

NATIONAL PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTRE

Pro Bono News Issue 22: Volume 3/2006

Welcome to the third edition for 2006 of the eNewsletter of the National Pro Bono Resource Centre (NPBRC). The Centre is affiliated with the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales and is funded by the Attorneys-General Departments of the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. To access archived e-Newsletters [click here](#).

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1 **National Access to Justice and Pro Bono Conference 2006**

At a glance:

- 11-12 August 2006, Grand Hyatt, Collins Street, Melbourne
- Early bird regn.fees (before 11 July) \$440 standard; \$280 CLC staff
- After 11 July: standard registration fee: \$660; CLC staff: \$380:
- Conference dinner Friday 11 August; \$100
- CPD points (Vic) 11.5; CLE points claimable for other states and territories
- Conference website at www.justiceprobono2006.com.au

Key themes of the Conference include legal aid, pro bono practice, human rights, crime & punishment, family relationships, civil justice and an overall theme of moving towards universal coverage for legal services in Australia - at least for legal advice.

A keynote address will be delivered by Mr Robert Musgrove, Chief Executive of the UK Civil Justice Council and opening addresses are expected from the Hon. Murray Gleeson, Chief Justice of Australia and from Commonwealth Attorney-General, Philip Ruddock. There are many high calibre speakers and pricing has been set so as to encourage a broad range of delegates. Particular pro bono sessions will deal with relationships between CLCs and law firms that provide pro bono legal services,

finding and keeping pro bono partners, aspirational targets and how to involve firm leaders and lawyers in pro bono practice.

The 2006 Conference follows the successful Second National Pro Bono Conference in Sydney (October 2003) and the Legal Aid Congress in Brisbane (November 2004) and is hosted by the Law Council of Australia, the Australian Legal Assistance Forum and the National Pro Bono Resource Centre.

Further information about the Conference including the full program and online registration details can be found on the dedicated conference website at www.justiceprobono2006.com.au. We hope to see you there!

2 Centre welcomes new Chair, farewells Tony Fitzgerald AC, QC

The Centre is very pleased to announce the appointment of Peter Stapleton as its new Chair. Peter is well-known to most in the access to justice sector as a strong and vocal advocate for disadvantaged people, and especially for his work promoting the legal rights of Indigenous people. Peter was instrumental in establishing Blake Dawson Waldron's national pro bono practice and was chair of Redfern Legal Centre for many years in the 80s. He presently holds other board positions, such as one on the new Aboriginal Legal Services (NSW/ACT) Ltd which will provide Indigenous legal aid services in NSW and the ACT.

In welcoming Peter, the Centre also farewells and thanks Tony Fitzgerald AC, QC who held the position of Chair from May 2004 to June 2006. Tony led the Centre through the transition from its first three years of Commonwealth government funding to a further four year period of joint Commonwealth/State and Territory funding.

3 Review of Victorian Government Legal Services Panel Contract

A review of the Victorian Government Legal Services Panel arrangements is to take place and a final report is expected to be delivered to the Victorian Attorney-General by mid September 2006. The proposed review will be undertaken by an independent consultant specialising in the legal services area to be engaged on selective tender by the Victorian Department of Justice.

Under the arrangements, panel law firms must deliver pro bono legal services equivalent to 10-15% of the income they derive from Panel contract work. In October 2005, the Hon. Rob Hulls announced that \$6.6m worth of pro bono legal services had been provided under the Panel arrangements during the past 3 years.

The terms of reference of the review include an assessment of the extent to which the Panel arrangements increased the amount of pro bono work undertaken (of the kind approved by the Department) and increased the briefing of women barristers. The review will also look at how the panel arrangements are regarded among legal service providers.

The Centre has been advised that it and other key stakeholders will be consulted for their views on the operation of the unique social justice objectives of the Panel arrangements. The Centre welcomes this initiative and looks forward to the review bearing in mind that other States and Territories in Australia are interested in the effectiveness of the arrangements.

Further information can be obtained from Margaret Fried, Senior Legal Policy Officer, Government Legal Services, Department of Justice, Victoria

T: (03) 9603 9467 or by email to margaret.fried@justice.vic.gov.au .

4 WA Unmet Legal Need Workshop

On 9 May 2006 a workshop convened by the National Pro Bono Resource Centre and the Community Legal Centres Association (WA) Inc ('CLCA') was held in Perth.

The object of the workshop was for the legal community, who have an interest in serving the socially disadvantaged and marginalized people, to get together and talk about their needs and problems with a view to identifying better ways of working together and how pro bono legal services might assist in meeting needs.

In attendance were representatives from 10 Community Legal Centres in the Perth and Fremantle area, 3 regional CLCs, the WA Legal Aid Commission, the Law Society's Law Access Public Interest Law Clearing House and national pro bono coordinators from Blake Dawson Waldron, Clayton Utz and Allens Arthur Robinson all of whom have offices in Perth.

The workshop identified a number of areas of acute legal need. There was strong support for a single point of access for pro bono services in WA, including providing support to members of the WA bar. Workshop participants thought that the Law Society was the appropriate organisation but noted that it would need additional resources to fulfil this function.

It is hoped to have a further function in Perth involving more of the local firms. For a more detailed report email [John Corker](mailto:John.Corker@justice.vic.gov.au).

5 New Resource: Pro Bono Referral Schemes History

With the assistance of social justice intern students, the Centre has compiled a history of professional association and law firm pro bono referral schemes in Australia including details of their current operation. It was compiled with the aim of recording a short history of these schemes so that their history is not lost but it also provides a resource for existing schemes to learn about their counterparts in other States and Territories and, hopefully, will assist States and Territories that are considering establishing their own referral schemes. Thanks to all the coordinators and others who provided the information. The resource is available for download from the Centre's website [by clicking here](#).

6 PILCH (Victoria) seminars for not-for-profits

PILCH (Victoria) is holding a series of seminars in 2006 to provide advice and training on legal issues which arise in the administration, operation and governance of not-for-profit organisations. The first seminar is being hosted and presented by Clayton Utz and will cover legal structures and governance issues.

The first seminar will take place from 2-5.30pm on Wednesday 28 June 2006, at Morgans 401, at 401 Collins Street, Melbourne. There is a registration fee of \$10. Organisations are invited to attend. For further information, including an outline of the issues which will be discussed, please [click here](#).

7 Pro bono legal service for cancer patients

The Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne has established a partnership with law firm Baker & McKenzie, to provide a specialist pro bono legal service for its cancer patients. The partnership is seen as a triple win situation: Peter MacCallum

social work staff are relieved of trying to ‘stopgap’ legal needs they are not qualified to deal with and receive knowledge and skills from the legal team; the legal team in turn gain some invaluable insights and experience into a major health issue in our society while optimising the quality of care for patients. Jennifer McVicar, Director, Pro Bono and Community Service at [Bakers](#) will be talking more about this service at the upcoming Access to Justice and Pro Bono [Conference](#) 2006.

8 Employment lawyers needed at Inner City Legal Service, Sydney

Unfortunately ICLC is suffering a lack of volunteer employment solicitors and badly needs to recruit some new ones. They do not need to have accreditation in employment, but they do need expertise in this area of law. The Centre runs face-to-face appointments for clients on Tuesday and Wednesday nights between 6pm and 8.30pm (at the latest). Volunteer solicitors are expected to attend once per month.

Anyone who can help should contact Pat McDonough direct at ICLC in Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. Tel: 9332 1966.

To find opportunities to volunteer at a Community Legal Centre near you, search at www.clcvolunteers.net.au and see who is looking for volunteers.

9 Pro bono bestseller and TV series?

A recently published novel by a former associate at a large US corporate law firm has not only received glowing reviews in the press but Paramount has apparently snapped up the movie rights to the book in order to create a new TV series. So what? The story is set in a large corporate law firm, a pro bono case is central to the plot and the good guy among the bevy of young corporate lawyers (some not such good guys) spends most of the book working on a (death penalty) pro bono matter. The author, Kermit Roosevelt (yes, great-great grandson of Theodore) worked at [Mayer, Browne, Rowe and Maw LLP](#) where he handled several pro bono cases before he moved to the University of Pennsylvania Law School as Professor of Law. Look out for the book. It seems that both pro bono and large law firm culture are explored in some detail. The book is titled *In the Shadow of the Law* and is published in paperback (2006) by Farrar Straus Giroux (New York).

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<http://www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/index.html>.

Please forward this newsletter to anyone else you think may be interested.

11 Centre contact details

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