

The Volunteer Lawyers Program was established in 1981 to complement the efforts of Southern Arizona Legal Aid, Inc. The VLP enlists the private bar to provide pro bono legal services to those who seek assistance with a civil legal problem and are unable to afford it. Currently, 1,100 attorneys participate in the VLP in Southern Arizona; these attorneys will assist more than 3,300 clients in 2005.

In the fall of 1999, the Volunteer Lawyers Program and the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law formed a partnership, VLP Advocates, to help deliver legal services to those Pima County residents most in need of civil legal help. The idea behind the partnership began to take shape when law students who serve on the University's Community Service Board began to discuss ways in which law students could get involved in law-related community service. To date, more than 250 law students have volunteered with the VLP.

The Volunteer Lawyers Program provides training for students who wish to participate in one of the projects. The program asks for a 12-15 hour commitment per semester from the students who want to become involved with the VLP

"The University of Arizona law school Community Service Program - in which VLP is a key component - teaches our students shared responsibility for their community in a hands-on, heart-connected way. Through VLP, the students provide public service, not mere 'lip service,' to our profession's highest ideals. We are deeply proud of our student volunteers, and of our association with VLP."

- Toni M. Massaro, Dean and Milton O. Riepe Chair in Constitutional Law

The University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law

Volunteer Opportunities

> Child Support Court Project

Under the supervision of an attorney, students will review the pleadings of pro per litigants at domestic default hearings to make sure that their child support has been calculated accurately. If the paperwork is deficient, the student will enter the individual's information into a computer and then print out new and accurate documents.

> Bankruptcy Court Reaffirmation Hearings

Volunteer attorneys and law students meet with unrepresented clients at their reaffirmation hearing in Bankruptcy Court. The students review reaffirmation agreements presented to the client by their creditor. Students then have the opportunity to appear before the court and offer their recommendation as to whether the client should enter into the reaffirmation agreement.

> Domestic Relations Clinic

This clinic takes place at the VLP office and provides students with an opportunity to meet with a client under the supervision of a volunteer attorney. Students provide basic information and advice and assist clients in completing self-help forms.

> Guardianship Project

Under the supervision of an attorney, students meet with unrepresented clients at their guardianship hearings in probate court. The students will explain the proceedings and review the client's file to ensure that all the legal requirements have been met. Students then have the opportunity to appear before the court and offer their recommendation as to whether the client should be awarded guardianship.

For more information contact:

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"I think that the VLP is a great opportunity for law students to get out into the Tucson community early in their legal career and begin making a difference. I am appreciative of the opportunity to volunteer with and aid such an effective, worthwhile, and rewarding program."

*- Lindsay St. John
Third Year Law Student*