

Celebrate Pro Bono 2015 – Take Part in the Celebration

The National Celebration of Pro Bono Week officially takes place during the last week of October each year with events in many locations all over the country. However, events begin early in October and often run through the end of the year. According to the American Bar Association, last year there were over 600 events in 48 states and Puerto Rico. Nearly 70 percent of those events were volunteer training or direct service events and the remainder were receptions, fundraisers, or awards ceremonies. The ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service sponsors Pro Bono Week. It is a time to renew your commitment to pro bono, get inspired, and explore ways to give back to your community.



What can I do to give back?

Kansas Legal Services (KLS), a statewide nonprofit corporation, provides essential legal and mediation services to Kansans with limited means. KLS has 11 offices and two mediation offices throughout the state and maintains an extensive retainer contract system with cooperating members of the KBA. KLS is in need of your help and here are some ideas to consider.

KLS Pro Bono Program

The KLS Pro Bono Program provides service to low-income clients or children on an uncompensated basis. No potential client is given an attorney's name without specific approval from the attorney. All potential clients will be screened for financial eligibility through KLS. Many of the cases referred will be cases that KLS cannot accept due to conflicts or other barriers. Clients using this program understand that the attorney has agreed to provide services at no cost for the referred case only. Clients also understand that they may be required to pay filing fees, witness fees, etc. Acceptance of the case is with no expectation of payment for attorney time or office expenses. KLS may be able to help with extraordinary litigation expenses, when the interests of justice require it.

Elder Law Hotline

Join other Kansas attorneys in providing legal services to Kansans who are over age 60. The Kansas Elder Law Hotline is a project of KLS. There is no income eligibility for callers to participate in this program, and volunteers can expect to talk to clients of varying economic and social backgrounds. The hotline provides Kansas senior citizens access to an attorney willing to advise them about legal issues and may also refer them to other resources for additional assistance. The Elder Law Hotline asks that attorneys volunteer a three-and-a-half hour block of time every other month. Calls will be transferred to your office, along with demographic information about each client.

Kansas Emeritus Attorney Program

Any attorney who currently has a status of inactive or retired on their license to practice law in Kansas can work with a not-for-profit provider of civil legal services on a pro bono basis; KLS is such an organization. This practice is covered by 2013 modifications to Supreme Court Rule 208. An attorney interested in working under Rule 208 should complete an application providing information regarding time commitment, type of legal work preferred (i.e., providing advice to clients, representing in court, and drafting documents) and length of commitment.

Applications and additional information on the above programs can be found online at <http://www.ksbar.org/probono>.

Other ways to help KLS

Make a donation directly to Kansas Legal Services

Donations can be made through your PayPal account or a credit card or bank account. Visit <http://www.kansaslegal.services.org/> and scroll to the bottom right corner and click on Donate.

Shop at Dillons

KLS is a participant in the Dillons Community Rewards program. By registering your Dillons Shopper Card, you can direct funds to KLS. Enrollment is easy at <https://www.dillons.com/communityrewards>. Apply for a (or register an existing) Dillons Rewards Card. Register your card in the community rewards program with your email address. Enter 64929 to select Kansas Legal Services as your charity. Swipe the card when you shop. Dillons will provide funding to KLS.

Amazon Smile

Visit www.smile.amazon.com and register KLS as your charity. Return there to shop. Same merchandise, same prices. But a portion of what you spend goes to KLS.

Jeans for Justice

The KBA hosts a Jeans for Justice event each fall. This is a fun event for firms and organizations to participate in to raise money for access to justice programs at KLS. For \$5 participants can wear jeans to work and receive a Celebrate Pro Bono sticker for their participation. Visit <http://www.ksbar.org/jeansforjustice> to learn more about scheduling your casual day.

KLS Office Supply Drive

Last year was the first office supply drive. It is in full swing again this year. In fact, you can donate supplies any time of the year. Donations can be delivered to the KBA or taken to a local KLS office. They are always in need of the basics like blue and black ink pens, yellow highlighters, letter and legal pads, copy paper, flash drives, and Post-it notes.

Another way to support access to justice

Give back through an IOLTA Trust Account

If you have Kansas clients you have a perfect opportunity to support access to justice by selecting an IOLTA account for your trust account. Over 140 banks in Kansas participate



... serving the citizens of Kansas and the legal profession through funding charitable and educational projects that foster the welfare, honor, and integrity of the legal system by improving its accessibility, equality, and uniformity, and by enhancing public opinion of the role of lawyers in our society.

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and after setting up the account with the bank and submitting your one page application to the Kansas Bar Foundation, the rest of the work is done for you. This year IOLTA will provide \$80,000 to Kansas organizations that support access to justice and law related education. That is possible because attorneys have voluntarily opted for an IOLTA trust account. Join your colleagues and establish an IOLTA account soon! <http://www.ksbar.org/iolta>.

Record your pro bono hours

KBA members can now record their pro bono hours on their member profile online. Please remember to enter your hours before December 15. Go to Manage Profile (then Edit Bio) and scroll to Professional Information. The Pro Bono Hours 2015 box is listed below the County box. This will help us learn more about the number of hours members provide each year.

Share your story and help us get others involved

You may be a veteran at pro bono work. You have experienced the joy of helping others. You may have learned new skills or had opportunities to network while volunteering. One of the best recruitment tools for finding volunteers is to have current volunteers share their stories. If you have a story to share, please share it with someone who has not yet tried pro bono work. The KBA would like to compile stories from members and with your permission, post them online. Confidentiality will be respected and no client names will be used. Please contact Anne Woods, public services manager at (785) 861-8838, to share your story. ■

PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES



Help is needed to provide pro bono legal services to low-income Kansans; ALL areas of practice are needed.

No potential clients will be given your name without approval and all will be screened for financial eligibility through Kansas Legal Services.

KLS may be able to help with extraordinary litigation expenses when the interest of justice requires it.

Visit <http://www.ksbar.org/probono> for more information.