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# Music to Pro Bono Cases Placed Family Law Conference

BY BOB CERCEO, ESQ.

The idea arose three decades ago: The Annual Family Law CLE conference would become the place where all family law practitioners would break bread together, under one roof, and make peace with one another following a year of facing off in rancorous divorce cases. In addition to helping with attorney civility, promoting uniformity in the treatment of cases statewide, and leading to discussions on legislation and trends from the Supreme Court, the conference has become a forum in which to place pro bono cases. Much has been accomplished for pro bono, but there is more work to be done.

The Family Law Section has held its annual conference in a rural setting for nearly 30 years. It moved from Tonopah to Ely, and it is currently taking place in Bishop, California. The location makes a difference; under one roof, in the middle of nowhere and away from our offices, there are fewer distractions and we have to actually face each other.

About a decade ago, as I became more active with the Family Law Section (in the capacity of an Executive Council member), promoting the placement of pro bono cases became a

personal project. To assist Nevada Legal Services, Volunteer Attorneys of Rural Nevada, Washoe Legal Services and Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, we tried everything we could think of to place roughly 80 cases per year. Our efforts included asking with the help of a district court judge or Supreme Court justice (always effective),



Attorney Katherine Provost won this guitar during the 2017 Family Law Conference.

Photo courtesy of Katherine L. Provost

# Our Ears: During Annual

a pie sale from a local Ely baker—take a case and bring home a pie (less effective, but very tasty)—and free mid-year CLE seminars for those taking on new cases (not quite the free pie, but also an effective, persuasive tool).

Borrowing an idea from greater minds, I bought a nice guitar and had a local luthier dress it up with Nevada emblems. Judge Bryce Duckworth then carried it around for signatures at the judge's annual conference that took place shortly before the Family Law Conference; thus, the birth of the "Judge and Justice" signed guitar. Conference attendees took a pro bono case and received a lottery ticket representing a chance to win the guitar. The idea was a hit; 80 cases up, 80 cases down. Ten guitars of different shapes and colors now dot the Nevada law office landscape. In that span, about 800 cases—all representing indigent families in great need—have been served by our section members. We had fun with the guitars, but seeing the number of families served is the real reward.

This past March, [TrueFire.com](http://TrueFire.com), an online guitar lesson company that offers some of the best courses available, donated 400 90-day subscriptions to all Family Law Conference attendees, along with a one-year subscription to the guitar lottery winner. Somewhere out there, live a lot of aspiring guitar pickers moonlighting as lawyers.

2019 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Family Law Conference. It will again take place in Bishop, California. National and Nevada speakers will present on a variety of Family Law topics. Grab a pick and sit in with us in Bishop... and think about taking on a pro bono case. Your guitar is waiting for you! **NL**



TrueFire, a privately-held company in St. Petersburg, Florida, has a long history of supporting charitable events, such as producing Muriel Anderson's All-Star Guitar Night,

collecting and donating guitars and lessons for our returning able and wounded war veterans to help with recovery. TrueFire now helps our state's pro bono initiative. TrueFire's educational collaborations with hundreds of top artists and educators power over 33,000 interactive video guitar lessons covering all styles, all techniques and all levels of play. From GRAMMY award winners, to top session players, to world renowned educators, TrueFire lessons are powered by the best educators in the business.

**TrueFire is now offering a \$75 All Access Voucher. To get 90 days of free access to all TrueFire guitar lessons and savings on downloadable courses, visit [TRUEFIRE.COM/SPARK](http://TRUEFIRE.COM/SPARK) and register your pin, with voucher pin code: IGNITED.**

## 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 through the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Washoe Legal Services, Nevada Legal Services and Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans, and those who donated their time to work at events like Ask-A-Lawyer and Lawyer in the Library.

Ilan Acherman	Erik Foley	Shaina Plaksin
Alyssa Aklestad	Sean Forbush	Kristopher Pre
Peter Aldous	Lynn Fulstone	Carrie Primas
Jennifer Anderson	Dara Goldsmith	Lisa Rasmussen
Christian Augustin	<b>Marjorie Guymon</b>	James Ream
Eunice Beattie	George Haines	<b>Molly Rosenblum</b>
Audrey Beeson	Karen Hanks	Ryan Saldanha
John Blackmon	John Hunt	Robert Schmidt
Brian Blaylock	Kristian Kaskla	Atif Sheikh
Cara Brumfield	Mona Kaveh	Nicholas Shook
Benjamin Carman	Caleb Langsdale	Brian Steadman
Marilyn Anne Caston	Brittany Llewellyn	David Stephens
Shelly Cooley	Dawn Lozano	Hardeep Sull
Renee Cooper	Kegan Monks	Ashlie Surur
Laura Deeter	Todd Moody	<b>Stephen Swinton</b>
Shirley Derke	Brian Morris	Matt Tsai
Damon Dias	Eric Olsen	Brittnie Watkins
Rachel Donn	<b>Christine Owen</b>	<b>Marshal Willick</b>
Angela Dows	Maren Parry	Rachel Wise
Steve Evenson	Romeo Perez	Shane Young
<b>Dean Jason Ferris</b>		

### Attorneys who participated in Ask-A-Lawyer, Lawyer in the Library or other clinics:

Enrique Acuna	Michelle Darquea-	Lauren Pena
Jason Aivaz	Kaplan	Lindsey Pena
<b>Alyssa Aklestad</b>	Damon Dias	Jennifer Poynter-
Daniel Allen	Cherie Fletter	Willis
Jeanette "Jae" Barrick	<b>Joe Gorman</b>	Mariteresa Rivera-
Lauren M. Berkich	Michael S. Gregg	Rogers
Robert Blau	<b>Jack S. Grellman</b>	Arturo Sanchez
<b>Craig Bourke</b>	Robert Hernquist	<b>Glenn Schepps</b>
Brianna Bower	James Hoffman	<b>Madelyn Shipman</b>
Michelle Briggs	Janice Jacovino	James Smyth
Amy Buchanan	Tatiana Jensen	Cassie Stratford
<b>Ebru Cetin</b>	<b>Gabrielle Jones</b>	Janet E. Traut
Radha Chanderraj	Madeline La Forgia	<b>Sandra A. Unsworth</b>
<b>Jessica Chong</b>	<b>Chelsea Latino</b>	Natalia Vander Laan
Lesley Cohen	<b>Megan Lucey</b>	Justin Watkins
<b>Brittany N. Cooper</b>	Bryan Martin	Jill K. Whitbeck
Melissa Corral	Christopher Owen	Shann Winesett

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

**Be sure to follow Access To Justice on Twitter at @NevadaATJ, in order to keep abreast of all upcoming pro bono opportunities and events!**