

ABA/ NLADA 2007 Equal Justice Conference

**Fostering Involvement by Government Attorneys in Pro Bono Programs**

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**Brief Description:** Government attorneys can play an important role in pro bono programs in cities where government offices are located. This presentation focuses on the successful collaboration in Olympia, WA between the VLP, community advocacy organizations (such as domestic violence programs) and government attorneys to increase services to low-income clients.

**Topical Outline:**

- I. Introduction of panelists: 2 min
- II. Overview of collaboration with AGO: 8 min.
  - a. timeline of development of working relationship
  - b. stats on volunteer participation
  - c. Success stories: 2006 award and publicity
- III. Issues faced by government attorneys doing pro bono work: 10 min.
  - a. work schedule/expectations
  - b. use of public resources
  - c. conflicts of interest (personal/departmental)
  - d. lack of professional liability insurance
  - e. lack of support staff and office resources

- IV. Internal structure at AGO vis a vis pro bono: 10 min.
  - a. AGO Pro Bono Policy and revision
  - b. establishment and work of Pro Bono Committee and Intranet site
  - c. pro bono survey
  - d. chain of command for authorizing pro bono work
  - e. proposals for tracking pro bono hours
  
- V. Entrepreneurial nature of pro bono & changing paradigms of volunteerism: 10 min.
  
- VI. Collaboration and support: 10 min.
  - a. VLP
  - b. local bench
  - c. private local bar/ WSBA
  - d. gov't bar
  - e. social agencies
  
- VII. TCVLS program structure: 10 min.
  - a. clinics and direct rep projects
  - b. training program
  - c. involvement of support staff
  - d. the role of mentors
  
- VIII. Experience of gov't attorney in clinics: (Traci) 5 min.
  
- IX. Further program development: unbundled services, limited-scope rep: 10 min.
  - a. Micro-firm proposal
  - b. clinic expansion
  - c. youth law project
  - d. Housing Justice Project
  - e. Collaborative Law
  - f. proposed on-line advice pilot project
  
- X. Closing comments: 5 min.
  
- XI. Questions: 10 min.

**Notes:**

**Bibliography & Website Links:**

1. AGO Pro Bono Policy
2. Sample of the internal AGO pro bono survey and summary of results

3. screen shot of AGO Intranet pro bono site
4. WSBA article on 2006 award presented to AGO
5. article on entrepreneurialism in volunteering (TBD)
6. "8 Questions" article and TCVLS Response to the 8 Questions
7. TCVLS program descriptions
8. Applicable Rules of Professional Conduct
9. <http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org>
10. <http://www.advocateresourcecenter.org>
11. <http://www.tacomaprobono.org> (*TCVLS works closely with the Tacoma VLP, and our website links to theirs*)