

MARYLAND ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

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11 December 2013

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING

1. Committee Reports.

- a. **Public Education Committee.** Four of the videos in production have now been released.

Using the *Maryland Court System* lesson plan developed by the Committee, Ms. Ortiz taught two sessions of teacher training to 50-60 Baltimore Public School teachers on November 15.

People's Law Library: December 11 is the deadline for the new RFP to host the website. There was a "write-in" pro bono event in October 2013. Improvements have been made to better incorporate videos on the site.

At their meeting, the Committee heard from Maryland Legal Aid which uses social workers to address collateral issues their clients face. The Committee also heard from the Just Advice Program which offers 30 minute consultations for \$10. The Committee will be exploring these models further.

- b. **Definitions, Standards & Awards Committee.** The Commission decided to authorize a long-range planning committee to review the strategic planning proposal and come up with a proposal and a structure for the strategic planning process.

Members of the Committee attended the Local and Specialty Bar President's Conference and shared information about the Access to Justice Awards process and the Class Action Residual Funds Toolkit. Materials are posted on a special website maintained by the MSBA.

- c. **Access & Delivery of Legal Services Committee.** The Committee continues to monitor the fee waiver rules, pro bono practice rule and limited scope representation rule pending with the Rules Committee.
- d. **Critical Barriers Committee.** The Committee met with advocates for persons with mental illness to explore how individuals with mental illness are having their civil legal needs met.

- e. **Self-Represented Litigants Committee.** A group of Circuit Court clerks and others are meeting to discuss how to better address the needs of self-represented litigants in Circuit Court.

2. **Old Business.**

- a. **Videos.** The Commission recently released four new short form videos. They are available on the Judiciary's website. Several additional titles are in production.
- b. **Web Accessibility Grants.** The Grant Committee met and awarded grants to five non-profit legal services providers. The grants will be used to enhance the accessibility of their online presence.
- c. **Task Force to Study Implementing a Civil Right to Counsel in Maryland.** The task force met for the first time on December 3. It will produce a report by October 2014.

3. **New Business.**

- a. **Awards.** The Judicial Conference has been moved to Fall 2014, which will change the awards schedule. Once specific dates are available, the Commission will make a determination regarding when to schedule the awards.
- b. **2012 Pro Bono Report.** Highlights of the recently released report of pro bono activity were shared. A copy of the report is on the Judiciary's website.