

THE LAWYERS' CAMPAIGN for EQUAL JUSTICE

Oregon's Leaders Speak Out For Legal Aid



PHOTO: MIKE RENFROW

Chief Justice DeMuniz at Portland Open House

Nelson joined members of the judiciary including Chief Justice De Muniz, and Justices Kistler, Riggs, Durham and the newly appointed Justice Walters in making remarks about the importance of access to justice and the valuable work done by Oregon's 91 legal aid lawyers. US Attorney Karin Immergut spoke in Pendleton. The focus once again was domestic violence—which represents over 40% of legal aid's workload. Justice DeMuniz has stated, "When those who are most vulnerable have access to the legal system, there is hope for justice."

With help from the Bank of the Cascades, who sponsored refreshments at the event and also generously agreed to contribute \$10 per attendee, the Central Oregon office in Bend drew a record crowd of over 60 people.

"When those who are most vulnerable have access to the legal system, there is hope for justice"

Leigh Dickey, Director of the Central Oregon office presented the community partnership award to the Homeless Leadership Council, which was established in 1995, as a network of individual and local agencies
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PHOTO: MIKE RENFROW

OSB President elect Albert Menashe, MBA President Peter Glade and Senator Kate Brown meet in Portland.



PHOTO: JACK LIU

University of Oregon Law School Dean Margaret Paris speaks about the importance of legal aid at Open House in Eugene.

On October 4, 2006, over 700 people attended legal aid Open Houses around the state. The Open Houses are an opportunity to educate the community about the work done by legal aid offices to provide access to justice for the poor, and, in many offices, to recognize their community partners, and honor the work of pro bono lawyers. Senators Kate Brown and Betsy Johnson, along with state Representatives Tom Butler, Brad Avakian and Donna

Single Mom Keeps Family Stability

When Stephanie Vertrees and her three children left an abusive home, the Department of Human services assisted them by providing childcare so Stephanie could work.

Five years later, with a fresh start in a new town and new schools for the children, DHS began garnishing Stephanie's paycheck in the belief that her unemployed husband should have provided childcare back then. In fact he had been under a "no contact" order and could not have provided any help.



PHOTO: RITA BADALAMENTI

Stephanie with Melina, Zachary and Marin

Stephanie could not afford both food and rent with the garnishment in place so she began working 12 hour shifts six days a week, that kept her apart from her children. Legal aid attorneys in Hillsboro helped Stephanie navigate the administrative system to stop the garnishment. This helped Stephanie maintain the delicate economic balance that keeps her family in a stable and safe home.

Mom Escapes Domestic Violence

Ari Halpern, an attorney at the Central Oregon office of Legal Aid, helped Tammy obtain a divorce after 23 years in an extremely abusive marriage. Tammy is now working to make a safe life for herself and her daughter, while also facing illness.



PHOTO: ARI HALPERN

Tammy and her daughter

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Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 3215

Among Us



Nargess Shadbeh

HARVARD HONORS LEGAL AID LAWYER

Nargess Shadbeh, Oregon Law Center's Farmworker Program Director, has been named a Harvard Law School Wasserstein Fellow for 2006-2007. Wasserstein fellowships recognize exemplary lawyers who have distinguished themselves in public interest work and who

can assist students who are considering similar career paths. Harvard Law School brings the awardees to the campus to give presentations and meet individually with students over a two-day period to encourage students toward public interest law.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEMORY OF SID LEZAK

Thus far, 53 individuals and groups have contributed \$4,420 to the Campaign for Equal Justice in memory of Sid Lezak. A complete list of contributors will be published in the 2006 annual report.

INNOVATIVE PROJECT TO PROMOTE TENANT OWNERSHIP OF MOBILE HOME PARKS

The Community Development Law Center, in collaboration with other agencies will launch an innovative project to preserve the homes of low-income people living in manufactured housing parks. Residents in these parks typically own their units but rent the space where the unit is sited.

Manufactured housing parks in Oregon are closing at a record pace. Owners close parks in order to redevelop their properties because costs to repair the aging infrastructure are high. Low-income and elderly mobile home park residents face the loss of their homes when parks close, since few options exist for moving their units to alternative sites. The project will explore effective models of resident-led park ownership including

housing cooperations, community land trusts and ownership by community-based nonprofits.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY CELEBRATES 70 YEARS



PHOTO: MIKE RENFROW

Hon. Michael Marcus, Lou Savage, Hon. Maureen McKnight, Doug Green—back row: Hon. Richard Baldwin, Stan Sitnick, Ron Gevurtz, Charlie Williamson receive awards for their past service as legal aid leaders in Multnomah County

LEGAL AID AWARDS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM

Multnomah County Legal Aid honored the Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team (DVERT) for "its ongoing efforts to reduce the incidents of domestic violence and its ripple effects in the community and state." Twelve government and private agencies, including legal aid and the Portland Police Bureau, make up the DVERT team. Legal aid's role in this team is to provide legal representation in high risk cases.



Legal aid lawyer Pam Haan presenting DVERT award to _____

IN MEMORIAM.

Michael Muñiz, a longtime Salem lawyer, passed away unexpectedly on September 30. Michael managed the first legal services office for farmworkers in Woodburn and later became the



Michael Muñiz

statewide director for farmworker legal services. Michael was a tireless advocate for farmworkers, immigrants and poor people. In keeping with his commitment to justice for all, his family requested contributions in his memory be made to

the Oregon Law Center through the Campaign for Equal Justice. Michael was honored at many of the Open Houses. Speaking in Portland, Justice DeMuniz stated, "He was a wonderful human being. He was a person who walked his talk, he believed in service to man, he believed in service to the community, and he believed in this legal aid service that he participated in for a good bit of time. I want all of us to acknowledge that he was the kind of lawyer that demonstrates what legal aid is about. For Michael, being a lawyer was not a job—it was a calling. And I think that that is what this is about, those who accept legal aid services, those who do that valuable, valuable job, for them it's not a job—it's a calling. And those of us here recognize that and we need to always honor that."

Salem Legal Aid Has a Secret Strength

The Salem offices of Legal Aid Services of Oregon and Oregon Law Center are just a few blocks east of the capitol, at the corner of 17th and State Street. Staff members here are experienced at their work and most have lived in the community for years. **Jorge Lara**, managing attorney of the OLC office, has been on the staff since 1993. He says, "We try to do the best legal work we can for people with low incomes—that's our purpose." The staff's focus on family law, housing, and public benefits.



In back, Jorge Lara, OLC Managing Attorney; Liam Deyerle; Ed Millis; Michael Keeney, MPLAS Regional Director; Amanda Deyerle; Rafaela Burton; and Peter James. In front, Carla Mikkelsen; Chris Sielicky; Glyn Arko; Kelly Noor; Angelica Vega; Leslie Lanning; Eleanor Beatty; and Claudia Rodriguez.

The programs' secret strength is a good relationship with both the Marion and Polk County bar associations and the individual Marion/Polk attorneys. There is a long history of generous giving at the annual Marion County bar luncheon each fall and, when local seniors need the help of a lawyer, they can turn to ELVIS, Emeritus Lawyer Volunteers in Service, a cadre of retired lawyers that staff clinics at local senior centers. On October 19, lawyers from community, led by **Andrew Shull** and **Tammy Dentinger** raised over \$24,000 for legal aid. The Marion County Bar generously donated \$3,500.

The percentage of people living in poverty in Marion County is somewhat higher than the rest of the state. Lara

said, "There are not a lot of employers here due to the decrease of resource-based industries—wood products, for example." More important, though, is the lack of living wage work. "Most of our clients are working 40 hours a week or more and yet they still qualify for our services because they're not receiving a living wage."

The Salem office is seeing an increasing number of people with housing problems—deteriorating buildings and failure to make repairs. According to Lara, "Although there are many good landlords, there are some who lack training in dealing with tenants."

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working to address the problem of homelessness in Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties—all areas served by the legal aid office in Bend.

The University of Oregon hosted the Lane County Open House because the legal aid facility wouldn't be able to accommodate the sixty attendees. **Gerry Gaydos** and **Dean Margaret Paris** welcomed the crowd and spoke about the importance of legal aid, and the **Hon. Martha Walters**, newly appointed to the Oregon Supreme Court and sworn in a week after the event, spoke about the great need for legal aid and access to justice.

U.S. Attorney **Karin Immergut** addressed over 100 people who gathered in Pendleton for the banquet. According to the East Oregonian, Immergut stated "Legal Aid layers are part of a fair and just system." Of legal aid lawyers, Immergut stated, "Their service to the less fortunate makes Oregon a better place." Among other awards, **Larry Rew**, received Pendleton's Professionalism Award, and **George Galloway**, a retired Stool Rives lawyer and **John Grove** received pro bono awards. Galloway has volunteered more than 650 hours since 2005.

For a complete listing of speakers, pro bono awards, community partnership awards and case types, please visit the CEJ website at www.cej-oregon.org.



Merv Loya greets Congressman Peter DeFazio and the Hon. Martha Walters at the Eugene Open House.



Justice Durham and Dennis Karropp at the Bend Open House.



US Attorney Karin Immergut speaks in Pendleton

A Call To Action >

What You Can Do To Help Legal Aid In Your Community

- > Understand how funding for legal aid works and support increased funding on both the state and federal level.
- > Put your lawyer trust account funds with a bank that will maximize the rate of return on IOLTA money that goes to support legal aid. www.oregonlawfoundation.org
- > Do pro bono work though your local legal aid office. Administration resources are often limited, so please be patient. In the Portland metro area and Bend sign up at: probonooregon-subscribe@mail.lawhelp.org.
- > Give generously to the Campaign for Equal Justice. The best way to increase access is to create more legal aid staff attorney positions.
- > Include the Endowment Fund in your estate plan to help build stable future support for Oregon's legal programs. Contact Sandy Hansberger at (503) 295-8442 or sandy@cej-oregon.org.
- > Understand how legal services are delivered in your community so that you can make appropriate referrals for low-income clients.
- > Become involved in your local legal aid offices' case priority setting.
- > Take a legal aid lawyer to lunch. Get to know the lawyers and their work.

For more information go to www.cej-oregon.org, "A Call to Action".

You Can Also Shape the Future

- Remember The Oregon Access to Justice Endowment Fund in your will
- Designate the Endowment Fund as the final Beneficiary of your retirement fund assets
- Transfer life insurance to the Endowment Fund
- Preserve income for yourself or your loved ones through a trust

Decide now to help secure the future of legal aid.

Campaign Co-Chairs: Why I volunteer for the Campaign for Equal Justice.



BILL CROW SCHWABE WILLIAMSON WYATT

"I try to conduct my work in accordance with a quote from Franklin Roosevelt, 'The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.'"



BILL CARTER MEDFORD

"The real heroes of our profession are the legal aid lawyers who work in cramped quarters, with minimal staff and resources, for modest pay and no glory, so that disadvantaged people can get fair treatment in our system. They work to assure that our system is truly a justice system and not just a legal system. The rest of us should support them in every way that we can."



DENNIS KARNOPP KARNOPP PETERSEN LLP

"As lawyers, we have an obligation to ensure that all people have access to our legal system. The Campaign for Equal Justice is an important element in helping to meet that obligation."



LINDA LOVE WILLIAMS LOVE O'LEARY CRAINE & POWER

"I volunteer for Campaign for Equal Justice because I believe that all people should have access to legal services. I am proud of Oregon lawyers' commitment to justice for the poor, so I wanted to be a part of this campaign."



LARRY REW PENDLETON

"I hope to influence donors as to the importance of legal assistance to members of our society who cannot afford such services. If we cannot help them, then we do not have much room to complain when the law is overlooked or broken by those folks."

Young Lawyers First to Kick Off Fall Campaign



John Belknap, Eric Deitrick and Brien Flanagan celebrate the young and new lawyers' kickoff of the Annual Campaign in September at the Ecotrust building in Portland, sponsored by Bridge City Legal.

OSB Delegates Support Funding for Legal Aid

On September 16, 2006, the OSB House of Delegates passed Resolution #27 without opposition. The resolution recites that providing equal access to justice to all Oregonians is central to the mission of the Oregon State Bar and that we are currently meeting less than 20% of the legal needs of the poor in Oregon. The resolution recognizes that access to justice plays an important role in the perception of fairness of the justice system. Delegates stated a goal of 100% participation in the Campaign for Equal Justice by bar leaders, and 50% for all OSB members. The resolution was sponsored by former OSB Presidents **Charlie Williamson, Bill Carter and Dennis Karnopp** and is similar to resolutions passed by the bar in previous years.

Social Security Lawyers Contribute on the Fairway



Members and friends of the Oregon Social Security Claimants' Representatives group, OSSCR, celebrated in July with a professional meeting and golf outing at the Glendoveer Golf Course in East Portland. Recognizing their kinship with legal aid, the group chose the Campaign for Equal Justice as a focus of charitable giving that day, contributing more than \$800 to support legal services. Attorney **Tim**

Wilborn said, "Legal aid lawyers, in many cases, serve the same low-income clients that our members serve and so it made sense." Wilborn was pleased to learn that, as first-time donors to the Campaign, many of their members' contributions would be matched by the Meyer Trust grant. OSSCR plans to make the golf outing an annual event.

Seniors Get Help with Collection Agency

Clifford Lint and Donna Allison have never met, but along with other residents on the south coast, they had the same legal problem. The Coos Bay Oregon Law Center was there to help them. A collection agency demanded immediate payment from Cliff and Donna for medical services that Medicare or private insurance should have covered. Neither had seen the charges before. The medical clinic had closed without notice and all outstanding bills, whether eligible for insurance coverage or not, were given over to a local collection agency.

When asked if he had the ability to pay the medical charges claimed by the debt collectors, Cliff said he figured he could pay about a nickel a month for the rest of his life. When the demand for payment came in the mail, Cliff tried unsuccessfully to reach the collection agency by phone. When they finally called back, a representative claimed to have no knowledge of any insurance information. "When you get tangled up in a legal snafu," he told us, "it's intimidating as the dickens."

The collection agency brought suit against Donna, a retired cook and long-time resident of the area. Donna,

who was in the hospital when her doctor's office closed, expected her bills would be paid for by insurance.

OLC lawyer **Kris Thompson** called a representative of Medicare who said that the seniors had no liability for charges not properly billed to Medicare. Medicare notified the collection agency that they had no legal right to demand payment and the matters were resolved.



Clifford Lint and Donna Allison

PHOTO: KRISTINA THOMPSON

The Campaign for Equal Justice

The Campaign for Equal Justice was established in 1991 and works to support statewide legal aid programs. Our mission is to champion access to justice for low-income Oregonians through education and by working to increase funding for legal aid through grants, foundation support, state and federal support, and direct fundraising from private lawyers. The Oregon legal community has responded generously, helping the Campaign to raise more than \$12,000,000 over the last fifteen years. Despite the tremendous efforts of our volunteers and contributors, we are still meeting less than 20% of legal needs of the poor in Oregon. With your help we can do better than 20%!

"The Campaign for Equal Justice is every lawyer's campaign. And we need every lawyer's support. What's remarkable about this campaign is that it brings lawyers together – it unites us around principles we all believe in."

– **Henry Hewitt,**
Campaign for Equal Justice Board Member

"Access to justice is one of the Bar's highest priorities and supporting legal services programs is the unique obligation of every lawyer."

– **Nena Cook,**
Immediate Past President, Oregon State Bar

Types of Cases Handled

Over 40% of legal aids case are family law. The majority of those focus on domestic violence. Because we can only serve less than 20% of the legal needs of the poor, legal aid offices must set priorities.



Thanks

to our volunteers, led by Nena Cook, in the re-design of our newsletter. –Thanks!

We Could Use ...

- A 6' round table
- A letter folding machine
- A 48" x 36" black cloth tri-fold display board
- A plain, safe, reliable used car for LASO's Farmworker Program

Legal Aid Offices in Oregon



Where We Are

Legal Aid Services of Oregon –

Albany
Bend
Eugene
Hillsboro
Independence
McMinnville
Newport

Oregon City
Pendleton
Portland
Salem
St. Helens
Roseburg
Woodburn

Center for NonProfit Legal Services
– Medford

Lane County Law & Advocacy Center
– Eugene

Oregon Law Center
– Coos Bay, Grants Pass, Ontario,
Portland, Salem, Woodburn