

Just Dealings

THE OHIO LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION

ULMER & BERNE AWARDED OLAF'S 2008 PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Ulmer & Berne LLP is the recipient of the 2008 OLAF Presidential Award. The Award is presented annually to an individual, firm, or organization that has provided outstanding leadership in the delivery of pro bono legal services in the state of Ohio. The recipient is chosen by the president of the OLAF board of trustees.

Ulmer & Berne, a state-wide law firm with offices in Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, as well as Chicago, is celebrating during 2008 the centennial anniversary of its founding during 1908. The firm chose to commemorate the anniversary with community service and civic activities. In 2007 the firm contributed nearly 5,300 hours in community and pro bono service.

In honor of its 100 years, the firm presented a gift of \$100,000 to Legal Aid Society of Cleveland to benefit Legal Aid's Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP). Because the firm wanted its gift to support the legal aid programs in every Ohio community in which the firm works and lives, the gift was shared with Legal Aid Society of Columbus and Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati. The gift is the single largest gift received by Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.



F. Thomas Vickers, Partner and Chair of Ulmer & Berne's Construction Litigation Group, with Corena Larimer, a first year law student at Case Western Reserve University School of Law, assisting a clinic client.

The gift flows from strong firm participation in Cleveland Legal Aid's VLP. According to Ann Porath, VLP Managing Attorney whose position is identified as the "Ulmer & Berne Anniversary Position" for 2008, "What is so wonderful is that it is not just about the money and about Cleveland. The donation is great, of course, but the donation came about because Ulmer & Berne sees the importance of pro bono and steps up to do it."

Ulmer & Berne lawyers from varying practice groups and across personal demographics participate in VLP. Firm lawyers accept direct referral of pro bono cases in addition to staffing pro bono clinics.

"The gift was a natural evolution of the way we do things," said Harold (Kip) Reader, the firm's Managing Partner. "It was a natural thing for the firm and a perfect opportunity."

Yank Ulmer and Joe Berne founded the firm in Cleveland in 1908, after graduating together from Western Reserve University Law School. The two lawyers shared one desk and one phone. The firm now has 180 lawyers, with its largest office in Cleveland.

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Ulmer & Berne Managing Partner Kip Reader with clinic client.

About Ulmer & Berne

Established 100 years ago, Ulmer & Berne LLP is one of Ohio's largest law firms and has over 180 attorneys in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Chicago. The firm has been ranked two years in a row as a Fortune 500 Go-To Law Firm®. In 2007, the firm was recognized as one of 85 US law firms that "delivers the best value for the dollar." For more information, visit www.ulmer.com.

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ATTORNEYS

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Each of its four offices serves its local community. Cincinnati Partner Michael Marrero is a long time member of the board of Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati and served as its president for three years.

Even Managing Partner Reader finds time to participate in VLP Clinics. "Clients are very appreciative and very focused on what you have to say," he said. "It is also obvious that what you have to say is going to be put to use."

"It gives you a warm feeling that you've helped someone out – that's all there is to it. It's that simple."

Reader is also impressed with Cleveland Legal Aid's effective use of resources and its impact across the state of Ohio. On a more personal level, Reader said he knows the lawyers at Cleveland Legal Aid and has great respect for both their work and their commitment. "These are very good lawyers doing very good work,

who could earn two to three times more than what they're earning at Legal Aid."

The Award is to be presented by OLAF board president Julie Davis during the Council of Delegates and General Assembly Meeting at the Ohio State Bar Association Annual Convention, held this year in mid-May at the Columbus Convention Center. The Award will be accepted by Alexander M. Andrews, Partner-In-Charge of Ulmer & Berne's Columbus office.

2008 marks the thirteenth year in which the Presidential Award has been given. Last year's recipient was Richard W. Pogue, who was recognized for his work as chair of the OLAF board committee responsible for developing the Foundation's recommendations to the Supreme Court of Ohio concerning aspirational goals for voluntary pro bono service by Ohio's lawyers.

By Jane Taylor, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono

Past OLAF Presidential Award Recipients

Richard W. Pogue (2007); The Honorable W. Scott Oelslager (2006); The Honorable Walter Herbert Rice and David A. Kutik (2005); Diana Thimmig (2004); Richard Cordray (2003); Greater Cincinnati Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation and Magistrate Stephanie Clark of the Licking County Court of Common Pleas (2002); Attorney General Betty Montgomery (2001); Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project (2000); Sternberg, Newman, Shifrin & Associates of Akron, Barkan & Neff of Columbus, and Gilliam & Ireland of Dayton (1999); Denis Murphy (1998); Bill Weisenberg, Government Affairs Director, Ohio State Bar Association (1997); and, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, Columbus (1996).

OLAF Welcomes New Board Members

Jack R. Christopher, Majority Legal Counsel, Ohio House of Representatives, *Columbus*

William D. Dowling, Shareholder, Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs, LLP, *Akron*

Gary J. Leppla, Leppla Associates, *Dayton*

Nancy Hardin Rogers, Dean, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, *Columbus*

The Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation is a private, non-profit organization created by the Ohio Legislature in 1994 as a response to the serious deficiencies in meeting the civil legal needs of all Ohioans. In partnership with the state and local bars, elected officials, and local legal service providers, the Foundation continues to coordinate statewide resource development, support the delivery of legal services by local legal aid providers, and promote innovative approaches to ensure justice for all.



Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation Board of Trustees (November 2007).



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BENSON WOLMAN: A MORAL COMPASS

A MAN FULL OF PASSION, SAGE ADVICE, AND A WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR

Much of what was written about Benson Wolman in the days after his unexpected death late last November focused on his achievements in advancing the causes of civil liberties. But those who knew and worked with Benson, especially in the last years of his life when he worked as the Chief Executive and General Counsel for the Equal Justice Foundation, remember as well his dedication to improving access to the economically disadvantaged.

Benson Wolman was a teaching associate at The Ohio State University, a lobbyist for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and chair of its Central Ohio chapter in 1969 when he was elected Executive Director of the Ohio affiliate. What followed was 17 years of groundbreaking work, including cases that went to the United States Supreme Court on behalf of those who were injured, and the families of those who were killed at Kent State University on May 4, 1970; and on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan, which resulted in a decision protecting the Klan's right to erect an unattended cross on public property. Two years after giving up the Executive Director position, Benson became an attorney and entered private practice, first in an of counsel position, and then as a principal in his own firm. In 2005 he joined Equal Justice Foundation, an organization with a mission to defend and advocate the rights of indigent, minority and other disadvantaged Ohio residents

through a program of proactive litigation in state and federal courts. At the time of his death he and his colleagues at Equal Justice Foundation were deeply involved in the predatory lending crisis, as well as in cases involving consumer rights, public benefits, and civil rights.

OLAF board member Bill Faith wrote shortly after Benson's death, "Benson was an inspiration. He has

been very important to our current work on fighting predatory lending but had a long life of putting his convictions and principles first and acting clear and strong. He made lasting changes in his own right and was a mentor to many who will continue to make lasting changes for years to come. I will miss his passion, sage advice and sense of humor greatly." Board member Rick Dove, in an eloquent and moving tribute for the newsletter of the Ohio Center for Law Related Education, an organization of which Benson was a founding member, wrote that Benson attended his last board meeting for that organization less than 48 hours before his death and the



minutes from that meeting, and from prior meetings, "cannot adequately capture Benson's role as the moral compass and conscience of the organization."

While Benson took his life's work seriously, he did not take himself seriously, and was as well known for his sense of humor as for his passion. A tribute publication issued by the Ohio ACLU at the time of his

death recounts several of his humorous jabs, including the occasion on which he shared the stage with John Glenn and Madalyn Murray O'Hair, introducing them as the God-fearing and the God-jeering. He was also known for his out-of-control messy desk, and his tendency to talk at length. The ACLU Tribute to Benson Wolman recounts that perhaps the challenge wasn't the lengthy explanation, but "the pause at the end of the oration and then the, 'On the other hand,' as he examined the other side of the question."

Robert M. Clyde, OLAF's Executive Director, recalls that he had known Benson largely from an admiring distance until his association with the Equal Justice Foundation: "He had been an icon in his years with the ACLU. In spite of that association, Benson was greatly respected by legislators on both sides of the aisle during many effective years of advocacy in the General Assembly. He used to kid his more conservative friends in the Legislature that if they would not support his position on a particular bill, he would advertise the ACLU's support for them in the next election. I also enjoyed Benson's sense of humor, his knowledge of and love of wine and most of all, his indomitable spirit."

Benson was a faithful attendee at OLAF board meetings and a regular visitor to the office. His visits always broke up a morning or afternoon that became immediately dull by comparison. As with all others, the legal assistance community has lost too soon a friend, a fighter, a colleague we loved and enjoyed, and in whom we were immensely proud.

By Jane Taylor, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono



Learn more about the Equal Justice Foundation online at www.equaljusticefoundation.com

“JUSTICE IN ACTION” HELPS DOCUMENT THE EFFORTS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION TO ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation announces **Justice In Action**, an opportunity for Ohio lawyers to record their pro bono activities and financial support for legal aid programs.

In September of 2007, the Ohio Supreme Court issued its Statement Regarding the Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services by Ohio Lawyers, urging lawyers to “engage in new or additional pro bono opportunities.” The Court also announced that in order to document the efforts of the legal profession to ensure equal access to justice, it would work with OLAF to develop a means by which lawyers might, voluntarily and anonymously, record pro bono activities and financial support for legal aid programs.

The opportunity to record pro bono activities and financial support of legal aid programs will be offered annually, beginning in January of 2009. Attorneys having an email address on file with the Supreme Court will receive from the Court an email containing a link to an external survey site. By clicking on the link, which an attorney will be able to do only once, the attorney will then be able to enter hours of pro bono service and financial support for legal aid programs. Some general demographic questions may also be included. The external website will be designed so that any information reported will be collected without any identifiers. The information recorded by attorneys choosing to take part in Justice In Action will be collected and analyzed by Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, and will help the legal aid delivery system to identify gaps in service as well as to promote and improve opportunities for pro bono service.

Any attorney who may wish to participate in Justice In Action should begin recordkeeping now, as pro bono activities and financial support for legal aid programs during 2008 will be recorded in January of 2009. Watch for additional information and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

By Jane Taylor, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono

LEGAL AID PROGRAMS JOIN STATEWIDE “SAVE THE DREAM” EFFORT TO RESPOND TO OHIO’S FORECLOSURE CRISIS

On April 1, 2008, Ohio’s legal aid delivery system joined Governor Ted Strickland, Chief Justice Thomas Moyer, Attorney General Marc Dann, Treasurer of State Richard Cordray, Director of the Ohio Department of Commerce Kimberly Zurz and Ohio State Bar Association President Rob Ware, to announce the legal assistance initiative, the newest component of Ohio’s “*Save the Dream*” foreclosure prevention program. Recognizing that many homeowners threatened with foreclosure cannot afford an attorney and the resources available in the legal aid programs alone are inadequate to address the current need, this new statewide collaboration matches eligible low-income homeowners with legal aid lawyers and pro bono attorneys. “We believe that pro bono work is an obligation attorneys have to facilitate public access to justice,” said Chief Justice Moyer. “I am impressed, yet not surprised, by the outpouring of support from Ohio’s attorneys to help with foreclosure cases.”

Statistics maintained by the Supreme Court of Ohio show that there were more than 83,000 new foreclosure cases filed in Ohio in 2007. The new legal assistance component of *Save the Dream* is part of an extraordinary multi-agency effort developed to fulfill recommendations of the Governor’s Foreclosure Prevention Task Force and consolidates numerous state resources and programs addressing the record number of foreclosure filings across the state.

The Department of Commerce launched *Save the Dream* on March 13 as a public awareness campaign that includes radio and television advertisements, a user-friendly website (www.savethedream.ohio.gov) and a telephone hotline that connects homeowners to information and programs and also provides access to approved housing counselors.

Save the Dream’s new legal assistance initiative focuses on two specific recommendations from Governor Strickland’s Ohio Foreclosure Prevention Task Force: 1) using court-based mediation programs to resolve foreclosure cases and 2) recruitment and training of pro bono attorneys to represent homeowners faced with foreclosure.

On February 7, the Supreme Court of Ohio announced the creation of a “Foreclosure Mediation Model” designed to provide all common pleas courts with “best practices” and support for local foreclosure mediation programs. With support from the Supreme Court’s Dispute Resolution Section, some courts are mediating foreclosure cases as part of a general mediation program and other courts are actively developing specific mediation programs focused on resolving foreclosure cases. More than 200 attorneys signed up to serve as pro bono mediators in court-based mediation programs and mediation trainings are being held statewide. Local courts also are working with the “Save Our Homes” task forces created by Treasurer Richard Cordray to strengthen and expand mediation programs.

The *Save the Dream* legal assistance program is limited to foreclosure cases that have been filed on owner-occupied homes, e.g., the homeowner would like to stay in the home, and can also demonstrate sufficient income to sustain payments based upon a new loan workout. To participate, a homeowner calls the *Save the Dream* hotline (888-404-4674), operated jointly by staff from the offices of the Attorney General and the Department of Commerce, to determine if they meet the income and other eligibility requirements. Qualified homeowners are referred directly to the local legal aid program servicing the county in which the home is located to be matched with a legal aid or pro bono attorney. Basic income eligibility is 250% of the federal poverty guidelines, which is about \$53,000 annual income for a family of four.

Using limited representation agreements, the pro bono attorney will meet with the client, review



documents and evaluate the matter for claims and defenses. While a pro bono attorney may limit participation to case evaluation only, the goal is to have the same pro bono attorney also represent the homeowner at the mediation or through settlement negotiations. If the action is not resolved, additional pro bono attorneys have been recruited for full representation, including litigation.

On February 15, Chief Justice Moyer, Attorney General Marc Dann and Ohio State Bar President Rob Ware jointly sent a letter to more than 34,000 licensed Ohio attorneys urging them to volunteer their time to this important initiative. Initially named the Foreclosure Legal Assistance Group or “FLAG Ohio,” the pro bono legal assistance program is now fully integrated into the *Save the Dream* program as part of the statewide partnership to create one unified effort to link homeowners to available resources.

More than 1100 attorneys responded to the call-to-service and have volunteered to provide pro bono legal assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure. “These pro bono attorneys will supplement the resources available in the legal services community which alone are inadequate to address the current need,” said OSBA President Ware during the April 1 public announcement. “We are committed to helping Ohioans stay in their homes - to save their dreams - wherever possible.”

The Ohio State Bar Association also led the initial training effort for more than 350 pro bono attorneys on March 10-11 and coordinated CLE programs at eight locations throughout the state. Additional support for the CLE program was provided by the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, the Attorney General’s office and the Supreme Court of Ohio. The two-day comprehensive CLE training included presentations by national foreclosure law experts from the National

Consumer Law Center and participation was offered free of charge to all attorneys who volunteered to provide pro bono legal assistance to homeowners. The CLE program also was approved for up to 13.5 hours of CLE credit.

Seventeen new CLE programs have been developed by all six regional legal aid programs and the additional training opportunities are scheduled throughout May and June. The CLE programs will again be offered free of charge to all attorneys who have signed up to assist homeowners through the *Save the Dream* initiative and 5.5 hours of CLE credit has been requested.

To expand and complement this initiative, the legal aid programs have asked OLAF to set aside the majority

of its discretionary grant funds for the next three years to fund a statewide legal aid initiative that will focus on 1) providing support and training for the pro bono attorneys who provide services in foreclosure cases, 2) expanding outreach and education to the client community to encourage them to seek assistance when they fall behind in their mortgage payments and/or receive a summons, and 3)

increasing legal aid capacity to provide a wide range of advocacy responses to the foreclosure problems. OLAF’s board of trustees approved the statewide grant proposal at its March meeting.

Visit the OSBA website (www.ohiobar.org) to learn more about volunteering with *Save the Dream* and scheduled CLE programs.

By Lisa Eschleman, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono



April 1, 2008 press conference with Governor Ted Strickland (foreground), Chief Justice Thomas Moyer, Treasurer Richard Cordray, Ohio State Bar Association President Rob Ware, and Director of Commerce Kimberly Zurz (right to left, background).



LEXISNEXIS® CARES: AN INNOVATIVE PRO BONO INITIATIVE AND PART OF A COMPANYWIDE COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

LexisNexis®, a familiar name worldwide in both business and legal communities, is now making a name for itself as a dedicated supporter of pro bono service. As part of a broad, companywide commitment to community known as LexisNexis® Cares, the company launched a formal Pro Bono Initiative in the fall of 2007.

The Initiative was undertaken with the full support and commitment of Andu Prozes, LexisNexis® Group President, and the company's senior management.

According to Selene K. Edwards, Global Director for LexisNexis® Cares, the company's Pro Bono Initiative is unusual in that it is designed to engage not just lawyers in the global legal department, but the two to three thousand employed by LexisNexis® worldwide who hold a juris doctor or comparable degree.

Although the Initiative is just under way, Ms. Edwards hopes it will identify pro bono opportunities for which LexisNexis® will be able to provide unique expertise to solve problems.

An early example of such an opportunity is its support of Wills for Heroes, a national project in which pro bono attorneys prepare simple estate planning documents for first responders such as firefighters, police officers and paramedics. LexisNexis® donates HotDocs® document assembly software used by the pro bono attorneys, recruits and trains attorneys taking part in the project, and promotes it at community outreach activities.

LexisNexis® is currently working with OLAF technology staff to create document templates for Ohio. OLAF pro bono staff worked on development of a limited representation agreement for the project.

LexisNexis® pro bono volunteers also support the Southern African Litigation Center (SALC), through a joint project with the International Bar Association, to provide resources and litigation support for human rights cases being litigated by SALC in South Africa. LexisNexis® pro bono lawyers in the United States re-

motely provide legal research to SALC lawyers, who often do not have internet access available or access to a library of print materials.

Kermit Lowery, Vice President and Lead Customer Solutions Counsel, with 18 years as a volunteer for Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) and five years as a member of its board, has led LexisNexis® lawyers by example. Helenka Marculewicz, Executive Director of VLP, worked with the Pro Bono Initiative to identify pro bono opportunities and projects that would allow LexisNexis® attorneys to volunteer their time, while taking into consideration that many of the lawyers are not admitted to practice in Ohio. Helenka identified bankruptcy as an area of need for VLP clients, and LexisNexis® attorneys admitted to practice stepped forward to take bankruptcy court training as well as CLE training. The trained lawyers were then matched with four LexisNexis® lawyers not admitted to practice in Ohio, who assist with client interviews, preparation of schedules, and other tasks associated with the case. The Volunteer Lawyers Project prepared an in-depth manual to assist the teams, and Helenka notes the experience with the LexisNexis® lawyers has been "very positive." The commitment of the LexisNexis® lawyers to this project has resulted in a much-needed increase in VLP's bankruptcy panel.

By Jane Taylor, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono

The **Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project** creates innovative opportunities for attorneys to provide pro bono civil legal services to benefit persons with limited financial resources.

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UNIVERSITY OF AKRON SCHOOL OF LAW HONORS OLAF ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR JANE TAYLOR

Jane Taylor, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono, was presented the 2008 Outstanding Alumni Award on April 24, 2008 during the University of Akron School of Law's annual Law Alumni Awards and Class Reunion Dinner. The Outstanding Alumni Award recognizes law school alumni who have demonstrated service to the School of Law, his or her community and the legal profession. Recipients of the Outstanding Alumni Award also must possess outstanding professional accomplishments and consistently demonstrate professional integrity.

Since 2006, Ms. Taylor has been an associate director for pro bono at the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, a private, nonprofit foundation that works to assure resources, programs and services exist statewide to serve the unmet civil legal needs of Ohio's poor. As one of two associate directors for pro bono, Taylor serves in a statewide leadership role to energize and expand pro bono participation by attorneys, and serves as a catalyst and source of support for the development of local pro bono programs by bar associations, law firms, law schools and corporations.

Prior to joining the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, Taylor was an associate attorney from 1981-89 and partner from 1990-2006 at Guy, Lammert & Towne in Akron where her practice focused on representing creditors in commercial litigation matters.

Taylor was elected as the first female president of the Akron Bar Association (1994-95); elected first (and to date only) female District 11 (Summit and Portage counties) representative to Ohio State Bar Association Board of Governors; named Outstanding Committee Chairperson of the Akron Bar Association; and was named one of 100 Women of Distinction by the Akron Area YWCA.

Her professional associations include the Akron Bar Association, where she is currently a member of the Lawyers Assistance Committee and the Pro Bono Committee, and she also is a Fellow of the Akron Bar Association Foundation. Taylor is also active with the Ohio State Bar Association including service as its president in 2005-06. She is currently a member of the Access to Justice Committee and the Section on Women in the Profession; the board of the Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program, and the board of Ohio State Bar Foundation; and Life Fellow of the Ohio State Bar Foundation. She is also a member of the American Bar Association and the National Conference of Bar Presidents.

Also an active member in the community, Taylor has served on the board of trustees of the United Way of Summit County and is also a supporter and volunteer for Stewart's Caring Place, a wellness and educational resource center for individuals and families touched by cancer, which is an organization she supports in memory of her husband. She is chairing the Hope Walk in 2008, which will be held May 24.

She received a bachelor's degree from Kent State University in 1977 and her Juris Doctor degree from the UA School of Law in 1980.

We congratulate Jane Taylor on receiving the 2008 Outstanding Alumni Award from the University of Akron School of Law.



“CARRYING THE SPIRIT FORWARD” RECEPTION COMMEMORATES DENIS J. MURPHY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AND HONORS ROSS COLLINS OWENS WITH 2007 DENIS J. MURPHY AWARD

On November 29, 2007 the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation paid tribute to the late Denis J. Murphy, a founder and OLAF’s first board president at a reception in the Native American Lobby of the Ohio Judicial Center. “*Carrying the Spirit Forward*” served as the theme for the evening and highlighted the vision, contributions and dedication of Denis to ensure meaningful access to justice for low-income persons throughout Ohio. Chief Justice Thomas Moyer; Lt. Governor Lee Fisher; Kent Markus, Chief Counsel to Governor Ted Strickland; and Michael Deemer, Chief Deputy Attorney General for Governmental Affairs; made presentations during the event.

The reception also commemorated the creation of the Denis J. Murphy Fellowship Program that has attracted highly-skilled law school graduates to legal aid to create and execute programs that address and resolve specific and urgent

needs facing low-income persons and families across the state. OLAF’s partnership with Equal Justice Works helps provide recruiting, training, and funding to support the Denis Murphy fellows.

As an integral part of its mission, OLAF’s board of trustees established the Denis J. Murphy Fellowship program with The Columbus Foundation in 2007. This public/private partnership is designed to produce sufficient income to annually support three two-year fellowships and is part of OLAF’s commitment to enhance recruitment and retention of lawyers in Ohio’s

legal aid delivery system. The Denis Murphy Fellows work on a broad range of legal issues that impact the impoverished including immigration, the foreclosure crisis, medial legal partnerships and predatory lending.

During the evening, OLAF’s board president David Weiner also presented Ross Collins “Col” Owens with the 2007 Denis J. Murphy award in recognition of outstanding contributions to Ohio’s Legal Aid Societies. “Col Owens has devoted his career to serving those in poverty through policy reform advocacy,” said OLAF executive director Robert M. Clyde. “Col’s work has impacted the lives of thousands of low-income persons, transformed communities and influenced national programs. He is very deserving of this recognition.”

Col joined Cincinnati Legal Aid in 1985 and currently serves as a senior attorney with the Legal Aid

Society of Southwest Ohio. For more than 22 years Col has specialized in public policy advocacy work to support clients who are pursuing self-sufficiency through employment. Col is recognized as a state and national expert in legal aid policy reform advocacy and has worked on healthcare, child care, child support, workforce development, welfare, education, unemployment compensation, transportation and tax credit issues.

Col serves as a consumer representative on Governor Strickland’s State Coverage Initiative (SCI)



Col Owens (left), 2007 Denis Murphy Award recipient, with David C. Weiner, 2004-2007 OLAF Board President and Partner with Squires Sanders and Dempsey.

healthcare reform team as well as on the SCI Advisory Committee. The team is developing a plan to achieve the Governor's goal of providing healthcare coverage to half of Ohio's uninsured by 2011. "This is very challenging but rewarding work," said Col. "The potential is there to provide healthcare coverage to hundreds of thousands of legal services-eligible citizens."

For more than ten years, Col has served as co-chair of the Ohio Family Coverage Coalition which, in 1999 secured an expansion of Medicaid coverage for parents that led to providing coverage for over 80,000 poverty-level working parents. Col continues to lead the Coalition to fight against reductions and to preserve coverage for the poor throughout Ohio.

Col continues to serve on the Human Services Planning Committee to the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services. In recent years, Col initiated projects to increase utilization of work support services and benefits including Medicaid, food stamps, earned income tax credit, child support and child care, for persons working in low-wage jobs without benefits. Col also advocates to decrease the number of TANF participants sanctioned from benefits.

Col served as a founding member and board chair of the Transportation Resources and Information Project (TRIP), a unique service that provides employment transportation to low-income parents. He also chaired Hamilton County's Transitions to Employment (TTE) coalition for many years and served on the Hamilton Self-Sufficient People Vision Council, initiatives to help people find and maintain jobs and stay off the welfare cycle.

Col serves as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Cincinnati College of Law, teaching "Poverty and the Law." He has also written, co-written, and edited numerous works on poverty and law, many of which are recognized as leading policy opinions for Northern Kentucky and the Cincinnati area.

By Lisa Eschleman, OLAF Associate Director for Pro Bono

www.olaf.org/murphy

Carrying the Spirit Forward

Eschleman Appointed to Environmental Review Appeals Commission

With both sadness and pride OLAF acknowledges the appointment by Governor Ted Strickland of Lisa Eschleman, Associate Director for Pro Bono, to a six-year term on the Environmental Review Appeals Commission.



Ms. Eschleman has been with OLAF for two years and, most recently, called together and staffed a coalition of governmental and nonprofit partners to implement recommendations of the Ohio Foreclosure Prevention Task Force aimed at helping Ohioans remain in their homes. The coalition, initially known as FLAG-Ohio and now part of *Save the Dream*, includes the Governor's Office, the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Attorney General's Office, the Treasurer's Office, the Ohio State Bar Association, and the Ohio legal aid programs. In addition to her work with *Save the Dream* and its predecessor, FLAG-Ohio, Ms. Eschleman also worked with law schools, corporate legal departments and law firms to increase the pro bono resources for low-income Ohioans with civil legal problems. Her insight and commitment to expanding and strengthening pro bono opportunities is recognized and appreciated statewide. Ms. Eschleman will continue to work with *Save the Dream* on a part-time basis for six months.

Before joining OLAF, Ms. Eschleman was the Senior Attorney at Capital University Family Advocacy Clinic and developed the clinical program that provides legal representation to victims of domestic violence in contested child custody cases. Prior to her work at Capital University Law School, Ms. Eschleman was a partner at Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur where she concentrated her practice in civil litigation.

OLAF is proud of Ms. Eschleman's commitment to a vibrant pro bono culture in Ohio and her dedication to providing Justice for All.

Carrying the Spirit Forward



THE OHIO LEGAL
ASSISTANCE
FOUNDATION



November 29, 2007 Native American Lobby in the Ohio Judicial Center

Courtesy of Katie Munk Design & Signs. For reprints of this poster please contact Katie Munk at kmunk@aol.com or visit his website at www.katiemunkphotodesign.com.