

LEGAL SERVICES OF SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

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October is Pro Bono Month

For the second year, the State Bar of Michigan has designated October as Pro Bono Month, joining the American Bar Association and many other states in selecting October as a time to highlight the need for and importance of pro bono assistance by lawyers.

In Michigan, the need for pro bono legal help for the poor is greater now than ever. Over 3 million people (nearly 1/3 of all Michigan residents) qualify for free legal help from legal aid agencies because their annual income is below 200% of the federal poverty level (more than 40 percent of Michigan's children are in these low-income households). Foreclosure rates have increased more than 70%, and Michigan's unemployment rate remains one of the highest in the nation. Michigan's nonprofit legal aid programs do not have the resources to serve all who need help; they must turn away more than half of all who request assistance. This can have dire consequences for the poor whose legal problems often affect basic needs like family, safety, housing, health, and economic security.

This year, during Pro Bono Month, the Battle Creek office of Legal Services of South Central Michigan is having a Powers of Attorney event for senior citizens and other low-income individuals in the Battle Creek community. We are looking for attorneys who will commit to providing just three hours of pro bono legal service on October 27, 2010 from 10:00AM until 1:00PM at the Burnham Brook Senior Center. This is a small time commitment, but can have a huge impact on the lives of senior citizens and other low-income individuals in our community.

Please contact Robert Mathis, Managing Attorney of the Battle Creek office of Legal Services, for more information at (269) 965-3951.

***Now more than ever, pro bono is more than
just the right thing to do.***

"...there can be no equal justice where the kind of trial... (one) enjoys depends on the amount of money (one) has."

--Hon. Hugo Black, *Griffin v Illinois*, 351 US 12 (1956)



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