# Using Pro Bono Resources to Maximize Your Legal Program

Laura Burdick, Capacity Building Section  
Lauren Graham Sullivan, Advocacy Section

## Panelists

- Allison Rutland Soulen, Director of Legal Services, Just Neighbors  
- Debi Sanders, Senior Staff Attorney, Catholic Charities of DC  
- Keith Suter, Legal and Administrative Intern, Catholic Charities of DC  
- Lauren Graham Sullivan, Advocacy Attorney/ BIA Pro Bono Project Coordinator, CLINIC  
- Larry Katzman, Deputy Public Service Counsel, Steptoe

## CLINIC’s Capacity Building Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is Pro Bono?</th>
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<td>Why have a pro bono component to your program?</td>
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<td>Benefits of a Pro Bono Program</td>
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Challenges

- Takes resources = staff time
- Requires recruiting = staff time
- Assuring quality representation = training
- Mentoring needs = staff time or more recruiting to identify mentors
- The need exceeds number of available attorneys

Steps in Creating or Enhancing a Pro Bono Program

- Needs Assessment
- Recruitment
- Management

Larger Nonprofit Perspective

Debi Sanders, Senior Staff Attorney
Keith Suter, Legal and Administrative Intern
Catholic Charities of Washington, DC
Immigration Legal Services
**Pro Bono Panel**

- Recruits, trains, and mentors pro bono attorneys
- Cases identified through weekly intake at four CC offices and Family Justice Center in Rockville
- 171 clients represented last year
- Cases: U visas, VAWA, asylum, SIJs

**Pro Bono Panel**

- Weekly bulletin, “Pro Bono Action Alert” with case summaries to individuals interested in pro bono work
- Monthly legal trainings for pro bono lawyers

**Developing Your Network**

(Recruit, Train, Mentor and Thank)

- Recruit at every opportunity (AILA, Convening, Bar, Church, friends, neighbors)
- Provide training to develop your network (train at least once a month, some short, others long)
- Provide materials to new volunteers between trainings
- Be clear about what you expect from your pro bono attorneys
- Circulate your trainings and current needs
- Transition experienced volunteers into mentors
How to Reach Your Network

• Action Alert: weekly emails
• Case Summaries: circulate summaries, provide more detailed intakes and information for conflicts checks
• Trainings: require pro bono commitment
• Victories: celebrate and thank volunteers and inspire new volunteers

How We Manage Our Cases

• Make sure you have all the information the pro bono attorney will need regarding the client and sample forms
• Have volunteers sign retainer agreement and confidentiality forms
• Create a Master Table (preferably excel) with details on client, case, relevant dates, contact information, back up contact information
• Provide competent mentoring from staff and experienced volunteers
• Pro bono database for further detail

Sample Master Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>May 13</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Date of Service</td>
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Small Nonprofit Perspective

Allison Rutland Soulen
Director of Legal Services
Just Neighbors

Overview of Just Neighbors

• History of its Program

• Office Locations

• Intake Process

Legal Services

• Just Neighbors does handle:
  – U Visas and U Visa adjustments of former clients
  – VAWA and VAWA adjustments
  – Asylee and refugee adjustment
  – TPS
  – I-821D renewal and replacement
  – Green card renewal and replacement
  – DACA
  – Some family petitions
  – I-751
  – Naturalization
  – Advice & Counsel

• Just Neighbors does NOT handle:
  – Asylum
  – Deportation
  – Most Immigration Court Matters
  – Some Family Petitions
Staff and Volunteers

- Just Neighbors has 5 staff
  - Executive Director, Full Time
  - Office Manager, Full Time
  - 3 attorneys, close to full time

- Volunteers
  - How do we recruit volunteers?
  - How do we use volunteers?
  - How do we supervise volunteers?

Volunteers

- 2011
  - 3060 attorney hours
  - 5346 non-attorney hours
  - 8406 total
  - Cases: 770
  - Clients: 651

- 2012
  - Attorney hours -- 35 individuals: 4,752
  - Non attorney hours -- 85 individuals: 5870
  - Total: 10,622
  - Cases: 1218
  - Clients 1076

National Pro Bono Project Perspective

Lauren Graham Sullivan
Advocacy Attorney / BIA Pro Bono Project Coordinator
CLINIC
BIA Pro Bono Project

• Overview of the Project
  Partners:
  • Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR)
  • Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
  • American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
  • American Immigration Council (AIC)
  • National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG)
  • Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition (CAIR)

BIA Pro Bono Project

• Overview of the Project, cont’d
  – Who do we serve?
    • Detained
    • Non-detained
    • Pro Se before the IJ
  – Needs Assessment – Origin of the Project
  – Recruitment of Pro Bono Attorneys
  – Management of the Project

BIA Pro Bono Project

• What do we do?
  – Screen
  – Select
  – Distribute
  – Match
  – Pro Bono Representation (100%)
BIA Pro Bono Project

How we sell/pitch the Project:

– Screened cases
– Mentorship
– 6 weeks for brief writing
– Transcripts and records
– Resources

Pro Bono Firm’s Perspective

Larry Katzman
Deputy Public Service Counsel
Steptoe & Johnson LLP

Firm Facts

• Steptoe & Johnson LLP
• Based in Washington, DC
• 400 lawyers
• 6 US offices plus 3 abroad
**Pro Bono Activity**

- Two full-time public service counsel
- 2012: 31,000 hours of pro bono
- Average of 77 hours per attorney
- Full-time loaned associate to Washington, DC Legal Aid
- One Equal Justice Works fellow (currently with Women’s Refugee Commission)

**Pro Bono Mechanics**

- Expectation that every attorney will engage in pro bono
- Associates can apply their pro bono hours toward their billables requirement
- Associates always teamed with a partner

**Goals of Pro Bono Work**

- Make a “meaningful contribution to access to justice”
- Enhance professional development, particularly for associates, to develop proficiency in particular legal skills, as well as competence in case management and strategic analysis
- Give attorneys in different practice areas and in different offices a chance to work together
Range of General Pro Bono Work

- Non-litigation (“transactional”) – wide range of assistance to non-profits
- Civil court litigation – family law, housing, civil rights, impact litigation
- Administrative hearings – immigration, public benefits, tax court, appellate
- Clinical – family, Medicare Part D, tax

Range of Immigration Pro Bono Work

- Direct representation – asylum, U and T visas, SIJS, VAWA, Miscellaneous (DACA, adjustments, I-730s, Iraqi Special Immigrant Visas)
- Special project working with unaccompanied alien children
- Appeals
- Legislative and administrative advocacy
- FOIA requests and litigation
- Special research projects
- Currently 50 active cases, 7,000+ hours in 2012

Placing a Pro Bono Immigration Case with Steptoe & Johnson

- Case description
- Deadlines, atypical facts or circumstances, location of client(s)
- Special needs – foreign language, female attorney preferred
Internal Case Acceptance Procedures

• Willing and available attorneys
• Viable legal claim
• Firm conflict of interest check

Questions?

twitter.com/cliniclegal

415 Michigan Ave., NE
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20017
202-635-2556
national@cliniclegal.org