

Poverty Law Fellowship Update - April 2010

Since the start of my fellowship in November 2008, I have provided legal services ranging from counsel and advice to full representation to a total of 114 low to moderate-income clients facing foreclosure. The county-by-county breakdown of clients that I have assisted is as follows:

County	# of Clients
Addison	6
Bennington	8
Caledonia	11
Chittenden	13
Essex	1
Franklin	6
Grand Isle	6
Lamoille	5
Orange	4
Orleans	10
Rutland	8
Washington	9
Windham	13
Windsor	14

In December 2009, I collaborated with the Consumer Protection Unit of the Attorney General's office to draft a mandatory mediation bill for foreclosure cases. The bill was introduced in the Legislature as H.590 and was passed by the House of Representatives on March 18, 2010. Our advocacy efforts continue in the Senate and we are hopeful that we will have a viable foreclosure mediation statute that will ensure all homeowners, whether or not represented, have access to the full range of foreclosure prevention options available.

Finally, I have participated in a number of outreach efforts aimed at public education and attorney training. In February 2009, I assisted in organizing a day long basic foreclosure defense training for Vermont attorneys. Over seventy attorneys participated, and of those, more than thirty signed up to provide pro bono legal services to homeowners in need. Furthermore, I authored an article on foreclosure mediation legislation, entitled *How Foreclosure Mediation Legislation Can Keep Vermonters in Their Homes (and Money in the Pockets of Mortgage Holders)*, that will be published in the Spring edition of the Vermont Bar Association Journal. Finally, on March 31, 2010, I was featured in a Vermont Public Radio story about the rising rate of foreclosures in Vermont, that can be found at: http://www.vpr.net/news_detail/87608/.