

PRO BONO Opportunities

Help for 501(c)(3)s

The State-wide Community Tax Law Project (CTLP) was originally founded in 1992 to provide pro bono representation to low income Virginia residents in federal, state and local tax disputes. *In 1998, CTLP expanded its representation to include incorporation of new nonprofit organizations and application for IRS tax-exempt rulings. Clients must be Virginia organizations whose charitable purpose in some way assists low income individuals and which cannot otherwise afford legal representation.* Prospective clients call the Project's office in Richmond where their cases are screened for merit and financial eligibility. Once a case is accepted, CTLP contacts a volunteer attorney in the client's geographic area. *CTLP refers nonprofits to the Richmond Bar Foundation Pro-bono Clearinghouse for assistance with other legal matters.* The project has also organized and participated in statewide programs developed to provide legal and tax advice to small, community-based nonprofits and assistance to their advisors. For more information or to find out how you can volunteer for this program please call The Community Tax Law Project at (804) 358-5855, or e-mail info@ctlp.org.

The Richmond Bar Foundation Pro-bono Clearinghouse provides pro bono opportunities for transactional lawyers and lawyers with counseling practices. The Richmond Bar Foundation has formed the Pro Bono Clearinghouse to serve the legal needs of 501(C)(3) corporations that would otherwise be unable to obtain legal counsel. The mission of the Clearinghouse is to *refer nonprofit organizations to lawyers in the Richmond Metropolitan Area* whose practices focus on the business aspects of law, such as corporations, finance, tax, real estate and employment. The program will be housed within the offices of the Richmond Bar Association. This program will perform the dual function of assisting nonprofits in need and providing pro bono opportunities to lawyers with counseling practices. The Clearinghouse has begun to accept attorney volunteers. It coordinates its activities with The Community Tax Law Project. For a copy of the attorney volunteer form, please send your request by e-mail to Brian R. Marron at bmarron@cantorarkema.com.

Legal Services and Educational Programs for Virginia's Creative Community. Low-income individuals and nonprofit organizations of the *arts and cultural communities* throughout Virginia have access to legal services and information through the Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts (WALA). WALA provides help in negotiating a contract (exhibition, copyright licensing, lease agreements, etc.), resolving an employment dispute, or understanding the tax implications of a "for-profit" venture for tax-exempt organizations. WALA helps individuals choose the appropriate business structure for their creative endeavors, and assists them in collecting payment for their services. The Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, has been serving the creative community since 1983. WALA makes essential services—professional business counseling, legal advice and representation, and educational programs—accessible and affordable for *low-income artists and nonprofit cultural and arts organizations in DC, Maryland and across Virginia*. WALA is a partner-organization to the DC Commission on the Arts and the Humanities. WALA also works with Virginia's Commission for the Arts, and cooperates with the Virginia Bar Association to reach

the Commonwealth's artists and its arts and cultural organizations. Three staff members operate WALA's programs, including arts resolution services, legal services, and education. For more information, contact: WALA, 815 Fifteenth Street, NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20005 (Phone) 202 393-2826; (Fax) (202) 393-4444; (Web) www.thewala.org

Pro Bono Resources

Health Care Advance Planning

The American Bar Association Commission on Legal Problems of the Elderly is providing lawyers with a book that it says will serve as a "tool kit" to better help clients with their advance planning. "Lawyers Tool Kit for Health Care Advance Planning" is designed for lawyers in estate planning, elder law, and general practice who know the technical requirements for drafting health care advance directives, but may not have the time or training to guide their clients through the extended self-reflection and discussion with family and physician that constitute the core of effective health care advance planning. "Lawyers Tool Kit" contains a variety of self-help worksheets, suggestions and resources to focus discussion and help clients work through the decision-making process. It also includes a 3.5-inch diskette featuring the tools in Microsoft Word format that can be uploaded, customized, and printed directly from the computer. "Lawyers Tool Kit" costs \$24, plus \$5 shipping and handling. To order, call the ABA Service Center at 800/285-2221 and request the Lawyers Tool Kit for Health Care Advance Planning, product code 4280020 or log on to <http://www.abanet.org/elderly>. For more information, contact the ABA Commission on Legal Problems for the Elderly, 740 15th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005-1022, or (202) 662-8690.

ABA Standards for Programs Providing Civil Pro Bono Legal Services to Persons of Limited Means.

Previously released in hard copy, this resource is now available on the ABA Division for Legal Services Web site. The standards are intended to provide guidance to newly established nonprofit programs and their governing bodies and to provide a basis for improving and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of existing programs. To download a copy, visit www.abanet.org/legalservices/standards1.html.

Update on Ethics 2000 Project. The American Bar Association Commission on Evaluation of the Rules of Professional Conduct (the "Ethics 2000" Commission) was established in 1997 to undertake a comprehensive study and evaluation of the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct in light of developments in the law and in the legal profession since the Rules adoption in 1983. The entire report is available to download at http://www.abanet.org/cpr/e2k-whole_report_home.html. Files for each individual rule, including those for public service and legal services are available at http://www.abanet.org/cpr/e2k-report_home.html. A summary is available.

Visit www.corporateprobono.org or www.cpbo.org for additional information or help for nonprofits.

Pro Bono and Reduced Fee Opportunities in Domestic Relations: Addressing the Needs of Low-income and other Vulnerable Clients

Increasingly, bar associations are asking for information about model programs with family law components that might easily be replicated. And individual attorneys are expressing interest in participating on private bar panels for free or reduced-fee referrals. If you are in one of these categories, we invite you to inquire about program designs and potential listings from the groups shown below. Commitment requests vary. Some groups or projects such as legal aid directly sponsor formal representation, advising, and mentoring opportunities. Other projects, including lay groups such as Virginians Against Domestic Violence, may consider making informal client referrals when they assemble a minimum of three practitioners in a given geographic area or when they have been requested by non-legal professionals to recommend lawyers willing to consult with local health care providers and other community resources.

Join a Referral Panel

Private Bar Initiatives with Virginia's Licensed Legal Aid Societies:
www.lscv.org

Attorney General Mark Earley's Volunteer Prosecutors/Child Support Enforcement Project: <http://www.vba.org/yld.htm>

Clients with Disability Rights Issues/Virginia's Local Centers for Independent Living: <http://www.vasilc.org/cils/cils.html>

Community Mediation Centers with Sliding Fee Scales:
<http://www.courts.state.va.us/cmcl/cmcl.htm>

The Central Virginia Regional DV Pro Bono Program:
www.vplc.org/domestic.htm

Local Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Referral Programs:
www.vsb.org/probono/index.html

CTLP provides help for the Innocent Spouse in state, local and federal tax matters: www.CTLP.org

American Association of Retired Persons Legal Services Reduced-fee Program: <http://www.aarp.org/lsn/virginia>

The Elder Rights Center/Virginia Department for the Aging: pro bono and reduced-fee referrals. **1-800-552-3402**

Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights:
<http://www.karamah.org/>

Christian Legal Society: <http://www.christianlegalsociety.org>

Connect with Your Colleagues

www.vsb.org/sections/fa/boardgov.htm

www.vsb.org/yl/domviolence

www.vba.org/yld.htm (domestic violence project)

Learn more about Special Programs

The VBA/Virginia NAMI Joint Mental Health Referral Pro Bono Program: www.vba.org/servicepro.htm

Targeted Local Bar Association Programs/the Virginia Beach Bar Association Example: (community assistance programs)
<http://www.virginia-beach.va.us/courts/courts.htm>

A Faith-based Law School's Family Mediation Clinic:
www.regent.edu/acad/schlaw/programs/clinical.html

Investigate Community Education Initiatives

The Virginia State Bar's Speakers Bureau:
www.vsb.org/publications/speakersbureau/index.html

Various Bar Association Community Education Brochures: for sources of samples, contact petrini@vsb.org

Advising Health Care Providers and other Community Professionals on DV issues: www.vadv.org

A law firm-sponsored Community Education Clinic: "The Women's Divorce Seminar Hotline." (757) 456-1574

Virginia Fatherhood Initiative's "What Men Need to Know" Divorce Seminar: <http://www.va-dads/divorce.htm>

Visit the Pro Bono page on the VSB Web site for **pro bono training and opportunities** listed at.
www.vsb.org/probono/.