

A pair of golden scales of justice is centered in the background, set against a warm, textured golden-brown background. The scales are slightly out of focus, with the pans hanging down on either side of a central vertical post. The lighting is soft, creating a sense of depth and highlighting the metallic texture of the scales.

ARKANSAS PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP

“I WILL NOT REJECT, FROM ANY CONSIDERATION
PERSONAL TO MYSELF, THE CAUSE OF THE
IMPOVERISHED, THE DEFENSELESS, OR
THE OPPRESSED.” ~ ARKANSAS ATTORNEY OATH

PRO BONO RECOGNITION 2008

The Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership

THE ARKANSAS PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP is a collaborative effort of the Equal Access to Justice Panel; River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project; Volunteer Organization of Center for Arkansas Legal Services; Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly; and the Arkansas Bar Association. The Pro Bono Partnership's purpose is to improve and expand the reach of pro bono activities in the state, and it is charged with coordinating the recruitment and recognition of volunteer attorneys. The Partnership plans to conduct a statewide pro bono recruitment campaign in the fall of 2009.

The Pro Bono Partnership also provides many resources and tools to help attorneys become more knowledgeable of poverty law issues and become better pro bono advocates for indigent clients. For more information, see our website at www.arlegalservices.org.

**Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers
for the Elderly**

**River Valley
Volunteer Attorney Project**

**Equal Access
to Justice Panel**

**Volunteer Organization of the
Center for Arkansas Legal Services**

IN THE PREAMBLE TO THE U.S. CONSTITUTION, our founders promised to “establish justice.” And in “Federalist, No. 51” James Madison proclaimed, “Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society.” Our nation has striven to achieve that goal ever since.

How Arkansas Has Sought Justice

Arkansans are known for their compassion and willingness to lend a hand. The members of the Arkansas legal community are no exception, especially when it comes to issues of justice.

When each attorney takes the Arkansas Attorney Oath, he or she declares, “I will not reject, from any consideration personal to myself, the cause of the impoverished, the defenseless, or the oppressed.” A few sentences later the attorney states, “I will endeavor always to advance the cause of justice.”

And in the Arkansas Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 6.1 states: “Every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay. A lawyer should aspire to render at least (50) hours of pro bono publico legal services per year.... In addition, a lawyer should voluntarily contribute financial support to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means.”

How You Have Succeeded

The Arkansas legal community has followed through with its commitments. Pro bono volunteerism reflects our highest ideals; it sustains the fabric of a free and just society. For many low-income Arkansans, receiving pro bono assistance is the first important step on the road to civil justice. The pro bono attorneys who volunteer their time and contribute financially to the non-profit Arkansas legal aid programs demonstrate these ideals through their passion and commitment to justice for all.

Read On

Each winter, *The Arkansas Lawyer* contains this insert about the pro bono activities around the state. This year we’ve enhanced the insert by recounting pro bono client stories (p. 6–8). We’ve also added a new award to the Honorees Section: the Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership Attorney of the Year Award (p. 4).

The attorneys, corporations, judges and law students you see here are committed to expanding access to justice for low-income Arkansans. We thank them. May these role models encourage even more participants to volunteer and contribute in 2009.

Danyelle Jones Walker

2008 Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership Attorney of the Year

DANYELLE JONES WALKER HAS BEEN NAMED the first “Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership Attorney of the Year.” This award will be given by the Partnership each year to one attorney in Arkansas who best demonstrates a commitment to the principle of equal justice for all. Indeed, Ms. Walker has worked passionately to help low income Arkansans with their legal problems, and earlier this year the Arkansas Bar Association recognized her pro bono work with the 2008 Equal Justice Distinguished Service Award.



Pro Bono Commitment

Soon after becoming an attorney, Ms. Walker joined the Volunteer Organization of the Center for Arkansas Legal Services (VOCALS) to help clients with bankruptcy issues. She quickly proved to be a dependable asset to the program; as a member of VOCALS, Ms. Walker has accepted over 150 cases.

She continued to accept bankruptcy pro bono clients, even after the bankruptcy laws changed in 2005. This change had a profound impact on the clients of the legal services programs in Arkansas: the pool of attorneys practicing in bankruptcy decreased tremendously, and those attorneys accepting pro bono bankruptcies were even harder to find. Ms. Walker was among three attorneys out of a former pool of 33 who agreed to continue pro bono bankruptcy work. In the meantime, she opened her own law office while accepting pro bono cases with unwavering zeal.

Professional Commitments

Along with doing pro bono work, Ms. Walker serves on several boards and committees. Ms. Walker is a board member of the VOCALS program, and is currently one of two board members who accept pro bono cases. She serves on the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, where she works to see that equal justice reaches all Arkansans. She is a past president of the Central Arkansas Debtor/Creditor Bar of Central Arkansas. She is a member of the Arkansas Bar Association where she is serving a second term on the House of Delegates. She also serves as Co-Chair of the Arkansas Bar Association’s Commission on Diversity. She has done numerous continuing legal education seminars for both the Arkansas Bar Association and the Debtor/Creditor Bar. And Ms. Walker is a member of the Pulaski County Bar Association, W. Harold Flowers Law Society, and the Judge William R. Overton Inn of Court.

Education

Ms. Walker completed her undergraduate degree with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting in 1992, graduating Summa Cum Laude from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She graduated from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law and was licensed in 1995. She began her legal career in bankruptcy law after completing a clerkship with Judge Andree Layton Roaf.

Arkansas’ Model Attorney

While Ms. Walker sees her service to the VOCALS program as a simple way to assist Arkansans most in need of her services, her commitment and generosity have been monumental, earning her the honor of being named Arkansas’ model attorney.

Pro Bono Attorney Honorees 2008



David R. Bridgforth has been named the Jefferson County VOCALS Pro Bono Attorney of the Year for 2008. Mr. Bridgforth joined VOCALS in 1991, and he donated over 50 hours of service to the program last year. Mr. Bridgforth is an attorney at the Pine Bluff law firm of Ramsay, Bridgforth, Harrelson and Starling LLP. He graduated from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law in 1991.

James M. (Jim) Dunn has been named the AVLE Pro Bono Attorney of the Year for 2008. As a member of AVLE since 1989, he has donated over 194 hours of service to the program. Mr. Dunn was previously named the River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project Attorney of the Year in 2005. He is an attorney for Warner, Smith & Harris. Mr. Dunn graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 1974.



James W. Hyden is one of two attorneys to be named Pulaski County VOCALS Attorney of the Year for 2008. As a member of VOCALS since 1993, he has provided over 100 hours of service to the VOCALS program. Mr. Hyden serves as Of Counsel to Hyden, Miron & Foster, where his practice areas include tax, estate planning, trusts and estates, employee benefits, and corporate law. He graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 1972.

Steve Sharum of Fort Smith, Ark., has been named the River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project Attorney of the Year for 2008. Mr. Sharum has been a dedicated pro bono attorney of VAP since its inception in 1990. Mr. Sharum has practiced law in Fort Smith, since 1974, focusing on civil trial practice, personal injury litigation, and worker's compensation claims. He graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 1973.



Shaneen Kelleybrew Sloan is one of two attorneys to be named Pulaski County VOCALS Attorney of the Year for 2008. As a member of VOCALS since 2002, she has provided over 100 hours of service to the program. Ms. Sloan's practice areas include tax, estate planning, business law and probate. Ms. Sloan assists clients in the areas of estate probate, all instances of wills and will drafting, and guardianship petitions. She graduated from the University of Arkansas in Little Rock School of Law in 2000.

Tim Watson of Newport, Ark., has been named the Outstanding Volunteer Attorney of 2008 for Legal Aid of Arkansas. Mr. Watson donated 73 pro bono hours to the Newport community in 2007. Mr. Watson has participated on the Equal Access to Justice Panel since its formation in 2002, and also served as an Arkansas Volunteer Lawyer for the Elderly since 1992. He graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law.



Pro Bono Stories

WHEN BRIAN LESTER RECEIVED A PRO-BONO GUARDIANSHIP REFERRAL from Legal Aid of Arkansas, he quickly assumed that the client sought legal guardianship over her grandchildren because of their parents' abandonment.

It wasn't until after Lester met with his client, Ms. Palmer, that he realized the depth of her situation and his mistake. "This wasn't the typical abandonment story that many families face each day," Lester said. Ms. Palmer looked after her grandchildren because their mother, Sarah, courageously admitted that she wasn't capable of providing for them. Although Sarah was willing to consent to the guardianship, she struggled with the decision, he said.

Lester met with Sarah several weeks before the hearing and explained the meaning of the guardianship. He helped her understand that it did not terminate her parental rights, nor did it suggest that she wasn't a good mother. Lester said after their conversation, Sarah's tearful eyes dried and she began to smile – she finally understood that she wasn't a failure to her children.

After receiving guardianship, Ms. Palmer has provided stable housing and much needed structure in her grandchildren's lives, Lester said. Meanwhile, Sarah works toward improving her situation with the hope of one day demonstrating to her children and to herself that she can be a successful mother.



Thanks to Brian R. Lester

Brian R. Lester, a native of Texarkana, Texas, graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in May 2006. Following the advice of his mentor, the late F. Lewis "Lew" Steenken, Lester began volunteering with LAA in 2007. Lester practices criminal, property, and family law in Fayetteville.

MS. SMITH HAD AN ABUSIVE HUSBAND. She also had two children, and she suspected that her husband sexually abused their oldest daughter. She wanted a divorce and sought legal counsel, but her mistreatment led to a nervous breakdown that prevented her from working and paying legal fees. So, in 2004, she contacted the Center for Arkansas Legal Services. The legal aid organization referred her to pro bono attorney Khayyam Eddings, of Friday, Eldredge & Clark. Eddings worked zealously on Ms. Smith's case, and after four hard years Ms. Smith was granted custody of her children and child support. Now she is finally on the road to regaining her confidence and peace of mind.

Thanks to Khayyam Eddings

Khayyam Eddings joined the VOCALS program in November 2004. He is a partner at Friday, Eldredge and Clark, LLP, and his areas of practice include employment, labor, education, civil rights, and class actions. In addition to his involvement in VOCALS, Mr. Eddings is also a member of the National Bar Association, the W. Harold Flowers Law Society and Bethel A.M.E. Church.



MRS. BARNES WAS THE 43-YEAR-OLD GRANDMOTHER OF TWO CHILDREN. The children's parents were never married, and the father was a drug dealer whose whereabouts were unknown. The children and their mother had always lived with Mrs. Barnes, but one day the mother moved out, leaving the two children behind. She moved in with another man and became pregnant. Mrs. Barnes discovered that the new boyfriend possessed "a lot of guns."

Mrs. Barnes was concerned about the situation and needed an Order of Guardianship over the children. So she contacted the Center for Arkansas Legal Services, and she was referred to Allen Laws, a pro bono attorney. Mr. Laws filed the Petition and obtained the Order for her, thus legalizing both Mrs. Barnes' and the children's living arrangements and stabilizing their lives.



Thanks to Allen Laws

Allen Laws is a partner in the firm of Law & Murdoch, P.A. of Russellville, Ark. Mr. Laws graduated from the University of Arkansas Law School in Fayetteville in 1986. His practice focuses on general civil litigation, domestic relations, and general practice. Mr. Laws is a member of the Pope County Bar Association, the Arkansas Bar Association, the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association, and the American Bar Association.

CALEY VO STUMBLED ON HIS FIRST PRO BONO CASE while browsing the online Pro Bono Case Selection System. Moved by the client's vulnerability, Vo jumped into a seemingly hopeless case. The client was being sued for \$10,000, and was unsure how she could ever make the payment.

Vo quickly began settlement negotiations and strongly argued that the client could not pay the consent judgment or judgment at trial. Four months later, Vo helped settle her case for \$1,000.

"This case really exemplifies why pro bono legal work is important," Vo said. "Without legal assistance, the client would either have faced a severe summary judgment, judgment at trial or consent judgment for the full debt. The failure to satisfy these would probably have created more litigation and heartache."

"Legal Aid of Arkansas' involvement helped achieve a practical solution and is something this client is not likely to ever forget," Vo said.

Thanks to Caley B. Vo

Caley Vo graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 2004. He practices law at Wright, Lindsey, & Jennings in Rogers, Ark. Mr. Vo focuses on general litigation, including negligence, malpractice, products liability, automobile liability and worker's compensation.



AFTER YEARS OF CONSTANTLY RELOCATING, young Matthew and Beth Jones finally settled with their grandparents in Northeast Arkansas. Ann Smith, the children's grandmother, said the brother and sister had not heard from their father in 12 years, and had once lived in a car with their mother.

"They were so upset moving from place to place," Smith said.

So in 2005, Ann and her husband, Charles, contacted Legal Aid of Arkansas in hopes of adopting the children.

"I called them [LAA] and explained we were on disability," Smith said. "They recommended Tim [Watson], and he was just wonderful."

Watson, a dedicated LAA volunteer, helped the Smiths, now in their early 60s, adopt their two teen-aged grandchildren in 2006.

Smith said after the adoption she immediately recognized a difference in her children.

"They knew they had a place," she said. "There was such a big change in both of the kids – they knew they had a home now." Smith's grandson, Matt, will be 17-years-old in April. "He's an A-B student, an honor student," she said. "He's doing great."

Smith said Watson genuinely cares about what happens to his clients. He has even helped the Smiths since the 2006 adoption. "We would use him for anything," she said. "I'd recommend him to anyone."



Thanks to Tim Watson

Tim Watson, a native of Newport, Ark., graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law. Watson, 64, was named the Outstanding Volunteer Attorney of 2008 for LAA. He has a long history of pro bono service and deeply enjoys the interesting people he meets as part of his LAA work.

"As a kid growing up, I always thought the better lawyers were the ones who helped those who couldn't afford it. I admired their willingness to do it. I thought that was one reason why I'd become an attorney."

—Tim Watson

***All client names have been changed to protect the clients and their families.**

Arkansas Pro Bono Attorneys 2008

The Latin phrase *pro bono publico* means “for the public good.” Attorneys can satisfy their pro bono responsibilities by donating time and money to legal aid organizations.

These organizations work to meet the civil legal needs of low-income Arkansans.

We thank the following attorneys who donated their time.

Leslie R. Ablondi	Robert Abney	Raymond Abramson
John T. Adams	Lauren Adams	Scott Adams
Vanessa Cash Adams	William C. Adkisson	Matthew Adlong
Jim F. Akins	Charles Gregory Alagood	John Aldsworth
John Aldworth	Charles Allen	Charles P. Allen
Phillip Allen	Richard Allen	Susan Allen
Thomas Allen	Tom Allen	William P. Allison
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Paul Bennett	Tom A. Bennett	S. King Benson
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Allen Laws
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Arkansas Access to Justice Commission Commends Your Efforts in 2008 Your Work Brings Us Closer to the Promise of Justice for All Arkansans

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Secretary

303 West Capitol Ave.
Suite 200
Little Rock, AR 72201

501.376.3423
501.376.3664 FAX

Arkansasjustice.org

Dear Arkansas Lawyer:

On behalf of the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, we would like to thank all of the attorneys who this year helped low-income Arkansans with legal issues.

Some of you represented low-income clients, providing over \$800,000 worth of legal services to the poor. Some of you donated money, contributing over \$225,000 to the legal aid programs in Arkansas.

Because of your commitment and generosity, we are closer to achieving our mission:

To provide equal access to justice in civil cases to all Arkansans.

But there is still much work to be done:

- One out of every five Arkansans lives below the poverty level and qualifies for legal aid.
- Each year 28,000 Arkansans request legal aid, but half must be turned away.
- Arkansas has 42 legal aid staff attorneys who handle 14,000 cases annually—an astounding caseload of 333 cases per attorney.

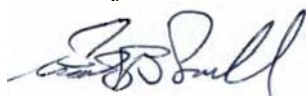
Our poorest citizens need your continued help now more than ever. We are asking every attorney in Arkansas to volunteer for 2–3 cases annually. Financial donations are also welcome, with a suggested amount of \$400.00. In addition, the Commission, in cooperation with the Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership, plans to conduct a statewide pro bono recruitment campaign in the fall of 2009.

Please visit the Pro Bono area at www.arlegalservices.org and become a registered volunteer attorney and contributor. Once you are registered, you receive access to the Online Legal Library with over 1,000 resources, including hundreds of legal forms, fact sheets, automated documents, videos, and the Poverty Law Practice Manual.

Now you can also select the exact case you would like, either through the monthly Pro Bono Case Alerts e-newsletter or by the online case selection tool. And don't forget other resources, such as free malpractice insurance coverage and free CLE courses.

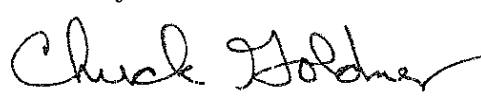
As the Commission works to achieve its mission, you are a valuable part of that effort. We cannot attain equal access to justice for all Arkansans without your help. Cases are available throughout the state. Please volunteer or donate today.

Sincerely,



Frank B. Sewall
Chair, ATJ Pro Bono Committee

Sincerely,



Charles W. Goldner, Jr.
Chair, Access to Justice Commission

Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership™

AVLE

Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly

Provides pro bono service for the elderly in all Arkansas counties except ---
Clark Faulkner Garland Hot Spring Jefferson Lonoke Pulaski Saline

Catherine Edwards, Director

501.376.9263

avleprog@yahoo.com

Equal Access to Justice Panel

A project of Legal Aid of Arkansas, Inc.

Baxter Benton Boone Carroll Clay Cleburne Craighead Crittenden Cross Fulton Green
Independence IZard Jackson Lawrence Lee Madison Marion Mississippi Monroe Newton Phillips
Poinsett Randolph St.Francis Searcy Sharp Stone Van Buren Washington Woodruff

Susan Purtle, Pro Bono Manager/Senior Attorney

Catherine Bahn, Pro Bono Coordinator

479.442.0600

spurtle@arlegalaid.org

River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project

A project of the Center for Arkansas Legal Services

Conway Crawford Franklin Johnson Logan Pope Scott Sebastian Yell

Janet B. Dyer, Managing Attorney/Pro Bono Manager

479.785.5211

jdyer@arlegalservices.org

VOCALS

Volunteer Organization of the Center for Arkansas Legal Services

Arkansas Ashley Bradley Calhoun Chicot Clark Cleveland Columbia Dallas Desha Drew
Faulkner Garland Grant Hempstead Hot Spring Howard Jefferson Lafayette Lincoln Little
River Lonoke Miller Montgomery Nevada Ouachita Perry Pike Polk Prairie Pulaski Saline
Sevier Union White

Angie Moore, Pro Bono Coordinator

501.376.3423

amoore@arlegalservices.org

For more information or to register online visit:

www.arlegalservices.org

Or complete the following form and mail to:

Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership
303 West Capitol Avenue/Suite 200
Little Rock, AR 72201

Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership™

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

New Volunteer

Update

CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: _____

LAW FIRM: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

COUNTY: _____

AR SUPREME COURT #: _____

MEMBERSHIP OPTION A

I HEREBY JOIN THE PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP. I AGREE TO REPRESENT UP TO THREE LOW INCOME-QUALIFIED CLIENTS EACH YEAR FREE OF CHARGE. I MAY REQUIRE PAYMENT OF NECESSARY COSTS.

Indicate the panel(s) from which you will accept cases.

Equal Access to Justice Panel

Volunteer Organization of Center for Arkansas Legal Services – VOCALS

River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project(s)

Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly – AVLE

*Volunteers of AVLE & any other panel must only agree to accept (2) cases from each project instead of three.

Please specify the types of cases you prefer to take as a volunteer. The Pro Bono Partnership will make every effort to refer cases you prefer, however, when needed, you may be asked to accept other types of cases. _____

In what counties will you accept pro bono cases? _____

MEMBERSHIP OPTION B

I hereby join the Pro Bono partnership. In lieu of accepting referrals, I agree to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$400 to help provide free legal services to low income Arkansans who cannot afford an attorney in civil cases.

Enclosed in my check made payable to:

Center for Arkansas Legal Services for

VOCALS River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project(s)

Legal Aid of Arkansas for Equal Access to Justice Panel

Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly – AVLE

Signature of Attorney

Please Return This Form To

Arkansas Pro Bono Partnership
303 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 200
Little Rock, AR 72201
PH. 501.376.3423 | FAX 501.376.3664

The logo consists of a stylized blue graphic on the left, resembling a scale or a set of vertical bars, with a curved top element. To its right, the text "ARKANSAS PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP" is written in a dark blue, serif font, stacked in two lines.

ARKANSAS PRO BONO
PARTNERSHIP



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
PRO BONO COMMITMENT IN 2008