

**LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION  
KATRINA CONFERENCE CALL NOTES  
OCT. 19, 2005**

**Mississippi**

- The Supreme Court passed the order on pro hoc vice last Friday. It is posted on [Katrinalegalaid.org](http://Katrinalegalaid.org) along with the orders of Florida and Louisiana
- Sam has had contact with the YLD about their work. The YLD was concerned if they were operating efficiently and what more they could do.
- So far only 10 cases have been referred from the YLD hotline to the Mississippi Centers for Legal Services. Some calls were being sent to different organizations. Largest issues have been landlord tenant and insurance, and some bankruptcy.
- They get between 30 and 40 calls a day at the Bar hotline.
- Concerning people whose complaints concern FEMA benefits, Terry indicated that while YLD can't advise people to file a suit, they can refer it to a resource that can pursue the matter.

**Alabama**

- Several Legal Services of Alabama (LSA) staff members are in Birmingham setting up their program's Katrina call center location at the law school. They have two other lines to be used for Spanish speakers and seniors. This new hotline will not take the place of the YLD hotline, but will be complementary to it.
- As of a week ago, LSA had opened 150 cases, 50 are extended service. Ninety of them are seniors.
- The referral from the YLD hotline to LSA is smooth, but the YLD hotline is only meeting a small percentage of the need at this point. It rings into the Alabama Bar to a designated line for Katrina callers. All calls go into a voice mailbox and are not answered immediately but the callers are called back. Periodically the VLP coordinator checks the line – does call backs, intakes, and passes it on to the YLD lawyers. She is the only one answering the calls. This does not seem very efficient. The YLD effort does not include going out to the DRC's.
- Information sharing between people who are monitoring hotlines in different areas would be helpful. Some hotlines have solved problems that other ones have.
- Flyers for this new hotline are being widely distributed. There are 15 issue specific fliers that are being given out to churches, social services offices, DRCs,

schools, etc. These flyers are on their Katrina sight and can be downloaded and printed from the internet for easier distribution.

- There is going to be a training coming up next week for paralegals and students, as well as LSA's own staff.
- YLD hotline is only meeting a tiny sliver of people's needs at this point. They have a very good relationship with the YLD person at the bar.

## **Louisiana**

- On Thursday at 5:00 the YLD call center switched to the LSU law school – they are going to be doing a better job than the Baton Rouge Bar Association was able to do.
- They had 330 cases, most of them eviction, that needed to be referred to lawyers. LSU handled 450 calls on 10/18.
- YLD now understands that they have to provide funding for lawyers at the call centers. They now have 4 lawyers who are staffed at the center.
- The numbers of people at the DRC's are beginning to get smaller. They have stopped going to one, and will stop going to another soon.
- 44 % of the lawyers getting referrals are out of the area.
- Now there is a lull on cases. There were a lot of bankruptcy calls until recently – Minnesota was helpful in taking bankruptcy calls. People thought they had to file for bankruptcy by last Sunday, which explains the large volume of calls.
- They are now trying to gear up for evictions cases – a moratorium was imposed until Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>. They expect to have lots of these cases after that.
- There are a lot of insurance cases coming in, but they are fee generating so they are not getting involved with them at this time.
- One of the things they have heard is that your chances are better to get trailers if you leave the state and apply for one upon your return. One problem is that the trailers are not handicap accessible.

## **Texas**

- They have tried to get numbers. Programs have 1,500 active cases, and have closed out 2,600 cases. They have seen thousands of more people than that. The two largest categories are bankruptcies and landlord tenant.

- The Beaumont office is okay as is the non-LSC grantee in the office. Programs have been helpful to counties in getting disaster relief funds.
- There are still places in East Texas without electricity and they are still trying to get disaster area status.
- Texas still has many Katrina evacuees.
- Nothing new to report on the YLD.

### **Florida**

- They are waiting to see what happens with Wilma. (Kris Knab, who had a conflicting PDA meeting, was not on the call.

### **California**

- The 10,000 evacuee number given during the call last week includes both the formal and informal evacuees.
- People were brought here in miscellaneous ways, including by some providers who have been running shelters. There have been scams connected to some of them.
- California providers see the usual cases involving FEMA and public benefits. There have been some issues with referrals to welfare offices and they are working on them as well.

### **ABA**

- They have been attempting to work with YLD to foster better communication among YLD network and between YLD and programs.

### **LSC**

- AARP is offering grants to organizations providing help, long-term care, housing and legal assistance. LSC will put these up on the website tomorrow. Don sent it to everyone on the e-mail list.
- Equal Justice Works has received 70 applications from attorneys for the Disaster Relief Fellowship program. Applicants have anywhere from 3-30 years of experience. They hope to be able to have between six and 16 fellows from this group. They have talked to Alabama and Texas. EJW hopes to place two Fellows at each program.

## **LSTech**

- 18 volunteers have signed up to help affected programs with technology consulting
- They are talking to affected programs and putting together a grant for mobile law units.
- Kate Lang put Steve Gray in contact with Morrison and Forester. They have desk tops and monitors they would make available (37 computers and 250 monitors) to programs in need.

## **NLADA**

- They are behind in their conference planning because they are working on Katrina subject matter for the conference.
- They are hoping to mobilize support for the emergency situations.
- In response to a strong sense in the community, they have set up a fund for staff that was affected by the hurricanes. They will try to get funds and have had a good response from the community thus far.
- They are trying to figure out a support infrastructure to work with the volunteers.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- (Anybody/everybody) Figuring out a way to share information about setting up an effective call center. Perhaps creating a set of standards that centers must follow.
- (Melissa) Working on the contact for the mobile law units.
- (Anybody) Send Steve an email at [grange@umich.edu](mailto:grange@umich.edu) if you want to be considered for the computer and monitor donation that Kate Lang put him in contact with or if you want technology consulting assistance.

## **NEXT CALL – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26 AT 5:00 PM (EDT)**

- Instructions to join the conference call:
  1. Dial the IDT connect access number at the scheduled time:  
1-(866) 266-3378
  2. Enters this conference ID number: 202-295-1500  
(An automated system will answer and prompt parties to enter password, followed by the # sign.)
  3. Enter the password 9981# and you will be connected to the call.