

Access to Justice Commission Standing Committee on Law School Partnerships

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Via Teleconference

In attendance: Jamie Iguchi, Randy Snyder, Kate McGrath Ellis, Angie Wagenhals, Diana Garrett, Hillary Wandler, Jessica Walker-Keleher, and Judge Krueger. **Also present:** Kate Kuykendall.

Call to Order: 1:00 p.m.

Introductions.

Each Committee member on the call stated that he or she was present.

Appoint a Committee Chair.

The floor was opened for volunteers. Jamie Iguchi volunteered to serve as Chair. Judge Krueger moved to appoint Jamie as Chair. Randy Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Discuss procedure for future meetings.

The Committee discussed how it would like to proceed with its assigned tasks. Jamie, as Chair, agreed she would be willing to help coordinate meetings and agendas, and suggested setting a regular monthly meeting date. Several Committee members expressed a preference for having at least some meetings take place in person rather than by phone. The Committee agreed this would be a good approach, as long as there is phone access to all meetings available.

The Committee discussed possible dates for an in-person meeting, and agreed to meet in Missoula on Friday, April 11, at 1:00 p.m. Diana Garrett noted that the Montana Legal Services Association conference room and phone are available at that time, and that the Committee is welcome to meet there. The Committee agreed. Kate will send out a Save the Date email to all Committee members.

Discuss Assigned Strategic Priorities.

The Committee reviewed the four strategic priorities assigned by the Access to Justice Commission as a result of its strategic planning process.

Priority 1: Work with partners to develop a signature program to pair MT attorneys with law students to work on Rule 6.1 pro bono matters.

The Committee discussed this priority, and clarified members' understanding that this priority essentially asks the Committee to develop a mentoring program in conjunction with other community partners. Several members expressed their understanding that mentoring programs are difficult to create and are often not particularly effective. The Committee agreed to pursue this priority by first researching similar programs already in place in other states. **Randy Snyder and Kate Kuykendall will pull together some resources for the Committee to review on April 11.**

Priority 4: Coordinate with the Justice Initiatives Committee to support its strategies aimed at increasing participation by pro bono attorneys.

The Committee discussed this priority, and found nothing in it to prevent the Committee from adopting it. Hillary Wandler suggested that having a member of this Committee serve on the Justice Initiatives Committee as well would help facilitate communication between the two. Angie Wagenhals noted that both she and Patty Fain sit on the Justice Initiatives Committee, so communication between the two committees should be possible.

Priority 2: Work with partners to develop and implement an ongoing program to expand and support pro bono opportunities for students, and make appropriate recommendations to the Commission.

The Committee discussed this priority, and agreed that it would prefer to pursue this priority in a different way. The Committee generally agreed that it makes more sense to first assess existing programs, support them as appropriate, and only then work to expand pro bono opportunities as needed. Approached this way, the priority now reads: *Work with partners to assess and support existing pro bono programs and opportunities for students, expand programs and opportunities as necessary, and make appropriate recommendations to the Commission.*

Hillary Wandler and Jessica Walker-Keleher agreed to pull together a report of current programs and opportunities for law students for the Committee to consider at its April 11th meeting. Angie Wagenhals agreed to provide support and information if Hillary and Jessica find they need to know more about Montana Legal Services Association's efforts to engage and support student pro bono efforts.

Priority 3: Support adoption of appropriate changes to Rule 6.1 to accommodate law student pro bono practice.

The Committee discussed this priority. Jessica provided a general description of the student perspective regarding pro bono and resources that support student pro bono, noting that there are several varied opportunities, but no centralized place for students to go for support. She described a pilot project Professor Gross, who teaches Professional Responsibility at the Law School, has implemented this semester to encourage students to participate in pro bono. Jessica also noted that students are becoming more interested in using technology, such as Skype, to work with attorneys in areas outside of Missoula.

Randy suggested that this would be another area where the Committee might benefit from surveying what other states have done with regard to student practice. **Jamie Iguchi and Kate McGrath Ellis agreed to research this area and report to the Committee on April 11th.**

Meeting Adjourned: 1:42 p.m.