

A history of helping. A future of hope.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROGRAM

News from the VLP

Save the Date!

VLP Luncheon

The VLP's 11th Annual Awards Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, November 28 from 11:45 am to 1:30 pm at the Marriott University Park. Elliot Glicksman will MC the event. Look for your invitation by e-mail!



Looking for a Few Good Volunteers

The VLP is looking for a few volunteers to assist with the program's growing number of clinics. In the last quarter, the program offered 98 clinics. Through the clinics hundreds of Arizonan's received advice and brief service from volunteer attorneys and law students. With client need on the rise, the VLP is scheduling clinics more frequently. The program has also created new clinics to help clients with currently unmet needs. There are three clinics where more volunteers are desperately needed. For more information about how you can volunteer in one of these clinics, please call Socorro Diaz at 623-9465, ext. 4172. It only takes a couple of hours to make a huge difference in the lives of those in our community who need it most. For more information about the Advice-Only Clinic, the Child Support Clinic, and the Intake Project, [please click here](#).

helping clients

During the first nine months of 2007, the VLP opened 1,908 new cases and closed 1,686. Currently, the VLP has 1,123 active cases.

VLPArizona.org

Awards & Recognition

Dynamic Duo Awards

In September, the VLP was recognized locally by Compass Health Care at its 12th Annual Awards Gala. The program was honored for its outstanding contributions to the community. Program Director, Michele Mirto, and Pima County Coordinator, Socorro Diaz, nominees for the Dynamic Duo Award, are pictured at right.



Achievement Awards

In early September, the VLP learned that it had been selected as one of twelve finalists by the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona for the Achievement Awards, a community initiative recognizing excellence in the local nonprofit sector. Winners will be announced on November 15th. If selected, the VLP will receive a \$5,000 cash award for its outstanding work.

Student Update

Summer Wrap Up

On Saturday, August 18th Judge Fred Dardis hosted the VLP's end of the summer BBQ. The event was held to thank all of the law students who volunteered their time with the VLP during the summer of 2007. The festivities were attended by students, law school faculty, volunteer attorneys, judges, friends and family. Good food and fun were had by all! The VLP wishes to thank Judge Dardis, who opened his home to the VLP students and their families again this year. Thanks also to Jean West, Martha Taylor, and Jillian Aja for coordinating this summer's event.



Fall Volunteers

The VLP recruited and trained 40 law students in September! The students will volunteer with the VLP Advocates program during September, October and November. The students will participate in a variety of clinics that include the Bankruptcy Reaffirmation Clinic, the Domestic Relations Follow Up Clinic, the Intake Clinic, and the Child Support Clinic. Over the course of the fall, it is expected that the students, supervised by volunteer attorneys, will assist several hundred clients.

Client Success Story



The client, a single mother with a young daughter came to the VLP through one of the program's rural offices. Sadly, the client's daughter had been sexually molested by a man, a former friend of the client. The man was prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to a lengthy prison term.

During the course of the criminal trial, the defendant filed non-consensual liens against the home of our client. After the conviction, when the client attempted to sell her home, she discovered the liens. It was at this point that a volunteer attorney stepped in and filed suit to set aside the liens. The defendant filed an answer and counterclaim, and an additional lien. At the same time, the defendant tendered affidavits for the client and her daughter to sign saying that they had perjured themselves at his criminal trial. He offered to withdraw his claims and counterclaims if they would sign the affidavits. [Click here to read the rest of the client story...](#)

Technology / Website Stats

The VLP Website, located at www.VLPArizona.org, continues to be a popular site for clients, volunteer lawyers, students, and community members. In September, there were approximately 24,000 hits to the site with over 4,800 unique visits.

The most popular pages include the [home page](#), lists of [volunteer lawyers](#) and [volunteer students](#), information on the [VLP Advisory Board](#), the [contact page](#), and the list of [individuals and organizations that provide funding to the VLP](#).



Staff News

The VLP welcomes...

The VLP is proud to welcome two new staff members! **Randi Burnett** joins the program as the VLP's Student Coordinator. Randi graduated from the University of Arizona's College of Law in 2007. She participated in VLP projects as a student and brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to the position. Randi will be working with law students and undergraduate students in a variety of clinics. She was recently notified that she passed the Arizona bar exam. Congratulations, Randi!

Also joining the VLP staff is **Baudelina de Ramirez (Baude)**. Baude will serve as an administrative assistant and the program's outreach coordinator. She is very excited about working with volunteer students and attorneys as well as community agencies.

Welcome, Randi and Baude!

The VLP says good-bye...

Sadly, **Annie Barrett** resigned from the VLP in September. Annie accepted a position with the Arizona Attorney Generals Office. Although we are all sad to see Annie leave, we understand that this is the best decision for her family. Annie promises to remain involved with the program as a volunteer attorney. True to her word, she has already agreed to assist the program with the training of new students and attorneys. We are grateful to Annie for her dedication to our clients and for her friendship. She will be missed!

This fall the program also said good-bye to our long time administrative assistant, **Mary Beth Pierce**. During her tenure, MB represented the program throughout the community. She established relationships with the courts and social service agencies as well as with clients, students and volunteer attorneys. Her professional and friendly demeanor was appreciated by all. MB resigned from the program to accept a position with M3 Engineering & Technology Corporation. The VLP wishes Mary Beth the very best of luck in her new position!

Questions or comments? E-mail Michele Mirto at mmirto@sazlegalaid.org or call 520.623.9465, ext. 4171.

The VLP is a joint program of Southern Arizona Legal Aid and the Pima County Bar Association.



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