


CATHOLIC LEGAL  
IMMIGRATION  
NETWORK, INC.

# Using Pro Bono Resources to Maximize Your Legal Program

Laura Burdick, Capacity Building Section  
 Lauren Graham Sullivan, Advocacy Section



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## Panelists

- Allison Rutland Soulen, Director of Legal Services, Just Neighbors
- Debi Sanders, Senior Staff Attorney, Catholic Charities of DC
- Keith Suter, Legal and Administrative Intern, Catholic Charities of DC
- Lauren Graham Sullivan, Advocacy Attorney/ BIA Pro Bono Project Coordinator, CLINIC
- Larry Katzman, Deputy Public Service Counsel, Steptoe

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## CLINIC's Capacity Building Goals

What is Pro Bono?

Why have a pro bono component to your program?

Benefits of a Pro Bono Program

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### Challenges

- Takes resources = staff time
- Requires recruiting = staff time
- Assuring quality representation = training
- Mentoring needs = staff time or more recruiting to identify mentors
- The need exceeds number of available attorneys

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### Steps in Creating or Enhancing a Pro Bono Program

- Needs Assessment
- Recruitment
- Management

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### Larger Nonprofit Perspective

Debi Sanders, Senior Staff Attorney  
Keith Suter, Legal and Administrative Intern  
Catholic Charities of Washington, DC  
Immigration Legal Services

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## Pro Bono Panel

- Recruits, trains, and mentors pro bono attorneys
- Cases identified through weekly intake at four CC offices and Family Justice Center in Rockville
- 171 clients represented last year
- Cases: U visas, VAWA, asylum, SIJs

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## Pro Bono Panel

- Weekly bulletin, “Pro Bono Action Alert” with case summaries to individuals interested in pro bono work
- Monthly legal trainings for pro bono lawyers

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## Developing Your Network (Recruit, Train, Mentor and Thank)

- Recruit at every opportunity (AILA, Convening, Bar, Church, friends, neighbors)
- Provide training to develop your network (train at least once a month, some short, others long)
- Provide materials to new volunteers between trainings
- Be clear about what you expect from your pro bono attorneys
- Circulate your trainings and current needs
- Transition experienced volunteers into mentors

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## How to Reach Your Network

- Action Alert: weekly emails
- Case Summaries: circulate summaries, provide more detailed intakes and information for conflicts checks
- Trainings: require pro bono commitment
- Victories: celebrate and thank volunteers and inspire new volunteers



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## How We Manage Our Cases

- Make sure you have all the information the pro bono attorney will need regarding the client and sample forms
- Have volunteers sign retainer agreement and confidentiality forms
- Create a Master Table (preferably excel) with details on client, case, relevant dates, contact information, back up contact information
- Provide competent mentoring from staff and experienced volunteers
- Pro bono database for further detail

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## Small Nonprofit Perspective

Allison Rutland Soulen  
Director of Legal Services  
Just Neighbors

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## Overview of Just Neighbors

- History of its Program
- Office Locations
- Intake Process

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## Legal Services

- Justice Neighbors does handle:
  - U visas and U Visa adjustments of former clients
  - VAWA and VAWA adjustments
  - Asylee and refugee adjustment
  - TPS
  - EAD renewal and replacement
  - Green card renewal and replacement
  - DACA
  - Some family petitions
  - I-730s
  - Naturalization
  - Advice & Counsel
- Just Neighbors does NOT handle:
  - Asylum
  - Detention
  - Most Immigration Court Matters
  - Some Family Petitions

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## Staff and Volunteers

- Just Neighbors has 5 staff
  - Executive Director, Full Time
  - Office Manager, Full Time
  - 3 attorneys, close to full time
- Volunteers
  - How do we recruit volunteers?
  - How do we use volunteers?
  - How do we supervise volunteers?

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## Volunteers

- **2011**
  - 3060 attorney hours
  - 5346 non-attorney hours
  - 8406 total
  - Cases: 770
  - Clients: 651
- **2012**
  - Attorney hours -- 35 individuals: 4,752
  - Non attorney hours -- 85 individuals: 5870
  - Total: 10,622
  - Cases: 1218
  - Clients 1076

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## National Pro Bono Project Perspective

Lauren Graham Sullivan  
Advocacy Attorney / BIA Pro Bono  
Project Coordinator  
CLINIC

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## BIA Pro Bono Project

- Overview of the Project

Partners:

- Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR)
- Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
- American Immigration Council (AIC)
- National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG)
- Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition (CAIR)

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## BIA Pro Bono Project

- Overview of the Project, cont' d
  - Who do we serve?
    - Detained
    - Non-detained
    - Pro Se before the IJ
  - Needs Assessment – Origin of the Project
  - Recruitment of Pro Bono Attorneys
  - Management of the Project

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## BIA Pro Bono Project

- What do we do?
  - Screen
  - Select
  - Distribute
  - Match
  - Pro Bono Representation (100%)

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## BIA Pro Bono Project

How we sell/pitch the Project:

- Screened cases
- Mentorship
- 6 weeks for brief writing
- Transcripts and records
- Resources

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## Pro Bono Firm's Perspective

Larry Katzman  
Deputy Public Service Counsel  
Step toe & Johnson LLP

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## Firm Facts

- Steptoe & Johnson LLP
- Based in Washington, DC
- 400 lawyers
- 6 US offices plus 3 abroad

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## Pro Bono Activity

- Two full-time public service counsel
- 2012: 31,000 hours of pro bono
- Average of 77 hours per attorney
- Full-time loaned associate to Washington, DC Legal Aid
- One Equal Justice Works fellow (currently with Women’s Refugee Commission)

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## Pro Bono Mechanics

- Expectation that every attorney will engage in pro bono
- Associates can apply their pro bono hours toward their billables requirement
- Associates always teamed with a partner

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## Goals of Pro Bono Work

- Make a “meaningful contribution to access to justice”
- Enhance professional development, particularly for associates, to develop proficiency in particular legal skills, as well as competence in case management and strategic analysis
- Give attorneys in different practice areas and in different offices a chance to work together

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### Range of General Pro Bono Work

- Non-litigation (“transactional”) – wide range of assistance to non-profits
- Civil court litigation – family law, housing, civil rights, impact litigation
- Administrative hearings – immigration, public benefits, tax court, appellate
- Clinical – family, Medicare Part D, tax

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### Range of Immigration Pro Bono Work

- Direct representation – asylum, U and T visas, SIJS, VAWA, Miscellaneous (DACA, adjustments, I-730s, Iraqi Special Immigrant Visas)
- Special project working with unaccompanied alien children
- Appeals
- Legislative and administrative advocacy
- FOIA requests and litigation
- Special research projects
- Currently 50 active cases, 7,000+ hours in 2012

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### Placing a Pro Bono Immigration Case with Steptoe & Johnson

- Case description
- Deadlines, atypical facts or circumstances, location of client(s)
- Special needs – foreign language, female attorney preferred

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## Internal Case Acceptance Procedures

- Willing and available attorneys
- Viable legal claim
- Firm conflict of interest check

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## Questions?



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