

Access to Justice Commission Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2018

In attendance: Rose Garcia (Enlace), Bette Fleishman (Pegasus Legal Services for Children), Molly Graver (NMLA), Aja Brooks (NMLA), Chris Ford (JFA Work Group Member), Mark Bennett (Decision Resources), John Arango (Civil Legal Services Commission), George Chandler (ATJ Commissioner), Janice Kauer (NMLA), Carol Skiba (NMLA), Debbie Norman (United South Broadway), Rachel Rodriguez (Equal Access to Justice), Jennifer Foote (ATJ Commissioner), Laura Bassein (Institute of Public Law, UNM School of Law), Keely Lovato (Kenyon College), Jerry Dixon (State Bar of NM), Ernestina Cruz (State Bar of NM), Nancy Higgins (Enlace), Renee Valdez (Metro Court), Michelle Garcia (NMLA), Dina Afek (NMLA), Stephanie Wagner (State Bar of NM), Rosalie (Lisa) Chavez (NMLA), Grace Spulak (Administrative Office of the Courts), Chris Morganti (State Bar of NM), Stacey Leaman (NM Center on Law and Poverty), Mary H. Smith (Civil Legal Services Commissioner), Kip Bobroff (UNM School of Law), Ellie Rushforth (Southwest Women's Law Center), Pamela Herndon (Law Center for Social Justice and Change), Rudy Sanchez (DNA People's Legal Services), Gary Housepian (Disability Rights New Mexico), Hon. Sarah Singleton (First Judicial District), Hon. Shannon Bacon (Second Judicial District), Liz McGrath (vice-chair), Torri Jacobus (City of Albuquerque)

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes

-Minutes from December 14, 2018 meeting were approved.

Report on NM Supreme Court LLLT Work Group (George Chandler)

-The Access to Justice Commission studied Washington State's development of Limited License Legal Technicians (LLLT) and recommended that the NM Supreme Court create a task force to determine how LLLTs could be incorporated into New Mexico's legal system.

-The LLLT Work Group was convened by the Chief Justice to address this issue and is chaired by Judge Mowrer from Clovis. The group has had two meetings to date. George Chandler serves as ATJ's liaison to this group.

-The LLLT model as implemented in Washington state is a two-year degree with both coursework and internship requirements (for paralegals it requires less coursework). The curriculum established by a law school and available through community colleges.

-At their first meeting, the LLLT Work Group heard a presentation from Washington state on their program (the same presentation that was provided to the ATJ Commission), and asked members of the group to get feedback from their constituents about whether New Mexico should go forward. At the second meeting, the Work Group agreed to go forward with developing a proposal for LLLTs in New Mexico.

-The Commission discussed the need to ensure that any proposal allow LLLT candidates to receive training in their home communities and the potential for positive impact of LLLTs on access to the legal system in rural communities and for middle income people in metropolitan areas.

-George will continue to update the Commission on progress made by this group.

NMLA Community Justice Worker Program (Michelle Garcia)

-NMLA has created this program to address the need for advocacy in rural areas, particularly northwestern New Mexico (Gallup-area)

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- the Community Justice Worker (CJW) is based on the community health worker model
- through this program, NMLA will work with community services providers to identify local advocates, health professionals, and other community members who can receive training and advocate on a number of legal and quasi-legal issues
- this will allow community members to have access to advocacy in situations that don't require a lawyer (e.g. helping draft letters to landlords or debt collectors on behalf of clients)
- program is currently being piloted in the Gallup area and NMLA would like to expand the program through the state
- NMLA will conduct trainings on holistic advocacy in Gallup and Grants on January 17, 2019 and January 22, 2019, and is developing training housing and consumer law
- if people want to attend the January 17 or 22 trainings, they should RSVP to Michelle Garcia at michelleg@nmlegalaid.org

Update on Memorial to Study Qualifications for Custody Evaluators (Liz McGrath)

- no updates since last meeting; Commission chairs will ask the Supreme Court for approval to have the ATJ Commission included as a party to the proposed task force in the memorial

Update on Civil Legal Services Funding (John Arango)

- John Arango and Liz McGrath met with David Abbey the Director of the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) last week to share their proposed appropriation for Civil Legal Services (CLS)
- asking for \$4.6 million in total funding, an increase of \$2.5 million
- David Abbey recommended that they ask the chair of the House Appropriations Committee to set a hearing on CLS which Liz will do.
- likely can't count on the \$2.5 million increase as an ongoing appropriate so should look at one time needs for this money
- LFC will have staff devoted to CLS at some point in the near future

Strategic Planning

- The Justice for All Strategic Action Planning work groups met for the remainder of the meeting to further develop their action items identified at the December 14, 2019 meeting.
- The Justice for All planning work group will take the planning templates and information from these groups and develop a proposed action plan. This will be shared with members via email and at our next ATJ Commission meeting.

Next Meeting

April 12, 2019 from noon-4 PM at the State Bar.