

NATIONAL PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTRE

Pro Bono News Issue 7: Volume 1/2004

Welcome to the first edition for 2004 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 Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. Archived eNewsletters for 2003 are available at www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/index.html

In this edition:

- 1 New Director for NPBRC**
- 2 Centre directions for 2004**
- 3 Family law—can pro bono assist?**
- 4 Focus on RRR**
- 5 2003 Conference papers**
- 6 NPBRC website**
- 7 Subscribe/unsubscribe**
- 8 Centre contact details**

1 New Director for NPBRC

The Centre is pleased to announce the appointment of John Corker as its new Director.

John started his career as a judge's associate and a barrister in Victoria. He spent 7 years in Central Australia as a lawyer for Aboriginal Legal Aid and then as the sole lawyer involved in the establishment of Australia's first Aboriginal-owned commercial television service (Imparja). He moved to Sydney where he was employed by the Australian Broadcasting Authority, finally as its General Counsel. He was most recently a senior associate for 3 years in the Sydney office of Clayton Utz.

He holds Bachelor of Economics and Laws degrees from Monash University and a Master of Laws (Media, Communications and Information Technology) degree from the University of New South Wales. Media release at www.nationalprobono.org.au.

2 Centre directions for 2004

Advocacy and coordination are the Centre's key directions for 2004. The Centre aims to be a champion for pro bono and those who provide it. As well as fostering awards and other forms of recognition for those who excel in providing pro bono, the Centre will focus on making the business case for pro bono. It will lead discussion and debate on the issue of aspirational targets—proposing that a minimum 50 hours a year, or an hour a

week, is not an unreasonable amount of time for individual lawyers to devote to pro bono services.

On coordination, the Centre will direct particular attention to government lawyers, in-house corporate legal teams, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services and rural and remote communities. It will work actively to facilitate matchmaking between pro bono providers and those in need; it will develop a specific strategy for law students, academics and law schools and continue to work on key projects addressing barriers to pro bono – such as conflicts of interest in relation to obtaining government work. The Centre's Strategic Directions document is available at: www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/index.html

3 Family law—can pro bono assist?

On 4 February 2004, NPBRC attended a meeting with 10 law firm pro bono coordinators and representatives from the National Association of CLCs (Macarthur Legal Centre, Hawkesbury Nepean Legal Centre and Women's Legal Services, NSW) to discuss the national issue of what can be done about unmet need in family law cases. The meeting was convened by NACLCL following a resolution by acclamation at the 2003 National Conference of CLCs that the issue should be addressed as a priority.

A strong case was put for assistance in areas of family law including child support and protection, also in needy cases where legal aid funding was not available.

The Centre has agreed to coordinate an ongoing dialogue between NACLCL and the pro bono coordinators to consider what assistance private firms may be able to provide in discrete areas of law or other activities.

4 Focus on RRR

The Centre has funding approval from the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW to undertake a project aimed at improving access to legal services for disadvantaged and marginalised people in regional, rural and remote (RRR) communities in NSW. The project will assist community legal centres and their clients and support the development of three pilot projects to deliver improved pro bono services in RRR areas.

NPBRC Project Officer Jenny Lovric has been employed for a period of 8 months to carry out the project. She will work with a Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Law and Justice Foundation, the community legal centre sector, the Legal Aid Commission of NSW and a city firm with a pro bono practice.

A key component of the project involves organising a 'relationship-building event', an evening where firms with pro bono practices (or an interest in pro bono practice in RRR areas) and representatives from RRR community legal centres can meet and strategically develop ways to facilitate pro bono assistance to RRR areas. The event is scheduled to take place on 24 May 2004. If you would like further information about the event or the project in general, please contact Jenny at the Centre on (02) 9385 7381 or by email to jenny@nationalprobono.org.au.

5 Conference papers

Unexpurgated papers from the Second National Pro Bono Conference (October 2003) are available on the website at www.nationalprobono.org.au/conference/index.html. Centre staff are currently preparing a printed edition of these and other contributions from Conference participants. Subscribe to the Centre's eNewsletter to be advised of final publication date:
<http://lists.nationalprobono.org.au/mailman/listinfo/nationalprobononews>.

Conference photographs

Some of the photographs taken at the conference and conference dinner are available on the Centre's website. If you would like to order any of these photographs or inquire about others, please email the Centre info@nationalprobono.org.au.

6 NPBRC website

The Centre regularly updates its website with its own news and resources and with links to other pro bono items and issues. You can find a list of the Centre's current projects, publications (including the *Australian Pro Bono Manual*) and activities. David Hillard's paper on aspirational targets can be read or downloaded www.nationalprobono.org.au/conference/index.html. The Centre's latest strategic directions paper can be found at www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/index.html

7 To subscribe or unsubscribe to Pro Bono News

To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter please go to our subscription page:
<http://lists.nationalprobono.org.au>

This newsletter is available on the web at:
www.nationalprobono.org.au/publications/index.html

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

8 NPBRC contact details

National Pro Bono Resource Centre

web: www.nationalprobono.org.au

email: info@nationalprobono.org.au

phone: +61 2 9385 7381

fax: +61 2 9385 7375

post: The White House, University of New South Wales, UNSW Sydney NSW 2052