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LEGAL SERVICES NOW

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Funding News

➘ **Major State Legislative Success for Virginia** – Legislation passed in Virginia will increase the filing fee appropriation for legal services from $4 to $9 per case. This will generate an additional $4.2 million per year, for total filing fee revenue of $7.6 million. The increase will be used for three initiatives to improve attorney recruitment and retention: 1) an increase in starting salaries for legal aid attorneys to the same level as public defenders and prosecuting attorneys and similar percentage increases for more experienced attorneys; 2) the funding of a retirement fund for legal aid staff; and 3) the funding of a loan repayment assistance program. For more information on the Virginia legislation, contact Mark Braley, Executive Director, Legal Services Corporation of Virginia, at mark.lscv@mindspring.com or 804/782-9438. For more information on other state legislative funding for legal services, contact Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at meredithmcburney@msn.com or 303/329-8091.

➘ **Utah Supreme Court Adopts IOLTA Interest Rate Comparability** – On April 1, 2008, the Utah Supreme Court approved revisions to the state's IOLTA rule to include interest rate comparability. This revenue enhancement strategy requires that lawyers place their IOLTA accounts only in a financial institution that pays those accounts the highest interest rate or dividend generally available at the institution to other customers when IOLTA accounts meet the same minimum balance or other qualifications. The revisions went into effect immediately. There are now 19 states that have adopted IOLTA interest rate comparability. For additional information about this IOLTA revenue enhancement strategy and others, contact Bev Groudine, Counsel, ABA Commission on IOLTA, at bgroudine@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5771.

Pro Bono News

➘ **Illinois Supreme Court Amends Rules to Permit Retired, Inactive and In-House Attorneys to Perform Pro Bono Work** – The Illinois Supreme Court amended Rules 716 and 756 to permit in-house, retired and inactive attorneys to provide pro bono legal assistance to individuals of limited means or charitable, civic, community or other similar groups. Attorneys must provide pro bono services through a not-for-profit legal services organization, governmental entity, law school clinical program or a bar association providing pro bono services. The amendments become effective on July 1, 2008. To review the full text of the new rule, visit http://www.state.il.us/court/SupremeCourt/Rules/Art_VII/. For more information, contact Dina Merrell, Associate Director, Chicago Bar Foundation, at dmerrell@chicagobar.org or 312/554-1206.

Hot On the Web

Mississippi Pro Bono Attorney Manual Available Online – The Pro Bono Attorney Manual is a practice manual developed through a collaboration of thirteen law firms in Mississippi, in partnership with the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project (MVLP), Mississippi Legal Services programs, the Mississippi Center for Justice and probono.net/ms. The manual, developed to assist MVLP in the recruitment of volunteer lawyers, contains practice resources including a detailed overview of each

area of law, client questionnaires, sample forms and petitions, and reference to cases and statutes. To download a copy of the manual, go to probono.net/ms. For more information, contact Shirley Williams, Executive Director of MVLP, at SWilliams@msbar.org or 601/960-9577.

The Path to Pro Bono: An Interviewing Tool for Law Students – This updated brochure assists law students in assessing a law firm's commitment to pro bono. It provides sample interview questions that law students may utilize to elicit a firm's pro bono commitment. The brochure was created by the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service and the Center for Pro Bono. It will be available for reproduction by law schools for law students and can be downloaded for free from the ABA Center for Pro Bono website. To download a copy of the brochure, go to http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/downloads/probono/path.pdf. For further information, contact Melanie Kushnir, Assistant Staff Counsel, ABA Center for Pro Bono, at kushnim@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5775.

Nurturing the Next Generation: Best Practices in Recruiting and Supervising Law Students and New Attorneys – This flier provides public service employers with the best practices in recruiting and supervising law students and entry-level attorneys for paid and unpaid positions held during both the summer and the academic year. It is a product of the National Association of Law Placement (NALP) and the Public Service Law Network (PSLawNet). NALP plans to distribute the flyer to its public service employer contacts and encourages dissemination to any individuals or groups that would find it useful. To download a copy of the flier, go to http://www.pslawnet.org/assets/409_nurturingnextgeneration1.pdf. For more information, contact Steven Grumm, Director of Public Service Initiatives, at sgrumm@nalp.org or 202/296-0057.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

Washington Update

More than 350 ABA and state/local and specialty bar leaders converged on Washington April 15-17 to lobby Congress for more adequate funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). Armed with two letters addressed to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee signed by all 50 state bar associations, and two territories, these bar presidents, access to justice commission members and ABA leaders urged Congress to fund LSC at no less than $400 million. The ABA supports the LSC Board of Directors' request for $471 million. For more information, visit the ABA Day Issues Resource webpage at: http://www.abanet.org/poladv/abaday08/lscresources.shtm or contact Julie M. Strandlie, Director, Grassroots Operations/Legislative Counsel, at jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org or 202/662-1764.

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.