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JOURNAL

SPECIAL FEATURE: Resourceful Leadership: A Symposium

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Supervision Systems in a Legal Services Office

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Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.

Why Are Supervision Systems Important?

Supervision Systems are important because they (1) support a culture that values high quality legal work and professionalism; (2) support compliance with the ethical duty to supervise a law firm's employees and attorneys; and (3) provide supervisors with a supervision road map and institutionalize best practices.

A Supervision System must promote the delivery of high quality, effective, efficient and energetic legal services that address the current and emerging needs of the client community. At the same time a Supervision System must support the professional development of the staff.

A Supervision System must reflect the values, culture and structure of your program. It must be adapted to the unique needs of your staff. A Supervision System permeates and encompasses many aspects of a program's operation including its attorney recruitment program; quality initiatives and standards; case acceptance and case handling protocols; client grievance procedures, professional development and training programs, and evaluation protocols.

FOUR COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SUPERVISION SYSTEM

There are four basic components to a comprehensive Supervision System. The first component establishes and communicates performance expectations. The second component monitors ongoing work. The third component evaluates performance. The fourth component promotes professional development. The four components are interrelated and reinforce each other.

An overriding consideration in the development of a Supervision System in a legal services office is that it should seek to achieve the goals of the American Bar Association Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid (2006) and the Legal Services Corporation Performance Criteria (2007). In Florida, it must also satisfy the requirements of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar, Rules of Professional Conduct.[2]

Ideally the Supervision System is developed in collaboration with members of the management team with the full support of the Executive Director. Input should be solicited from the staff — through the Guiding Coalition, Labor-Management Committee, unit and department meetings, and individual staff meetings. The Supervision System must be shared, discussed, referenced, used and revised. Supervisors must be held accountable for its implementation.

1. Establish and Communicate Performance Expectations and Standards

A comprehensive Supervision System must establish and communicate to the attorney staff the performance expectations and standards which they must meet and against which their performance will be evaluated. Ideally the standards are agreed upon explicitly, and their achievement results in the delivery of high quality legal services. Despite this ideal, performance expectations and standards are established and communicated in a number of ways — some not as clear as others.

Performance expectations are perhaps most profoundly established outside the formal Supervision System of the program. However, because these standards are not part of the formal supervision protocol, they are not necessarily in a clear and uniform way communicated to all members of the staff. Also, the standards established by these methods may be less than ideal in some cases. However, these "unspoken" or "informal" standards communicate a powerful message about what is expected of the attorney staff. Some of these more informal mechanisms which communicate performance standards include:

- The program's Mission and Vision statements;
- Recruitment materials and attorney hiring criteria.

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- The employment interview is your first opportunity to directly and personally convey the program's performance expectations;
- New attorney training and orientation program;
- Program awards and honors — who is recognized and for what; who is promoted and rewarded; what accomplishments are acknowledged;
- Supervisor's personal code of conduct and professional performance — your actions set the *real standard.*

Most programs have formal performance standards. Frequently these standards are stated in terms of minimum performance requirements. These include:

- Case load expectations
- Time and hour requirements
- Grant requirements
- Job descriptions
- Written case handling protocols
- Written performance standards for attorneys with various levels of experience
- Unit work plans
- Regional advocacy plans
- Promotion and advancement standards
- Evaluation forms and criteria

Some programs also have individual performance standards. These are often contained in individual work plans, professional development plans, training plans, mentoring contracts, and self evaluations.

2. Monitor On-Going Work

The regular monitoring of ongoing work is usually what is thought of as a Supervision System — but it is only one element of a comprehensive system. It is not sufficient for a program or a supervisor to utilize one system for the review of on-going work because the frequency and focus of a supervisor's review must change as the attorney becomes more experienced. As the attorney gains experience the frequency with which the supervisor reviews the attorney's work and the focus of the review will change. For example, a supervisor may review and approve every letter drafted by an attorney with less than six months experience. If the supervisor is still providing this level of oversight a year later, there is a serious issue with either the attorney's performance or the supervision strategy.

Comprehensive protocols for the review of ongoing work typically address numerous aspects of an attorney's work. Most work review protocols provide significant details about how and when to review an attorney's work. Typical areas of review include maintenance and review of case lists; time sheet analysis; the review of retainer agreements for accuracy and specificity; assessment of compliance with funder and office requirements and protocols; file review at various stages of the case; the review and editing of written work; the review of opening and closing file memoranda and case acceptance memoranda; the observation of an attorney's performance of various tasks including client interviews, depositions, negotiations, court and administrative appearances, and client education and outreach; and assessment of work habits and co-worker relations.

Other mechanisms to monitor the ongoing performance of an attorney's work include conducting moot court; litigation strategy meetings (including interdisciplinary strategy meetings); presentation of cases at Litigation Review Committee meetings; co-counseling cases with a supervisor; and informal and formal meetings between the supervisor and other team members to discuss pending cases and other work.

3. Evaluate

Evaluation is the third component of a comprehensive Supervision System. It should reflect the program's performance standards and be based on the ongoing review of an attorney's work. Evaluation should guide the formulation of an attorney's professional development goals and inform training decisions.

Informal evaluation should occur regularly through the timely provision of evaluative feedback concerning an attorney's written work, case preparation and analysis, client interactions, performance in court, client education presentations, networking activities, and interactions with co-workers and supervisors.

Formal evaluations typically occur at least once a year, and more frequently for new attorneys during their initial probationary period. Just as there are numerous protocols for the review of ongoing work, there are innumerable excellent evaluation protocols. However, effective evaluation protocols have some common characteristics. They assess the employee's performance in light of established performance standards against which the employee knows he or she will be measured. If the evaluation is a narrative, it must be more than a recitation of the attorney's assignments and activities. Rather, it must assess how the attorney performed his or her duties against previously articulated performance standards. Even though the attorney is ultimately responsible for meeting the performance standards, the attorney should have been provided with the tools and training to meet the performance standards. The evaluation must be written in a clear, concise and focused manner without any mixed messages. The evaluation must be based on actual and specific examples of the attorney's performance which the evaluator has observed. Serious performance issues should not be raised for the first time in the formal evaluation. Rather, performance concerns should be initially addressed at the time they occur. There should not be any surprise news in a formal written evaluation.

4. Promote Professional Development

An effective Supervision System helps the attorney develop the necessary skills to address the legal needs of the client community while at the same time it provides the attorney with the tools, opportunities and guidance to achieve his or her individual professional development goals. As supervisors you must establish and communicate the clear expectation that the attorneys on your staff are responsible for their own professional development and growth. However, it is also your responsibility, and a reasonable expectation of the attorneys on your staff, that you will promote an environment that supports the individual attorney's efforts to continually develop throughout his or her career. This means that supervision does not end after two or three years when an attorney typically has mastered the basics of practicing law. It also means that all attorneys must be supervised — including high performing attorneys. However, the strategy to supervise a more experienced attorney and promote her professional development must change to reflect her need to grow beyond the basics. The focus of supervision should be on achieving high performance goals rather than compliance with minimum performance standards and the avoidance of malpractice. A legal services program cannot afford to have a ten-year attorney performing at the same level as a two-year attorney.

Strategies a supervisor may use to promote the professional development of the attorneys he or she supervises include:

- Facilitate a mentor relationship in which the attorney is either a mentor to a less experienced attorney or the protégé of a more experienced lawyer. To be successful, both the mentor and protégé must be committed to working together to achieve agreed upon goals within a defined time period. Like all successful relationships, the mentoring relationship requires a time commitment from both parties, which the supervisor must accommodate. Mentoring may also occur in a small group setting. For example, at Legal Services of Greater Miami Inc. (LSGMI), we have developed a Staff/Board mentoring program modeled on the Inns of Court.
- Provide opportunities to co-counsel a case or second chair a trial with more experienced staff or the supervisor, state support attorneys or pro bono attorneys.
- Provide opportunities to become a recognized substantive law expert so that the attorney may mentor, train and guide other lawyers.

MIE JOURNAL

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MIE invites readers to submit articles for publication. Please note that the MIE *Journal* contains 56 pages and is published four times each year. Articles accepted for publication may not appear immediately but may appear in later issues consistent with the themes of the issue and the decisions and editorial policies of the MIE *Journal* Committee.

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- Provide opportunities for the attorney to assume leadership roles within the program, region or state. For example, assign the attorney responsibility to coordinate an advocacy project. Appoint the attorney to program committees such as recruitment, technology, litigation review, or law clerk program committees. Nominate the attorney to lead joint regional advocacy projects or committees. Encourage and support the attorney's efforts to lead or actively participate in umbrella groups, task forces or bar committees.
- Develop opportunities for the attorney to share his accomplishments and expertise. For example, schedule a presentation before the Board of Directors or program staff about a recent case victory. Help the attorney make contacts which will lead to participation on community forums and panels. Include the attorney on the in-house training calendar. Help the attorney develop contacts and opportunities to publish articles in legal publications. Encourage and guide the attorney's efforts to develop media contacts so as to effectively promote his legal work, the needs of the client community and the program.
- Create opportunities to help the attorney meet and network with judges, bar leaders, and subject matter experts. For example, LSGMI sponsors quarterly Judges' luncheons which provide an opportunity for staff attorneys to meet and speak with a judge in a personal and informal setting. Encourage attorney board members to invite staff attorneys to attend bar events with them. Send attorneys to trainings outside the program. Through training and mentoring help attorneys develop the skills to network so they are comfortable and effective in these situations.

Even though my comments about professional development have focused on experienced attorneys, I would like to include a special word about the professional development of new attorneys. Aside from learning substantive and procedural law, from the very start new attorneys must adopt the perspective that they are proactive problem solvers who are instrumental in helping their clients achieve their goals. Supervisors must communicate the clear expectation to new attorneys that they are responsible for developing and implementing a plan to solve their client's problem and achieve a satisfactory outcome for them.

Despite the time pressures and the emergency nature of much of our work, the supervisor must resist the urge to give quick answers to a new attorney's many questions. Do not become the "Answer Book." Require new lawyers to research the law in every case assigned to them, write a short memo and place it in either the client file or a legal research file organized by subject matter. By doing this the inexperienced lawyer will methodically learn both the law and how to apply it to solve client problems.

Another way to promote this aspect of professional growth is to encourage the inexperienced attorney to ask, "Based on my research, this is what I propose to do. What do you think?" Or, "I have done the following research and analysis. But, I don't know what to do for the following reasons. What do you recommend I do to figure out this problem?"

Case review/acceptance meetings are another extremely important professional development tool for new lawyers. They also provide the supervisor with an excellent way to assess the progress the new attorney is making in terms of learning the law, issue spotting, identification of relevant facts, client interviewing skills, oral presentation, case analysis, and problem solving skills. At an early stage, new lawyers should be required to articulate both in a written case acceptance memo and in an oral presentation to the unit or supervisor the client's goals, relevant facts, the legal issue presented by the case, a case acceptance recommendation and their reasons for the recommendation. If the new lawyer has difficulty doing this, he or she should be required to explain the reason for struggling. Perhaps the new attorney is missing essential information because she forgot to ask the client about a relevant piece of information or does not understand a document provided by the client. The lawyer may not think the client's goal is achievable or in her best interest, but is struggling with how to counsel the client as to alternatives. The attorney may not have a clear understanding of the law, or has not yet developed the judgment to pick the best course of action among many possibilities. Young lawyers are not expected to have mature legal judgment and a complete understanding of the law. However, this type of analysis and self-reflection will help the new lawyer develop the analytical and problem solving skills required of every successful advocate.

For Reflection

Think about the strengths of your program's Su-

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pervision System and how it may be improved to enhance the ability of your staff to meet the legal needs of the client community while achieving their professional goals. Issues you may want to consider include:

- What are my program's performance expectations for attorneys? What are the program's expectations of me as a supervisor? How were these standards established? How are they communicated? Is there consensus that these standards are appropriate? Are they consistent? Do they promote high quality legal services?
- What protocols does my program use to monitor ongoing work? Do these protocols change to reflect an individual attorney's experience and performance expectations? What can I do to improve my ability to monitor legal work? Who can support me in my efforts to develop these skills?
- Do I routinely provide my staff with timely, informal feedback? Do I have the skills to provide effective feedback? What are the strengths of my program's formal evaluation system and how could it be improved? Does a professional development plan flow from the evaluation?
- Are the attorneys I supervise committed to and responsible for their professional development? What strategies do I use to promote my staffs' professional development? Do my strategies change depending on the staff member's experience, responsibility, skills, and goals?

1 Margaret F. Zehren started her career at what was then called Legal Services of Northeastern Wisconsin representing clients in special education and public benefits cases. Margaret then moved to south-central Florida where she was assigned to the Belle Glade office of Florida Rural Legal Services. She handled a wide variety of cases but was most heavily involved in representing recent Haitian immigrants in political asylum cases and representing African American students in a federal class action lawsuit to enforce their rights to receive appropriate educational services. After a number of years, Margaret relocated to Connecticut where she was the managing attorney of the Bridgeport and Danbury offices of Connecticut Legal Services, and established a state wide legal unit to represent elderly and disabled clients. Since 1991 Margaret has worked at Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc. While in Miami, Margaret has held a variety of positions including Coordinator

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Resourceful Leadership: Contributions from MIE's 2009 National Fundraising and Directors Conferences

By César Torres, Executive Director[1]
Northwest Justice Project

In this Special Feature, we want to share some of the valuable contributions from MIE's 2009 National Fundraising and National Directors Conferences, held in July in Chicago.

Planning for the 2009 Conferences took on special urgency as the economy collapsed. Some programs across the country faced catastrophic reductions in IOLTA revenue and state and local funding, while the numbers of people desperately seeking legal help multiplied. It was clear that the Conferences would provide an opportunity for the national legal aid community to convene on core issues of leadership and financial management confronting programs of all sizes and funding sources. With this clear purpose, the planning for the conferences paid off and both were among MIE's most successful in memory.

In times of crisis, the critical role of leadership comes to the fore, and our Fundraising Conference keynote speaker Carmine Gallo inspired us with lessons from his "Seven Secrets of Inspiring Leaders." The strategic relationship between the Executive Director and the Development Director takes center stage in "Executive Directors and Development Directors — Moving the Dialogue Forward." Having committed to the hire of a development director to grow resources for staff and clients requires executive director leadership to instill a culture of development throughout your program and ensure that the development director is recognized as a full fledged member of your advocacy staff. These invaluable insights are shared by Will Ogburn, Diana White, and Meredith McBurney.

Financial stresses being paramount, helping each other to improve our ability to develop resources and manage existing resources were key themes of the Conferences. The strategic alignment of legal aid *pro bono* activities and law firm giving is explored in two pieces, "A Law Firm Insider's View of Giving to Legal Aid," by Bob Glaves, and Barry C. Taylor's "Creating a Synergy Between Your *Pro Bono* and Fundraising Programs." Importantly, law firms are increasingly tying their giving to organizations with which the firm or its staff have a direct relationship — hence the critical importance of a successful *pro bono* program to your fundraising success.

Also, Paula Lawton Bevington introduces us to the importance of starting endowments ("The Gift That Keeps on Giving") — even or especially during difficult times like these, to ensure we are prepared for the "next inevitable recession." Although the Atlanta Legal Aid Society endowment began somewhat serendipitously, the important role it now plays is a lesson for us all. And speaking of counterintuitive, you will want to closely read how to capitalize on the cultural shifts that resulted in significant online fundraising *growth* in 2008 at a time when overall charitable giving declined. "Growing Your Online Fundraising Program," by Shirley Sexton of See3 Communications, provides an excellent, detailed roadmap to developing an effective online fundraising strategic plan.

Identifying and developing a strategic approach to the management of program reserves for use during difficult financial periods is the subject of a piece by Robert Sable. And extremely useful is the concise, technical review of ways to reduce health care insurance costs by Daniel Byrne.

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Future: Leadership and Professional Development," an article by Catherine Carr, and Colleen Cotter. Despite the seeming calamity surrounding us, they call upon us to take stock of the fundamentally different situation facing legal aid in 2009: we are not threatened with extinction; we are mature programs with a responsibility to make the right decisions to ensure we do not abandon important capacities and gains. Focusing on our values and a vision of a permanent community centered institution, fully integrated into the bar and the justice system and committed to positive change for our clients, we must then ensure that we honestly face internal obstacles as we commit to excellence in managing, nurturing and developing our most important resources, our committed passionate advocates to become the leaders who bring real solutions for our clients.

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of Children First, Senior Attorney of the Family, Juvenile and Education Unit, Director of Training and Professional Development and her current position as Director of Grant Development and Funder Relations. Margaret received both her Bachelor and Master degrees in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She graduated from Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota. Margaret may be reached at *mzehren@lsgmi.org.*

2 *See*, ABA Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid (2006) Standard 6.4 (on Review of Representation) which sets out standards for the ongoing review of legal work.

See, Legal Services Corporation Performance Area Three, Criterion 1, *Legal Representation* which addresses performance standards, the monitoring of ongoing work, evaluation and professional development.

See, Rules Regulating the Florida Bar, Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 4-5.1, Responsibilities of Partners, Managers, and Supervisory Lawyers; Rule 4-5.2, Responsibilities of a Subordinate Lawyer, and Rule 4-5.3 Responsibilities Regarding Nonlawyer Assistants which set out the duty to ensure that reasonable efforts are taken by attorneys with managerial and supervisory authority to ensure that those they supervise comply with the ethics rules.

Building Our Future: Leadership and Professional Development

By Catherine Carr, Executive Director, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia, and Colleen Cotter, Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland[1]

We organized a session called "Building Our Future: Leadership and Professional Development" at the MIE National Directors Conference in July in Chicago because we believe that in this economic crisis it is more important than ever to have an eye toward the future. It is easy to be so focused on getting through the current challenges of a difficult fiscal year that we lose sight of the bigger questions: i.e., where do we want to be going in the longer run, and how do our reactions to a short term crisis fit in with that bigger vision? Our premise for the session was: We will survive. How do we make the right decisions today to ensure we come through this in good shape?

Catherine Carr (L) and Colleen Cotter (R).

We in legal services know financial crisis too well. However, this national and worldwide economic crisis, broader and deeper than any we have experienced, affects us differently than the many previous legal services funding crises we have lived through. This recession has hit our clients tremendously hard. They face job loss and denial of unemployment claims, foreclosure, eviction, increased domestic violence, and struggles to obtain health care. Many of our programs have fewer resources to serve increased demand. These are indeed bleak times.

But unlike earlier financial crises for legal services programs, we are not threatened with extinction. This separates this crisis from our other experiences. Earlier cuts in funding were so often linked to the threat that the Legal Services Corporation would be dealt a fatal blow. We were fighting not for financial health, but for our very survival. We were in survival mode. Planning for the future was understandably not on our agenda. We were driven by the crisis, often energized by it.

But it has been more than a decade since we faced that last crisis. We have diversified our funding sources and broadened our political support, making such a threat unlikely in the future. In most places we are recognized as long term players, part of the cultural and political mix and the system of justice. We may not always be loved, but we are respected and seen as necessary. We have several generations of attorneys working in our programs, and fewer and fewer people remember that time "before," when there was not a national legal services system, when the existence of legal services programs was a novelty, an option, even an experiment. Many programs have seen a second generation of leadership step in, and those which have not are more concerned about succession planning than the possibility of closing down. We no longer move from crisis to crisis. We have grown up.

As mature organizations we now must be focused on the future, even during this recession, or perhaps especially because of it. As a mature community of solid, established organizations, we must take steps to get through this current economic crisis as strong as we can be. Our goal is to ensure that after this recession is over, we are not making up for lost time, but rather poised to take advantage of the opportunities that will be before us. And reaching that goal depends on developing the people to get us there, irrespective of our budget shortfalls, our overwhelming client demand, and a general cultural malaise. We cannot stop thinking about leadership and staff even in this difficult environment.

That was the context for our session in Chicago. More than fifty colleagues joined us for a frank conversation of where we are and how we can move forward to achieve our goals of professional and leadership development among our staff.

From Values to Vision

We started with a discussion of values and moved from there to a discussion of our vision for the future

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of our organizations, the reality we now face, and how we can move towards achieving our visions, even in this time of challenges. There were several themes of our discussion.

First, we recognized that our organizations depend on the people we hire and employ. We need diverse, talented, and committed advocates and we need to support and train them and keep them interested, involved and challenged. We need to develop the people we have and recruit new people with skills and passion to join us. We need to grow our staff into leaders, and provide them the opportunities to thrive.

We recognized the connection between good management and good staff, between leadership and excellent work. We must run our organizations in a way that encourages innovation, creativity and growth, recognizes and rewards talent and dedication, and is fair in its treatment of staff as well as clients. We must communicate well, provide good salaries and benefits, and opportunities for learning and advancement. Our organizations must be creative, flexible, innovative and adaptable if we want our staff to be that way as well. High quality and effective, efficient organizations will attract and retain high quality, effective and efficient staff and keep them loyal.

Community Connection

We acknowledged that if we own the problem of poverty as ours alone, we will not build a large cultural commitment to address and resolve it, a commitment we know is critical to a long term solution for our clients. The importance of connection with the community was recognized in several ways.

First, we noted that we need to be recognized as part of the larger bar, a critical and expert part, integral to the function of the legal system. We should not be "separate" or "outsiders," but indeed, leaders of the legal community. We need to get over the 1960s sense of distrust of the mainstream, and see the private bar as our partners and collaborators. We need to tear down any remaining walls of an old legal services culture of "us" and "them," where only we are dedicated and committed enough to help out our client communities. As we change our vision of the private bar, we can realize that they have a positive vision of us. While we may think somehow we are seen as "not real lawyers," we need to own that we are very real and important, and can be well connected and highly valued attorneys among the larger community of attorneys. This requires seeing ourselves as professionals, as well as advocates for change. The fact that our clients are too often voiceless "outsiders" does not mean that we should be so as well; indeed it mandates that we are integrated into the bar, and heard. So our clients are heard.

Similarly we need to be a critical part of the larger community and seen as key partners and leaders in finding and achieving community solutions. Legal services must be recognized as part of the mandatory infrastructure of our communities; like courts and schools, legal services must be seen as an institution which the community needs and treasures, working with a wide variety of other organizations who share some or part of our goals.

We also discussed the need to be connected with the client community. It is critical that we understand our client communities and are responsive to their goals and needs, that we are involved with the client community and they are involved with us, and that we are focused on work with maximum, positive, and appropriate impact on our client communities.

Finally, we discussed the need to build communities within our organizations as well. If our staff members do not value each other, and communicate with and support each other, we will not be well suited to build a community role externally. We tend to work individually within our organizations, but we will build stronger organizations by building teams.

The Challenges in Achieving Our Vision

We talked through the difficulties we face in achieving this vision for our organizations and community, some new and some seemingly eternal. Inadequate funding is a constant problem, and some programs are facing particular problems caused by the recession and IOLTA funding reductions. The simple but tremendous problem of making any change to the status quo holds us back even when money is not an issue. We have a strong legal services culture and individual organizational cultures, with beliefs and perceptions that resist change. We do not always admit our weaknesses, or easily criticize ourselves, preventing us from seeing change as an imperative. The advantage of experienced staff also brings the disadvantage of stagnant "dinosaur" vision; some long term employees feel entitled to their *status quo* positions, and will protect old ways or stand in the way of change.

We also often avoid conflict with our colleagues. Our deeply held values of compassion and fairness are such an important part of who we are. But they also may discourage us from taking on problems within our programs when it means confronting colleagues whom we care about and respect, but who might not be doing their job. Our community's lack of management expertise and training may also be a barrier to organizational cultural change.

We discussed at some length our lack of clarity about exactly what role our organizations play; our dual vision of our programs as professional law firms serving individuals excellently, and as forceful change advocates seeking the end of poverty on behalf of our client communities and the culture at large. We recognized the challenge of balancing these two visions and communicating them to others and to ourselves, and wondered if this somehow hurts us as we try to achieve change.

Steps to Take

As we discussed what we need to overcome our barriers and achieve our vision, we identified some very concrete steps we need to take.

Doing strategic planning, managing work and staff with excellence, and building external support for our clients, our organizations and our work must not be seen as luxuries but necessities. Excellence requires excellence in management as well as in advocacy work; we must think about and actually engage in succession planning and improving staff performance, not just improving our litigation and intake systems.

Building our staff's skills through training, professional development opportunities, and assisting them in becoming leaders in and outside of our organizations must be a priority, and thus something we are willing to pay for. We should encourage our staff to take leadership roles in related organizations, local and national, like Management Information Exchange and the National Legal Aid and Defender Association. We must support our staff in being part of the bar and community, not just the office; they must see themselves as leaders of change and have the opportunities to take on that role. Our staff comes to us with passion. We need to nurture it and encourage it. It will take flexible, strategic organizations to produce flexible strategic leaders and bring real solutions for our clients.

It is our responsibility to not just survive this economic crisis, but to continue during it to build our organizations. We are here to stay. We need to behave like it.

1 Catherine Carr is the Executive Director of Community Legal Services in Philadelphia. She has held that position since 1995 and previously was a staff attorney concentrating in public benefits litigation for eleven years. She serves in leadership positions on a number of boards and policy committees of national, state, and local public interest organizations, including as Vice President of the MIE Board. Cathy may be reached at *ccarr@clsphila.org.*

Colleen M. Cotter, Esq. is the Executive Director of The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. Prior to joining Cleveland Legal Aid in 2005, Colleen worked as a consultant to legal services programs and their funders. She also worked at Indiana Legal Services and Pine Tree Legal Assistance. She is a former member of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association Civil Policy Group and NLADA Board of Directors. Her 2007 speech entitled "Justice and Healthy Communities" was published in Vital Speeches of the Day. Colleen may be reached at *colleen.cotter@lasclev.org.*

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