

PRO BONO

HONOR ROLL



The State Bar of Nevada Board of Governors and the Access to Justice Commission extend a special thanks to the following attorneys who generously accepted cases in December 2013, through the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Washoe Legal Services, Nevada Legal Services and Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans.

Gehovany Alonso	Maximilien Fetaz	Rena McDonald
Kevin Benson	Frances-Ann Fine	Jennifer McDonald
Fredrick Biedermann	Michael Flaxman	Christine Miller
Scott Bogatz	Jon Eric Garde	Mikyla Miller
Elizabeth Brickfield	Marjorie Guymon	Stanley Parry
Brandy Brown	Larry Hankins	Todd Prall
Ernest Buche	Ann Marie Hansen	Christopher Reade
Robert Caldwell	John Hawley	Benjamin Reitz
Candace Carlyon	Nancy Heimerle	Africa Sanchez
Matthew Carter	Warthan	Jeffrey Silver
Randy Creighton	Jeremy Hilsabeck	Muriel Skelly
Charles Damus	Rena Hughes	Rosa Solis-Rainey
Ryan Daniels	Michael Hughes	Edward Vargas
Linda Daykin	Martina Jaccarino	Marshal Willick
Valerie Del Grosso	Kory Kaplan	Shannon Wilson
Kelly Dove	Todd Kennedy	Karen Wong
John Eccles	Israel "Ishi" Kunin	Homa Woodrum
Emily Ellis	Dawn Lozano	Diana Zuccarini
Thomas Fell	Racheal Mastel	

Attorneys who participated in clinics, Ask-A-Lawyer, Small Business Project:

Eunice Beattie	Mark Gardberg	Sue Martinelli
Robert Blau	Stefana Ghita	Susan Noyce
Hai Ling Chu	Rachel Jacobson	Maren Parry
James Claflin	Caren Jenkins	Patrick Reilly
Kim Cooper	Shawanna Johnson	Francesca Resch
Trina Dahlin	Terry Johnson	Amber Robinson
Larissa Drohobyczer	Gabrielle Jones	Africa Sanchez
Mario Fenu	Chris Mackenzie	Kevin Van Ry
Frances-Ann Fine	Gary Manson	Shannon Wilson

BOLD honors multiple cases accepted and/or sessions conducted within the month.

ONE FOCUS

A SPOTLIGHT ON PRO BONO

Mary* came to Nevada Legal Services after a case of mistaken identity turned into a nightmare. Mary, who is on disability due to a severe seizure disorder that causes her to have multiple seizures each day, was being sued for a debt that was not hers. Mary does not utilize credit cards or loans, which is why it was a surprise to her when she received a summons stating that a credit card company was suing her for \$2,200 for a credit card that she never had. Having a common name, Mary knew that this was a case of mistaken identity and told the credit card company and their attorney this. The creditor responded by demanding more personal info, including her social security number and credit info, which Mary was not comfortable providing. When she refused their demands, the credit card company proceeded with the case.

Mary, with the help of her mother, made one appearance in court in April 2012, then heard nothing until late 2012, when she learned through the court's website that a default had been entered against her. After Mary's appearance at the first hearing, where she provided her current address, counsel for the credit card company had Mary served by publication for subsequent hearings. Since Mary received no notice, she did not appear and the court granted a default against her. When she learned of this, Mary contacted several attorneys for help, but no one was willing to take her case because she could not afford the fees. Mary was able to have the default judgment set aside on her own, but the experience left her shaken and she was terrified of trying to represent herself in court again, particularly because the nervousness and stress of appearing before a judge was triggering even more seizures, and she was afraid she would embarrass herself in court. Feeling frustrated and frightened by the threats of opposing counsel, Mary contacted Nevada Legal Services for help.

Nevada Legal Services placed Mary with pro bono attorney Terry Johnson. Although Johnson was prepared to zealously advocate for Mary, after a few discussions with opposing counsel, the credit card company agreed that they had the wrong person and stipulated to dismissing the case with prejudice. Thanks to the assistance that Mary received from her pro bono attorney, she was

able to end her legal nightmare and continue on with her life.

Terry Johnson works full time for the State of Nevada as a member of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, and very regularly does pro bono work in the form of taking cases and participating in outreach clinics. Johnson was Nevada Legal Services' southern Nevada 2013 Volunteer Attorney of the Year.

*Client's name has been changed.

ATTORNEY'S ANGLE:

Question: What, if anything, about that case stayed with you?

Terry Johnson: The client's appreciation for the pro bono work stayed with me. She was genuinely and sincerely appreciative that an attorney would give of their time to help her. I also enjoyed working with the client to help her understand certain legal processes and terms. Her increased understanding in turn helped me because she was constantly and creatively looking for ways to defend against the suit that was filed against her.

Question: What tip(s) can you offer attorneys interested in or considering taking a pro bono case?

Terry Johnson: While I only practice law pro bono, I can see where revenue-oriented attorneys could benefit from the referrals to their practices that can result from pro bono work. Pro bono work is also a good way to gain practice experience in areas in which an attorney does not regularly practice. ■