

Volume IV, Number 6 October 2010

## **NATIONAL PRO BONO WEEK SPECIAL ISSUE!**

### **ProBonoNY Committees' Plans for NATIONAL PRO BONO WEEK CELEBRATIONS and Other Events This Fall**

By John Ritchie

National Pro Bono Week, October 24-30, is a nationwide celebration, promoted by the American Bar Association and intended both to recognize the many hours of free legal services voluntarily contributed by pro bono lawyers throughout the nation and to help recruit more volunteers to expand even further the delivery of pro bono legal services. A formal Pro Bono Week kick-off event for New York, sponsored by the New York State Bar Association, will be held October 22, at the Court of Appeals in Albany.

ProBonoNY committees are sponsoring (or co-sponsoring) Pro Bono Week events again this year, as they did

last year. Though operating this year within budgetary restraints that preclude incidental refreshment and related expenses, the committees are nevertheless hosting a variety of celebratory and educational programs. Scheduling preferences and conflicts have resulted in several events occurring before and after the defined calendar week, as well as during the week—but all are inspired by the same enthusiasm for voluntary pro bono work.

This special issue of the BULLETIN provides brief descriptions, locations, dates and times of Pro Bono Week events and some other fall or early winter events. Judge Fisher will attend as many events as possible. I will also attend as many as I can.

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## **PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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### **FIFTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

For the Fifth District Committee, Pro Bono Week provides an opportunity to highlight what programs in the Fifth District do during the year. A galaxy of events is planned throughout the fall to draw attention to the many ways that lawyers, law students, and other members of the legal community meet—and can help meet—unmet civil legal services needs.

The Fifth District Committee has been lead sponsor of free two-part, seven-credit CLE programs, completed in late September, for volunteers at the many free Talk-to-a-Lawyer advice and referral clinics in the Syracuse area. On October 26 and November 2, in Syracuse (and in Albany, October 28 and November 4), members of the Committee are participating in planning and presenting a free two-part CLE program for lawyers who represent prisoners in civil rights cases, sponsored by the Pro Bono Committee of the NDNY Federal Court Bar Association.

On October 21, at the Annual Dinner of the Onondaga County Bar Association, the Committee will join the Association in honoring the Association's

2010 Distinguished lawyer, William C. Bergen, recognizing his long-time commitment to pro bono work. Shifting focus to the next generation of lawyers and their teachers, members of the Committee will participate in a panel discussion about pro bono work and a reception for The Syracuse University College of Law community at 5:30 p.m. October 25. On October 28, the Fifth District Committee will continue its program of meeting at locations throughout the district by meeting in Utica prior to the Oneida County Bar Association's screening for the general public of the film, "Adam's Rib."

For further information about all Fifth District events, contact the Committee's attorney/coordinator, Jim Williams, at [jwilliams@lscny.org](mailto:jwilliams@lscny.org).

### **SIXTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

The primary Pro Bono Week event in the Sixth Judicial District will be the Committee's second annual Judges' Best Practices CLE program in Ithaca, targeted for attorneys in Chemung, Schuyler, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties. To be held October 21, the program will provide four free CLE credits to attendees, in return for commitments to

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**PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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accept pro bono referrals. Sixth District Administrative Judge Robert C. Mulvey will moderate the panel. Other presenters are Hon. M. John Sherman (Supreme Court and Surrogate's Court), Hon. Judith Rossiter (County Court), Hon. David Brockway (Family Court), and Hon. Steven W. Forrest (City Court). Moakley House, 215 Warren Road, Ithaca, October 21, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.

For further information about this program and other events, contact the Sixth District Committee's attorney/coordinator, Suzanne Myette, at [smyette@wnylc.com](mailto:smyette@wnylc.com).

**SEVENTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

The Seventh District Committee will co-sponsor with Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County (VLSP) a program entitled "Ethics Redux." In exchange for attendees' commitments to accept pro bono referrals, this October 29 program will provide two free CLE ethics credits. Panelists will be Hon. Marian W. Payson, U.S. Magistrate

Judge; Gregory J. Huether, Esq., Chief Counsel, Fourth Department Attorney Grievance Committee; and Christopher K. Werner, Esq., Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson, LLP.

Topics will include confidentiality and candor to the tribunal, historical perspective of the April 2009 adoption in New York of the Rules of Professional Conduct, discussion of the most significant changes under the Rules for practicing attorneys, top areas of ethical violations, and an overview of grievance procedures. The program will be live at the Hall of Justice in Rochester, 99 Exchange Boulevard, Room 165, October 29, 12:30 p.m. registration and program 1–4 p.m. Also video broadcast live to the county courthouses in Steuben, Ontario, Wayne, Livingston, Seneca, Yates, and Cayuga Counties.

The Committee is co-sponsoring, with Southern Tier Legal Services, a Division of Legal Assistance of Western New York, two events: (1) on October 28, a Matrimonial CLE program, at the Steuben County Office Building, South Conference Room, 2–4 p.m. and (2) on October 29, a Pro Bono Recognition Reception honoring Steuben County

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**PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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**SEVENTH DISTRICT (continued)**

volunteer attorneys, at Southern Tier Legal Services, 104 East Steuben Street, Bath, 3–5 p.m.

For further information, contact the Seventh District Committee’s attorney/ coordinator, Linda Kostin, at [lkostin@wnylc.com](mailto:lkostin@wnylc.com).

**EIGHTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

The Eighth District Committee will co-sponsor, with the Northern Chautauqua County Bar Association and the Jamestown Bar Association, a lunchtime reception honoring volunteer attorneys of Chautauqua County, building on the Committee’s recruiting activities and recognizing pro bono work done this year through cooperating agencies, Legal Aid of Chautauqua Region and Southern Tier Legal Services, a division of Legal Assistance of Western New York—work primarily in the Chautauqua County clinic for unrepresented divorce litigants. Chautauqua County Courthouse, Mayville, November 1, 12 noon.

In Erie County, the Committee co-

sponsored with ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) a Pro Bono Awards Reception on September 30, prior to VLP’s “Champions for Justice Bash.” The Committee will co-sponsor with VLP two CLE programs intended to help expand VLP’s current Immigration Project: October 29, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Basics of Representing an Immigrant in Removal Proceedings, 3.5 free CLE credits in exchange for commitments to handle at least one such case pro bono; and November 1, 9–11 a.m., Handling a Violence Against Women Act Case in Immigration Court, 2 free CLE credits. Both programs will be held at VLP offices, 237 Main Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Buffalo.

In the planning process, to be co-sponsored with the Matrimonial & Family Law Committee of the Erie County Bar Association, is a program for experienced matrimonial attorneys on separate property appreciation and family businesses. Matrimonial CLE programs are also being planned for the near future in Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties.

For further information, contact the Eighth District Committee’s attorney/ coordinator, Amanda Warner, at [awarner@wnylc.com](mailto:awarner@wnylc.com).

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**PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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**NINTH DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

The Ninth District/Westchester County Committee, in cooperation with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) and Pace University law School, will present a dramatic CLE program, “Ethics on North Broadway: Representing a Pro Bono Client,” on October 26. The “Pro Bono Players” will include Hon. Anthony A. Scarpino, Westchester County Surrogate and Deputy Co-Chair of the Committee, and well-known local practitioners Henry Miller, Esq., and Faith Miller, Esq., plus one other to be named later. Erin Guven, Esq., Director of Pro Bono Affairs at LSHV and Co-Chair of the Committee, will also appear and is rumored to be the author. Pace Law School, 78 North Broadway, White Plains, October 26, doors open at 5 p.m.

On September 24, the Ninth District/Rockland County Committee sponsored a free two-hour CLE program for experienced matrimonial attorneys who agreed to participate in a new pilot project in Rockland County Family Court. The project, called “Project F.A.I.R. Plan,” is a limited scope legal services program in which the pro bono attorneys will provide Family Court litigants with information and legal advice, answer

questions, and assist in the preparation of petitions on various matters, including custody, visitation, and support. The program will commence operations on Monday, October 18, and succeeding Monday mornings, with the possibility of later expansion to additional days.

On October 21, the Ninth District/Dutchess County Committee will recognize the Dutchess County Bar Association for its generous support of the Committee’s activities and its dedication to providing pro bono services to citizens of Dutchess County, at the Association’s Annual Luncheon. Following the luncheon, there will be a two-credit CLE program on the new power-of-attorney law and no-fault divorce legislation. Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, October 21, 12:15–3 p.m. On November 18, the Ninth District/Orange County Committee will sponsor an awards reception at the Dispute Resolution Center in Goshen, at 5:30 p.m., honoring the Orange County Bar Association and several local attorneys for their support of the Committee’s activities and commitments to pro bono work.

For further information, contact the Ninth District Committee’s attorney/coordinator, Carol Neiditch, at [cneiditch@lshv.org](mailto:cneiditch@lshv.org).

**PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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**TENTH DISTRICT:  
SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMITTEE**

1. Pro Bono Mentor Appreciation Luncheon, Monday, October 25, at the John P. Cohalan, Jr., Complex, 400 Carleton Avenue, Central Islip. The Suffolk County Committee will honor its dedicated matrimonial and guardianship mentors to fellow volunteer attorneys. Suffolk County District Administrative Judge and Chair of the Suffolk County Pro Bono Committee Hon. H. Patrick Leis III will present acknowledgment awards to approximately 30 volunteer attorneys, as participating mentors in the Committee's Matrimonial and Article 81 Guardianship pro bono programs. Invited presenters/guests will also include Hon. Marion T. McNulty, Supreme Court Justice; Hon. Martha L. Luft, Acting Supreme Court Justice; and Barry M. Smolowitz, Esq., Co-Chair of the Pro Bono Committee.

2. Pro Bono Volunteer Recognition Night, October 26, at the Watermill Restaurant, 711 Smithtown Bypass, Smithtown, 6 p.m. Suffolk County Bar Association hosts its annual pro bono volunteer recognition event, honoring

those who generously volunteer their services to the Suffolk County Pro Bono Project.

3. Pro Bono Guest Speakers Luncheon, October 27, 12:30 p.m. Touro Law Center, Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center, 225 Eastview Drive, Central Islip, co-sponsors with the Committee the first of its two-part celebration event, a guest speakers luncheon. Long-standing Pro Bono Project volunteers Robin S. Abramowitz, Esq., and Richard L. Stern, Esq., will provide Touro law students with insight into their unique personal pro bono experiences and awards.

4. Pro Bono Veterans' Advisory Clinic, October 27 following the guest speakers luncheon, 2-4 p.m. at Touro Law Center, Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center, 225 Eastview Drive, Central Islip: a free legal advisory clinic for designated local resident veterans; law students will observe and assist volunteer attorneys during the clinic's brief pro bono consultations.

For further information, contact the Suffolk County Committee's attorney/coordinator, Linda Novick, at [linda@scba.org](mailto:linda@scba.org).

**PRO BONO WEEK EVENTS**

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**TENTH DISTRICT:  
NASSAU COUNTY COMMITTEE**

During Pro Bono Week, the Nassau County Court System will be introducing the new location of their innovative Court Information Center. Throughout the year, the Nassau Courts have been working with pro bono attorneys from the Nassau County Bar Association who are committed to providing extraordinary legal representation through a myriad of initiatives, including the Mortgage Foreclosure Program. The Nassau County Courts continue to be supportive in the growth and planning of programs that assist the community at large.

For further information about Nassau County events, contact the Committee's attorney/coordinator, Lisa Williams, at [lwilliams@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:lwilliams@courts.state.ny.us).