



September 9, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Carl Rauscher
202-295-1615
rauscherc@lsc.gov

LSC Awards First Pro Bono Innovation Fund Grants

WASHINGTON – The Legal Services Corporation announced today that 11 legal aid organizations will receive grants from its new Pro Bono Innovation Fund to support projects that develop replicable innovations in pro bono services for low-income clients.

Many of the projects use emerging legal aid technology to reach rural populations. Others create extensive pro bono partnerships with local law schools, community organizations, and corporate attorneys. All the projects seek to engage and recruit pro bono lawyers and other volunteers to leverage LSC's federal funding and increase the resources available to low-income clients.

"We are grateful to Congress for funding this new competitive grant program to increase pro bono support for civil legal aid," LSC President Jim Sandman said. "As a former antitrust lawyer, I believe that competition promotes innovation. The number and quality of the applications for our new Pro Bono Innovation Fund grants proves the point."

The creation of the fund was recommended by LSC's Pro Bono Task Force, and Congress allocated \$2.5 million for it in its FY-2014 budget.

The recipients of the 2014 Pro Bono Innovation Fund are:

Atlanta Legal Aid Society - \$212,837, 24 months

Atlanta Legal Aid Society will integrate pro bono attorneys throughout their offices in five counties to make follow-up contact with clients and provide additional brief services, which has been proven to improve client outcomes significantly.

Colorado Legal Services - \$173,808, 24 months

Colorado Legal Services will collaborate with the Colorado Bar Association to develop different technologies and clinic structures to identify the most effective ways to replicate metropolitan-area pro bono clinics in rural parts of the state.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles - \$309,451, 24 months

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles will partner with Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County and OneJustice to develop the California Pro Bono Training Institute, a statewide online forum of substantive trainings that will provide legal services organizations and pro bono attorneys with high-quality, engaging, and on-demand Continuing Legal Education courses relevant to pro bono work for low-income clients.

Legal Assistance of Western New York (LawNY) - \$314,068, 18 months

In response to New York Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman's two major pro bono initiatives, LawNY is partnering with five other LSC grantees in New York State to create a new pro bono practice group across organizations and coordinate pro bono opportunities among their 33 offices and nine New York law schools, including the Feerick Center for Social Justice at Fordham University School of Law, which staffs the Attorney Emeritus Program for the Office of Court Administration.

Maryland Legal Aid - \$265,464, 24 months

Maryland Legal Aid will establish a single, statewide Veterans Hotline, staffed by qualified pro bono attorneys who will be recruited and trained throughout the state to effectively and efficiently meet the legal needs of Maryland's low-income veterans population.

Montana Legal Services Association - \$141,087, 24 months

Montana Legal Services Association's project will develop a statewide technology platform targeting barriers to legal service delivery for solo practitioners, small firms, government attorneys, law students, and paralegals.

Northwest Justice Project - \$211,120, 24 months

Northwest Justice Project will develop a comprehensive set of resources to support pro bono attorneys in providing significant assistance beyond brief advice or limited action in unfamiliar areas of law, systematically increasing the level of extended services provided to low-income clients.

Philadelphia Legal Assistance - \$240,305, 24 months

The Philadelphia Legal Assistance project will use the network of existing neighborhood public health centers to create a pro bono, law- student-driven Medical-Legal Community Partnership that will improve access to comprehensive, coordinated health and legal care.

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc. - \$158,815, 18 months

Prairie State Legal Services will partner with Illinois Legal Aid Online to recruit and train pro bono attorneys in suburban areas and other 'collar counties' surrounding Chicago in an effort to provide legal services for single parents in need of family law assistance.

Utah Legal Services - \$190,000, 24 months

Utah Legal Services is partnering with the Self-Help Center of the Utah State Courts, local Utah State Bar Pro Bono committees, Timpanogos Legal Center, and volunteer law students and attorneys to provide a continuum of service for clients representing themselves in family law matters in rural areas in Utah. These organizations will expand their collaboration by creating an online meeting and document-sharing platform that connects clients with on-call volunteer attorneys.

Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association - \$158,045, 24 months

The Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association will test and prototype "pop-up" clinics, a customized virtual law firm platform, and cost-effective videoconferencing to allow expert bankruptcy volunteers in Boston to train and mentor pro bono attorneys in parts of the state where no pro bono bankruptcy attorneys are available.

[Legal Services Corporation](#) was established by the Congress in 1974 to provide equal access to justice and to ensure the delivery of high-quality civil legal assistance to low-income Americans. The Corporation currently provides funding to 134 independent non-profit legal aid programs in every state, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories.