

## **Successful Practices for Fostering Supportive Relationships Between Staff and Volunteers**

### **Margaret Benson**

Executive Director  
Chicago Volunteer Legal Services Foundation  
100 LaSalle St. Suite 900  
Chicago, IL 60602  
(312) 332-5542  
[MCB@cvls.org](mailto:MCB@cvls.org)

### **Michael Bergmann**

Pro Bono Initiative Director  
Public Interest Law Initiative  
321 N. Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60610  
(312) 832-5129  
[mbergmann@pili-law.org](mailto:mbergmann@pili-law.org)

### **Marla Elliott**

Coordinator of Statewide Pro Bono Support  
Columbia Legal Services  
406 Legion Way #300  
Olympia, WA 98501  
(360) 943-6260 ext. 228  
[Marla.Elliott@ColumbiaLegal.org](mailto:Marla.Elliott@ColumbiaLegal.org)

### **Cheryl Zalenski**

Assistant Staff Counsel  
ABA Center for Pro Bono  
321 N. Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60610  
(312) 988-5770  
[zalenskc@staff.abanet.org](mailto:zalenskc@staff.abanet.org)

### **Brief Description:**

A key element of a successful pro bono program is a cooperative relationship between staff and volunteers. This workshop will discuss a variety of approaches to nurture mutually supportive relationships, including strategies for creating teamwork between staff and volunteers and techniques for educating staff on working with volunteers. The discussion will include lessons learned from research and theory in the field of volunteer management and how they might apply to the field of pro bono. Bring your thoughts, questions and experiences - active participation by attendees is encouraged!

## Topical Outline:

- I. Selling Pro Bono to Your Staff
  - a. Top (Executive Director) to bottom (administrative)
- II. Helping Your Staff Work With Volunteers
  - a. Training is critical
  - b. Nurture an understanding of volunteers
  - c. Defining volunteer jobs as “real” work
- III. How Can Staff Support Volunteers?
  - a. Thinking about volunteers from the staff’s perspective
  - b. Attorneys
  - c. Non-attorney staff
- IV. Special Volunteer Needs and Problems
  - a. Courtroom rookies
  - b. Retired attorneys
  - c. Judicial Relations

## Notes:

## Bibliography & Website Links:

1. Answers to Poor Staff/Volunteer Relations (handout)
2. “Effective Relationships Between Staff and Volunteers” by Mary Merrill,  
<http://www.merrillassociates.net/topic/2000/04/effective-relationships-between-staff-and-volunteers/>
3. *Building Staff/Volunteer Relations*, Ivan H. Scheier (2003). Available for purchase at  
<http://www.energizeinc.com/store/1-104-E-1>
4. “Volunteer-Staff Relations,” Ella Marin (handout)
5. *Building Better Relationships with Volunteers: Training Manual*, Nan Hawthorne (1999).
6. People: Roles and Responsibilities.  
<http://www.brightonhovevolunteers.org.uk/goodpractice/content.asp?filename=2x1>
7. McCurley, Steve and Lynch, Rick. *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Johnstone Training and Consultation Inc., 2006.