

LAOC NEWSLETTER

January 2008

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LAOC Has a New Location!

On June 7, 2007, LAOC opened its doors at its new location, 1136 7th Street NW, Rochester, MN 55901.

The new office, which is located in an area known as the Northgate Shopping Center, offers spacious, recently-renovated facilities. According to Lucy Douglas, LAOC's Executive



Scales of Justice: The imbalance and inadequacies of providing meaningful access to justice to indigent clients.

Director, "Many of our clients will find the new location to be conveniently located. The interior space is large, airy and bright; it

provides a pleasant working environment, one geared toward employee satisfaction and productivity. We are confident that it will be a valuable asset in our ongoing efforts to expand our services."

LAOC is now sharing its office space with Mediation & Conflict Services, the county's foremost non-profit alternate dispute resolution provider. "We are very excited to have MC&S in such close proximity. Clients who are looking for an alternative to litigation will no doubt benefit from their services, Angela Bostrom, LAOC's Volunteer Coordinator stated.

For the past 15 years, LAOC had occupied part of a building located at 1812 Second Street SW. It was not without a twinge of regret that staff members bade farewell to the Second Street address. "Unquestionably, our new space is a good fit for our current needs. Nevertheless, when you stay in an office building for an extended period of time you develop ties with other tenants. It will be sad not to have them around."

LAOC Seeks Information Technology Advisory Members

Legal providers increasingly rely on technology solutions to meet their needs. We at LAOC wish to harness the power of technology to give our community meaningful access to the justice system. Therefore, we have decided

to establish a new IT Advisory Board. We are seeking interested persons who wish to provide guidance on how to maintain and improve our information systems.

The IT Advisory Board will consist of four or five

individuals whose task it will be to initiate and implement an effective technology strategy. If you have the time and knowledge to commit to this effort, please contact Angela Bostrom at 507-287-2036 for further details.

In this issue:

LAOC Has a New Location 1

LAOC Seeks IT Advisory Members

LAOC Hires New Executive Director & Staff Attorney 2

Volunteer Testimony 3

Outreach &

Honor Roll 4

Special points of interest:

- OCBA March Fundraiser @ Plummer House
- Upcoming Clinics
- Outreach Opportunities





LAOC Hires a New Executive Director



LAOC is pleased to announce that it has a new Executive Director. Lucy Douglas joined the LAOC team in this capacity on a part-time basis in late August of this year. Lucy brings over a decade of non-profit management and fundraising experience to LAOC. She is originally from St. Paul and has worked with a variety of social service organizations in the Twin Cities since 1997. She relocated to the Rochester area in 2006.

Ms. Douglas graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1998 with a Bachelors degree in Political Science. Upon graduation, she began working with youth service programs on behalf of a small non-profit organization in South Minneapolis.

She quickly moved to private consulting and has been helping social service non-profit organizations raise capital and enhance capacity ever since.

Ms. Douglas specializes in program oversight and financial management of non-profit and public/private corporations and social service organizations. She brings to LAOC a strong collaborative employment and consulting history, program management, financial oversight, and communication and coordination skills.

She is excited about supporting LAOC's mission and creating future opportunities for the organization directorship.

LAOC Hires a New Staff Attorney

Steven A. Campbell, J.D., is a 1988 graduate of the School of Law, University of South Dakota. He was admitted to the Minnesota State Bar in 1995. Mr. Campbell is also a member of the South Dakota State Bar, and has been admitted to practice before eleven tribal courts: Prairie Island Tribal Court, MN; Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Court, SD; Yankton Sioux Tribal Court, SD; Upper Sioux Tribal Court, MN; Nett Lake Tribal Court, MN; Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Court, SD; Hoopa Valley Tribal Court, CA; Karuk Tribal Court, CA; Lower Brule Tribal Court, SD; Three Affiliated Tribes Tribal Court, ND; Sac and Fox Tribal Court, KS.

Mr. Campbell is a more than 10-year veteran of various legal services organizations. He is known for his considerable forensic skills, his passionate advocacy on behalf of the indigent, and his wide-ranging curiosity, which embraces topics as diverse as Indian law, criminal law, family law, and natural resources law.

We had the chance to talk to Mr. Campbell on his first day on the job. Peering behind several imposing piles of

case folders bequeathed to him by his predecessor, Mr. Campbell told the LAOC Newsletter that working for a legal services organization is a calling. "Trust me, nobody does this for the money. Indentured labor is an easier way to pay off your law school loans. I do this work because I believe in truth, justice and the American way. Everyone's equal under the law. No matter who you are, what you are, whom you know, the size of your wallet, whether you've lived a charmed existence or just about had it with life, you are entitled to not just adequate but zealous representation from counsel. I see no way for the courts to collectively call themselves a 'justice system' until that becomes a reality." Asked what inspired him to continue in this line of work, he answered "my clients; every time one of them questions my ability to represent him or her properly because I am not a 'paid lawyer.' I feel I have been placed here to change the perception that legal services attorneys somehow provide substandard representation." Turning again to his files, he added, more to himself this time, "changing perceptions. That's what I do; one case at a time."

LAOC additionally welcomes two new team members- Erin A. Gustafson, Attorney At Law and Dianne Dietrich, Legal Receptionist. Their individual profiles and experiences will be highlighted in our Summer Newsletter.

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONY



LAOC relies on the generosity of volunteers in order to fulfill its mission. We often ask volunteers to write to us about their experience at LAOC so that we can share it with others and perhaps inspire them to donate their time, skills and resources. This issue we offer a letter that we received from Robert Woodward. Robert is a college student with outstanding computer skills, who spent part of the summer helping us update our website and handle a host of pesky computer glitches.

“ ‘Why do you volunteer?’ is a common question that people ask me. While most of my friends have a summer job, or spend their time catching up on last season’s TV shows, I volunteer. I do it because it’s fun. Most people would not agree with me. How can volunteering be fun? Criminals are sentenced to community service, yet I give my time willingly?

Back in June I decided to look for a place to volunteer for the summer. I wanted to apply the skills that I

already knew. Being a Computer Science major at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, I found that working on LAOC’s website to be a good match for me.

I met with volunteer-coordinator Ms. Angela Bostrom around the middle of June and we discussed what LAOC needed to have done with its website. There was a need to reorganize the existing information and add new content as well. I came in once or twice a week during the next couple of months to work on the website and help office staff with computer-related problems.

I must say that my time volunteering at LAOC would not have been as enjoyable if not for the people who work there. We would take breaks and talk about the latest Harry Potter book or just talk about random events. Volunteering at LAOC was a memorable experience. “

— Robert Woodward

Interested in volunteering? Call Angela Bostrom at (507) 287-2035



Outreach & Collaboration

As part of its outreach program, LAOC has partnered with several organizations in the Rochester area to provide assistance to a larger number of people in the community. One of these organizations is LINK.

LINK (Living Independently with Knowledge) is a program of the Rochester Area Y that provides living skills to at-risk for homelessness youths between the ages of 16 and 21. Some participants are referred to LINK by their social worker or probation officer. Others come to this program because they wish to learn more about living independently.

As part of our interagency cooperation, a staff

attorney from our office regularly travels to the Rochester Area Y to give a presentation covering basic topics of Minnesota housing law, such as pre-inspections, lease agreements, evictions, security deposits, and subletting. Past presentations have generated a great deal of interest. Participants have asked probing questions and had the chance to reflect on their experience of rental housing.

These presentations are a great way of introducing LAOC to members of our community who may not know of our services, and reminder for everyone else that we can help low-income clients with housing law issues or many other civil issues that they may have.



ATTORNEY HONOR ROLL

VOLUNTEER HONOR ROLL

All attorneys are subject to an ethical duty to provide pro bono services. We, at LAOC, would like to thank the many attorneys in our community who have fulfilled that duty by providing help to our clients and staff, and wish to recognize the following for their efforts:

- *Barbara Swisher*
- *Brian Rotty*
- *Bruce Piotrowski*
- *Carole Pasternak*
- *Christina Stevens*
- *Christopher Wendt*
- *Crysta Parkin*
- *Deanna Schulesner*
- *Debra Groehler*
- *Deja Weber*
- *Edmond Feinberg*
- *Fran Kornblum*
- *Geoff Hjerleid*
- *Gerald Weinrich*
- *Greg Spoo*
- *Hon. Ancy Morse*
- *Jane Callahan*
- *Jill Frieders*
- *Jim Ohly*
- *Jim Ryan*
- *JoMarie Morris*
- *Jon Oviatt*
- *Karen Sullivan Hook*
- *Kimberly Holst*
- *Liz LaRoque*
- *Mark Delehanty*
- *Mark Stephenson*
- *Mary Alice Richardson*
- *Mary Dunlap*
- *Melanie Leth*
- *Pamela King*
- *Paul Ohly*
- *Richard Kimlinger*
- *Robert Rochford*
- *Steven Youngquist*
- *Suzanne Peterson*
- *Tammy Shefelbine*
- *Thomas Braun*
- *William French*
- *William Oehler*

- *Elaine Johnson*
- *Steven Conners*
- *Bridgette Lawler*
- *Staci Chase*
- *Bill Engelking*
- *Jennifer Albright*
- *Robert Woodford*
- *Suei Ching-An*
- *Tom Cummings*
- *Molly Bowen*
- *Kathy Berger*
- *Jesabel Velez*
- *Sandy Cookman*
- *Jeff Gorfine*
- *George Smith*
- *Kevin Buchs*

DONOR RECOGNITION

- *Wendland, Utz, Stahl & Mintz*
- *Jane & Mark Callahan*
- *Ed Pompein*
- *Bill Kolb*
- *Suzanne & Ham Peterson*
- *Gail Baker*
- *Pamela King*
- *Ace of Spades Catering*
- *Jane & Mark Callahan*
- *Suzanne & Ham Peterson*
- *Mark Smith*
- *Carl Anderson*
- *Minnesota State Bar Association*
- *Olmsted County Bar Association*
- *Third Judicial District Bar Association*

Funder Recognition:

Legal Services Assistance Coalition, Lawyers Trust Account Board, Olmsted County Purchase of Service, Violence Against Women’s Act, United Way of Olmsted County.

Are you a client who would like to share your story? Are you an attorney who assisted a client through their case and would like to share the outcome? Do you know of someone who has a fascinating tale to tell? If you are interested in submitting an article for future newsletters, please submit via e-mail to angela@laocmn.org

We’re on the Web!
www.laocmn.org
