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### Funding News

➤ **Pennsylvania Supreme Court Approves Increase in Attorney Registration Fee to Help Fund Legal Aid**

– On April 2, 2009, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court increased the attorney registration fee by \$25. The additional revenue will be forwarded to Pennsylvania's IOLTA program to fund legal services to the poor. The increase is expected to generate about \$1.5 million and will help reduce the funding loss due to the substantial drop in interest rates on IOLTA accounts. For more information, contact Al Azen, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Interest on Lawyer Trust Account Board, at [al.azen@pacourts.us](mailto:al.azen@pacourts.us) or 717/238-2001.

➤ **Arkansas Legislature Increases Filing Fee for Legal Aid Programs**

– On March 16, 2009, the Arkansas legislature approved a circuit court filing fee increase of \$10. The increase is expected to raise \$500,000 annually for the two LSC-funded programs in the state – the Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas. The Arkansas Access to Justice Commission was instrumental in the passage of this legislation. For more information, contact Ron Lanoue, Executive Director, Arkansas Legal Services Partnership, at [rlanoue@arkansaslegalservices.org](mailto:rlanoue@arkansaslegalservices.org) or 501/376-3423. For more information about other state legislative funding this year, contact Meredith McBurney, Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at [meredithmcburney@msn.com](mailto:meredithmcburney@msn.com) or 303/329-8091.

➤ **West Virginia Supreme Court Adopts IOLTA Interest Rate Comparability**

– On March 12, 2009, the West Virginia Supreme Court entered an order approving 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 became effective on April 15, 2009. West Virginia is the 24th state to adopt 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](mailto:bgroudine@staff.abanet.org) or 312/988-5771.

### Pro Bono News

➤ **North Dakota Supreme Court Adopts Rule that Provides the Opportunity for More Attorneys to Engage in Bono Service**


– Effective March 15, 2009, attorneys located in North Dakota who are licensed in other jurisdictions may provide pro bono legal services through approved legal services organizations. Attorneys who may qualify under the new North Dakota Admission to Practice Rule 3.1 include attorneys in private practice, public or academic employment, or in-house counsel. Attorneys must have been licensed for at least five years and volunteer through a non-profit legal services organization that has as one of its primary purposes the provision of legal assistance to indigents, free of charge, in civil matters. The rule is available online at <http://www.ndcourts.com/court/Notices/20090003/finalrule.htm>. To learn more, contact Penny Miller, Clerk, North Dakota Supreme Court, at [SupClerkofCourt@ndcourts.gov](mailto:SupClerkofCourt@ndcourts.gov) or 701/328-2221.

➤ **Organizations Offer Tools for Placement of Deferred Associates**

– Multiple organizations have recently developed tools to assist law firms and nonprofits manage the placement of deferred associates. The Association of Pro Bono Counsel (APBCO) is circulating *Considerations for the Placement of Law Firm Attorneys into Public Interest Organizations*. The Pro Bono Institute has also published a paper, *Law Firm Attorneys Displaced by the Economic Downturn*. In addition,

PSLawNet offers an important resource: a matching service for public interest organizations as well as law firms and associates looking for these types of placement opportunities. Links to these and other relevant resources are collected on the ABA Center for Pro Bono's web page, Strategies for Pro Bono and Public Service During the Recession at <http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/downturn/>. For more information, contact Tony Barash, Director Emeritus, ABA Center for Pro Bono, at [barasha@staff.abanet.org](mailto:barasha@staff.abanet.org) or 312/988-5773.

## Hot On the Web

 **Building a Better Legal Profession's Guide to Law Firms** – Building a Better Legal Profession (BBLP), a national grassroots organization founded by students at Stanford Law School, recently published *Building a Better Legal Profession's Guide to Law Firms: The Law Students Guide to Finding the Perfect Law Firm Job*. The publication includes much of the employment data on billable hours, pro bono participation, and demographic diversity at large private law firms that BBLP also publishes online. Additionally, the Law Firm Guide offers career guidance on the law firm hiring process and stories from the professionals already at the firms. For further information about BBLP and its projects or to order a copy of the book, go to <http://www.betterlegalprofession.org> or contact Davida Brook, President, BBLP, at [dbrook@stanford.edu](mailto:dbrook@stanford.edu) or 917/991-2240.

## Washington Update



On March 11, 2009, the 111th Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009. It includes the June 2008 House/Senate Appropriations Committee-recommended \$40 million increase for the Legal Services Corporation, funding LSC at \$390 million for FY 2009.

The Obama Administration should release its detailed FY 2010 budget proposal soon. ABA President H. Thomas Wells, Jr. wrote the Office of Management and Budget in March in support of the Administration's expected FY 2010 request for LSC of \$435 million. President Wells also urged the Administration to delete at least two of the restrictions on recipients of LSC funds that have been imposed through the appropriations bills since 1995. The ABA letter focused on the removal of restrictions affecting use of non-LSC funds and the receipt of statutorily-authorized attorneys' fees.

Bar leaders from across the country participated in ABA Day in Washington 2009, April 21-23, to advocate on access to legal services issues. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) spoke to the group about his bill to reauthorize the LSC, S. 718. For more information, contact Julie M. Strandlie, Director, Grassroots Operations/Legislative Counsel, at [jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org](mailto:jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org) or 202/662-1764.

**WASHINGTON UPDATE**

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](mailto:bgroudine@staff.abanet.org).