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Funding News

✎ **New Mexico Supreme Court Modifies Class Action Rule to Expressly Include Residuals for Access to Justice** - The New Mexico Supreme Court has included new language in Rule 23 of the New Mexico Rules of Civil Procedure to provide that residual class action funds may be distributed to non-profit organizations that provide legal services to low income persons, the IOLTA program, the entity administering the *pro hac vice* rule and/or educational entities that provide training, teaching and legal services that further the goals of the underlying causes of action on which relief was based. Funds also may be awarded to other non-profit organizations that support projects that benefit the class or similarly situated persons consistent with the goals of the underlying causes of action on which relief was based. There are now nine states with court rules or legislation that expressly permit class action residuals to be directed to access to justice purposes. For more information about funding for legal aid through *cy pres*, contact Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at meredithmcburney@msn.com or 303/329-8091.

✎ **Massachusetts Legislature Provides \$1 Million in Supplemental Funding for Legal Aid** - On February 17, 2012, Governor Patrick signed a supplemental funding bill that included an additional \$1 million for legal aid in the FY2012 budget year. This brings the total legal aid appropriation for FY2012 to \$10.5 million. The funding had been at \$9.5 million since the 2009 legislative session, when it was cut as part of overall budget reductions. Massachusetts bench and bar leaders have mounted an aggressive campaign to raise awareness among the legislators about the need for additional funding for legal aid. In mid-January, over 700 members of the bar participated in the 13th Annual Walk to the Hill to meet with their legislators. For more information about the Massachusetts legislative campaign, contact Lonnie Powers, Executive Director, Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, at lpowers@mlac.org or 617/367-1414. For more information about state funding campaigns generally, contact Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at meredithmcburney@msn.com or 303/329-8091.

Pro Bono Developments

✎ **Supreme Court of Hawaii Adopts New and Amends Existing Rules of Professional Conduct Regarding Pro Bono Services** - The Supreme Court of Hawaii recently amended Rule 6.1 of its Rules of Professional Conduct to permit attorneys to fulfill their voluntary commitment to pro bono legal services by donating at least \$500 to the Hawaii Justice Foundation or a legal aid provider. The court also enacted Rule 6.5, which addresses conflict of interest issues for lawyers providing brief advice at pro bono clinics. Both rule changes became effective on January 1, 2012. For more information, contact Robert LeClair, Executive Director, Hawaii Justice Foundation, at hjf@hawaii.rr.com or 808 537-3886.

✎ **New York Attorney General and New York State Bar Association Launch Joint Pro Bono Program** - "Charity Corps" is a new partnership launched by New York Attorney General Schneiderman and the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA). This program will help improve governance and legal compliance of nonprofits by providing pro bono attorneys to those organizations that cannot afford legal counsel. These volunteers will help to ensure that the non-profits are fulfilling their responsibilities and continue to provide critical services during these difficult economic times. The Attorney General's Charities Bureau, which supervises charitable organizations to protect donors and ensure that funds and other property devoted to charitable purposes are properly used, will support the initiative by providing

training and guidance to volunteer attorneys and nonprofits. The NYSBA will administer the project. For more information, contact Gloria Herron Arthur, Director, Pro Bono Affairs, NYSBA, at charitycorps@nysba.org or 518/487-5640.

Call for Nominations

➤ **Harrison Tweed Award** - The ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants and the National Legal Aid and Defender Association are seeking nominations for the 2012 Harrison Tweed Award. Named for an outstanding leader in the promotion of free legal services to the poor, this award was created in 1956 to recognize the extraordinary achievements of state and local bar associations that develop or significantly expand projects or programs to increase access to civil legal services to poor persons or criminal defense services to indigents. Work accomplished during the year beginning April 1, 2011 will be recognized, but projects that began before that date will be considered if substantial services have been provided between April 1, 2011, and March 31, 2012. Nominations forms and all supporting materials must be received electronically by the close of business on **Monday, April 2, 2012**. For more information, contact Tamaara Piquion, Program Manager, ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants at Tamaara.Piquion@americanbar.org or 312/988-5767 or see www.ambar.org/harrisontweedaward.

➤ **Pro Bono Publico Award** - This award was established by the American Bar Association in 1984 to recognize lawyers and law firms for extraordinary noteworthy contributions to extending legal services to the poor and disadvantaged. The recipients exemplify the volunteer tradition of the legal profession. The Association's Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service administers the program. Each year the Pro Bono Committee presents five awards to individual lawyers and institutions in the legal profession that have demonstrated outstanding commitment to volunteer legal services. Nomination forms and all supporting materials must be submitted electronically by the close of business on **Friday, March 9, 2012**. For more information, contact Erin Wellin at Erin.Wellin@americanbar.org or 312/988-5756 or see <http://ambar.org/probonoaward>.



WASHINGTON UPDATE

Washington Update

On February 13, 2012, President Obama submitted his FY2013 budget request to Congress, which included \$402 million for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). This amount represents a \$54 million increase over the FY2012 LSC appropriation approved by Congress. The American Bar Association is also 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 no where else to turn. The Association will once again sponsor ABA Day in Washington, D.C. on April 17 - 19, 2012. Please plan to attend and meet with your members of Congress to let them know how essential adequate funding for LSC is. For additional 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.