



*Washoe Legal Services*  
*By Paul Elcano*  
*Executive Director Washoe Legal Services*

For more than 40 years Washoe Legal Services has provided access to civil justice for the poorest members of Washoe County by offering legal educational seminars, counseling, direct representation in urgent non-criminal legal matters, and referrals to pro bono attorneys. Every day Washoe Legal Services assists survivors of domestic violence (and their families) by obtaining Temporary Protection Orders and providing guidance to improve chances of self-sufficiency, helps vulnerable individuals and families resolve housing issues and employment discrimination, represents disadvantaged clients who have been the targets of unscrupulous merchants and lenders, and advocates for the best interests of at risk children to ensure their long-term success.

The Washoe Legal Services staff consists of eight full-time attorneys, two part-time attorneys, one law clerk, five paralegals, two secretaries, an office manager, pro bono coordinator/grant writer, one receptionist, and three part time clerks.

The direct services offered by Washoe Legal Services are:

***1. Child Advocacy Program***  
***(NRS 432(b) proceedings)***

This program provides legal representation for approximately 400 abused and neglected children in the custody of Washoe County Social Services. Legal counsel meets with the child, the foster parent and the social worker. The

attorney then conducts an independent investigation and evaluation of needs and services. The child is then fully represented in Family Court hearings to ensure that his/her needs in education, visitation, residence and medical/mental health care are met. The communication between the courts, social services, foster families and Washoe Legal Services staff is invaluable to the success of the evaluation and ongoing case management.

***2. Immigration Assistance***

This program provides representation to individuals who are in the United States legally and aids victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and other crimes as well as providing support to individuals in the area of lawful naturalization. In family law cases, Washoe Legal Services provides immigration information concurrently with domestic violence advice. Members of our staff are fluent in English,

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# *Unsung Heroes*

*By Chairperson Carolyn Myers, Esq.*

Everybody knows at least one unsung hero. Someone, who quietly and consistently works for others, with no fanfare or reward. They do good works because they are good people and it is the right thing to do. You may even be one yourself, giving time or money, telling nobody and with no desire to get anything out of it yourself. All those attorneys who give time to Pro Bono cases are unsung heroes. Lawyers who give enough money to pay for Pro Bono legal help are unsung heroes.

The Nevada Law Foundation has some very special unsung heroes of its own. People who are not staff or Board members but who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the Foundation. The time has come for me to start singing and reveal names of people who have totally committed themselves to the Foundation's growth. When Justice Douglas and Justice Hardesty became Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Access to Justice Commission a new day dawned for the legally disenfranchised in Nevada. The Justices believed that the winds of change needed to blow through the way legal aide was financially facilitated in Nevada. Their combined energy and enthusiasm has indeed created hurricane force winds that have blown fresh air into every aspect of the way we view the delivery of legal aide to the needy. The Justices have gone out into the legal community; holding meetings with large and small law firms. They have given presentations at the State Bar

Convention. They are determined to educate members of the Bar about the need to maximize IOLTA monies. By the time the Justices finish talking everyone is aware of growing legal aide needs, of the reasons behind mandatory IOLTA, and how imperative it is to get the best percentage rate on IOLTA Trust Funds.

If you are reading this and wondering how these two Supreme Court Justices fulfill their judicial obligations, reinvent and reenergize the Access to Justice Commission, and proselytize about IOLTA to the Bar; hold on because the story is not finished yet. The Justices also approached the Banks who hold the IOLTA trust accounts. Together with our Banking Committee headed by Paul Elcano they left no stone unturned in the quest for the best return on attorneys IOLTA funds. Their hard work and tremendous time commitment has paid off in an amazing way. The Banks approached by the Justices and the Banking Committee have responded enthusiastically. Inspired by the tremendous need for legal aide that can only be funded by increased IOLTA revenues the Banks have stepped up to the plate. Starting with our own local banks; Nevada State Bank, Bank of Nevada, and First Independent Bank, followed by US Bank, a commitment has been made to increase the rate paid on IOLTA accounts. It is an amazing phenomenon that in these difficult economic times the Banks have been persuaded to maximize IOLTA interest rates so that funds can be increased to



*Carolyn Myers, Esq.*  
*Chairperson*

assist in the delivery of legal aide to the poor and needy. All of these efforts on behalf of the legally disenfranchised of Nevada have been led by the heroes I am naming today. Justice Douglas, Justice Hardesty, John Sande, Paul Elcano, and Steve Brown all part of the Banking Committee.

Thanks to all this dedication the Nevada Law Foundation will be able to distribute much needed grant monies to those organizations who serve the poor, indigent and disenfranchised. There is no way to pay our debt of gratitude to these heroes except to sing their praises to the members of the Nevada Bar so that the next time you see one of our heroes you can add your praise and gratitude.



## BUSINESS BANKING SERVICES

THAT BENEFIT YOU AND THE COMMUNITY

### Now Offering Increased IOLTA Rates!

Interest earned on an IOLTA (Interest on Lawyer Trust Account) benefits the legally disadvantaged, victims of domestic violence, and children through the Nevada Law Foundation.

To learn more about the Nevada State Bank IOLTA offering and business banking products, stop into a Nevada State Bank branch or call 702.383.0009 in Southern Nevada or 775.688.6966 in Northern Nevada.



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# Clark County Legal Services Chronicles

## The 1950's:

- The Clark County Legal Aid Society opened its doors August 1, 1958 at 515 South 5th Street.
- This new program was sponsored by the Clark County Bar Association.
- Attorney John Foley was its first president.

## The 1960's:

- The Clark County Legal Aid Society continued its endeavors of meeting the needs of the poor and disenfranchised in the Las Vegas Valley.
- In September of 1960, the organization moved to its new location at 1622 South A Street.
- Presidents throughout the 1960's included Paul Larson, Lexter Berkson, John Peter Lee, Charles Deaner, Franklin Smith, Norman Hilbrecht, Terry Jones, Owen Nitz, Richard Bryan and Jack Perry.

## The 1970's:

- In the Fall of 1970, Mahlon Brown III started as the new Director and sole attorney at CCLS.
- Mahlon Brown agreed to represent thousands of welfare recipients whose benefits had been cut off.
- Jack Anderson and Anthony Diamond were hired to assist Brown.
- Brown and Anderson filed a class action law suit in Federal Court challenging the termination in violation of federal law and due process.
- Judge Foley granted a Temporary Restraining Order.
- After many years of litigation and demonstrations, benefits were restored.

## The 1980's:

- CCLS joined with the Nevada Indian Rural Legal Services (NIRLS) in Carson City to form a statewide program.
- In 1982 CCLS and NIRLS merged with Nevada Legal Services.
- Statewide initiatives were undertaken to address reforms in public benefits, housing and Indian Law.
- In 1982 N.N. Singh was the only attorney on CCLS's staff.
- John Morrell and (now Supreme Court Justice) Michael Douglas were hired.
- 1989 saw the creation of the Low Income Housing Trust Fund and the hiring of Barbara Buckley who heads up the program today.

## The 1990's:

- Brought numerous legislative successes including the creation of the Low Income Housing Trust Fund and the largest ADC increase was passed.
- Barbara Buckley negotiated a \$31.6 million dollar settlement as part of the Community Reinvestment Act.
- Barbara Buckley successfully ran for the Nevada Assembly opening a number of doors for low income Nevadans.

## The 2000's:

- CCLS purchased a building at 800 S. 8th Street.
- CCLS and the Clark County Pro Bono Project merged.
- CCLS needs a new building...





**RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 8, 2008**  
TABLE PACKAGE RESERVATION

**50th CLARK COUNTY LEGAL SERVICES ANNIVERSARY**

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Individual tickets \$250 each, quantity (limit four) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Packages\*

Level I \$5,000     Level II \$10,000     Level III \$15,000     Level IV \$25,000     Event Sponsor \$50,000

I am unable to attend but please find my enclosed donation. \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Company (as you wish to be recognized at the event) \_\_\_\_\_

\*All payments are nonrefundable. Tables are sold on a first-come, first-served basis, therefore availability cannot be guaranteed. A portion of your sponsorship is tax-deductible, as allowed by law.

Mail reservations and make payments to:  
**CLARK COUNTY LEGAL SERVICES** 800 South Eighth Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101  
 For more information, contact Lynn Etkins at letkins@clarkcountylegal.com or call 702-386-1070, ext. 165.

*Clark County Legal Services  
an Icon in our Community  
by Suzan Baucum, Esq*

For 50 years Clark County Legal Services (CCLS) has been an icon in our community providing services to those without a voice. Services which include providing direct legal assistance to victims of domestic violence and many others who cannot afford legal representation. Many times victims leaving abusive relationships often require protective orders against domestic violence or stalking and harassment; child custody and support orders and or divorces. CCLS has been there at every turn providing for our community.

**Lana** one of those represented by CCLS began receiving services in 2004 when she was living in a locked facility at the Spring Mountain Treatment Center. She was released to a foster home, but was soon back at Spring Mountain and then sent to Child Haven. No foster home could be found. The Children's Attorneys Project (CAP) at CCLS intervened when others had given up on her and advocated for Lana to go to a specific group home with a caring and successful house parent. The group home parent and Lana developed a great relationship. Lana began receiving straight A's in school and went on to be elected class president.

**Teresa** suffered nearly a decade of physical abuse at the hands of her husband James. With the help of the CCLS's Domestic Violence program, Teresa

obtained a divorce and was given sole custody of the children. She also secured an order enforcing a Temporary Protection Order and child support.

**Arthur** at age seven, his older brother and sister were removed from their natural mother. Records show that they were neglected and abused. Their mother used drugs and could not care for the siblings and her boyfriend had sexually abused Arthur's sister. For the next 13 years, Arthur was in foster care. Through the fortunate combination of a good foster home, a caring Department of Family Services (DFS) caseworker and a reliable CAP attorney who responded to his changing needs, Arthur was able to turn these years in foster care to a hard won success story. CAP, among other things was able to negotiate an independent living contract for him well past the normal termination age of 18. Arthur went on to earn his Associate's Degree from the Community College of Southern Nevada and hold down a job. He is looking towards getting a degree in business administration from UNLV.

For 22 years, the Nevada Law Foundation has been a proud supporter of CCLS, providing funding in the form of grants through the Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program to this wonderful organization. The first grant to CCLS was small, only \$5,000.00, but with the dedication of Nevada attorneys and with the support



*Suzan Baucum, Esq.  
Executive Director*

of the Access to Justice Commission, CCLS received a grant in 2008 in the amount of \$400,000.00. I hope you will join me in supporting Clark County Legal Services 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Springs Preserve, September 25, 2008. They have outgrown their current facility and need your financial support in assisting them with funding for a new building.

For additional information please see page five of the newsletter or call Lynn Etkins at Clark County Legal Services (702) 286-1070, extension 165.

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Spanish, Russian, Hakka, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, and Telgu, and can provide corresponding interpretation.

### ***3. Consumer/Housing/Tenants' Rights Advocacy***

Washoe Legal Services provides comprehensive civil legal services as well as housing counseling for tenants of private housing. This service focuses on violations of the Fair Debt Collection Law, wrongful repossession, violations of the Fair Housing Act, and issues involving private landlords. These issues include illegal lockouts, failure to refund deposits, failure to make repairs or provide essential services, eviction and termination of rental.

Unfortunately, many low income tenants are unsophisticated in legal matters and do not feel they are empowered to confront their landlords. Washoe Legal Services is expanding its advocacy in this area through educational efforts (including distribution of educational materials, outreach to community agencies, and individual counseling), counseling and in-court representation for low income tenants.

### ***4. Family Law/ Domestic Violence***

This unit aids individuals in divorce and child custody matters involving domestic violence and enforcement and/or extensions of Temporary Protective Orders. This program is a full service

litigation program and represents client through entry of divorce decree.

### ***5. Pro Bono Project***

Washoe Legal Services recruits attorneys to provide pro bono services to address unmet legal needs to qualifying individuals in Washoe County. Areas of practice include family law (divorces), child custody cases involving child abuse, enforcement and/or extensions of Temporary Protective Orders, and bankruptcy. Washoe Legal Services collaborates with the Washoe County Bar Association and the State Bar of Nevada to develop Continuing Legal Education training for pro bono attorneys, especially in needed areas such as family law and bankruptcy.

### ***6. Informational Clinics***

Our staff, along with volunteers from the legal community, provide the following legal information clinics at no cost to the public:

#### ***Domestic Violence Clinic***

A staff attorney conducts a bi-weekly educational clinic about divorce and custody issues in the domestic violence setting. These clinics are held in alternately in Spanish and English.

#### ***Debt Collection and Bankruptcy Clinic***

Washoe Legal Services conducts a monthly legal education clinic about bankruptcy.

### ***Self Help Forms Completion Clinic***

Washoe Legal Services conducts semi monthly legal education clinics to assist pro per litigants with the completion of their forms.

Beginning September 1, 2008 Washoe Legal Services will be relocating to a larger facility in order to expand our provision of legal services to accommodate the increasing population in Washoe County.

***For more information  
on Washoe Legal Services,  
please visit  
[washoelegalservices.org](http://washoelegalservices.org)  
or call 775.329.2727.***

# Calendar of Events



|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Friday, September 5, 2008    | 2009 Grant Applications Available  |
| Friday, September 19, 2008   | Board of Trustees Meeting  |
| Thursday, September 25, 2008 | Clark County Legal Services 50th Anniversary Celebration,<br>6:00 p.m. at Springs Preserve |
| Thursday, October 16, 2008   | Grant Applications Due in Foundation Office  |
| Friday, November 7, 2008     | Board of Trustees Meeting  |

*For more information and an IOLTA enrollment form,  
please contact the Nevada Law Foundation at 702.384.1204.*

## Nevada Law Foundation

### *Perspective*

Written for all  
Nevada Attorneys

Editor  
Suzan Baucum, Esq.

Designed by  
Annabelle's All Occasions

Staff Writers  
Ryan Creel  
Denyce Tuller

Please submit comments,  
articles or photos to:

Suzan Baucum, Esq.  
Executive Director  
Nevada Law Foundation  
500 South Seventh Street  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101  
(702) 384-1204

## NLF *Perspective*

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