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Funding News

➤ **State Bar of California Makes Contribution to Legal Aid** – The State Bar of California is contributing \$2 million annually for each of the next two years from non-mandatory dues to help the state's legal aid programs compensate for the loss of IOLTA revenue. In addition, the State Bar is increasing an opt-out provision on the state bar dues invoice from \$10 to \$20. Last year the opt-out provision generated about \$1.6 million; it is hoped that the increase will generate another \$1 to \$1.5 million annually. The \$2 million annual contribution and the \$20 opt-out provision were both included in the annual dues bill for the state bar that the Governor signed in September. For more information about these funding initiatives, contact Mary Lavery Flynn, Director, Office of Legal Services, State Bar of California, at mary.flynn@calbar.ca.gov or 415/538-2251.

➤ **State Bar of Texas to Fund Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program** - The State Bar of Texas (SBOT) has announced a contribution of \$1.75 million, over five years, to support the Texas Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program (SLRAP). It represents the largest contribution ever made in the U.S. by a state bar association to support a loan repayment assistance program. With this support from the SBOT, the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, which administers the program, expects to continue funding qualified applicants through approximately 2013. First created in 2003, the SLRAP encourages and enables recent law school graduates—facing thousands of dollars in law school debt—to work for Texas legal aid organizations. Currently, 126 legal aid lawyers receive support from the program. For more information, contact Kimberly Schmitt, Communications Director, Texas Access to Justice Foundation, at kschmitt@teajf.org or 512/320-0099, ext. 104.

Pro Bono Developments

➤ **Illinois Legal Aid Online Launches First-Ever Pro Bono Application** - A new mobile application has been developed that puts the law in the palm of pro bono lawyers' hands. Illinois Legal Aid Online released its free Illinois Pro Bono App for legal professionals who wish to volunteer with a legal aid organization. It can be used to search for volunteer opportunities, view upcoming MCLE trainings and community events, and access legal reference guides. Resources include in-depth articles on discrete areas of civil law to supplement a lawyer's pro bono work. The Illinois Pro Bono Mobile App is available for Apple and Android devices. The app was developed in partnership with Pine Tree Legal Assistance and funded by the Legal Service Corporation. To learn more, contact Stephanie Villinski, Legal Content Manager, Illinois Legal Aid Online, at svillinski@illinoislegalaid.org or 312/977-9047, ext. 19.

➤ **Four Organizations Partner to Launch Unique Website in New York City** - The law firm of White & Case has partnered with Community Pediatrics at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia University Medical Center and Volunteers of Legal Service to create SocialNeedsRx.org, a referral database to legal, social and medical services in New York City. The database contains more than 230 listings of city, state and federal government programs, as well as city-wide and community-based organizations providing these services. The data, previously published as a booklet, is now available on a website (designed by Pro Bono Net) that also provides resources for advocates and families. For more information, contact Mark O'Brien, Executive Director of Pro Bono Net, at mobrien@probono.net or 212-760-2554.

✚ **Maine Supreme Court Announces New Recognition Program** - During the 2011 National Celebration of Pro Bono, the Maine Supreme Court announced the Katahdin Counsel Recognition Program to acknowledge lawyers who volunteer to assist people who cannot afford lawyers. The program will recognize lawyers who provide 50 hours or more of pro bono legal representation to Mainers in a year. Three other states - Colorado, New York and Texas – have similar recognition programs. For more information, contact Caroline Wilshusen, Executive Coordinator, Justice Action Group, at cwilshusen@mbf.org or 207/332-6565.

✚ **ABA Sponsors Pro Bono Summit** – The ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service held its first Pro Bono Summit on October 24th and 25th in Washington, D.C. This invitation-only event brought together pro bono leaders from local programs, private practice, corporations, government, and public interest organizations to engage in discussions about new ideas for reinvigorating the pro bono delivery system. Attorney General Eric Holder provided stirring remarks as a keynote speaker. Follow-up from the Summit will include the establishment of a discussion board and the formation of working groups to move forward several of the ideas discussed. To learn more, contact Steve Scudder, Staff Counsel, ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service, at Steve.Scudder@americanbar.org or 312/988-5768.



WASHINGTON UPDATE

Washington Update

In November Congress approved the FY2012 funding bill for Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS). The bill included \$348 million for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a reduction in overall funding from last year of more than \$56 million or 13.9%. However, because the entire reduction comes from the funding for basic field programs, those programs will see a 14.8% reduction. The appropriation finally approved by Congress was the result of an agreement reached by the Conference Committee of the House and Senate. The amount approved is midway between the funding levels for LSC originally approved by the Senate (\$398 million) and by the House (\$300 million).

The American Bar Association is committed to increasing funding for LSC in FY2013 so that local legal aid programs can continue their vital work of providing free civil legal services to those who have nowhere else to turn. The Association will once again sponsor ABA Day in Washington, D.C. on April 17 - 19, 2012. Please mark your calendars now so that you can meet with your members of Congress and let them know how essential adequate funding for LSC is. For more information, contact Ann Carmichael, Legislative Counsel, ABA Governmental Affairs Office, at Ann.Carmichael@americanbar.org or 202/662-1767.

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 email Bev.Groudine@americanbar.org.