THE DADE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2012

"A Century of Service to Miami-Dade County"

IN THIS ISSUE:

Pregnancy Employment Discrimination
Page 2

The Search Engine Optimization Arms Race
Page 3

Prosecuting Fraudulent Insurance Claims
Page 4

What is the Return on Investment for Social Media?
Page 4

Florida Supreme Court Rule Changes
Page 7

Programs and Services That Help You GROW Your Practice, GAIN Experience & GIVE Back

BULLETIN

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Garrett Biondo

Dade Legal Aid and the DCBA's Put Something Back Pro Bono Project continue their extraordinary efforts to meet the needs of the indigent in ensuring equal access to justice.

The practice of law is not an occupation; it is a profession. Our obligation as members of this profession exceeds our personal interests and those of the clients we serve. Ensuring the administration of justice within our system is our highest duty.

A History of Service

The Dade County Bar Association ("DCBA") and its members have long recognized this obligation. For decades, we have provided indigent individuals in this county with fair and equal access to the judicial system through legal representation at reduced, or no, cost. Dade Legal Aid and the DCBA's Put Something Back Pro Bono Project have made extraordinary efforts to meet the needs of the indigent population. However, the need far outstrips the DCBA's ability to provide it. As a result, the indigent do not always receive the access to justice that all citizens deserve.

Taking Initiative

Rather than sitting idle while the economic downturn impairs access to justice, the DCBA has stepped up to provide increasing support to Dade Legal Aid, so that it can continue to provide legal representation to the poor.

Legal Aid Committee

The Legal Aid Committee, chaired by former DCBA president Robert Fiore, has hit the ground running. On August 30th, Jason Jones and his firm Bilzin Sumberg, graciously hosted and sponsored a reception for Legal Aid and Put Something Back that was attended by more than 100 attorneys and members of the judiciary. The Honorable Stanford Blake, the 11th Judicial Circuit's liaison to Dade Legal Aid, welcomed the audience and emphasized the great work done by the program.

Moving Forward

This year, more than 50 volunteer attorneys have agreed to assist the Legal Aid Committee through several subcommittees being chaired by Douglas Chumbley, Alvin Lindsay, Jennifer Schwartz, Paul Singerman, Candis Trusty and other notable leaders. On November 1, 2012, the 3rd Annual Patently Impossible Project to benefit Dade Legal Aid will take place at the Miami Science Museum from 6 - 8 p.m. This event, chaired by Jaime Rich Vining, will bring several hundred lawyers and judges together to benefit Dade Legal Aid. Please mark the date on your calendar and join us.

I have been active in the DCBA since I began to practice law. I am proud to call myself a member of this association. We have some of the most honorable, talented and professional attorneys one could ever find, right here in our county. Many of these attorneys have stepped up to assist Dade Legal Aid and Put Something Back. If you have not done so already, please join the effort.

Foster Youth and Human Trafficking

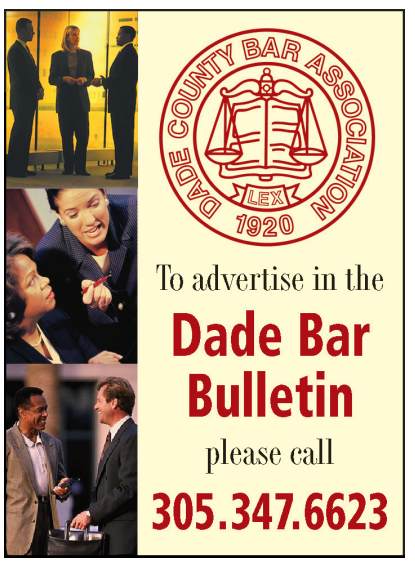
Dade Legal Aid's priority is the stabilization of families and the protection of children, particularly the vulnerable youth in foster care.

One of its core programs is the Transitioning Youth Project ("TYP"), a partnership between the Guardian Ad Litem's Office and Dade Legal Aid, staffed by four Dade Legal Aid attorneys who represent older teens transitioning from foster care into adulthood. In addition, another staff attorney represents former foster youth (ages 19-22) in appealing the denial of educational stipends. Through TYP, Dade Legal Aid has been at the forefront of the battle to protect victims of human trafficking, and foster youth are especially susceptible to exploitation. One of our staff attorneys, with the assistance of other pro bono attorneys, is currently representing several unfortunate foster teens ensnared in a prostitution ring that had been operating in South Miami-Dade County. As sex trafficking cases begin to receive the scrutiny that they deserve, Dade Legal Aid has partnered with local agencies such as Kristi House and the Department of Children and Families, to ensure that all foster youth get the appropriate treatment, services and legal representation they need to recover and become responsible adults. ■

Bilzin Sumberg Spotlights Pro Bono

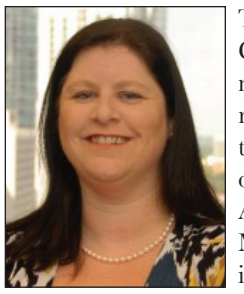
On August 30, Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP, hosted a reception for attorneys and other business leaders showcasing the work of Dade Legal Aid and pro bono opportunities with the Put Something Back Project. Featured speakers included Garrett Biondo, DCBA President, and Hon. Stanford Blake, the 11th Judicial Circuit Court's pro bono liaison. Judge Blake urged the lawyers in the audience to, "live up to the responsibility we lawyers have in keeping our system of justice alive" and reiterated the special privilege we have as attorneys to effect positive changes in society. "Caroline", a grateful client of Put Something Back, also attended the reception, accompanied by her attorney, Dorothy "Doris" Negrin. Caroline, 75, an articulate and engaging former marketing executive, lost her life savings to a Ponzi scheme. Caroline recounted her frustration and anxiety from her mounting debts and the loss of everything she had worked so hard to accumulate. "I'm so appreciative for Put Something Back and the compassionate and professional attorney they found for me," says Caroline. "Even though I lost everything, thanks to this program, I have a fresh start and can begin rebuilding my life." The ongoing support of firms such as Bilzin Sumberg with its strong tradition of pro bono service enables Dade Legal Aid to continue our work of protecting the most vulnerable in our community. ■

"Live up to the responsibility we lawyers have in keeping our system of justice alive."



Rule Changes

BY: LINDA MCGRATH-CRUZ



The Supreme Court has made several recent changes to the Rules of Judicial Administration. Most notable is new Rule 2.516 which addresses service of pleadings by e-mail. The rule took effect on September 1 for attorneys practicing in civil, probate, small claims and family divisions. On October 1, 2013 it will take effect for attorneys practicing in criminal, traffic and juvenile divisions. It requires that pleadings, subsequent to the initial pleadings, be served on the opposing party by e-mail. It doesn't affect process servers because formal service has not changed. The Rule allows you to designate up to three e-mail addresses for service, and, absent a designation, the e-mail address you have on file with The Florida Bar will be the default. The rule also outlines the format you need to use in your outgoing e-mail when serving pleadings and the size of your attachments.

The Supreme Court also amended the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure to address the hot topic of electronic discovery. In general, the amendments insert electronic discovery and electronically stored information into the rules. Parties will now be able to specifically address electronic discovery in their requests, object to discovery requests for electronically stored information, file motions to compel, and seek reimbursement for costs. The rules also allow a judge to limit electronic discovery if the burden or expense is likely to outweigh its benefits. These amendments also went into effect on September 1.

Finally, the Supreme Court approved a new uniform rule for time computation, Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.514, which defines how time will be counted when meeting various time standards in procedural rules. This new rule also spells out when weekends or holidays will or will not be counted, when the time for counting starts and stops, and other factors. Finally, the rule defines terms including "last day," "next day," and "legal holiday."

It is important to become familiar with these and other new rules, and put them into use in your practice. You can use your knowledge and familiarity of these new rules as an added asset to your employer.

Linda McGrath-Cruz is a paralegal at the Miami office of Arnstein & Lehr, LLP and the Chair of the DCBA's Paralegal Committee. She can be reached at lmc@miamifrp.com. ■

DCBA OPPORTUNITIES

4500 Members
Opportunities to Get Involved

33 Committees
Opportunities to Serve the Profession

100 CLE Programs
Opportunities to Increase Your Knowledge

More Than **250** Events a Year
Opportunities to Increase Your Referral Network

Dade County Bar Association
123 N.W. First Avenue
Miami, Florida 33128

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2
YLS Board Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 6:30 pm

OCTOBER 3
Legal Line
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 6:00 pm

OCTOBER 4
5th Annual Miami-Dade County Law Library Fundraiser
Location: Dade County Courthouse
Time: 6:00 pm

OCTOBER 10
Grow Your Practice Seminar with Paula Black
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 8:30 am

OCTOBER 10
Criminal Courts Seminar with The League of Prosecutors and FACDL Miami
Location: Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building, Courtroom 6-2
Time: 12:00 noon

OCTOBER 10
DCBA Board of Directors Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 4:00 pm

OCTOBER 11
Probate & Guardianship Seminar
Location: Lawson Thomas Courthouse
Time: 12:00 noon

OCTOBER 11
Business Outreach Committee Meeting
Location: Damian & Valori, LLP
Time: 12:00 noon

OCTOBER 11
Dade Legal Aid Seminar
"Legal Issues in the Arts"
Location: Book & Books
Time: 5:00 pm

OCTOBER 16
YLS Judicial Outreach Committee Lunch with the Judges
Location: Banker's Club
Time: 12:00 noon

OCTOBER 18
Criminal Courts Committee Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 5:00 pm

OCTOBER 18
Family Law Seminar;
"The Legends of Family Law"
Location: The Banker's Club
Time: 8:30 am

OCTOBER 26
Investiture of Thomas Logue
Location: 3rd District Court of Appeal
Time: 3:00 pm

OCTOBER 27
6th Annual Legal Legends Awards Dinner
Location: InterContinental Miami
Time: 7:00 pm

OCTOBER 27
YLS Kickball Tournament
Location: Tropical Park
Time: 9:00 am

OCTOBER 31
General Membership Luncheon with Congressman Alcee L. Hastings
Location: The Banker's Club
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 1
Patently Impossible Project to Benefit Dade Legal Aid
Location: Miami Museum of Science
Time: 6:00 pm

NOVEMBER 6
YLS Board of Directors Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 6:30 pm

NOVEMBER 7
Immigration Seminar
"Detention Standards and Immigration Reform"
Location: The Banker's Club
Time: 11:30 am

NOVEMBER 7
Legal Line
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 6:00 pm

NOVEMBER 8
Probate & Guardianship Seminar
Location: Lawson Thomas Courthouse
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 9
YLS 10th Annual Bids for Kids
Location: The Clevelander at Marlins Ballpark
Time: 6:00 pm

NOVEMBER 10
9th Annual Kozyak Minority Mentorship Picnic
Location: Amelia Earhart Park
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 13
Put Something Back Seminar
"Drugs & Human Trafficking"
Location: Lawson Thomas Courthouse
Time: 9:00 am

NOVEMBER 13
County Court Committee Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 14
DCBA Board of Directors Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 4:00 pm

NOVEMBER 14
Criminal Courts Seminar "Facebook And Other Social Media Admissibility Issues"
Location: Richard E. Gerstein Justice Building, Courtroom 6-2
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 15
Criminal Courts Committee Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 5:00 pm

NOVEMBER 16
Professionalism Seminar
Location: The Banker's Club
Time: 9:00 am

NOVEMBER 27
Workers Compensation Seminar
Location: Lawson Thomas Courthouse
Time: 12:00 noon

NOVEMBER 30
"Legal Legends vs. Young Guns" Commercial Litigation Mock Trial
Location: Dade County Courthouse
Time: 9:00 am

DECEMBER 4
YLS Board of Directors Meeting
Location: Dade County Bar Association
Time: 6:30 pm

For more information visit www.dadecountybar.org