

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
JUNE 2007 PLAN, INC. BOARD MEETING

Following is a report on some activities since my last Report.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. INTERNS AND FELLOWS: The new class of MLK interns began last week, starting with a two day poverty law training hosted by PLAN, Inc. MLK Interns are first and second year law students assigned to work at legal aid programs across the state for 10 weeks; salaries are paid by PLAN, Inc. We are also pleased to announce the hiring of two additional MLK Fellows for 2007. Sipi Gupta, a graduate of Temple Law School will be start her law career at the Pennsylvania Health Law Project in September and Autumn Johnson of Widener will begin this month at Northwestern Legal Services. Both are former MLK summer interns. In addition, the MLK program evaluation committee is in the process of planning a 15 year anniversary celebration tentatively scheduled for October 19th in conjunction with the PBA Diversity Summit in Philadelphia. Tobey Oxholm has agreed to chair the anniversary celebration.

STATEWIDE TRAINING CONFERENCE: The PLAN Inc.-sponsored statewide training was very well received and considered a great success. We had a record 273 registrants for the May 22-24 conference, which included a full day of trial skills training, a technology summit and a CCOP meeting on May 22. The main conference was geared to legal aid attorneys, paralegals, clients, and technology and support staff. The trial skills training provided 6.5 substantive CLE credits and the main conference provided 40 workshops, 30 of which offered CLE credits. Another unique feature was the partnership with the PBA's Outreach to Children Summit held in conjunction with our conference, on the 24th, which hosted 200 participants, including some of our registrants. This partnership with the PBA was very positive. The Thursday luncheon was attended by over 400 people from both events, with Justice Baer addressing the group. We will be reporting approximately 818 CLE credits for the statewide conference and attorney skills training and an additional approximately 300 credits will be reported for the Children's Summit, with PLAN, Inc. handling these CLE credits too.

LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE: This legislation has now been introduced as Senate Bill 860 and House Bill 1480, thanks to the leadership and support of Senators Greenleaf and Costa, along with Representatives Manderino and Harper. The legislation will create in PHEAA the authority to administer a loan repayment assistance program for public interest lawyers. This is a great first step to providing this assistance.

NEW CONTROLLER: James Flanagan started as our new Controller on June 1. He is working closely in transition with Chuck Bussard and with Jon, Elton and with me. There is lots to be done, in connection with year-end activities, monitoring of programs, and attention to the changes we've implemented in our fiscal operations. I'm pleased with the attention to these activities.

MORE ACCOLADES TO OUR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTERS: Some well deserved awards have been made in recent months. **Bob Racunas**, NLSA Executive Director and **Mary Ann Troper-Malley**, also of NLSA, received the Ted Craig Humanitarian Award from the Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, for leadership in NLSA's Pro Bono Protection From Abuse Project. **Steve Krone**, Esq., with MidPenn Legal Services, was recognized by the PBA as the Civil Legal Aid Attorney of the Year. **Cathy Carr**, CLS Executive Director, received the Alumni Award of Merit from the University of Pennsylvania Law Alumni Society for her leadership in Philadelphia's strong legal services system; and several people well known to us made it on the Super Lawyer listing: **Maureen Kelly** (one of top 50 Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania lawyers), **Jerry McHugh** (one of Pennsylvania's top 10), and **Sharon Dietrich**, from Community Legal Services. Also, **Community Legal Services** is receiving from the ABA's Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division, the

prestigious Hodson Award for Public Service, to be presented at the ABA's annual meeting on August 10, for the program's outstanding work, setting the "gold standard" for programs.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Friends of Farmworkers hosts its reception and awards presentation event at 5:00 p.m. on June 18 at the Philadelphia's Hilton Garden Inn at 11th and Arch.

The summer-end reception for our Martin Luther King, Jr. Interns will be held August 8 at 5:00 p.m. at the Dauphin County Bar Association Banquet Room.

TECHNOLOGY RELATED DEVELOPMENTS AND SUPPORT FOR TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES IN PENNSYLVANIA: We were very pleased that three different Technology Incentive Grants submitted to the Legal Services Corporation from Pennsylvania look very promising in that the sponsors have been asked, based on their project descriptions, to submit formal proposals. They are North Penn, SPLAS and NLSA. PLAN, Inc. and NLSA are seeking, in partnership with Pro Bono.Net, to update and modernize the national LawHelp template that is the foundation of PALawHELP.org. North Penn is seeking funding to expand its development of Hot docs documents to assist self-represented people with form court pleadings. SPLAS is seeking funding to develop web-based systems to assist low-income Pennsylvanians in obtaining state and federal tax rebates.

This is a good place to mention that LawHelp.org receive the Webby Award for the Best Law Website, on behalf of the entire nationwide LawHelp network, on June 5 in New York. Mark O'Brien's acceptance speech, "LawHelp is on the way!" was written by Hank.

We are engaged in an intense review of our website, PaLegalAid.net, and expect a possible upgrading of the site in the near future, based on the recommendations we have received.

A news feed of PALawHELP.org news has been added to the PaLegalAid.net community education page. This contains the news items that are regularly posted to PALawHELP.org.

DAY ON THE HILL: I have to mention again, as we continue to see results from the ABA's Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C., how successful this event was. Led by Andy Susko, a delegation of three of us met one-on-one with many members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation. As of today, nine Pennsylvania members of the Senate and House have signed onto a letter supporting increased funding to the Legal Services Corporation. Last year there were five from Pennsylvania.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel W. Milkes, Esq.
Executive Director