

# DIALOGUE

Spring 2010  
VOL. 14, NO. 2

News and Perspectives from the ABA Division for Legal Services

Home

Pro Bono

LRIS

OSB's  
30-Second  
Law School

From the Chair

Raising  
Student and  
Staff

Awareness of  
LRIS  
Programs

2010 LRIS  
Workshop

Delivery

IOLTA

LAMP

Download this  
issue in PDF

Download this article  
in PDF

SAVE THE  
DATES!

2010  
ABA  
LAWYER  
REFERRAL  
WORKSHOP

OCTOBER  
27 - 30

PORTLAND,  
OREGON



## From the Chair...

By Sheldon Warren

### Standing Committee on Lawyer Referral and Information Service

When you have been working with the ABA's LRIS Standing Committee as long as I have, it is easy to forget (or take for granted) the products and services available to local lawyer referral and information services from the ABA. Fortunately, the exchanges on the ABA LRIS LISTSERV regularly remind me that it is essential that we make sure these services know what is available to them. That is the goal of this column.

First, the "free stuff." Times are tough across the entire economy, whether in the public or private sector, and the bar associations which sponsor most public service oriented lawyer referral services have not been spared. The materials available through the [ABA LRIS Clearinghouse](#) on the web are so extensive that someone could use them to essentially start a legitimate LRIS from scratch. Moreover, the cost of all those materials is an amount that would warm the heart of even the most fiscally conservative bar executive, i.e. **zero**.

These materials include everything from sample applications and job descriptions to information on budgets, LRIS committees, the establishment of subject matter (experience) panels, percentage fee funding, marketing and many more topics. These materials have been gathered from services throughout the country and/or generated internally by the ABA Standing Committee and its staff. If an LRIS director has a question, regardless of the area, it is hard to imagine not being able to find the answer among these materials.

Not enough free stuff for you? How about ABA's Program of Assistance and Review (PAR)? PAR provides lawyer referral and information services throughout the country with on-site visits by consultants experienced in all aspects of lawyer referral. After observing a program's operation, these consultants provide concrete recommendations with regard to how that service can enhance its operation to better serve the public, its panel members and the sponsoring bar association. These recommendations are made during the course of the visit to the LRIS, and then distilled in a comprehensive written report that is provided to the LRIS and sponsoring bar within 30 to 45 days after the visit.

As I noted in my last column, the PAR consultants are sensitive to the unique characteristics of each individual LRIS they visit and offer all of their "best practice" recommendations in a constructive manner with these unique characteristics in mind. And the cost to the LRIS or sponsoring bar association – again, **zero**. While we ask the sponsoring bar to bring in sandwiches for lunch, this is to allow the PAR consultants, LRIS staff, bar executives and volunteers to continue their discussions during the lunch hour. I personally believe the PAR program is the most valuable resource available to lawyer referral and information services and I urge you to take advantage of it if you have not already done so.

There are numerous additional materials available from the ABA LRIS Standing Committee which, while not free, are available at basically the cost of their production. These materials, a list of which can also be found at the LRIS page on the ABA's website, include the "Lawyer Referral Public



Relations and Marketing Guide", which is essentially a "marketing campaign in a box." This 115 page guide shows LRIS programs how to launch and maintain a public relations/marketing campaign, and supplies sample publicity materials to utilize in that campaign.

The companion "PR Tools, Tips and Timesavers" provides numerous examples of successful public relations campaigns gathered from lawyer referral programs throughout the country, as well as a 22 page index of all available ABA LRIS public relations materials. There are additional materials available, all of which can help an LRIS successfully grow its program, whether large or small and regardless of its budget.

Last, but certainly not least, one of the best (and most fun) resources offered by the ABA is the annual [LRIS Workshop](#). The 2010 Workshop will be held October 27 - 30 in Portland, Oregon. It would be impossible for me to over emphasize the value that this Workshop, year in and year out, provides to its attendees. For individuals who have only recently started working in the LRIS field, whether as staff or as a volunteer, there is no better introduction than the all day, in-depth "nuts and bolts" session on the first day of the Workshop. The information provided during this "nuts and bolts" session, which is facilitated by a group of highly experienced LRIS staff and volunteers, enables attendees to not only have a clear understanding of the challenges facing a public service oriented LRIS, but also the tools with which to meet those challenges and succeed.

There are numerous programs on a variety of topics that are offered across the course of the Workshop, most of which are offered in a "breakout" (as opposed to plenary) format in order to allow for active participation by both presenters and knowledgeable attendees. Some of the programs are broken down as small/medium/large or metropolitan/rural/statewide so that attendees can interact with colleagues from similar lawyer referral services. The topics covered are myriad and you can choose to attend those most appropriate to your program. Many of the most popular sessions are repeated in order to avoid attendees having to miss a session they might want to attend.

While I have said it before, it bears repeating that, year after year, Workshop attendees report that one of the most valuable aspects of the Workshop is the opportunity to meet other individuals who are facing the same daily challenges and opportunities. The network of LRIS staff and volunteers that one can develop at a Workshop is, quite simply, invaluable. When you're faced with a problem and can't seem to come up with a solution, or maybe you're just having a bad day (and we all have those), it is reassuring to know that you can reach out to individuals within this network for advice or, maybe, just to vent. It's nice to know you're not alone.

So, don't be shy. Take advantage of the LRIS resources available from the ABA. Remember, many of these are **free**. And start planning your trip to the Workshop in Portland in October. It will be fun and I hope to see you there.

*Dialogue* is published by the [ABA Division for Legal Services](#)  
Copyright © 2010 American Bar Association  
[ABA Privacy Statement](#) | [ABA Copyright Statement](#)