

# BASF and JDC Volunteers Address the Glaring Need for Legal Services

**Timothy W. Moppin**

**A**s my tenure as president of The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) comes to a close, I have feelings of ambivalence. One side of me is looking forward to not having so many meetings and events to attend. The other side feels compelled to remain and continue to address the glaring need to provide legal services to the indigent and underserved population here in San

Francisco. I suspect that, notwithstanding my emeritus status, I will continue to volunteer for BASF and the Justice & Diversity Center (JDC), and will continue on with our pro bono mission.

very much appreciated. If you have not done so, I urge you to volunteer your time and feel the exuberance that results from having done so.

One of the most impactful volunteer days that I have experienced is when a group of volunteers visited the San Francisco Log Cabin Ranch (LCR), which is a boys detention facility operated by the San Francisco Juvenile

Probation Department. We planned the visit on a Saturday, since LCR is located in La Honda and getting there requires some effort. Our mission was to assist the youth in a gardening project to improve the landscape around the facility.

with the assistance of Urban Sprouts, the boys are involved in a garden-based education program and have an established edible garden on site. The boys were very pleased to show us their work, and I have to admit that the carrots we sampled were magnificent! It was explained to us that the produce that they grow is used by the LCR kitchen, so the boys really do eat what they grow, giving them a sense of accomplishment and pride. Before we departed, the boys presented each volunteer with a planter box, which the boys made themselves, containing a drought-resistant plant. That box reminds me that there are really are no “bad” kids, but just kids that get caught in “bad” circumstances.

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I want to thank all of the members who have signed the BASF Pro Bono Pledge. Thanks to your support, and the support of other member volunteers and staff, in 2014, JDC was able to render services to the community that valued approximately \$18.5 million.

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I have to admit that I was skeptical at first, as LCR houses the more serious juvenile offenders. However, my skepticism was dispelled by the end of our day, and I realized that there is a little “kid” in all of us, including juvenile offenders. The boys were so excited that we were there, and were very enthusiastic about their gardening. In fact,

The LCR visit was a pleasant change from the traditional model of what a volunteer lawyer does. In fact, there was no talk about the law. We were truly there trying to make new friends and to be there as adults for kids who need support and encouragement. It was such an enjoyable experience that I hope it becomes a BASF/JDC tradition. I am looking forward to our next visit and many more in future years.

I am certain that many volunteer hours are not accounted for but are still

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# 350

clients served annually by the **Federal Pro Bono Project** through which a JDC staff attorney and pro bono attorneys represent low-income litigants in cases in federal district court.

## Justice & Diversity Center

BY THE NUMBERS

# 900

clients served annually by the **Family Law Project**, helping clients with a range of family law matters, such as divorces, legal separations, annulments, establishment of paternity, child custody and visitation matters, and support issues.

# 200

active matters annually handled by the **Community Organization Representation Project (CORP)** assisting community-based organizations that primarily serve low-income communities with a wide range of transactional business law needs.

# 2,000

clients served each year by the **Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP)**, providing legal and social services to clients who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, with a priority on individuals who have severe mental health disabilities.

# 140+

monolingual clients served annually through the **Interpreter Program** through which JDC recruits and trains volunteer interpreters so monolingual clients can communicate with their pro bono attorneys and the courts.

# 800

San Francisco households served annually by the **Housing Negotiation Project**, providing limited scope legal representation to tenants facing eviction.

## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

# 100

students served annually by the **School-To-College Program**, providing college readiness resources and tools to underserved, ethnically diverse high school students at the Academy of Arts and Sciences in San Francisco.

# 30

grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other caring adults served annually by the **Guardianship Project**, providing full scope representation in guardianship cases.

# 225

clients are served annually by the **Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC)** assisting low-income taxpayers who have tax issues with the IRS.

# 280

households served each year through the **Eviction Prevention and Defense Project**, providing full scope representation in eviction defense matters to keep disabled, low-income people, and seniors in housing.

# 150

clients served annually by the **Consumer Law Project**, helping consumers address their debt issues and stop debt collection harassment.

# 140

students participate annually in the **Law Academy Program**, which encourages and increases career opportunities for underserved and ethnically diverse students at Balboa High School in San Francisco.

# 1,500+

clients served each year at **Legal Advice and Referral Clinics (LARC)** where staff and volunteers provide brief advice and referrals in many areas of law such as family, employment, consumer, and landlord/tenant law.

# 275

undergraduate students served annually by the **Destination Law School Program**, providing resources about law school and the legal profession to diverse students in Bay Area colleges.

# 1,030

clients served each year at **Legal and Identification Clinics**, held at San Francisco's Project Homeless Connect.

# 130

students participate annually in the **Mock Trial Program**, an interscholastic competition where high school students try a hypothetical criminal case.

# 7

active scholarships through the **Bay Area Minority Law Student Scholarship Program**, involving a substantial three-year commitment to qualified students.

# 150

clients served annually by the **Medical-Legal Project**, providing early legal interventions related to extreme health, environmental, and safety issues that patients face.