

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

LLOYD D. GEORGE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE  
333 LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD SOUTH, ROOM 7005  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89101-7083

GLORIA M. NAVARRO, CHIEF JUDGE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

TELEPHONE (702) 464-5490  
FACSIMILE (702) 464-5491

October 4, 2016

**BARBARA BUCKLEY AND LEGAL AID CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA**

The United States District Court and Bankruptcy Court for the District of Nevada nominate Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada and Barbara Buckley, Legal Aid Center's Executive Director, for the Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award. Since 2007, Legal Aid Center has had a generous partnership with the courts and has been dedicated to creating several programs to assist pro bono litigants.

Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization that serves the low-income population of Clark County, Nevada, by providing free civil legal aid and pro bono services. Legal Aid Center's mission is to preserve access to justice and to provide quality legal counsel, advice, and representation to individuals who are unable to protect their rights because they cannot afford an attorney.

Barbara Buckley joined Legal Aid Center in 1989 and she has been its most passionate advocate, dedicating her career to its success. After becoming executive director in 1996, Ms. Buckley has contributed to the Center by adding a Family Justice Project, a Children's Attorneys Project, a Civil Law Self-Help Center, and a Family Law Self-Help Center. Additionally, she partnered Legal Aid Center with the William S. Boyd School of Law, where all first-year law students are required and trained to help out the Center in teaching legal classes to the public.

Barbara Buckley and Legal Aid Center went above and beyond in tailoring the programs to the specific needs of Nevada's federal and bankruptcy courts. Ms. Buckley tirelessly reached out to see what programs were necessary, and created and customized the programs so that they would be equally successful for the courts and the participants. Due to Ms. Buckley's endless advocacy, Legal Aid Center has a reputation for excellence and has developed innovative systems to deliver critical services to clients in need.

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*Scope of Services*

**Bankruptcy Facilitator Program**

One program that Ms. Buckley and Legal Aid Center created was the Bankruptcy Facilitator Program. This Program assists unrepresented individuals with issues regarding filed bankruptcy cases, supplementing traditional pro bono services of helping victims of divorce, medical catastrophe, or the recession file new Chapter 7 cases. The Program was launched in 2007 with oversight by the Pro Bono Bankruptcy Committee that consists of all the Nevada bankruptcy judges, Bankruptcy Clerk, four pro bono attorneys, Chapter 7 trustee representative, Chapter 13 trustee representative, and staff from Legal Aid Center.

The Facilitator attends reaffirmation hearings and relief from stay hearings to provide legal information to unrepresentative individuals at those hearings. For those individuals needing more assistance than can be provided in a short consultation, they are given a "blue slip" referral directing them to the Legal Aid Center. A bankruptcy judge or bankruptcy trustee can give an individual a "blue slip" directing them to the Legal Aid Center to meet with the Facilitator or paralegal. If the litigant required direct legal assistance beyond a consultation, the Facilitator can refer the matter to a volunteer pro bono attorney on the Bankruptcy Litigation Panel. All of the volunteer pro bono attorneys who participate in the Bankruptcy Litigation Panel are provided with free malpractice insurance and mentoring, if needed.

The Facilitator participates in education and outreach efforts by supervising a weekly Bankruptcy Community Service Class, taught (in both English and Spanish) in partnership with the William S. Boyd School of Law, and maintains brochures and flyers in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court's Clerk's Office. The Facilitator also monitors the problems of bankruptcy petition preparers to protect debtors from unconscionable fees and improper advice.

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**Federal Court Pro Bono Project**

Ms. Buckley and Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada were also instrumental in assisting the Court in the development of a Pro Bono Project that has been in place since late 2014. At any time during the course of litigation, an assigned judge can refer a case to the Pro Bono Project for appointment of pro bono counsel. With a referral, Legal Aid Center contacts the pro se litigants to ensure he or she wants to participate in the pro bono program, meets the income requirements, and is otherwise unable to secure paid legal representation. Once the volunteer attorney and the prospective client have reached an agreement as to the scope of the representation, a court order is entered appointing the attorney. In addition to providing this valuable service to this program, Legal Aid Center also developed an informational webpage about this program which is hosted on their website.

**Ask-A-Lawyer Program**

Several years ago, Legal Aid Center also assisted the Court with the development of an Ask-A-Lawyer program that allows any unrepresented party (plaintiff or defendant) with an open case in federal court who is in need of legal advice to sign up for a free, thirty-minute consultation with a voluntary attorney. Legal Aid Center promotes the Ask-A-Lawyer program, recruits voluntary attorneys, collects information from the pro se litigants to allow for conflict screening, schedules the attorney consultations, and provides any other necessary administrative support.

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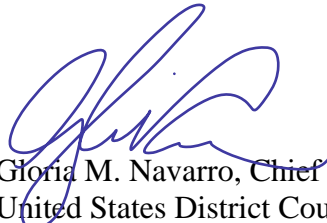
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Barbara Buckley and Legal Aid Center truly benefit the judiciary with their programs by working closely with the courts to adapt to and meet changing needs. These programs save countless hours for both the participants and the courts, and are vital for the Las Vegas community. Ms. Buckley and Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada deserve the Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award due to their passion, their dedication, and their involvement in enhancing the Clark County legal system.

Thank you,

  
Gloria M. Navarro, Chief Judge  
United States District Court

  
Bruce T. Beesley, Chief Judge  
United States Bankruptcy Court