

**Access to Justice Commission
Tenth Judicial District Pro Bono Committee
2010 Annual Report for the Period
January 1 2009 – December 31, 2009**

- 1. Provide a list of your committee members with phone numbers and e.mail addresses:**

Hon. Albert J. Mitchell, Jr., Chair
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- 2. Has your committee been successful in developing programs that enable attorneys to assist your low-income population?**

We are in the early stages of assessing our ability to develop programs to address the legal needs of our low income population. Our low number of attorneys and high number of low income individuals, coupled with the geographical make-up of our judicial district has made it challenging to initiate the development of a meaningful program. Our very rural judicial district consisting of De Baca, Harding and Quay Counties has a population of approximately 11,500, with 29% (3,300) living under 125% of poverty level. This small population spread across a large geographic area of 7,325 square miles equates to about 1.6 person(s) per square mile. Neither Harding nor De Baca Counties have any practicing attorneys, while Quay County has 14 (including 2 judges and 5 government attorneys).

- 3. Have you formed a volunteer attorney pool from a survey or other tool? List the names of attorneys who have provided pro bono services through participation in one of your programs.**

While we have not conducted a formal survey to establish a volunteer attorney pool due to the low number of attorneys in our district, we know our attorneys generously provide pro bono assistance to our low income population. An analysis of the 2009 NM State Bar Dues & Licensing Form, which mandated reporting of pro bono hours, disclosed that six of our attorneys reported donating 591 hours, the highest average gift of pro bono hours reported in the state.

- 4. Has your committee attempted to develop programs that have been unsuccessful in attracting assistance from pro bono attorneys?**

No.

5. **Please quantify the number of your low-income population who have benefitted from your programs:**

No formal programs have been developed.

6. **What do you see as the greatest impediment to securing pro bono assistance for your district's low income people?**

Our greatest impediments include the factors mentioned in response to Number 2: high number of low income individuals, low number of private attorneys coupled with large physical geographical area.

7. **Do you anticipate your current pro bono program to maintain its current status and/ or grow in subsequent years?**

Our goal is to grow.

8. **Did your committee participate in New Mexico Pro Bono week and if so, were the public functions sponsored that week successful? If not, please describe why the public functions were not successful. Do you intend to include similar functions in your on-going future pro bono plans?**

Yes. A recognition luncheon was hosted for members of our legal community. The luncheon, with special guest New Mexico Court of Appeals Judge Tim Garcia, was well attended by local attorneys, judges, city dignitaries, as well as students from the local community college participating in a criminal law survey class. **PLEASE ADD TO THIS, IF there's more detail.** We did not sponsor any public functions during the week. Moving forward, our committee intends to research the possibility of partnering with other judicial districts, richer in legal resources, to develop and implement programs for our low income population.

9. **New Mexico pro bono week was initiated as part of the 1st national annual "Celebrate Pro Bono" week. Would you support participation in another New Mexico Pro Bono week?**

Yes.

10. **The ATJ commission would like to use your work to build a resource guide for use by all committees. Please attach any forms, flyers, press releases, DVDs or other material you've used to implement your on-going programs or your participation in New Mexico Pro Bono Week.**

Attachment 1 is a press release regarding the Tenth Judicial District's celebration of New Mexico Pro Week.