year ago, I have been involved in implementation of the Housing First model in Norman. This model has changed the face of housing services by housing those most in need and tailoring support services to the individual. We were trained in and actively engaged in the 100K Homes Campaign and the efforts that followed the original goal set in 2010. [100K Homes Zero 2016](#)

For 20 years I was executive director of Thunderbird Clubhouse in Norman. The Clubhouse model has been identified by SAMHSA as an evidenced based practice that is effective in supporting adults in recovery from mental illness. [ICCD Clubhouse Model](#) [Psychosocial Rehabilitation Process Model](#)

**Barriers and Challenges:**

Evolving needs and system “lag”: the way we provide services is changing but not quite as quickly as the needs of those we serve. Our service system still highly values brick and mortar structures as the place where services originate. These structures are expensive and while they are “comfortable” for services providers, often those we serve do not benefit from them and are simply allowed to “visit” the comfortable structures while they go home to inadequate housing, etc. Yes, brick and mortar structures can serve a purpose, but it is my observation that they deplete financial resources that could go directly to services.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**

Yes, we have a social work students placed at Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma. Many other students provide support services to those in court programs through CASA, drug court and mental health court.

**If I Ruled The World:**

The playing field would be even and very green.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:

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Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Omar Rashidzada, VJO Specialist; Department of Veterans Affairs, Oklahoma City; (405) 456-3010
Jessica McLeod, VJO Specialist, Department of Veterans Affairs, Oklahoma City; (405) 456-1761
Matt Fox, Homeless Program Coordinator, Department of Veterans Affairs, Oklahoma City; (405) 456-5720

Organization Website and Mission:
http://www.oklahoma.va.gov/

Honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness (VA HUD-Vash/Tribal HUD-Vash Programs)
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems (VJO and Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans)
3. Food inadequacy (Partnership with Regional Food Bank)
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes (Case management in VJO, Grant & Per Diem, Healthcare for homeless Veterans, Transitional Residence and HUD-Vash)
5. Inadequate education outcomes (Partnering with VBA for vocational rehab assistance)
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage (Compensated work therapy, Supportive employment, Community Based employment services, Community Employment Coordinator) – emphasis on helping individuals with employment barriers find living wage employment.
Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:
Landlord fairs, Veterans Coordinated Case Management (By-Name-List), Veterans Task Force, SSVF, outreach.

Barriers and Challenges:
• Affordable housing units in low crime areas, rural communities
• Finding landlords to work with individuals who have felonies, registered sex offenders, individuals with prior evictions

Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc (New MOU signed)
Oklahoma Bar Association (OBA) and Oklahoma Lawyers for America’s Heroes Program (OLAHP)
Oklahoma County Diversion Program (Northcare/Oklahoma County District Attorney’s Office)
   Cleveland County – unique partnerships with Cleveland County and other rural communities through their drug or mental health courts on a case-by-case basis.

If I Ruled The World:
Repurpose the relocation costs that DOD pays to move its service members every couple of years by extending their orders at a particular station and use the money saved to house homeless Veterans in vacant on-base/post housing. Veterans could be fed and clothed while staying there and VA would provide case management.
Statement of Services

Ten Manifestations of Poverty:
1. Substandard and unaffordable housing and homelessness
2. Disproportionate involvement in criminal and civil justice systems
3. Food inadequacy
4. Inadequate healthcare and poor health outcomes
5. Inadequate education outcomes
6. Lack of opportunity for full employment at a living wage
7. Living through an unending and continuous cycle of crises
8. Lack of personal and physical safety
9. Stigma and lack of personal dignity
10. Isolation from community and political infrastructure

Speaker/Agency/Contact Information:
Pamela D. Richardson, MBA, CFRE

Organization Website and Mission:
www.voaok.org

Describe the work of your organization to address (one or more of) the manifestations of poverty:
Volunteers of America Oklahoma provides housing for the chronically homeless. 97% of our clients have a history of severe mental illness, substance abuse and previous incarceration.

Additionally, we provide employment services (job readiness, job-training, and job placement) to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Affordable housing is provided to seniors, the elderly and the disabled.

As a Social Security Organizational Representative Payee we manage the benefit payments of clients in our programs and those referred by multiple community partner agencies ensuring a client is able to maintain housing and utilities.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Muskogee and a four county area delivers Meals-on-Wheels to seniors who are isolated and unable to cook for themselves; transportation to doctor appointments; and friendly visits for seniors who may not have family in the area again to reduce depression and isolation.
**Success, Best Practices, Model Approaches:**
Each program employs best practices and achieves individualized success through its quality case management services.

**Barriers and Challenges:**
Adequate affordable housing.
Employers willing to give second-chances.
Fragile mental/behavioral health issues.
Lack of family or community support for the individual.
Lack of funding and lack of advocacy at the Legislative level.
Lack of public understanding of the issues.

**Does your organization currently collaborate with lawyers/legal services/court programs? Please elaborate.**
Yes, as a member of the A Way Home for Tulsa continuum of care, we work frequently with Legal Aid. As an agency located in the OKC Homeless Alliance at West Town Campus we work with Legal Aid as well in OKC.

**If I Ruled The World:**
Mental Health and Substance Abuse would be adequately funded.
Quality affordable housing would exist.
Employers would provide second chances and accommodations for the disabled.
Our communities would seek to understand the depth of some of the issues our clients face.
All people would be treated with dignity and respect.