

# VERMONT BAR FOUNDATION

## FY 2009 GRANTS

### **Battered Women's Services and Shelter, Inc. - \$8,700**

Weekly Domestic Violence Support Group: BWSS offers a number of services to help abuse survivors build upon their strengths and shape fulfilling lives for themselves and their children by offering an immediate response to domestic violence. BWSS will hold weekly support groups for women who are currently in the court system, as they attempt to leave abusive homes, and who unfortunately have no other financial resources to obtain legal assistance or support.

### **Burlington College - \$10,000**

Burlington College Pro Se Legal Clinic: The Burlington College Pro Se Legal Clinic teaches low income Vermonters how to manage their own legal issues in courts. Funding will support and expand the Pro Se Legal Clinic to include legal services to refugee litigants. The Clinic will teach Burlington immigrants to effectively advocate for themselves in minor civil disputes and host workshops on general legal education. Burlington College is located in the Old North End.

### **Have Justice–Will Travel, Inc. - \$30,000**

Legal Empowerment Assistance Program: Have Justice–Will Travel is an innovative, mobile, multi-service non-profit organization that assists rural victims of domestic violence through free representation for relief from abuse and family law matters. Funding of a Paralegal assistant will provide the organization with essential help to better serve the numbers and needs of domestic violence victims.

### **Northeast Kingdom Learning Services - \$5,000**

Publication: NEKLS provides programs in dropout recovery, GED, adult diploma, immigrant/farm worker, and adult basic education. Funding will support creation and publication of an easy-to-use booklet providing information regarding the criminal court system to individuals with literacy challenges. It will be distributed to schools, libraries, courts and criminal justice centers.

### **Vermont Bar Association - \$8,000**

Bennington County Pro Bono Project: The goals and objectives of the project are to provide low-income Vermonters the opportunity for legal representation in specific cases in the superior and probate courts in Bennington County and in involuntary guardianship cases in the Bennington and Manchester District Probate Courts. Funding will cover representation to low-income pro se litigants in specified cases on a reduced fee basis.

### **Vermont Bar Association - \$45,470**

Statewide Pro Bono Coordinator: The Pro Bono Coordinator will continue to identify and unify pro bono efforts throughout the State, publicize and promote the work of pro bono attorneys, recruit and provide training for pro bono attorneys in areas of need, and coordinate with existing access to justice program and projects. Funding will cover the coordinator's salary and benefits.

### **Vermont Ethics Network - \$8,000**

Publication/website/workshops: VEN's mission is to increase awareness and understanding of ethical issues, values and choices in health and health care. This grant award will assist in supporting the publication of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of **When You Must Make Medical Decision for Someone Else**, expand the current VEN website and provide outreach/education to the public about medical decision-making and guardianship.

**Vermont Protection & Advocacy, Inc. - \$2,500**

Publication: VP&A's mission is to promote the equality, dignity, and self-determination of people with disabilities. Funding will cover printing costs for the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of "Your Rights As a Vermonter Diagnosed As Having a Mental Illness."

**VT Refugee Assistance and the VT Immigration Project - \$12,000**

Vermont Immigration Project: VRA is the only organization in Vermont with the primary focus of assisting asylum-seekers and immigrants in greatest need. They provide legal assistance and representation for these asylum-seekers who are not part of an official resettlement program. VRA also works through the public schools, churches and the media to educate Vermonters about conditions in the refugee producing countries, about U.S. immigration law and its effect on asylum-seekers. Funding will be used for operating support.

**Women Helping Battered Women, Inc. - \$18,500**

Enhanced Legal Advocacy and Education: The mission of WHBW is to support, identify options and advocate for individuals who have experienced domestic violence and to serve as a catalyst for social change. Grant funding will be used to provide weekend legal advocacy. Funding will also allow WHBW to expand their free weekend Legal Clinic and to continue to staff the Thursday morning single docket for Relief of Abuse Order hearings at Chittenden Cty Family Court.

**Non-Competitive Grant****Legal Services Law Line of VT - \$50,000**

Staff Attorney: Law Line provides direct service, primarily counsel and advice, brief service and pro se assistance, to eligible clients in civil matters. Funding will support a full time attorney.

**VLS Legal Clinic - \$60,000**

Staff Attorney: The Legal Clinic provides a broad range of effective free legal services to vulnerable, disadvantaged residents of central and southeastern Vermont. Its primary goals are to provide high-quality legal services to low-income people and to help law students develop essential lawyering skills. Funding will support the staff attorneys.

**Vermont Legal Aid, Inc. - \$875,916**

Vermont Legal Aid helps low-income people who encounter legal issues - such as probate, domestic violence, securing public housing, fraudulent consumer practices targeted at senior citizens, and child custody and support, but lack the financial means to afford these necessary legal services. VT Legal Aid helps restore faith in our justice system for people who would otherwise have no access to justice as a way of resolving conflicts.