

CLIENT UPDATE

W I N T E R 2 0 0 5

Parent Participation in Public Schools

...It's more than baking cookies!!

Parents create an “aura” of presence for their children as they attend school. Even though parents are not physically present in the school on a daily basis, it is important that their “influence” is forever present. The role parents play in influencing their child’s academic placement and classroom performance cannot be understated. This “influence” can be either positive or negative; the preferred direction is definitively “positive.” Student placement and tracking play a major role in a child’s future educational, job and economic opportunities.

First, let’s look at initial student placement. When a child enters school, he or she becomes a student in the academic environment. Different schools use different strategies to place students in their respective classes. Testing and assessment of a student’s knowledge, skills and abilities affect the placement of students from preschool through high school. Preschool readiness tests

determine if the student will be placed in pre-kindergarten, level one or pre-kindergarten, level two. It is contingent upon the knowledge, skills and abilities that the student brings to the public school arena. Who is the most significant person to determine and impact the knowledge, skills and abilities that the student has when he or she is assessed by the readiness tests? It is the parent! Parents must recognize that their influence is significant to the placement level of their children. Schools signal that students grouped in pre-kindergarten, level two are less “ready” to enter preschool than a student placed in pre-kindergarten, level one. Parents have to ask what happens to the child when the child progresses from preschool to kindergarten and beyond? Parents need to know how to “influence” the change in placement for their children.

If, however, there is no specified and intense intervention as a result of the testing, the student will continue along the same mediocre or low-achieving track as he or she was initially placed in preschool. Thus, issues of student placement and tracking pose similar concerns when the child moves to the middle school grades. Parents need to understand the importance of their children’s mastery moving toward abstract concepts, such as algebra in middle school. What determines if the student begins algebra in 6th grade, instead of the 7th or 8th grades? Again, if the student has had no individual tutoring, intervention or enhancement related to his or her knowledge, skills and abilities since elementary school and that same student has not had the personal experiences that would enhance abstract

thinking, then the student may be placed in Math 6, Math 7 or Math 8, instead of beginning the abstract math “track” which includes algebra.

I am not implying that other factors have no influence on a student’s academic tracking. But, I am declaring that parents can more directly influence academic tracking in a positive direction. Parents must understand the negative influence caused by removing children from the instructional process for reasons that are counterproductive, such as: vacations, visiting distant relatives or allowing children to remain at home to wait for the repairman. While some absences from school may be necessary, the parent needs to take the responsibility to request in a timely manner the academic assignments during those absences and ensure that the student has the opportunity to make-up missed assignments upon their return to school. Parents should make verbal requests for the assignments and make transportation arrangements for students to either report to school early or remain after school hours for make-up assignments and learning. However, no make-up assignments have the same value as the direct instruction provided on a regular basis by a competent classroom teacher.

The student’s cumulative academic progress must be monitored in order to improve results for each battery of testing. Teachers are monitoring the academic progress of a group of 25-30 students in each class. It is not likely that a teacher can adequately monitor each individual student’s progress; therefore, it is the

continued on page 4

INSIDE

Leadership Corner2-3

Interview with Dr. Deans 4

NLADA Presidential Search Update6

Justice Leadership is Everyone’s Business7

Regions8-9

“More Training” is the Message from the Board Leadership Track10

Client News11

LEADERSHIP CORNER

NLADA Client Policy Group Officers 2005

Rosita Stanley
Chair
Macon, GA

Lucille Logan
Vice Chair
Oklahoma City, OK

Harry Johnson
Membership and Section Committee Chair
Indianapolis, IN

Lucille Logan
Communications Committee Chair
Oklahoma City, OK

Rosita Stanley
Training Committee Chair
Macon, GA

What is a Client?

As a Legal Service office you have one priority more important than any other—your clients. Let's take time to remember what your clients are to you. A client is the most important person in any legal service. A client is dependent on you—and you are dependent on him or her. A client is not an interruption of your work, he or she is the purpose of it. A client does you a favor when they call; you are not doing them a favor by serving them. A client is a part of your business—not an outsider. A client is not a cold statistic, he or she is a flesh and blood human being with feelings and emotions like your own. A client is not someone to argue with or match wits. A client is a person who brings you his or her wants—it is your job to fill those wants. A client is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment you can give them. A client is the life blood of every Legal Service office.

Message from NLADA Client Policy Group Chair Rosita Stanley

We begin 2005 with a greater readiness and capacity to move forward a dynamic agenda. The theme of the 2004 Annual Conference: *Breaking Barriers to Equality and Justice Commemorating the Spirit of Brown*, gives us a foundation to build on. Racial and economic justice was a major theme of the conference. A major focus of the conference was the joint track entitled: Protect the Children: Educate and Liberate. A highlight of the conference was the keynote address given by Professor Charles J. Ogletree, Jr.

I am particularly proud to report that the Client Track entitled "*Developing Dynamic Client & Community Advocates for the Next 50 Years*" was successful. Dr. Divine Pryor keynoted the track. The Client Policy Group made progress in its efforts to focus on leadership development by including on the Client Track, sessions such as "*Community Problem Solving Lawyering*," "*Building Your Skills for Future Growth*," and "*Civil Justice Leadership is Everyone's Business*."

Our community's ability to represent and impact the lives of our constituents requires us to engage in creative ways to face challenges and opportunities. As I discussed during the Client Policy Group meeting in December, a major priority in the next year is to develop the framework for a National Leadership Institute for the client community. We need to develop the capacity to train client board members to be responsive to the needs of our constituents. Our community also participated actively as attendees and panelists in the new Board Track that was launched at the Annual Conference. The four sessions were:

- 1) "*Supporting and Governing: The Core Responsibilities of Board Members*"
- 2) "*Financial Oversight*"
- 3) "*Best Practices for Effective Boards*"
- 4) "*Board Members as Equal Justice Leaders*"

I am committed to ensuring continued training that will help us promote our ability to fight for racial and economic justice.

During the next couple of months we will be developing a process for working on the initiatives discussed at the Client Policy Group meeting. The process and the status of our conversations will be communicated to you. I am committed to remaining responsive to your feedback. Minutes from both the Client Policy Group and Client Section will be forwarded to members. As preparations begin for the 2005 Annual Conference scheduled for November in Orlando, we will ensure that you have the information needed to submit training proposals for the conference.

Congratulations to Greater Boston Legal Services for bringing the largest number of client board members to the NLADA Annual Conference. Your efforts are greatly appreciated and go a long way toward empowering our community.

I also want to announce that Chuck Wynder, Jr., is the new NLADA staff liaison for the Client Policy Group. Wynder is the director of the Equal Justice Leadership Initiative at NLADA. I look forward to working with him.

As many of you know, Clint Lyons will be retiring as president and CEO of NLADA in the summer of 2005. He will direct the NLADA's Insurance Program. NLADA is currently undergoing a presidential search process. I will keep you informed on the selection process and other information during NLADA's transition.

Moving us into a position to better serve our communities will be a primary focus of this year. I encourage you to engage your community, your program and your board. While the challenges facing us remain significant, we can and will continue to break barriers to equality and justice.

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Message from NOCA President Lucille Logan

I am proud to say that another convention has been successfully completed and a lot was accomplished during our time together. On behalf of NOCA and of myself, I extend many thanks to the National Legal Aid & Defenders Association (NLADA) for hosting the convention. Also, many thanks to Massachusetts for the clients they brought to the NLADA conference. I hope all those who attended arrived home safely.

I want to welcome back Peggy Santos from Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation. Thank you for coming to the meeting and lending your help and support. You don't know how much you've been missed.

I am excited to announce that NOCA now has a Web site. David Pearson from Volunteer Lawyers Project, Mass. set that up. At the July board meeting we will determine from our membership what information is needed and what you would like to see on the Web site.

A highlight of the conference was the specialized and excellent training that NLADA provided for clients. The Leadership Track was well thought out and gave the clients plenty of information to take back with them. We have tentatively scheduled our board meeting and training session with Georgia State Client Council in late July. Mark your calendars and start your fundraising. You will be receiving more information at a later time.

By the time this newsletter is distributed, Black History Month will be over. However, I want to personally honor our own in the legal services program. In general, the contributions of African Americans in helping shape America through discovery, pioneering and developing of ideas has not been adequately presented in textbooks, mass media and other communications from written records about Americans. While

legal service programs are supported by a widely diverse and varied membership, Black History Month gives me the opportunity to honor the following African Americans who are instrumental in shaping legal services,

Clinton Lyons has devoted his entire career to providing and advocating vigorous, full-scale, high-quality legal services for America's poor. In 1983, Lyons became executive director of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association. He will be leaving in June to head the NLADA Insurance Program as president and CEO.

Harrison McIver, III, chairman of NLADA Board of Directors and executive director of the Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc., dedicated his career to the cause of providing services to the poor. He began as a Reginald Heber Smith Community Lawyer Fellow in 1977 after his graduation from Rutgers University School of Law.

Lillian Johnson, executive director of Community Legal Services in Phoenix, Ariz., upon graduating from the University of Chicago Law School in 1975, spent six years as an attorney with the Legal Assistant Foundation of Chicago. She served on the Project Advisory Group (PAG), which later merged with NLADA.

Jo-Ann Wallace, senior vice president for programs at NLADA, is a person who talks softly but carries a big stick! Wallace is responsible for oversight of civil and defender legal services programs. She has served as director of the Public Defender Services for the District of Columbia. Wallace served on the NLADA Board of Directors from 1995-1999, including serving as chairperson in 1999. She also chaired the NLADA Defender Council. She is a founder of the National Defender Leadership Institute for public defense advocates and the Equal Justice Leadership Initiative for civil legal aid advocates.

NOCA OFFICERS

Lucille Logan
President
Oklahoma City, OK

Charlie Morris
1st Vice President
Memphis, TN

Mollie Gomez
2nd Vice President
Norwalk, CA

Yvette Long
Secretary
Philadelphia, PA

Lucinda Henderson
Parliamentarian
Santa Ana, CA

Secret Henderson
Membership Committee Chair
Houston, TX

Pearly Blunt
Issues Committee Chairperson
Houston, TX

Harry Johnson
Treasurer
Indianapolis, IN

Wallace is a graduate of New York University School of Law.

Cynthia Works is director of training and education at NLADA. At one time, she was the staff person appointed to the Client Policy Group. She performed her duties with professionalism, even when we, as clients did not communicate so professionally! Works was always there to assist us. While she is just an office away, we will miss her as staff person assigned to the Client Policy Group.

Charles A. Wynder, Jr. is presently the director of the Equal Justice Leadership Initiative at NLADA. He is the new staff person assigned to work with the Client Policy Group. In the short time I have known Wynder, it is evident he makes clients and their issues a priority.

And to recognize our fallen soldiers, **Charles Dorsey, Jr.** (May 18, 1930 - April 21, 1995), former chair of PAG. Dorsey personified the value of respect for every individual and a commitment to

continued on page 12

Interview with Dr. Linda Deans

**Conducted by Maureen James,
Associate Attorney, NLADA
Defender Legal Services**

At the 2004 Annual Conference, NLADA explored education realities such as juvenile incarceration and funding and achievement disparities that exist 50 years after the landmark decisions *Brown* and *Mendez* opened the nations' public schools to previously excluded groups and new immigrants. Clearly, these cases did not immediately eliminate the institutionalized, systemic racism that pervaded all aspects of American life, but school desegregation marked a major shift in the national conscience worth revisiting today. The conference brought together educators, academics and practitioners to discuss the current status of public education, and Dr. Deans, a lifetime educator, contributed thought-provoking commentary on where public schools are today and where they might be headed. Some of her thoughts are captured below, including her ideas for what public

defenders, legal aid attorneys and community members can do to advance and safeguard equality in education.

Dr. Deans, thank you so much for joining us at the recent NLADA Annual Conference, *Breaking Barriers to Equality & Justice: Commemorating the Spirit of Brown*, and agreeing to participate in this interview.

You are welcome. The conference was professionally exhilarating. Being part of a large group focused on education, even though most of them were not educators, was a wonderful change and allowed for positive thought-provoking conversation and debate. One of the thoughts that has remained with me is the possibility of a successful law suit against a school district for presenting a pattern of failing and/or a climate that facilitates failure within a specified group of students merits further study.

At the Annual Conference, we explored aspects of juvenile justice and your perspective, as a school administrator and academic, was

invaluable. Can you briefly explain your history with juvenile education?

I have been an educator all my life. Serving as the school-court liaison for Hampton City Schools required that I attend juvenile court daily, as well as circuit and district courts when juveniles were charged as adults. Further, I also served as an administrator for both traditional and alternative education. In both settings, many students were court-involved, which required adjustments in his or her education/schedule in order to satisfy attendance and/or restrictions related to the juvenile court system. My role related to court-involved students was one of support. Every student walking into my office had some need/issue that required my advocacy or opposition. I chose to advocate for students, even when that advocacy was against the climate of the organization.

During the sessions you participated in, your comments ignited responses from your fellow

continued on page 5

Parent Participation in Public Schools

continued from page 1

parent who can best monitor that progress. Parents need to know that tutorial sessions are available for their children. Parents should be involved enough with the public school to actually know the location and availability of these sessions. Even though student handbooks and teachers' course outlines are published, they are often disseminated to students. It is important to acknowledge that parents may never receive them. Parents need to know the existence of these materials; or, seek resources on their own. They also need to be assertive and sometimes politely aggressive to get into public schools in order to identify and use resources available to their children. This allows parents to support their children's academic progress, especially through the use of appropriate intervention after testing identifies areas of weaknesses for students.

A fundamental issue for parents to understand is the impact "tracking" has on their children's ultimate destination: vocational school, college or jailhouse? If students are allowed to function throughout their educational experiences in classes that do not provide the stimulation and motivation equal to their ability levels, the students eventually lose the desire to learn in a structured academic setting. Once that "desire" is lost, behavior patterns often develop that will cause them to be removed from that setting for disciplinary reasons. Even when minor infractions occur, it can be the beginning of the deterioration of the students' desire to remain in structured educational settings. Students may not be mature enough to verbalize these words: "I am acting-out because I don't want to be here." But, it is the ultimate responsibility of parents to recognize changes in those behaviors that will exclude students from the traditional learning environment. It is "education" that can make or break a child's future; therefore, it is imperative that the parent participates in the decision to create

and implement strategies that will maintain the student's learning. The parent must partner with the educational institution to make such determinations relative to the least restrictive environment for the child to learn to the maximum capacity possible. If the parent fails to partner with the public schools, then the "sin of omission" could contribute to the child sailing down the road on the "schoolhouse to jailhouse track" at an alarming rate of speed. Society observes this journey more and more as preteens continue to enter the world of the juvenile court system.

Meaningful parental involvement in the educational development of children can not only guide a student away from the schoolhouse to jailhouse track, but also gives a student access to a track of academic excellence and opportunity!

Linda Deans, Ph.D. recently retired from the Hampton City Public Schools in Hampton, Virginia. She advises clients on organizational development and educational policy issues.

Interview with Dr. Deans continued from page 4

panelists and audience. For the benefit of those who attended the conference as well as those unable to attend, I would like to further discuss some of the juvenile justice issues raised at the conference, the first being "tracking." Can you explain what educational tracking is?

Educational tracking can involve academic, behavioral or social concerns. Of course an academic track references the ability of a child to learn the information presented, such as special education, traditional or gifted educational programs.

Behavioral tracking is more subjective. Educational professionals "mark" children as behaviorally problematic when they misbehave and those children may not be selected for academic/educational opportunities and advantages.

Social tracking happens when students are put in a caste system based on their family's socio-economic status, i.e. poor versus middle class versus rich. The more subjective tracking is, the more dangerous tracking can be. It is this subjective tracking that adversely impacts students in today's schools.

Many of the students who become "clients" of the "schoolhouse to jailhouse track" can often be identified as being in the more subjective tracking.

You served as the principal of an "alternative school." What do you believe to be the purpose of alternative schools?

My alternative school was created to get all the "bad" kids out of the traditional high schools and into one place. My alternative school was used to track students out of high school that had not passed the state benchmark testing. The "written rule" was that if I could get this group of 9th graders to pass the Literacy Passport Test (LPT in VA), they could return to their home high schools. However, many principals did not want to accept them back into their buildings even after they had passed the benchmark testing because many of these students were also behaviorally/socially tracked. These students had already been "kicked to the curb" by the public schools. To refute this "emotional

kick", I engaged both the community and the military to work with the children during duty hours.

Schools know exactly where [in what subjects] a child is failing, but instead of addressing the problem, they keep teaching the same way. I didn't do that. If the children couldn't do fractions, we did fractions until the students learned them, with the teacher, military personnel, and everyone who would offer their time. Educators really need to become more creative in teaching individual kids as opposed to teaching to the masses.

In three semesters, I returned 125 of my 130 students to their home high schools. Another group at the alternative school required more time to achieve since their learning style required a smaller setting. Those children were in my alternative school for the right reason. The real purpose of an alternative school is to teach children who require a more nurturing setting.

Discipline is a huge concern in primary and secondary schools today. Do you think discipline is emphasized more now than it was 50 years ago, and if so, why?

At the alternative school, we handled discipline differently. Rather than suspend a poorly behaving child, we took him home. If I couldn't take him, I could ask my secretary, the hall monitor or a military aid to take "John" home. Taking a child home is more time intensive than suspending him; however, when we did that, we avoided adding something to the child's permanent record. Then, we could return the child to their traditional high school and highlight improved behavior. My whole staff told the same story and believed in the value of prevention!

That being said, kids' behaviors have deteriorated because the values in society have deteriorated. Mothers tell their children to fight instead of mediate. My mother told me to talk to the adult in charge [when a dispute arose], the bus driver, the teacher, or cafeteria monitor.

Schools need to educate beyond the walls of the building. Instead of commercials about Pepsi, Coke or Folgers coffee, we ought to devote time to public service announcements on television. We can

educate parents and the community on the values we want children to have when they walk into the doors of the school.

At the Joint Track kick-off lunch you mentioned a fact that often goes unnoticed: that with new opportunities, *Brown* arguably also brought disadvantages to minority children. Can you discuss your thoughts on education segregated by race and/or sex?

Despite many obvious disadvantages, Black segregated schools [before Brown] followed an unwritten curriculum of nurturing. Research has shown us that nurturing enhances education. If you know your kids, you can intervene before a fight begins. There is no substitute for personal knowledge of each child. When personal circumstances of a child are understood, exceptions can be made, when fair and necessary. However, the larger schools do not allow for that personal and individual knowledge/information about students; thus, this serves as a disadvantage to all students, but, especially to minority students.

In your view, what can those in the equal justice community (public defenders, civil legal aid attorneys, law enforcement or military personnel & activists) do when they see a child being tracked from school to jail?

I think it has to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The first thing to do is collaborate with those who can get inside the school or system where a child lives to see what is going on. We need mentors for children who are court-involved, as well as those coming out of juvenile facilities. Community liaisons can assist in analyzing both the community and the status of youth in each community. The Department of Social Services could have a child advocate going into a school system where poor or minority children are going to jail at an unacceptably high rate. A local legal aid office could file suit over the disparity between minority and majority children using the fact that the school district is failing minority children at a disproportionate rate. The point is: When every community organization works together, every child can succeed!

NLADA Presidential Search Update

Message from the NLADA Chairman Harrison McIver

I want to update you on the status of our search for a new president and CEO. We have been fortunate to have had the leadership of Clinton Lyons for the last 22 years and he has a wonderful legacy to build upon, but now is the time to move forward with a search for a leader to take his place when he moves to the Service Corporation. We know that this selection is critical to the future of the NLADA and, indeed, is our most important responsibility as board members. We take this responsibility very seriously.

On December 10, 2004 the Board of Directors appointed the Search Committee. The Search Committee members are:

Leonard Noisetette—Chair
Ramon Arias
Myrnairis Cepeda

Jean Faria
Lillian Johnson
Harrison McIver—as Board Chair
Toby Rothschild
Rosita Stanley

We are committed to a search process that is as expansive and inclusive as possible so that we can have an excellent pool of candidates from which to select our next president and CEO. To this end, we retained Cynthia A. Metzler to assist the board and Search Committee with the important work at hand. Metzler began her career in legal services and was the executive director of Florida Rural Legal Services. She served in a variety of capacities in the Clinton Administration, including Acting Secretary of Labor. She has been an advisor to a wide variety of nonprofit and academic institutions and

has extensive experience with leadership transitions and searches.

We are seeking a candidate who has a passion for the mission of the NLADA, with a demonstrated commitment to our work. We need a strong leader to continue to grow and strengthen the organization, building on the successes of the past and embracing the new challenges of today and tomorrow.

The formal announcement of the position was made available in early January. The announcement appeared on the NLADA Web site and in relevant publications and other Web sites.

Thank you for your dedication to our mission and your support of the NLADA. I look forward to updating you on the progress of our search in the upcoming months.



NLADA offers high quality, affordable trainings and conferences, responsive to the needs of the civil legal aid and indigent defense community. Attend one of our programs this year and — Leave Empowered to Make a Difference in America!

January 20 – 23, 2005 • New Orleans, LA
Appellate Defender Training

March 19 – 22, 2005 • New Orleans, LA
Life in the Balance Conference

May 5 – 7, 2005 • Austin, TX
Equal Justice Conference

June 12 – 16, 2005 • Philadelphia, PA
Trial Advocacy College

July 14 – 15, 2005 • Washington, DC
National Immigration Consequences Training

September 11 – 14, 2005 • Scottsdale, AZ
Defender Impact Leadership Conference

September 14 – 17, 2005 • Scottsdale, AZ
Civil Impact Leadership Conference

November 16 – 19, 2005 • Orlando, FL
NLADA Annual Conference

For more information, visit www.nlada.org/training

Justice Leadership is Everyone's Business

The Equal Justice Leadership Initiative at NLADA continues to promote the use of the "Leadership Practices Inventory" developed by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. Kouzes is an executive fellow at the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the School of Business at Santa Clara University. Posner is the dean of the Leavey School of Business at Santa Clara University and is a professor of leadership. Kouzes and Posner promote the ideas that leadership is a relationship; leadership is everyone's business; and leadership development is self-development. They identified five behaviors that make leaders more effective. These practices are:

Model the way involves these commitments: Set the example, and lead by doing.

Inspire a shared vision involves these commitments: Envision the future and enlist people in a common purpose.

Challenge the process involves these commitments: Confront and change the status quo, and learn from mistakes and successes.

Enable others to act involves the commitments: Foster collaboration, and strengthen others by sharing power and information.

Encourage the heart involves the commitments: Recognize and value contributions and celebrate accomplishments.

The "Leadership Practices Inventory" helps you measure how often you engage in the five leadership behaviors. It is a tool designed to help you determine your leadership strengths and weaknesses. Knowing how you behave and committing to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for leadership development will help you become a better leader.

We encourage the client community to develop a personal leadership development plan by identifying the leadership practice you are committed to working on; identifying specific actions you will take to help you develop this area; identifying the support and resources you will need to be successful in your improvement strategy; identify obstacles you may encounter as you pursue your leadership development goals; and identify how you will know when you are successful in improving in that area.

The Equal Justice Leadership Initiative is a resource for you, your board and your program. We can assist you in learning more about the Leadership Practices

Inventory, and the development of a program or individual leadership development plan. Remember Justice Leadership is Everyone's Business!

Charles A. Wynder, Jr. is the director of the Equal Justice Leadership Initiative at NLADA. You can contact him with questions or comments about this article at c.wynder@nlada.org or (202) 452-0620, extension 221.

Just for Today, Lord

I will live through the next
12 hours and not try to tackle
All of life's problems at once.

I will improve my mind. I
Will learn something useful.
I will learn something that
Requires effort, thought and
Concentration.

I will not find fault with
Friend, relative or colleague.
I will not try to change or
Improve anyone but myself

I will have a program. I
Might not follow it exactly
But I will have it. I will save
Myself from two enemies—
Hurry and indecision.

I will do a good turn and
Keep it a secret. If anyone
Finds out, it won't count.

I will do two things I don't
Want to do, just for the exercise.

I will believe in myself. I
Will give my best to the world
And feel confident that the
World will give its best to me.

SAVE THE DATE!

2005 EQUAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE
*Celebrating the Pro Bono and Legal
Service Partnership*

May 5-7, 2005 • Austin Texas

www.equaljusticeconference.org

REGIONS

LSC Regions

Following are the regions that LSC's Office of Program Performance uses in organizing team work:

Team North

Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Illinois
Indiana
Maine
Massachusetts
Michigan
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Ohio
Rhode Island
Vermont
West Virginia

Team South

Arkansas
Alabama
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
Missouri
North Carolina
Puerto Rico
South Carolina
Tennessee
Virginia
Virgin Island

Team West

Alaska
American Samoa
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Iowa
Kansas
Micronesia
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Oregon
Texas
Utah
Washington
Wyoming

NLADA Regions

When NLADA and the Project Advisory Group (PAG) merged in 1999, NLADA adopted the majority of the PAG regions for the purpose of electing chief staff officers, staff and clients to the Civil Policy Group.

Region I

Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New York
Puerto Rico
Rhode Island
Vermont
Virgin Islands

Region II

Delaware
District of Columbia
Maryland
New Jersey
Michigan
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Virginia
West Virginia

Region III

Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wisconsin

Region IV

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
North Carolina
South Carolina
Tennessee

Region V

Arizona
Colorado
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Texas
Utah

Region VI

Alaska
California
Guam
Hawaii
Idaho
Micronesia
Montana
Nevada
Oregon
Washington
Wyoming

National Organization of Client Advocates (NOCA) Regions

Region I

Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont

Region II

New York
Puerto Rico
Virgin Islands

Region III

Delaware
District of Columbia
Maryland
New Jersey
Pennsylvania
Virginia

Region IV

Michigan
Ohio
West Virginia

Region V

Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wisconsin

Region VI

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
North Carolina
South Carolina
Tennessee

Region VII

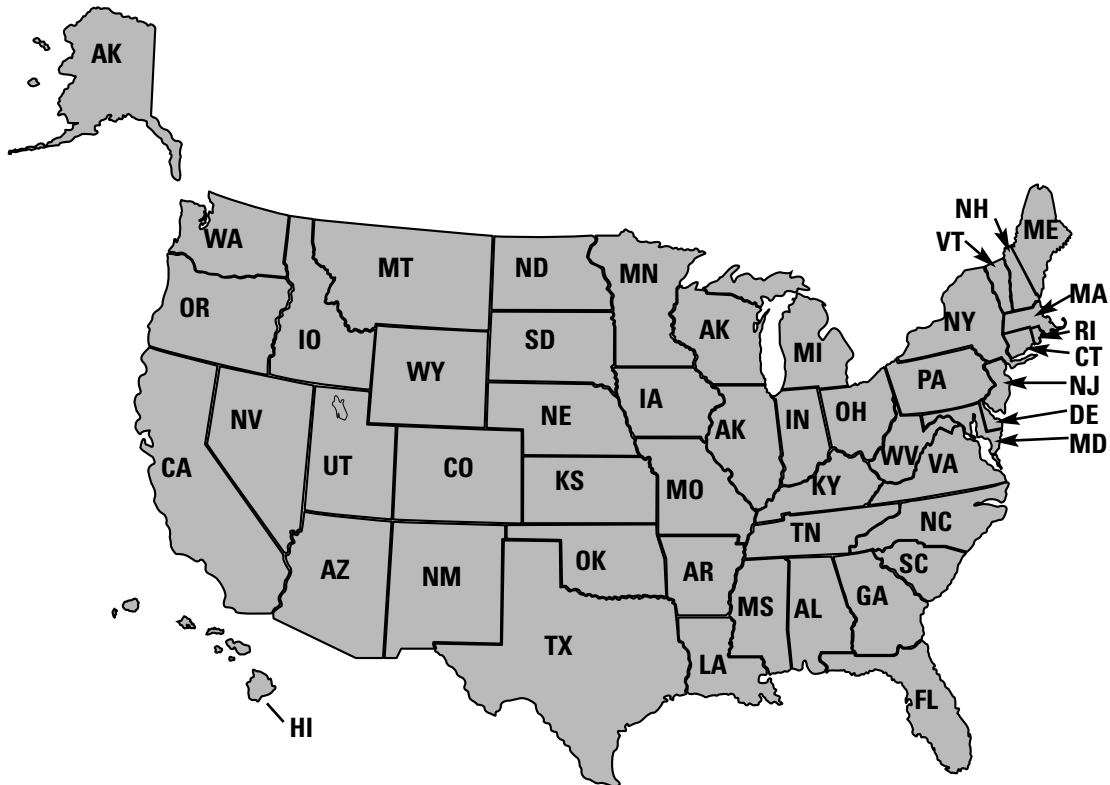
Arizona
Cal. Indian
Colorado
New Mexico
N. Dakota Indian
Oklahoma
S. Dakota Indian
Texas
Utah
Wyoming Indian

Region VIII

California
Nevada

Region IX

Alaska
Guam
Idaho
Hawaii
Micronesia
Montana
Oregon
Washington
Wyoming



“More Training” is the Message from the Board Leadership Track

Program board members strongly feel the need for training on board roles and responsibilities at both the local and the national levels. That is the main lesson that emerged from a “mini-track” of workshops held at the 2004 NLADA Annual Conference dealing with the many issues and challenges facing nonprofit boards in general and legal aid boards in particular.

The track, a new feature at the conference, was designed and presented with the assistance of board members, including both client and attorneys members, from a dozen programs around the country, as well as national experts on nonprofit issues. The sessions were all dynamic and filled to overflowing.

The track included four sessions:

- **Core Responsibilities.** A session on “*Supporting and Governing: The Core Responsibilities of Board Members*” covered the basic roles and responsibilities of program boards of directors, including the requirements of state laws governing nonprofits, the LSC Act, and other relevant laws and regulations, with a special focus on the tension between boards’ “governance” functions (in which their role is essentially one of protecting the public interest) and “support” functions, where their efforts are aimed at furthering the mission of the program. Panelists and board members in the audience discussed how they viewed their roles and the functions they performed for their programs.
- **Financial Oversight.** The particular challenges of the board’s financial oversight responsibilities, including new developments resulting primarily from the fall-out from recent corporate scandals in the for-profit corporate sector, were explored in depth by Washington Accountant and Nonprofit Specialist Patricia A. Drolet. She emphasized the importance of fully understanding the board’s

The track was very successful, the feedback from the clients was very positive, and they want to see it again next year.

I want to thank Jo-Ann Wallace for thinking of me as one of the presenters, and Bob Echols for giving me the chance to be one of the presenters. I look forward to the next conference, and I am sure the clients are also. Thanks

Harry Johnson

accountability for the program’s financial integrity and identified the bottom-line principles of “full disclosure” and “common sense” as the keys to successful compliance with state and federal requirements.

- **Best Practices.** At a “nuts-and-bolts” session on “*Best Practices for Effective Boards*”, experienced board members and a team of client member/attorney member/executive director engaged in a wide-ranging discussion with the audience about topics including recruiting, training, engaging and retaining effective board members; maximizing the effectiveness of the board; engaging board members in fundraising; and drawing the line between governance and management. Again, a broad consensus emerged from the participants about the importance of training, education and mentoring for board members, attorneys and non-attorneys alike.
- **Leadership.** The day ended with a session on “*Board Members as Equal Justice Leaders*”, emphasizing the challenge and opportunity of “governance as leadership.” Topics discussed included the importance of openness to best practices and new ideas; the board’s vital roles in defining and advancing the organization’s mission, framing problems and shaping strategies, plans and decisions; the leadership implications of program and board diversity; and the role of the board in projecting the organization into the larger justice community.

NLADA will build upon the successes and lessons learned to develop a similar track for the 2005 Annual Conference.

Would this work well for your program’s board?

The following are some of the ideas that participants shared during the board leadership sessions.

- Hold one or more annual events. Different kinds of events have different advantages—an annual orientation helps ensure that all board members are grounded in the program’s work and their responsibilities; a board retreat can promote bonding and good working relationships; a joint board-staff meeting can help build a shared sense of mission with staff.
- Develop a board leadership mentoring program, through which experienced board members can help newer ones.
- Foster client leadership through a client advisory committee, so that there is a pool of client leaders who are well prepared to take on board responsibilities.
- Include an educational component in every board meeting—regular features could include a report from a client committee on an issue facing the community, a report from program staff on significant recent cases, and a presentation on an aspect of board responsibilities.

These practices may not be best for every program board, but they work well for some boards.

Justice Builders Project

By Ovita Thornton, Executive Director, Georgia Clients Council

The Justice Builders Project (Lay Advocacy) was reintroduced at the 2004 Georgia Clients Council Conference (GCC). Since then, GCC was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Sapalo Foundation to expand the work. GCC in collaboration with Georgia Legal Services Program and The Access to Justice Committee will improve, facilitate and expand outreach to those needing legal assistance by training lay advocates. Through proper training and identifying opportunities, lay advocates can intervene in some civil and consumer disputes which need legal assistance but not necessarily an attorney, (Georgia Clients Council does not practice law). The Justice Builders Project will provide Legal Aid-GA Web site training for other community for other community and non-profit organizations working with the same or similar clientele.

"The vibrancy of our Democracy depends upon our willingness to ensure that the fullest range of choices and interest is represented and heard. This is what the fight for equal justice is about."

– Honorable Robert F. Utter, Retired Justice, Washington State Supreme Court

This what the Justice Builders is all about.

For more information or when training will be held in your area call 1-800-816-5156.

*Reprinted with permission
Quarterly Reporter, Winter 2004*

CLIENT NEWS

NLADA Client Section Holds Fourth Annual Meeting

By Harry Johnson

The fourth annual meeting of the NLADA Client Section was held December 3, 2004 in Washington DC. Approximately 50 persons attended the very productive meeting. David Pearson agreed to take the minutes in the absence of the Section secretary. We thank him for a very professional job.

The meeting was called to order by the convener Harry Johnson. The attendees introduced themselves providing their affiliation with NLADA and their local program boards. The minutes were approved with the necessary corrections. Peggy Santos from Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation agreed to chair the Issues Committee, and asked for a mechanism for the committee to communicate with each other. It was agreed that the committee will be able to have teleconference calls. The volunteers for this committee are: Ofelia Zapata from Texas RioGrande Legal Aid; Treana Walker from South Middlesex Legal Services, Massachusetts; and Doris Alexander from Legal Aid Society of Columbus, Ohio.

Charles "Chuck" Wynder, NLADA director of Equal Justice Leadership

Initiative, addressed the client section by providing information on the Equal Justice Leadership Initiative Conference in Snowbird, Utah in June 2004. He informed the group that the next training will take place September 14-17 in Scottsdale, Ariz., and that now is the time to let your program directors know that you would like to attend this training.

The client section adapted a resolution to insure the provision of handicap/disability needs on the registration form. Myrnairis Cepeda, NLADA conference committee member, noted that the information was currently on the registration form.

The Client Section would like to encourage all programs to register their client board members as individual members of NLADA. The dues are \$15 each year and then you are eligible to run for positions on the Board of Directors, Civil Policy Group, Defender Policy Group and Client Policy Group.

We hope to see everyone at the next Annual Conference, November 16-19 in Orlando, Fla.

State Organization of Client Advocates Representatives Attended NLADA Annual Conference

By Shirley Peoples

The State Organization of Client Advocates Council President Imogene Richard and Coordinator Shirley Peoples attended the NLADA Annual Conference in Washington DC, December 1-4, 2004.

Clients of legal services programs from around the country attended the conference. They exchanged information and ideas for client services. Clients had the opportunity to meet the new Legal

Services Corporation President Helaine Barnett and staff.

Peoples was named to serve on the Civil Policy Group of NLADA. She felt that the clients in Ohio have a lot of work to do with legal services for determining the service priorities of the state. The State Organization of Client Advocates will continue to provide workshops and client training in 2005.

ABOUT THE CLIENT UPDATE

NLADA and the National Organization of Client Advocates (NOCA) jointly publish the *Client Update* newsletter for their members three times a year: winter, summer and fall. If you have articles that you would like included, please send them to: NLADA Client Update, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036.

NLADA Client Section Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the NLADA Client Section is to promote the mission of NLADA by providing a forum for clients of legal aid and public defense programs to voice their interests and concerns as members of NLADA, as program board members, as customers of legal aid and as advocates for themselves.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Clean your closet of any old dust balls of anger, resentment, or rage you have hanging out in there, taking up valuable space, so that you can open up to new, more fun feeling.

RECIPES



OVERNIGHT SALAD

- 1 head lettuce
- 1 cup celery
- 1 cup chopped green onion
- 1 can waterchest nuts, sliced
- 2 pkg. frozen green peas
- 2 cups of mayonnaise

Add all the above ingredients in a large bowl or long oblong dish in the order listed. Sprinkle 2 teas. sugar over mayonnaise.

continued from page 3

justice. He reminded us to live these values with legal services as we demand that our society fulfill its promise of equal justice.

Gladys Barnes was truly a client advocate. She also served as PAG chairperson and, at her passing, was the chairperson of the Communication Committee of the Client Policy Group. Barnes was an integral part of the team to assist in the merger of NLADA and PAG.

With the passing of our own we are reminded to take time to seek out and honor those among our organization who have bravely paved the way for us and who continue tirelessly in the light to provide justice for all.

To Charles Dorsey and Gladys Barnes, rest in peace. We are the benefactors of your good work!



National Legal Aid & Defender Association

1140 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036-4019

T: (202) 452-0620 • F: (202) 872-1031 • Web site: www.nlada.org