

Committee on Civil Justice UPDATE



NOVEMBER 2008

- **Chief Justice**
Leah Ward Sears
Ex-Officio
- **Anne W. Lewis**
Co-Chair
- **Teri P. McClure**
Co-Chair
- **Jill O. Radwin**
Executive Director
- **Tracy Powell**
Project
Coordinator
- www.gaccj.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Committee News	2
ATJ Headlines	2
Looking Ahead	3

2008 Committee Wrap-Up

The Committee has had a very active year on many fronts. Progress has been made on several major projects, subcommittees have held meetings to further the advancement of their objectives, articles have appeared in various publications, and plans for future initiatives are in the works. Listed below are the activities and other notable happenings of the past year:

- The Committee initiated and, for the most part, completed the first Legal Needs Study (LNS) to be conducted in the state since 1994;
- A model uniform rule change on limited scope representation was submitted to the Council of

Superior Court Judges, and is advancing through the rule change process;

- The Lawyers Foundation of Georgia awarded the committee a grant to assist with funding the LNS;
- The Committee held a CLE program at the State Bar Annual Meeting on the preliminary findings of the LNS;
- The Appalachian Circuit Family Law Information Center pilot project was created, funded, and established;
- Committee staff attended two national conferences on access to justice;

- Articles about the Committee appeared in *The Atlanta Lawyer* and the *Georgia Bar Journal*;
- The committee met in full on three occasions, and subcommittees met at various times throughout the year;
- The clerk's guidebook for assisting self-represented litigants is scheduled to begin production in early 2009.

These accomplishments are the result of the hard work and dedication of our membership, leaders, and staff. Several projects are on deck for 2009, and we intend for it to be another very productive year.

Atlanta Bar Assn. "Pro Bono March Madness"

The Committee on Civil Justice has been invited by the Atlanta Bar Association to participate in its annual "Pro Bono March Madness" campaign.

Designed to serve as a kick-off for the month's events, the committee's program will be focused on the results of the Legal Needs Study. Results from the public telephone survey,

personal interviews, and focus groups will be shared, and special emphasis will be placed on the findings of the attorney survey.

This particular program will be targeted to pro bono coordinators and firm managers/leaders, and it will inform attendees about the need for pro bono services and how lawyers and firms can respond.

Information about this program, and the entire month of events, should be available from the Atlanta Bar Association in early 2009. More details will become available as the date approaches. If any committee members are interested in assisting with this program, please notify the staff.

Committee News

A quick look at what's been going on...

- The **Atlanta Bar Association** held its first annual awards luncheon and pro bono fair, "Celebrating Service," on October 2. Judge Glenda Hatchett and Hank Aaron were featured speakers.
- **Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation** held its 17th Annual Winetasting on November 6.
- The **Pro Bono subcommittee** met on Tuesday, October 28, to review objectives and discuss its work.
- The **Resource Development** subcommittee will meet on Tuesday, December 9.
- **All subcommittees** are encouraged to meet prior to our next full committee meeting (date TBD).
- **Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears** will retire from the Supreme Court when her term as Chief ends on June 30, 2009.
- The **Committee meeting** scheduled for Friday, December 12, has been **postponed** until after the first of the year. A notice will be sent out in advance of the new date.
- The **Appalachian Family Law Information Center** continues to grow. The staff has provided assistance to approximately 400 self-represented litigants since September. Visit the FLIC website at www.appfamilylawcenter.org



Access to Justice in the News

*Access to Justice Headlines information/source found at www.atjsupport.org

The **New Mexico Supreme Court** adopted a rule providing for mandatory IOLTA with comparability, effective January 1, 2009. The Court also adopted a limited representation rule for legal services, which allows out-of-state attorneys to work in legal aid programs for two terms of three-years, without having to take the state's Bar exam. The rule also provides emeritus attorneys the ability to represent clients in legal aid programs, without requiring them to hold "active" status with the state bar. View the rules at nmsupremecourt.nmcourts.gov/

The **South Carolina Access to Justice Commission** held its final public hearing on access to justice in front of the state Supreme Court on November 5. The initial findings from the first seven hearings were presented at the state's Judicial Conference in August.

The **Supreme Court of Montana** teamed up with six legal service

organizations to create an Access to Justice Forum Series, which will be held in six locations around the state. The first was held on September 8 in Great Falls.

The materials from the **2008 Equal Justice Conference** are now available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/ejc/workshop_preview_2008.html

The **Maryland Access to Justice Commission** held its first meeting on October 20. New Hampshire Chief Justice John Broderick served as the keynote speaker.

The materials from the **2008 Court Solutions Conference** are available in the library at selfhelpsupport.org

LexisNexis has launched its "HotDocs Software Donation Program," making the document-assembly software available free of charge to all organizations that receive

funding from the Legal Services Corporation or IOLTA. For more information, see the LSC [press release](#).

The Summer 2008 issue of the **ABA Judges' Journal** was dedicated to the issue of access to justice. Read at www.abanet.org/jd/publications/jjournal/home.html. The series will continue in the Fall issue.

The **Supreme Court of Wisconsin** will consider in December the petition from the Wisconsin State Bar on the creation of an Access to Justice Commission.

The **District of Columbia** has released its Legal Needs Study, [Justice for All? An Examination of the Civil Legal Needs of the District of Columbia's Low-Income Community](#).

California held a Pro Bono Summit, *Statewide Strategic Planning for Legal Services and Law Firms*, on November 6.

Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Civil Justice

244 Washington Street, SW
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Jill O. Radwin
Executive Director
Phone: 404-463-1849
Fax: 404-651-6449
E-mail: radwinj@gaaoc.us

Tracy Powell
Project Coordinator
Phone: 404-463-0040
Fax: 404-651-6449
E-mail: powellt@gaaoc.us

Committee Membership

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears	P. Todd Carroll
Anne W. Lewis Co-Chair	Richard Deane
Teri P. McClure Co-Chair	Terence Dicks
Charles T. Lester	Judge William Duffey
Rita Sheffey	Reverend Jane Fahey
W. Terence Walsh	Senator Seth Harp
Judge Wayne Purdom	Thomas D. Hills
Timothy W. Floyd	Linda Klein

Created in May 2005, the Committee on Civil Justice works to strengthen Georgia's civil justice system by developing, coordinating and supporting policy initiatives to expand access to the courts for poor and vulnerable Georgians.

Vision Statement

The cornerstone of our free society is a civil legal system that is available to all to address legal issues that arise in their daily lives and a judiciary that advances the fair, efficient, and impartial resolution of disputes

Mission Statement

To develop for implementation in Georgia a statewide, broad-based, publicly-known and supported, coordinated system for the poor which:

1. Provides education, advice and tools to identify and address legal issues;
2. Ensures competent legal representation when appropriate; and
3. Promotes the efficient, effective and fair resolution of legal issues and disputes

Representative Edward Lindsey	Advisory Members
Judge Willie Lockette	Martin L. Ellin
John B. Long	Steven Gottlieb
Cubbedge Snow	Sharon N. Hill
Michael Tyler	Phyllis J. Holmen
Derek J. White	Michael L. Monahan

Looking Ahead, etc.

December 12, 2008 — Committee on Civil Justice Meeting
POSTPONED - NEW DATE TBD

January 12, 2009 — Legislative Session Begins

January 20-23, 2009 — Council of Superior Court Judges Winter Conference

March 2009 — Atlanta Bar Association "Pro Bono March Madness"

**** Happy Holidays! ****