

# We. Need. You.

CHECK THE BOX and let Nevadans in trouble know they aren't alone

BY KRISTINA MARZEC, DIRECTOR OF THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION



There are fewer than 100 civil legal aid lawyers in the entire state of Nevada.

***That means 5,000 to one:*** This is the caseload for each legal aid lawyer if we had the money for everyone who qualifies. Your dues check-off donation goes directly to these legal aid trauma teams in your area, and they do what they do better than anyone else.

## Praise to the Choir

Thanks to everyone who provided services and advice to the indigent, participated in activities for improving the law in our communities, and/or donated to civil legal aid organizations. Here's what you reported for 2010:

- **33 percent** of active members reported doing pro bono services as described in Rule 6.1. That's a 9 percent increase over the previous year, but is still very low compared to the national average, which is around 70 percent.
- **754** members reported 37,126 hours of donated service to organizations addressing needs of persons of limited means.
- **904** members reported 33,958 hours of donated service improving the law or law-related education.

Thanks to the 2,156 lawyers who donated more than 100,000 hours of time to providing direct legal aid services last year. Our statistics show that fewer people are donating more hours, and their tireless efforts are appreciated.

To those of you who participated last year and donated a total of \$154,000 through dues-check off, we thank you. That is down from \$185,000 the year before, and we hope everyone will consider helping out in 2012.

## Want to learn more?

If you haven't had a chance to check out what the legal aid providers in your area do, I invite you to call me or better yet, contact them directly. The caseloads and breadth of services they handle are astounding; the heartbreaking choices of which people to help and which to turn away because there just is not enough money to help; the sadness that only half of the children in the justice system have a lawyer to protect their interests, and that justice comes to those with a lawyer and most often not to those without.

Pro bono opportunities come in all shapes and sizes. There truly is something for everyone. And if work and life can't wait, DONATE!

I know it's been an extraordinarily challenging few years for all Nevadans, including lawyers. If you are in a position to help, please consider sending a donation along with your dues payments this year. And have a wonderful holiday season. ■

---

**KRISTINA MARZEC** has been an employee of the State Bar of Nevada since 1995 and currently serves as the Director of the Access to Justice Commission. She can be reached at [kristinam@nvbar.org](mailto:kristinam@nvbar.org) and (702) 317-1404.