



VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE POOR FOUNDATION

VLP Celebrates 35th Anniversary; Creates New Custody Clinic



Harry Santen and Mary Asbury with Judge Barrett.

2017 was a milestone year for the VLP. We celebrated our 35th anniversary with a reception hosted by Graydon, at which Judge Michael R. Barrett delivered the keynote address. We saluted

founders of the VLP: Harry Santen, Robert Laufman, and Jerry Lawson. We also recognized 23 law firm and corporate *pro bono* coordinators. Each received a signed, framed print of a commemorative painting by our colleague Bruce Petrie. During the past five years, 866 VLP attorneys closed 7,324 cases, which represented over 72,000 hours of in-kind services. Thank you to everyone who donated their time and professional expertise.

In 2017, we expanded our innovative advice and brief services clinics by introducing the Custody and Companionship Clinic last September, in partnership with Hamilton County Juvenile Court, Legal Aid, and the Hamilton County Law Library. The clinic is featured in this report.

The Family Law Clinic at the Hamilton County Domestic Relations Court, introduced in 2016, provided advice to 815 individuals in the past year. Thanks to the 85 private attorneys who have volunteered at the clinic.

We also held a special wills clinic for Jewish Family Services at the Mayerson JCC for Holocaust survivors. We were honored to assist the 22 emigres from the former USSR, who required the assistance of Russian speaking interpreters to prepare wills and advance directives. Our thanks to the attorneys from GE Aviation and Dinsmore who spent several hours with each client, some of whom are pictured.



Event Host and VLP Board member Mike Robert joins fellow firm coordinators and VLP President Joe Heyd to highlight the commemorative painting by Bruce Petrie.



Another highlight of the year was the expanded immigration law representation started by VLPP board member and Frost Brown Todd partner Ali Razzaghi. He organized a team to help low-income, unaccompanied children, who have fled their Central American home countries due to violence and poverty, pursue the specific legal remedy of Special Immigrant Juvenile Status to remain in the U.S. Legal Aid and Catholic Charities of Southwestern Ohio attorneys provided training for the FBT volunteers on these complex cases which require appearances before the juvenile court, the Cleveland Immigration Court and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. 21 FBT attorneys have accepted 25 cases.

Our Uncontested Divorce clinics program continued, assisting 332 clients during 39 divorce clinics in six counties. 39 Volunteer attorneys, assisted by one law student and four Legal Aid staff represented clients through these clinics.



The fifth class of mentees with Legal Aid's Kelly Malone

A fifth class of six attorneys new to the practice of family law recently completed their year-long Mentoring Program. To date, 33 private attorneys have benefited from this program and have accepted 126 VLP case referrals.

The VLP and Legal Aid co-hosted a Bankruptcy Breakfast to thank members of the Bankruptcy Bar for taking *pro bono* cases. Jeffery P. Hopkins, Chief Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court-Southern District

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of Ohio, was the keynote speaker, followed by Attorney Nick Zingarelli.

In 2016, the VLP honored Cathi Evans as the Butler County Volunteer Lawyer of the Year. Our 2017 Volunteer Lawyers of the Year, B. Scott Boster and Susan Schreiber, are highlighted separately in this report.

331 attorneys handled over 2,200 cases in 2017. In addition to their volunteer efforts, your generosity provided

the resources needed to assist these clients. We offer our thanks to all who supported the VLP financially. We especially thank the Cincinnati Bar Association, our partner in producing and distributing this report, the Cincinnati Bar Foundation, which underwrites our volunteer recruitment efforts, and the Legal Aid Society for its significant in-kind support.

Juvenile Court Custody Clinic Launched

The Custody and Companionship Clinic is the most recent legal clinic to be introduced by a strategic partnership between the Volunteer Lawyers Project, the Hamilton County courts, Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, and the Hamilton County Law Library.

The goal of this Clinic at Hamilton County Juvenile Court is to improve access to and knowledge of the juvenile court custody process for low-income individuals. At the clinic, volunteer lawyers offer brief, on-the-spot legal advice, including explanations on court procedures, guidance on the evidence self-represented litigants will need in court, and assistance in drafting agreements and pleadings. As a result, they have the resources to file correctly and completely the first time, saving both time and stress.

In the clinic's first three months of operation, 14 private attorneys assisted 142 individuals filing for changes in custody or visitation. On average, the attorneys are spending 40 minutes with each litigant. Most of the clinic participants reported that they had tried but not succeeded in filing on their own before coming to the clinic. 90% said that the clinic assistance was very helpful. The Custody and Companionship Clinic is open Mondays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first floor of 800 Broadway.

As part of our effort to increase capacity for representation in juvenile court, Legal Aid and the VLP have launched the Juvenile Custody Mentoring Program. Modeled after the successful Family Law Mentoring Program, attorneys new to the practice of juvenile law will represent clients with one-on-one guidance from experienced juvenile court practitioners, as well as attend traditional seminars and assist participants at the Custody and Companionship Clinic.



Volunteer Lawyers Recognized



B. Scott Boster was selected as the 2017 Volunteer Lawyer of the Year. He was honored at the Cincinnati Bar Association annual meeting in May. A partner at Ulmer & Berne, Scott has taken *pro bono* VLP cases for over 30 years. Recently, Scott has focused his talents on assisting clients in contested tax

disputes. He has accepted seven VLP tax referrals in just 16 months. Scott recently negotiated a 50% reduction in tax liability for an elderly client suffering from heart disease and memory loss.



Susan M. Schreiber was named 2017 Butler County Volunteer Lawyer of the Year. Anne Lucas presented her with the award at the Butler County Bar Association Law Day celebration. Susan is a 2008 graduate of the University of Dayton School of Law and she started accepting VLP cases soon

after she was admitted to the bar. In the last eight years, she has taken 28 cases, assisting victims of domestic violence gain freedom from their abuser and have the opportunity to start a safe, secure new life.

Thank you, Scott, and Susan, for your commitment to serving clients.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	2017	2016
Cash & Cash Equivalents	293,574	288,545
Accounts Receivable	500	8,000
Prepaid Expense & Other	1,266	1,988
Total Assets	295,340	298,533

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	47,933	36,341
Unrestricted Net Assets	247,407	262,192
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	295,340	298,533

Revenue and Support

In-Kind Services	1,327,706	1,502,845
Contributions		
Individuals	55,700	41,007
Firms	58,900	68,121
Other Organizations	11,003	13,661
Total Revenue	1,453,309	1,625,634

Expenses

Legal Services	1,388,830	1,565,655
Management & General	59,409	56,750
Fundraising	19,855	7,385
Total Expenses	1,468,094	1,629,790

Change in net assets	(14,785)	(4,156)
Net assets, beginning of year	262,192	266,348
Net assets, end of year	247,407	262,192

The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati provides the Foundation with personnel to perform administrative functions and certain other non-reimbursed expenses. These services and expenses are valued at the cost to the Legal Aid Society and are included in the financial statements. Total services and expenses provided by the Society were approximately \$302,000 in 2017. The value of the legal services donated by lawyers on a volunteer or reduced fee basis is included as contributed services at rates estimated to be what the Foundation would have been required to pay for additional outside services. Donated hours by lawyers in 2017 approximated 7,719 hours valued at approximately \$135 per hour for a total of \$1,042,065. A full financial statement is available by calling (513) 362-2804.

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Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation

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