

### FY 2007 PUBLICLY-FUNDED LEGAL SERVICES GRANTS

The DC Bar Foundation awarded by April 30, 2007 the public funds appropriated by the D.C. City Council for local legal services. The funds will support the creation of a shared legal interpreter bank, and the provision of more legal services lawyers working on housing issues and in underserved communities. Overall, the grants are characterized by collaboration, creativity, and a community-based approach to the delivery of legal services.

#### **SHARED LEGAL INTERPRETER BANK**

One grant will support a collaborative project involving 5 organizations, headed by Ayuda, to develop the city's first shared legal interpreter bank. The first year will include work to identify a cadre of interpreters; develop screening, testing, training, and evaluation materials to expand the interpreter pool; and launch an initial pilot project with selected legal services organizations to provide legal interpreters.

#### **LEGAL SERVICES GRANTS**

##### **Lawyers working on Housing Issues**

Grants to 4 organizations will add 8 attorneys working on housing issues in a critical area of need: services in landlord-tenant court. In addition, some of the community-based grants will support lawyers who will work on housing issues in the community.

*Three organizations – **Legal Aid Society, Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Bread for the City** -- will hire two staff attorneys each who will collaborate to provide extended representation to litigants in Landlord & Tenant Court in a new court-based legal services initiative. The project will be coordinated by an additional supervisory attorney based at the Legal Aid Society, who will ensure consistency in training, services, and staffing, and who will identify and address systemic housing issues that emerge from the cases handled by the project. **DC Law Students in Court** will hire one additional staff attorney to work in court to provide brief services in to more litigants to support this collaborative project.*

##### **Lawyers working in the Community**

Nine grants will bring lawyers into underserved communities and support the growth of existing neighborhood programs. Legal services lawyers will be opening programs in some of the poorest and most underserved neighborhoods in the city. The grants will support roughly 24 lawyers who will work with clients from offices readily accessible to the community: at Greater Southeast Hospital, at THEARC, at Children's Hospital clinics, at the Max Robinson Center, at Bread for the City's food pantry, on major

transportation routes – in short, in places where people already come to receive benefits, social and medical services, and other support.

- ***The Children’s Law Center** will expand its Health Access Project into Wards 7 and 8 to work with children and their families to identify and address non-medical barriers to health. Two lawyers will work with clients from three locations in Southeast DC, including from a mobile medical van that travels into Wards 7 and 8.*
- *Three separate organizations will be opening or expanding offices in underserved neighborhoods in Wards 5, 7, and 8, bringing lawyers into the community to address critical legal needs, including housing, at the neighborhood level. Neighborhood Legal Services Program, Legal Aid Society, and Bread for the City will each implement programs with public funding grants that will expand their presence in the neediest communities.*
  - ***Neighborhood Legal Services Program** will add 6 lawyers, four of whom will work out of an office to be opened in the far Northeast/Southeast section of Ward 7. The remaining two lawyers will work either in NLSP’s Ward 8 office, or its new facility in Ward 5. All will provide general legal services within NLSP’s service priority areas.*
  - ***Legal Aid Society of DC** will add 5 lawyers who will work out of three locations in Ward 8 in Southeast DC to provide general legal services to area residents.*
  - ***Bread for the City** will place two lawyers in its Southeast facility in Ward 8, providing full-time legal capacity at this holistic service site.*
- ***WEAVE** will open an office in a new Victim Services Center at Ft. Totten in Ward 5, to provide legal services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. The two full-time and one part-time lawyers funded through this grant will be part of a ‘one-stop’ Center that will provide survivors ready access to social, legal, and other critical services.*
- ***Whitman Walker Legal Clinic** will expand its Southeast DC program in Ward 8 to include legal staff. The two full-time legal services staff attorneys will be the first located in the Clinic’s Southeast site, and will meet the legal needs of the growing AIDS and HIV-positive population east of the Anacostia River.*
- ***Legal Counsel for the Elderly** will provide a full-time attorney to meet with home-bound elders in our city’s poorest neighborhoods to bring to their doorstep the legal services they need to secure benefits, keep their homes, and provide for expand fund lawyers to work with medical professionals. The lawyer will cover areas of concentrated poverty in Wards 5, 7, and 8.*

- *Two lawyers will be funded --- one each at **Ayuda** and **APALRC** --- to work with the city's first multi-lingual intake and referral program, which will reach into underserved communities of African, Asian-American, and Latino immigrants to increase access to justice. Clients will be drawn from these immigrant communities across the District.*
- ***University Legal Services** will partner with the DC Prisoners Project of the Washington Lawyers Committee to provide strengthened legal services to disabled incarcerated DC residents. The grant will fund a new full-time lawyer at ULS. Clients will come from across the District.*