

**Access to Justice Commission  
Chaves County Pro Bono Committee  
Annual Report for the Period  
January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008**

**I. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED**

**Chaves County Pro Bono Committee**

**Chairs:**        *The Hon. Steven L. Bell*  
                      5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District  
                      575-624-7518  
                      [rosdslb@nmcourts.gov](mailto:rosdslb@nmcourts.gov)

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**Members:**

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*Sheryl Saavedra*  
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*Judy Pittman*  
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**II. HAS YOUR COMMITTEE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN DEVELOPING PROGRAMS THAT ENABLE ATTORNEYS TO ASSIST YOUR LOW-INCOME POPULATION?**

We have instituted a program that helps low income persons that do not have complex legal issues to complete the forms and understand the process of getting divorced, through our Pro Bono/Pro Se Divorce Workshops. During Pro Bono Week we enlisted the services of several attorneys to present educational programs of interest to low-income persons.

**III. HAVE YOU FORMED A VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY POOL FROM A SURVEY OR OTHER TOOL? PLEASE LIST THE NAMES OF ATTORNEYS WHO HAVE PROVIDED PRO BONO SERVICES THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN ONE OF YOUR PROGRAMS.**

a. Efforts to create a broad volunteer attorney pool have been undertaken, but have yet to go into full effect. A number of local attorneys have volunteered to assist with the Pro Bono/Pro Se Divorce workshop.

b. List of attorneys who have assisted or attended the Pro Bono/Pro Se Divorce Workshop:

Dustin Hunter  
Sheryl Saavedra  
Jared Kallunki  
Matt Bristol

c. List of attorneys who gave an educational presentation during Pro Bono Week:

Tom Dunlap  
Henry Dickson  
Jared Kallunki

**IV. HAS YOUR COMMITTEE ATTEMPTED TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN ATTRACTING ASSISTANCE FROM PRO BONO ATTORNEYS?**

The programs that we have developed have had limited success. We anticipate further ventures but have found local attorneys willing and eager to support the Pro Bono efforts.

**V. PLEASE QUANTIFY THE NUMBER OF YOUR LOW-INCOME POPULATION WHO HAVE BENEFITTED FROM YOUR PROGRAMS.**

a. The Pro Se/Pro Bono Divorce Workshops: 85 persons screened through Legal Aid have been assisted.

b. The Educational Presentation program: Approximately 150 persons were helped, primarily through presentations at the Roswell Joy Center.

**VI. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE GREATEST IMPEDIMENT TO SECURING PRO BONO ASSISTANCE FOR YOUR DISTRICT'S LOW INCOME PEOPLE?**

The biggest impediment is developing programs that balance the desire to provide services to low income clients and attorneys busy schedules and need to support themselves. In addition, many attorneys are willing to assist but are reluctant to take on large commitments of time or resources for fear of detriment to their own practice.

**VII. DO YOU ANTICIPATE YOUR CURRENT PRO BONO PROGRAM TO MAINTAIN ITS CURRENT STATUS AND/OR GROW IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS?**

The committee will strive to grow and expand the pro bono program in subsequent years. We are looking for other ways to provide legal services to low-income people. We have recently discussed a plan to have local attorneys do short consultations in association with New Mexico Legal Aid. In the meantime, the Pro Se/Pro Bono Divorce Clinic will keep operating. It is the belief of the committee that if we continue to provide opportunities that are appropriate in scope that more attorneys will become involved.

**VIII. 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?**

a. Our committee did participate in New Mexico Pro Bono Week. We organized and presented educational programs on topics relevant to low-income people. We organized a recognition luncheon for our local bar and for Justice Maes. We also purchased a trophy to annually honor a deserving local attorney for their commitment to Pro Bono service. The first recipient was Henry Dickson.

b. The public participation varied greatly depending on location. Those that were targeted at Senior's were most successful.

c. The Committee believes that we were unsuccessful in getting adequate publicity for the educational programs. We believe we will be able to get better attendance if we are more effective in our publicity efforts. We did learn from our efforts, and did make substantial efforts to advertise our informational seminars,

including flyers, newspaper articles and radio interviews and announcements. However, it is the belief of the committee that these efforts were done too closely to Pro Bono week to have their full effect.

d. As noted above, we intend to continue the Pro Bono/Pro Se Divorce Workshop and expand the breadth of our efforts.


**LX. NEW MEXICO PRO BONO WEEK WAS INITIATED AS PART OF THE NATIONAL/1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CELEBRATE PRO BONO WEEK. WOULD YOU SUPPORT PARTICIPATION IN ANOTHER NEW MEXICO PRO BONO WEEK?**

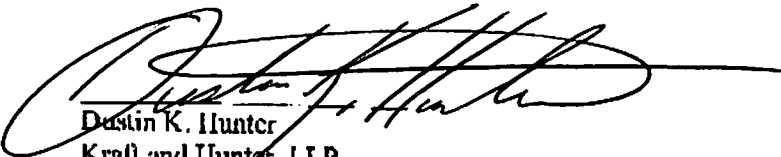
Our committee would support participation in Pro Bono Week.

**X. ATTACHED ARE A FLYER AND PRESS RELEASES FROM OUR EFFORTS IN 2009.**

We did not keep copies of the flyers that we put out in the community for Pro Bono week.

Submitted by:

  
The Honorable Steven L. Bell  
5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court  
Co-Chair, Chaves County Pro Bono Cmte.

  
Dustin K. Hunter  
Kraft and Hunter, L.L.P.  
Co-Chair, Chaves County Pro Bono Cmte.

# ***New Mexico Legal Aid***

200 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Roswell, NM 88203  
(575) 623-9669

**Do you need help getting divorced?  
Then NMLA might be able to help!**

## **FREE SELF-HELP DIVORCE CLASS**

**Wednesday, December 16, 2009**

**5:30-8:30 p.m.**

**If you are in agreement on child custody issues and community property/debts, or if you don't have any child custody issues, community property/debts then you may be eligible for this class.**

**For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact New Mexico Legal Aid in Roswell at (575) 623-9669 or long-distance, 1-866-416-1920.**



**New Mexico Legal Aid, Inc.  
200 W. First St., Suite 200  
P.O. Box 1087  
Roswell, New Mexico 88202-1087  
Telephone (575) 623-9669      Facsimile (575) 623-3083**

**November 03, 2009**

To whom it may concern:

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Date: Tuesday, November 3, 2009 from 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
Contact: Jared G. Kallunki  
Telephone: (575) 623-9669

**FREE SELF-HELP DIVORCE WORKSHOP TO BE OFFERED**

Low-income residents of Chaves and Eddy counties who plan to file for divorce may be able to take advantage of a self-help class offered by New Mexico Legal Aid (NMLA). The class is free to those who qualify.

“This course is designed for people who do not expect a court dispute over children, property, or debts,” explained Jared Kallunki, managing attorney of the Roswell office of NMLA.

The one-session class will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, in Roswell. Interested persons must pre-register by Tuesday, December 15, 2009, by calling (575) 623-9669, or toll-free (866) 416-1920.

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