

Access to Justice Commission Standing Committee on Law School Partnerships

Friday, April 11, 2014

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Missoula MLSA Office

In attendance: Justice Baker, Jamie Iguchi, Randy Snyder, Kate McGrath Ellis, Angie Wagenhals, Diana Garrett, Hillary Wandler, Jessica Walker-Keleher, Judge Krueger, Janice Doggett, Amy Sings in the Timber, and Patty Fain

Call to Order: 1:00 p.m.

Introductions.

Committee members introduced themselves.

Approve Minutes

The minutes from the March 11, 2014 meeting were approved with no objections.

Item 1- Recommendation for pro bono student reporting.

Justice Baker reported on the public comment and court impressions of the proposed student pro bono reporting policy. The public comment submitted was not supportive of the proposal overall.

Additionally, the court had two concerns:

- 1) The proposal gives the impression that pro bono is a requirement or that it would be used as a factor to evaluate the character and fitness application for each new bar applicant, and
- 2) That an additional regulatory obligation should not be imposed on students seeking admission to the Bar.

Justice Baker suggested that this committee needs to come up with a proposal that addresses those concerns to take to the Access to Justice Commission for consideration and approval at its June 25th meeting. This proposal needs to be something this committee is confident will be approved by the Court.

After much discussion, it was determined that **Janice and Patty will develop an “opt-in” reporting form** modeled on the pro bono reporting form distributed to the Bar annually. The form will be optional, just as it is for Bar members, and will be clear that pro bono participation will not be used to evaluate the applicant’s character and fitness.

The committee also discussed that it will be important to solicit law student input when the next proposal is open for public comment.

Item 2- Current programs and opportunities for law students in Montana

Hilary and Jessica reported on current opportunities available for law student volunteers. See the attached document for more detail.

Item 3- Student practice in other states

Kate and Jamie looked at programs that other states have developed to encourage student pro bono work. They found that there are three basic structures: 1) student oriented, 2) law school oriented, and 3) employer oriented. Please see the attached report for more detail.

A discussion on the importance of recognizing student pro bono work through awards, etc. followed and many felt that it would be significant to award students who have done pro bono work with a pin during the swearing in ceremony.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:30PM

Next meeting date to be determined.