LSSM Establishes Medical-Legal Partnership With CoxHealth

Legal Services of Southern Missouri (LSSM) has entered into a partnership with CoxHealth to create a Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP). A MLP is a health care delivery model that improves the health and well-being of low-income and other vulnerable populations by addressing unmet legal needs and removing legal barriers that impede health. Legal staff is integrated into the healthcare team, where they partner with frontline physicians, nurses, case managers and others to: (1) provide direct legal assistance to patients; (2) develop/align strategies to improve health and legal institutions and practices; and (3) change policies, all in service of ensuring that vulnerable people get and stay healthy. The MLP is unique because it ensures health and legal services are integrated, rather than operating as a referral mechanism. This in turn leads to long-term, sustainable, more effective solutions to health and legal problems. The LSSM-CoxHealth MLP joins the other 276 MLP programs in 36 states. The first MLP was created in 1993, in Boston.

Families living in poverty face social and economic problems that affect their health. Many health problems affecting families in poverty are not medical in nature. Housing, health insurance, income, nutritional benefits, violence, access to special education services, and immigration issues all can negatively affect health and threaten family stability in a profound way. Despite laws that ensure these services, access is out of reach without legal counsel. Poor families and their physicians are rarely prepared to negotiate with these institutions. Nor do they have the training and resources needed to research the relevant statutes and regulations in order to determine if a family is being denied benefits legally.

According to the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership (NCMLP), over 50 million Americans need legal assistance to be healthy. Numerous studies have found a significant level of unmet legal need among low-income individuals. The American Bar Association indicates nearly 50 percent of low-income households have an unmet legal need and RCHN Community Health Foundation estimates the need to be as high as 85 percent. This roughly translates to 104,000 to 177,000 individuals living in poverty within the 43 county service area covered by LSSM.

continued on page 2
LSSM Establishes Medical-Legal Partnership With CoxHealth continued from page 1

MLP project research discovered that patients had several different kinds of legal needs including guardianships, domestic violence, basic needs for food, housing, safety, insurance, advance directives, powers of attorney, and disability benefits. All of these issues connect back to poverty and social turmoil that have begun to threaten the health and stability of families as health problems have created a tipping point.

Our MLP addresses the interwoven health/social/legal problems that clash in the local hospital by taking a non-traditional approach. This approach provides more holistic healthcare services by health care professionals and attorneys to create better patient outcomes. This ensures that the effects of poverty do not prolong or prevent a provider from doing their best for a patient.

The project, partially funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health, which is a philanthropic organization whose vision is to improve the health of the people in the communities it serves, is staffed by LSSM Managing Attorney Andrea R. Long and Paralegal Jeanne Crawford. Also assisting with the project is LSSM Staff Attorney Johnda Boyce. LSSM focuses on saving time, trouble, and money in serving the low-income patients in its service area and maximizing patient health outcomes by removing legal barriers to good health. The ultimate goal is to reach the low-income people that are difficult to reach in traditional venues. CoxHealth and LSSM serve much of the same population. MLP’s are an efficient way to partner a hospital with a non-profit to serve these low-income patients and improve patient health outcomes.

Currently, hospitals are dealing with patients in a more holistic approach. The trend of the medical community is focused on the quality of patient health outcomes. In many instances, low-income patients have many social and legal barriers to quality health. These barriers range from lack of insurance for routine medical treatment to inadequate housing that may contribute to the poor health of the patient. When this occurs, these patients typically enter hospitals in poorer health.

The health care team has been trained on screening patients for social determinants of health that may have legal remedies. They listen for issues listed in the acronym IHELP, which is defined as:

- Income maintenance and food insecurity;
- Housing such as evictions, utilities and foreclosures;
- Ensuring safety through orders of protection, divorce and custody for victims of domestic violence;
- Legal help with simple estate planning and health care directives;
- Powers of attorney and guardianships.

Once the legal issue has been identified by a physician, nurse, case manager, etc., a referral is made to the MLP staff who goes bedside to assess the patient’s legal needs. MLP staff will also follow the patient after discharge from the hospital if needed to resolve the legal problems.

The project is centered on tracking outcomes to ensure it demonstrates the removal of economic and social-cultural barriers for individuals living in poverty, and studies the changes in health outcomes for patients involved in the MLP.
Kim’s son was evaluated by a speech therapist for a texture disorder, and the therapist stated that he would benefit from swallowing therapy sessions that could improve his acceptance of a wider variety of foods. Due to his refusal to eat most foods, and his inability to consume enough calories and nutrients, Kevin has been on a nutritional supplement shake for several years. Kevin’s managed care MO Healthnet (Medicaid) plan denied coverage for the swallowing therapy sessions, despite the fact that the managed care plan had required Kevin to undergo further evaluation in order to continue paying for his nutritional supplement.

Kim felt like the family was caught up in a bind, unable to afford the therapy, and she turned to LSSM’s Advocates for Family Health program for help. Advocates for Family Health assists families with children in the home with any problems or questions they may have with their managed care MO Healthnet plans. At this time, LSSM has an Advocates for Family Health program in seven (7) of the MO Healthnet managed care counties: Cedar, Gasconade, Laclede, Maries, Phelps, Polk, and Pulaski.

Kim worked with a LSSM attorney to file a brief to appeal the managed care plan’s decision to deny coverage. Medical records and letters from providers stating that the therapy was medically necessary were submitted along with the brief. Kim was very relieved when the appeal was successful, as her providers had told her that there is a small window in which to correct a child’s texture disorder, and it was rapidly closing due to Kevin’s age. Kevin will now be able to participate in therapy sessions to improve his swallowing, his acceptance of a wider variety of foods, and his caloric intake.

Client Story

Christina L. Kime holds a Bachelor of Arts from the College of the Ozarks. Christina attained her law degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia, where she was a member of the Order of the Coif. Following her graduation, she served as law clerk at the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, from 1987-1989.

Christina is a solo practitioner in Piedmont, Missouri. She joined LSSM’s judicare panel in 1998. Christina is a fearless advocate for the poor and disadvantaged. Her willingness to help has ensured many poor and disadvantaged a chance to be heard; an opportunity they would not have had without her. Without her, no one knows how many people would have continued to be stricken by domestic violence, homelessness, and desperateness.

During her tenure of helping Legal Services clients, Ms. Kime has handled 73 cases for low-income people living in rural Missouri providing 1,831 hours of legal representation. Ms. Kime has helped 115 adults and 120 children with Medicaid, advanced directives, landlord/tenant, orders of protection, custody matters, divorces, and helped victims out of domestic violence situations.
Imagine getting a ticket for littering or jay walking. Most of us would drive to court, pay our fine, and be on our way. It would hardly even be worth mentioning to family or friends over dinner. However, for the homeless population, a ticket like this can be crippling. In contrast to a drive to the courthouse, think of a three-mile walk in the cold only to report to the Judge you have no money, promise to set up a payment plan, leave knowing that you will likely not make the money you need to make the first payment, and wait for a warrant to be issued, only to spend several days in jail. You finally get out and still owe the money. The cycle continues at the next court hearing. But what if there were a different way to handle these types of offenses, a way to give people a hand up?

The Springfield Municipal Court along with several local agencies, believe there is a better way, and have recently started the Springfield Homeless Court. Homeless Court is just one of a growing number of specialty courts designed to help those who are suffering from poverty, mental illness, and/or substance abuse. The Court is held one night a month at the Kitchen Clinic in downtown Springfield. The room doesn’t look anything like a courtroom, and this is by design. “Homeless Court is a treatment court, so it resembles a counseling session more than a court session. The courthouse atmosphere can be a barrier to some defendants, so having our sessions away from the courthouse can improve participation,” says Municipal Judge Becky Borthwick. The Judge hands out Snickers bars, and volunteers and defendants sit side by side chatting over pizza. Career services, behavioral health services, and legal services are all on hand to speak to defendants and help them work through problems. Each court session consists of a “staffing” of the defendants and their goals by the court and volunteers, followed by a discussion with the defendant about their current progress. If goals are accomplished or participants are working towards goals, they may earn bus passes, gift cards for food, and even forgiveness of a certain amount of municipal fines. New goals are set for the next month to focus on housing, stability, healthcare, and other needs. The big difference between this court and regular municipal court is that the participants are given resources to help accomplish their goals. One on one meetings with a career services professional, referrals to substance abuse treatment, and help with civil legal services are just some of the many tools that can be utilized by the Homeless Court to help participants.

Don’t be fooled by the friendly atmosphere, Homeless Court is still a place of accountability. Failure to work toward goals or meet with the probation officer will result in consequences, and repeat offenders may even be released from the program. However, participants make an active choice to be involved in the court. Many times, the resources and accountability available are just what is needed to help a defendant take positive steps forward. Even in its infancy, the program is already seeing results. Communication barriers have been broken down between participants and volunteers, resulting in a level of trust being built between the two. Participants are feeling comfortable asking for help and have worked on resumes, addressing back child support, and attacking addictions head on.

The Springfield Homeless Court has accepted 10 participants at this time, and has generated a lot of interest. It is the goal of the Homeless Court to accept up to 10 people in the first year. Interested defendants will be screened by the Homeless Court probation officer and then staffed at the next court date to see if they are a good match for the program.

Andrea R. Long
Managing Attorney
Medical-Legal Partnership

Shop AmazonSmile to support LSSM

If you’re not already using AmazonSmile when you shop, you should start right now! Amazon introduced this program allowing their customers to support charities. Items that are eligible for the donations will be marked as such on their product pages. Smile gives Amazon shoppers a way to donate a small percentage of their purchases to the charity of their choice. Once you sign up at https://smile.amazon.com/, and choose a charity, 0.5 percent of your eligible purchases will be donated. The service doesn’t cost anything to the charities that sign up or the shopper. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

To start supporting LSSM, simply sign up at https://smile.amazon.com/ selecting Legal Services of Southern Missouri.
All proceeds support Legal Services of Southern Missouri, a community-based nonprofit providing essential services to low-income individuals, victims of abuse, veterans, and the elderly in Southeast Missouri.

October 2, 2015
Hidden Trails Country Club
Dexter, MO

Registration and Lunch at 12:00 p.m.  
Golf Tournament, Shotgun Start at 1:00 p.m.  
Awards Presentation Following Tournament

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!
Hole Sponsor - $100 • Lunch Sponsor - $300 • Beverage Sponsor - $300

TEAM INFORMATION

<table>
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<th>Phone</th>
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4 Person Scramble

Registration fee: $400 per team
(Fee includes: Golf, Golf Cart, Lunch, Goodie Cart, and Prizes)

Mulligans are available for purchase for $10 (limit one set per person)

Please make check payable and mail to:
Legal Services of Southern Missouri
P.O. Box 349 • Charleston, MO 63834-0349

Legal Services of Southern Missouri is proud to be a Legal Services Corporation (LSC) grantee. We are required to notify that our funds may not be used in any manner inconsistent with the Legal Services Corporation Act or Section 504 of Public Law 104-134. The LSC Act and regulations may be viewed at www.lsc.gov.
Sponsorship

All tournament sponsors will be recognized in the LSSM newsletter, promotional materials and signage.

☐ Yes, I would like to serve as a hole sponsor. My check for $100 is enclosed.
   Name as you would like it to appear on sign: ____________________________________________

☐ Yes, I would like to serve as the lunch sponsor. My check for $300 is enclosed.
   Name as you would like it to appear on sign: ____________________________________________

☐ Yes, I would like to serve as the beverage cart sponsor. My check for $300 is enclosed.
   Name as you would like it to appear on sign: ____________________________________________

☐ Sorry, we are not interested at this time.

Contact Information

Business Name: _________________________________________

Contact Name: _________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ___________________________________________

Phone (____) ___________________________________________

E-mail: ________________________________________________

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Cup of Justice Golf Classic

REGISTRATION

October 12, 2015
Registration & Lunch: Noon
Shotgun Start: 1:00 p.m.

Hickory Hills Country Club
3909 East Cherry, Springfield, MO

Registration Fees
$500 per team, $125 per player

Register Early!
Registration will be confirmed upon receipt of registration form and payment. For more information, contact Sharon Alexander, Legal Services of Southern Missouri at 417-881-1397, ext. 1327, or sharon@lsosm.org.

11:30 a.m. Driving Range Opens
Participants may practice on the driving range prior to the tournament.

12:00 p.m. Lunch

Raffle during the tournament.
Need not be present to win. Raffle winners will be posted online at www.lsosm.org following the event.
Raffle Tickets: 2 for $10 / 5 for $20

Contests
Closest to the Hole
Longest Drive
Other fun games

REGISTRATION FORM

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Registration
$500 per team
$125 per player

Make checks payable to LSSM.

Mail completed form and payment to:
Legal Services of Southern Missouri
Sam F. Hamra Center for Justice
809 N. Campbell Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802

Legal Services of Southern Missouri is proud to be a Legal Services Corporation (LSC) grantee. We are required to notify that our funds may not be used in any manner inconsistent with the Legal Services Corporation Act or Section 504 of Public Law 104-134. The LSC Act and regulations may be viewed at www.lsc.gov.
All tournament sponsors will be recognized in promotional material and signage. Sponsors will be further recognized at the following levels:

- **Event Sponsor, $1000**
  - Thank You, THE BAR PLAN
- **Hole-in-One Sponsor, $800**
  - Sponsorship includes appropriate signage
- **Lunch Sponsor, $600**
  - Sponsorship includes appropriate signage and opportunity to address the group at lunch.
- **Registration Sponsor, $500**
  - Sponsorship includes appropriate signage and opportunity to greet and register golfers.
- **Driving Range Sponsor, $400**
  - Thank You, Neale & Newman, L.L.P.
- **Putting Green Sponsor, $300**
- **Hole or Tee Sponsor, $200**
  - Sponsorship includes appropriate signage.
- **Gift Sponsor, Provides a gift with your name or logo for each player (approx. 100)**
  - Sponsorship provides recognition on printed materials and participant appreciation.
  - Golf Towels
  - Sleeve of Golf Balls
  - Ball Markers
  - Tees
  - Other:

For more information, contact Sharon Alexander, Legal Services of Southern Missouri at 417-881-1397, ext. 1327, or sharon@lsosm.org.
Medical Debt in Dissolution of Marriage.

In all cases of Dissolution of Marriage in Missouri, one aspect the Court must evaluate and distribute is the debts of the marriage. All debts and encumbrances incurred during the marriage are to be split amongst the parties in an equitable manner by a ratio the Court deems appropriate after a review of the evidence present to the court. A common problem for clients with limited means is at some time while married one or both parties has received medical treatment which remains unpaid for a number of reasons, but in many cases lack of insurance is a key factor. When one party to the marriage files for Dissolution of Marriage, the issue of who is “awarded” the medical debt can be contentious and often a sticking point during settlement negotiations.

The Missouri Bureau of Vital Statistics, Division of Missouri Health and Human Services, tracks all dissolution petitions along with many other categories and submits a report annually with the data to the Legislature, Governor and the Public. The last annual report is for Fiscal Year 2012. In the section on Dissolution, Graph G measures and plots the percentage of Dissolution filings per 1,000 population on bivariate graph. The title is Graph G: Dissolution Rates per 1,000 Population, Missouri 1950-2012, see Exhibit A. Graph G claims the Dissolution rate for Missouri per 1,000 population for 2012 is 3.7% and the average for the period from 2008 to 2012 is approximately 3.8% per 1,000 population. A 3.8% per 1,000 population comes out to approximately 38 people per every 1,000 population filed a Dissolution of Marriage Petition in Missouri over the period from 2008 to 2012.

The issue of health care and the need for affordable health insurance for individuals in all socioeconomic brackets has been hotly debated at every level of government since the early 1990’s. The Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law in March of 2010, was designed to enroll a vast majority Americans in either private health insurance plans via federal or state exchanges or through the expansion of State Medicaid rolls with the help of Federal funds to cover the additional expenses for a specified period of time. The State of Missouri as of the date of publication, has yet to create a state exchange nor approved the expansion of Medicaid rolls to increase coverage of low-income citizens.

For a little background on the gravity of medical debt issue, a foundation called ACA International published a compilation of statistical and regression model articles looking at interview surveys on health care, medical care debt and health insurance rates from a variety of non-profit organizations and government agencies. In the National Health Interview Survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Center for Health Statistics for September 2014, the ACA International summed up the following as finding from the survey: “In the first three months of 2014, among people ages 18-64, 18.4 percent were uninsured, 17.1 percent had public health plan coverage and 65.6 percent had private health insurance coverage”; “Among adults ages 18-64, the percentage who were uninsured decreased from 20.4 percent in 2013 to 18.4 percent in the first three months of 2014.” The U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey on the number of people with health insurance in 2013 noted the majority of individuals (64.2 percent) were covered by private health insurance. The largest single type of health insurance in 2013 was employment-based health insurance, which covered 53.9 percent of the population.” In the Press Release, The Commonwealth Fund interview survey for 2013, the ACA International summed up the following as finding from the survey: “As of 2012, 75 million people reported problems paying their medical bills or were paying off medical debt, up from 73 million in 2010 and 58 million in 2005. An estimated 48 million people were paying off medical debt in 2012, up from 44 million in 2010 and 37 million in 2006.”

A case from the Missouri Court of Appeals, Southern District, published on November 7th, 2013, has shed some light on the area of medical treatment that occurs during the pendency of a divorce and after a divorce is a final judgment. In the case of SAINT FRANCIS MEDICAL CENTER v. WATKINS, ET AL., 413 S.W. 3d 354, the court held that: 1). Doctrine of Necessaries required hospital to establish that services provided to patient were necessary; and 2).evidence was insufficient to establish necessity of medical services provided to the patient.

The facts are as follows: a divorce is filed by a wife or husband. Wife goes to the hospital for medical care and the hospital renders care to wife. Wife has multiple visits to the hospital for variety of problems over a period of time that includes the time before divorce is a final judgment and after divorce decrees is entered and each visit is only person to sign consent form for medical care to be rendered. Wife defaults on payments of medical care expenses; hospital files a collection action against both wife and husband. Husband and wife hired attorney to represent both in the collection action. Attorney attend trial on their behalf. Hospital produced evidence of three consent forms signed by wife and invoices for services rendered by individual physicians and nurses via testimony of records custodian; trial court rules in favor of hospital against wife and husband jointly in the amount of $12,333.36. Trial court finds husband liable for medical care expenses incurred by wife under the continued on page 6
LSSM Helps the Low-Income File their 2014 Taxes

Legal Services of Southern Missouri (LSSM) is proud to be a member of the Across the Lifespan (ATLS) Coalition. The ATLS Coalition is comprised of the Community Partnership of the Ozarks, Missouri State University, the IRS, Drury University, Southwest Missouri Office on Aging, Missouri Department of Revenue, United Way, the Springfield-Greene County Library District, University of Missouri Extension, Consumer Credit Counseling, and LSSM. The ATLS Coalition provides Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) to those of low-income including those with disabilities, non-English speakers, and the elderly. This program provides free tax preparation assistance for federal tax returns and Earned Income Credit (EIC), Missouri Property Tax Credit, and other tax forms. Assistance with the Missouri tax return is available if the federal return is being prepared. During this past tax season, low-income individuals could visit LSSM’s Springfield office each Tuesday evening from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. to obtain free help in preparing their tax returns through VITA. During the nine week period, the tax clinic at LSSM helped 163 individuals/families file their tax returns totaling $162,943 in federal refunds and $31,931 in state refunds. The clinic also obtained other various credits including: $104,028 in earned income credit; $14,170 education credits; and $9,026 in child tax credits. The tax clinic helped save low-income families approximately $24,500 in tax preparation fees. This is the fifth year LSSM has offered this service to the low-income population, and feels it is a great investment in its clients and the communities it serves. LSSM sees this opportunity as a way to help its clients and the local economy as the tax refunds are reinvested in the Springfield community; therefore, LSSM plans to continue to participate in the Coalition.

Medical Debt . . . continued from page 5

Doctrine of Necessaries. Husband appeals the judgment on two points, main point relied on is the hospital failed to produce sufficient evidence of medically necessary care or that wife did not have separate assets to recover against.

The court addressed the issue of whether the hospital had provided sufficient evidence to hold husband liable for medical treatment to wife under the Doctrine of Necessaries. In reviewing the evidence presented to the trial court, the appellate court observed that the husband did not sign either of the consent for treatment forms and that the hospital is required to show the necessity of treatment. The hospital presented as evidence the consent forms, an interrogatory answer by wife admitting to the treatment, the itemized billing records via testimony of records custodian, the appellate court found that all of these piece of evidences do not provide the fact-finder with enough information to determine that the procedures or service were medically necessary. An analogy is used to explain why they disagree with the “on its face” argument, “... Wife had been admitted because of a serious laceration to her hand, the fact that she was billed for a colonoscopy would not constitute proof that the colonoscopy was medically necessary to either diagnose or treat her wounds.” The appellate court ruled in favor of husband and ordered the trial court to enter a judgment in favor of husband on the hospital’s claims against him.

In summary when evaluating a divorce client’s assets and debts to be distributed in resolution of the divorce, it may behoove the practitioner to discuss the details of the medical debts with the client especially the who, what, and when questions of the medical billing. If it can be determined the client did not consent to the treatment and it may not be medically necessary, it may be a chip to be used when negotiating or trying the issue of distribution of debts amongst the parties.

Dylan Bates
Staff Attorney
Legal Services of Southern Missouri

Support Equal Access to Justice

Ways you can donate

Justice For All Campaign

Contribute securely online
Go To
www.lsosm.org
and click
Donate Now

Send a Check
payable and mail to
LSSM Justice For All Campaign
809 North Campbell
Springfield, MO 65802

Pledge to Donate
Contact Sharon A. Alexander
417.881.1397, ext. 1327
800.444.4863 or
Sharon@lsosm.org

Our Mission
It is our mission to provide quality legal representation and advice to low-income individuals and families to ensure equal access to justice in civil matters.
LSSM Opens Satellite Office in Steele, MO

Legal Services of Southern Missouri (LSSM) has opened a part-time satellite office in Steele, Missouri. The office is located at the Sam Farris Hamra Community Center, 101 South Walnut, Steele, Missouri, and is staffed the first and third Thursday of each month by LSSM. This partnership, facilitated by Sam F. Hamra, allows LSSM to reach clients in the bootheel that have limited transportation prohibiting them from reaching LSSM’s other offices. Participating in the office dedication and reception were Kyle Aubuchon, Chief of Staff, Office of Senator Doug Libla; The Honorable Kent Hampton; Christy Mercer, District Director, Office of Senator Claire McCaskill; Tom Schulte, District Office Director; Office of U.S. Senator Roy Blunt; City of Holland Mayor Ronnie Bray; City of Hayti Heights Mayor Alice Higgins, City of Steele Mayor Keith Samford; City of Hayti Mayor Bobby Watkins; Bank Star of the Bootheel President Raymond DePriest; Co-CEO, BancStar, Inc. Joe Stewart, Jr.; Co-CEO, BancStar, Inc. Joe Stewart, III; Sam and June Hamra; members of LSSM Board and Staff.

Following the ceremony, a reception was sponsored by Steele’s Bank Star of the Bootheel.

Jenifer Placzek Presented the Equal Access to Justice Award

The Springfield Metropolitan Bar Association (SMBA) and Legal Services of Southern Missouri presented Jenifer Placzek the Equal Access to Justice Award during the SMBA Law Day. Ms. Placzek, of Placzek, Winget & Placzek, was born and raised in Springfield, Missouri. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1997 with a degree in Journalism. Before starting law school, Ms. Placzek volunteered for eight months at an orphanage for disabled children in La Paz, Bolivia. In 2001, she graduated from Boston College Law School. She practiced at a large law firm in Los Angeles after graduating from law school. In 2005, she moved back to Springfield to practice law with her father and partner, Mathew W. Placzek. Over the past year, Jenifer has invested over 55 pro bono hours in representing the poor and mentoring LSSM staff. Jenifer has assisted with domestic violence and consumer fraud cases. Working with LSSM staff attorneys practicing less than five years, Jenifer has been able to share her expertise regarding admission of evidence, cross-examination, and witness preparation. The most valuable part of Jenifer’s contribution for our staff is the opportunity to learn from a more experienced attorney to improve upon their legal advocacy skills. She truly exemplifies a dedication to pro bono cases and services to those who would otherwise have no access to justice. During the past year, Jenifer handled 5 cases helping 5 adults and 4 children.

DID YOU KNOW

Nearly one in three Americans – 96 million people – qualified for LSC-funded services at some time during 2013.

63.6 million people – one in five Americans – had annual incomes for the entire year below the LSC-funded legal assistance of 125 percent of the federal poverty line - $14,363 for an individual; $29,438 for a family of four.

LSSM denies over 8,000 applications of qualifying individuals every year due to lack of resources.
Staff Updates

Sharon Alexander was recognized by the Springfield Business Journal as one of 20 Most Influential Women of 2014.

James Beck has joined LSSM as a staff attorney in the Rolla office. James received his Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts, and Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Sarah Bernard was elected to a three-year term on the West Plains Library Board. Ms. Bernard is a staff attorney in LSSM’s West Plains Office.

Amanda Brown was elected to The Missouri Bar’s Young Lawyers Section (YLS), District 11 council seat. Ms Brown is a staff attorney in LSSM’s Springfield Office.

Erin Bush has joined LSSM as a staff attorney in the Rolla office. Erin received her Bachelor of Science and Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Nicole Carpenter joined LSSM in its Domestic Violence Unit for the 2015 Spring semester as a practicum student. Nichole is currently a student at Missouri State University working on her Bachelor of Social Work degree. Nicole will have the initial contact with clients, providing case management and resource information, support and advocacy during court hearings, assisting with organization and implementation of resources information, assisting with gathering and preparing evidence for hearings/trials, and small projects as they arise. LSSM DVU nominated Nicole for the 2015 Bachelors of Social Work Field Education Award and on May 4, Nicole was presented with the award in recognition of her superlative work at LSSM and tireless efforts this semester. She graduated with her BSW on May 15, 2015.

Sarah Donelan is serving as the 2015 chair of the Springfield Metropolitan Bar Association Family Law Committee.

Andrea Long was recognized by Missouri Lawyer’s Weekly as an Up & Coming honoree. Andrea was also presented the Rising Star Award by Missouri Lawyer’s Weekly.

Summer Masterson-Goethals was recognized by the Springfield Business Journal as a 2015 40 Under 40 Honoree.

Polsinelli makes contribution to the Legacy Campaign supporting the Springfield Metropolitan Bar Foundation and Legal Services of Southern Missouri.