

Executive Director's Message

by Karen A. Gould



Three Organizations That Enhance the Bar's Mission

QUESTION: What do Lawyers Helping Lawyers, the Legal Services Corporation of Virginia, and the Virginia Law Foundation have in common?

Answer: Virginia lawyers. These three organizations help Virginia lawyers and our communities in unique ways. They are an important part of our statewide legal community.

Lawyers Helping Lawyers

Lawyers Helping Lawyers (LHL) was organized in 1985 to provide confidential assistance to members of the legal profession with substance abuse and mental health problems. LHL is not a part of the Virginia State Bar, and lawyers who go to it for help are assured of confidentiality by Rule 8.5, Comment 5, of the Rules of Professional Conduct. In addition to a statewide network of volunteers, LHL has a professional staff. Assistance can include assessment, professional consultation, information about or referral to treatment resources, informal or formal intervention, and monitoring. A major objective of the program is to help impaired lawyers and prevent disciplinary problems. In addition, LHL receives referrals from the VSB Professional Regulation Department and monitors the lawyers' progress. In return, the VSB provides \$100,000 in support for LHL's programs. The VSB also makes three appointments to the LHL Board of Directors. Mary Yancey Spencer, deputy executive director of the VSB, is one of the VSB's appointees to the LHL board. Contact LHL at 600 E. Main Street, Suite 2035, Richmond,

VA 23219; (877) 545-4682 (toll-free); info@valhl.org.; <http://www.valhl.org>.

Legal Services Corporation of Virginia

Legal Services Corporation of Virginia (LSCV) was created in 1975 by the Virginia State Bar, the Virginia Department of Social Services, and the Virginia Legal Aid Association. It promotes the development and coordination of legal aid programs that help the poorest and most vulnerable people obtain help with legal problems that affect their most basic needs: food, shelter, job, and health care. LSCV is a bridge to the local, community-based legal aid organizations that serve disadvantaged Virginians. LSCV provides those organizations with funding from the state and Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA), program oversight, and coordination. The VSB acts as a conduit for state funding to LSCV. In addition to state and IOLTA funding, LSCV relies on donations to support legal services to the indigent. Because of the decrease in interest rates, decline in IOLTA revenue over the fiscal years ending 2009 and 2010 is projected to be close to \$4 million for LSCV. The VSB Council appoints sixteen members of the LSCV Board of Directors, the VSB Young Lawyers Conference appoints one director, and the chair of the VSB's Special Committee on Access to Legal Services is an automatic appointment. The VSB's executive director currently serves on the LSCV Board. Mark D. Braley has been LSCV's executive director for eighteen years. Contact LSCV at 700 E. Main Street, Suite 1504, Richmond, VA 23219; (804) 782-9438.

Virginia Law Foundation

The Virginia Law Foundation was established in 1974 by the Virginia State Bar to serve as the nonprofit for Virginia lawyers seeking to improve the administration of justice and promote the rule of law throughout Virginia. Its mission is to promote through philanthropy the rule of law, access to justice, and law-related education. To that end, Virginia Law Foundation provides grants to help to:

- provide civil legal services to the poor;
- educate the public about law and about the legal profession;
- offer not-for-profit continuing legal education of Virginia lawyers;
- support public service internships for Virginia law students; and
- recognize and encourage excellence in the practice of law.

The Virginia Law Foundation has provided more than \$23 million in grants to support law-related projects in Virginia. The foundation selects fellows each year to encourage and recognize excellence in the practice of law and public service. No more than 1 per cent of Virginia's lawyers are selected to be fellows; they are chosen for their distinction in the profession and contributions to the community. Supported by IOLTA revenue until 1996, the Virginia Law Foundation now relies on investment income and donations to

Organizations *continued on page 59*

Organizations continued from page 12

generate funds for grants. The foundation's board of directors is appointed by the VSB and the Virginia Bar Association, with ex officio members consisting of the VSB's executive director, the VBA's executive director, the Virginia CLE chair, the foundation's Fellows Council chair, and the foundation's executive director. Contact the Virginia Law Foundation at 600 E. Main Street, Suite 2040, Richmond, VA 23219; (804) 648-0112; vlf.info@virginialawfoundation.org; http://www.virginialawfoundation.org.

I HOPE YOU WILL SUPPORT these organization in whatever way you can. They do good work for Virginia lawyers. They need our help and support as much as we need them. 🙏