

TENTH Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee

Chair:

Honorable Lisa Wilson
Circuit Court of Peoria County
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March 12, 2014

Dear Law Firm or Corporate Legal Department Leader:

Members:

Kirk W. Bode
Law Offices of Kirk W. Bode

Honorable Stuart Borden (Ret.)
Borden Law Office

Honorable Michael E. Brandt
Circuit Court of Tazewell County

Shirley Coers
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.

Denise Conklin
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Michelle Eggert
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Honorable Paul P. Gillfillan
Circuit Court of Tazewell County

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Brad Keller
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Chief Judge Stephen A. Kouri
Tenth Judicial Circuit

Scott Kriegsman
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Jeff Krump
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Jaime Myers
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Patricia M. Redman
*Assistant State's Attorney
Peoria County State's Attorney*

L. Lee Smith
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Marisa Wiesman
Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.

Sonni Choi Williams
Interim Corporation Counsel, City of Peoria

As the chair of the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee, I am writing to ask for your assistance in increasing participation in providing pro bono legal services to those citizens of our community who are unable to secure legal representation in civil legal matters. The Illinois Supreme Court has recognized the need to make access to justice a high priority for everyone in the legal system and formed the Access to Justice Commission in 2013. Locally, we established the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee bringing together lawyers and judges from across our Circuit to expand the availability of pro bono legal assistance. This is a collaborative effort with the Public Interest Law Initiative, Prairie State Legal Services and our local bar associations.

Our legal community has had a long-standing tradition of providing pro bono legal assistance, and for that we should be congratulated. However, the number of unrepresented individuals has increased significantly, and more pro bono assistance is needed.

Enclosed you will find a Pro Bono Pledge for your consideration. This Pledge was created by the Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee to recognize those law firms and corporations already committed to pro bono, and to encourage everyone to increase their commitment to pro bono. We hope that you will take this pledge on behalf of your law firm or corporation.

On Wednesday, April 9, 2014, at noon, a luncheon will be held at the Peoria Civic Center to kick off the Prairie State's Campaign for Legal Services and to recognize the pro bono accomplishments of the past year. A flyer which outlines details of this event is enclosed. If you submit your completed pledge to me by March 28th, our committee will announce your firm or corporation as a lead pro bono provider at the event. If you would like further information before making this pledge, I would be happy to speak with you.

If you have provided pro bono assistance to individuals in our circuit in the past, we thank you, and ask that you continue your commitment and pledge to provide continued assistance in the future. If you have not provided pro bono assistance in the past, we ask that you now consider doing so. Our committee and Prairie State Legal Services can provide assistance and training to assist you in providing pro bono legal representation in the future.

Aristotle was quoted as saying that "any society and any nation is judged on the basis of how it treats its weakest and most helpless or vulnerable citizens." Thank you in advance for your willingness to provide pro bono assistance to those less fortunate in our community.

Sincerely,

Lisa Y. Wilson
Chair, Tenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee

Staff:

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Enclosures

www.pili.org/10thcircuit

