

MISSISSIPPI
Access to Justice
COMMISSION

————— JUSTICE *for* ALL —————

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Mississippi Access to Justice Commission
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MISSISSIPPI
Access to Justice
COMMISSION

2015 Year In Review

Passed 1 New Supreme Court Rule, the Law Student Limited Practice Rule, expanding volunteer opportunities for law students.

Added 3 New Committees – Faith-Based Initiatives, Medical-Legal Partnership and Strategic Planning.

Developed 2 Virtual Self-Help Forms – Divorce and Emancipation.



Co-sponsored 3 “Lawyers in the Library” legal advice clinics in Jackson and Pascagoula, where 35 attorneys provided advice to 60 people.

Co-sponsored 5 Expungement Workshops and 6 Expungement Legal Clinics and in Biloxi, Clarksdale, Hattiesburg and Jackson, where 86 attorneys and law students provided services to over 450 people.



Featured in 5 articles, blog posts and podcasts.

Appointed to 3 Supreme Court Commissions and Committees.

Assisted in the expansion of 7 new Pro Se Legal Clinics in 7 Mississippi counties – Alcorn, Itawamba, Monroe, Union, Pontotoc, Prentiss and Tishomingo.

Participated in 3 conferences and conventions, including the invitation-only ABA Summit on Innovation in Legal Services.



Spoke to 7 legal and community groups about the work of the Commission and the need to expand access to civil legal services in Mississippi.

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About the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission

The Mississippi Access to Justice Commission (“the Commission”) was created by the Mississippi Supreme Court on June 28, 2006 to develop a unified strategy to improve access to the civil courts for the poor. The Commission is tasked with investigating the need for civil legal services to the poor in Mississippi, and evaluating, developing and recommending policies, programs and initiatives that will assist the judiciary in meeting needs for civil legal services to the poor.

Objectives of the Commission

The Commission’s stated goals are to:

- Identify the current and future needs of the legal services community in providing access to justice for the poor in Mississippi;
- Develop and establish a strategic statewide plan for delivery of legal services to the poor in Mississippi;
- Develop strategies and ideas to increase resources and funding for access to justice in civil legal matters, and to make recommendations to appropriate entities to ensure that the resources and funding are applied to the areas and organizations of greatest need;
- Work to maximize the wise and efficient use of available resources, including development of local, regional and/or statewide systems that encourage the coordination of resources and funding;
- Develop and implement initiatives designed to expand civil access to justice;
- Work to reduce barriers to the justice system by addressing existing and proposed court rules, procedures, and policies that affect access to justice for poor Mississippians;
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide system and service providers, and periodically evaluate the progress made in fulfilling their respective responsibilities; and
- Consider relevant topics, including available funds and budgets, expansion of resources, increased public awareness through communications and message development, pro bono matters, and other related matters, and shall make recommendations as it deems.

Current Commission Co-Chairs and Members

The Commission is made up of twenty-one (21) voting members and eleven (11) *ex-officio* members. Co-Chairs are Hinds County Chancery Judge Denise Owens and former Mississippi Bar President H. Rodger Wilder. Voting members of the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission include: Harrison County Court Judge Margaret Alfonso, Gulfport; Jamie Bardwell, Deputy Director of the Women's Foundation of Mississippi, Jackson; Representative David Baria, Bay St. Louis; Court of Appeals Judge Donna M. Barnes, Tupelo; attorney Edderek Cole, Jackson; Supreme Court Presiding Justice Jess H. Dickinson, Gulfport; attorney La'Verne Edney, Jackson; Chancery Court Judge Deborah Gambrell, Hattiesburg; Reverend Hosea Hines, Pastor of Christ Tabernacle Church, Jackson; Michael L. Jones, University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson; Lela Keys, Delta Community Partners in Care, Clarksdale; Supreme Court Justice Leslie D. King, Greenville; Chancery Judge Jacqueline Mask, Tupelo; Hinds County Chancery Judge Denise Owens, Jackson; former Mississippi Bar President Joy Lambert Phillips, Gulfport; Representative Thomas Reynolds, Charleston; Sixth District Circuit Judge Lillie

Blackmon Sanders, Natchez; Dennis Smith, former WLBT News Director, Jackson; attorney Ronnie Walton, Meridian; former Mississippi Bar President H. Rodger Wilder, Gulfport; and Mississippi Economic Council President Blake Wilson, Jackson.

Non-voting *ex-officio* commission members include: Deborah Bell, Interim Dean, University of Mississippi School of Law, Oxford; Sam Buchanan, Executive Director, Mississippi Center for Legal Services, Hattiesburg; Gayla Carpenter-Sanders, Executive Director/General Counsel, Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project, Jackson; Ben Cole, Executive Director, North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Oxford; Patricia Gandy, Executive Director, Mission First Legal Aid Office, Jackson; Jaribu Hill, Executive Director, Mississippi Workers Center, Greenville; Beth Orlansky, Advocacy Director, Mississippi Center for Justice, Jackson; Jody Owens II, Managing Attorney, Southern Poverty Law Center, Jackson; Jennifer Riley-Collins, Executive Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi, Jackson; Dean Wendy Scott, Mississippi College School of Law, Jackson; and Harry Yoste, Attorney/Director, Northcutt Legal Clinic.

The Executive Director of the Commission is Tiffany M. Graves.

Commission Committees

The Commission is currently comprised of three Committees—Delivery System, Public Awareness and Resource Development—and two Subcommittees— Faith-Based Initiatives and Medical-Legal Partnership. A Strategic Planning Committee also meets regularly to assure the Commission is meeting its stated goals and objectives. The Delivery System Committee oversees the development of an expanded and improved system for providing civil legal services to low income people. The Resource Development Committee is tasked with developing a long-term plan to increase funding to civil legal services programs. The Public Awareness Committee works to educate the Bar, governmental leaders and the public about the scope of the need for legal services. The Faith-Based Initiatives Subcommittee seeks to foster partnerships between the legal and religious communities in Mississippi to help expand access to justice to the state’s poor. Finally, the Medical-Legal Partnership Subcommittee was formed to explore ways the legal and medical communities can work together to reach more Mississippians in need of assistance. Committees often include non-Commission members.

Financial Support for the Commission

The Commission is funded through the generous support of the Mississippi Supreme Court, The Mississippi Bar and The Mississippi Bar Foundation.

2015 Commission Meeting Dates

The Commission meets quarterly. In 2015, Commission meetings were held as follows: March 3, June 2, September 1 and December 1.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2015

Since the Commission is divided into three committees—Delivery System, Public Awareness and Resource Development—the reports on accomplishments for the past year will be provided based on the working group under which a specific program or initiative was completed.

DELIVERY SYSTEM

Among its objectives, the Commission is tasked with developing and implementing initiatives designed to expand access to civil justice. In addition, the Commission has to work to reduce barriers to the justice system by addressing existing and proposed court rules, procedures and policies that affect access to justice for poor Mississippians. Through various projects, initiatives and outreach programming, the Commission accomplished these goals with the assistance of its committees, the state's nonprofit legal service providers, bar associations and other community partners.

Virtual Forms Project

The virtual form packets for irreconcilable differences divorces and removal of disability of minority/emancipation were finalized this year and made available to the Mississippi Legal Services Programs and the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project (MVLP). It is the Commission's hope that the legal services programs will make the packets available to eligible individuals on their respective websites as a way to serve those who exceed the programs' financial guidelines and/or have the capacity to represent themselves in these type proceedings. The virtual form developer has started to work on the name change packet and it should be available in the first quarter of 2016. The name change packet is the last of the three packets the Commission agreed to develop for the state's Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and LSC-affiliated programs. Per our contract with the developer, the Commission can only make the packets available to the Mississippi Legal Services Programs and MVLP.

Law Student Limited Practice Act

On November 19, the Mississippi Supreme Court handed down an Order granting the Commission's request to adopt a Court rule governing law student limited practice. The former Law Student Limited Practice Act, codified in Mississippi Code Sections 73-3-205-207 (Revised), was created by the Mississippi Legislature and prohibited law students from participating in limited practice through voluntary legal aid programs that do not provide course credit. It also prevented students who attend law schools in other states from limited practice in Mississippi through summer volunteer opportunities and externships. Finally, it limited eligible attorney supervisors to state or legal services employees thereby limiting *pro bono* collaborations between law schools and the private Bar. The new rule will expand practice opportunities for law students by allowing them to provide limited legal services as part of a clinical legal education course, law school legal internship program or through a volunteer legal services program under the supervision of licensed attorneys.

Local Access to Justice Initiatives

Expungement Workshops and Legal Clinics

The Commission and the Mississippi Association for Justice (MAJ) partnered on several expungement workshops and expungement legal clinics this year. The organizations sponsored expungement events in Clarksdale, Biloxi and Jackson in May and June. Over 200 people attended the events and received legal assistance from 50 *pro bono* attorneys. The Commission and MAJ partnered again in the fall on expungement events in Hattiesburg and Jackson in September, October and November. Approximately 250 people attended those events and received assistance from 30 attorneys and 6 law students from Mississippi College School of Law. The Capital Area Bar Association, Mississippi State Senator Sollie Norwood and the City of Jackson were co-sponsors of each of the expungement events in Jackson.

The Commission and MAJ have already scheduled six expungement events in 2016. At present, only one of the state's civil legal service providers is offering expungement assistance as part of its regular casework. Others are only offering this type assistance through legal clinics. The Commission is engaging in the partnership with MAJ to help fill this gap in civil legal services in Mississippi.

"Lawyers in the Library" Legal Advice Clinics

The Commission co-sponsored three "Lawyers in the Library" legal advice clinics with the Young Lawyers Division ("YLD") of The Mississippi Bar. The attorneys who volunteered at the events provided legal advice and counsel on the following topics: expungement, family law, social security and estate planning. The first event was held on January 22 in Pascagoula at the Pascagoula Public Library. The second event was held in Jackson at the Eudora Welty Library on March 19. The final event was also held at the Eudora Welty Library on October 29, 2015, in conjunction with National Celebration of *Pro Bono* Week. In all, 60 people received legal advice from 35 attorneys. The Commission will continue to partner with the YLD on these events in 2016.

Pro Se Clinic Expansion

The Commission continues to work with chancery court judges to develop in-court access to justice initiatives with the involvement of county bar associations. In 2015, the Commission worked very closely with Lee County Chancery Court Judge Jacqueline Mask to implement *pro se* legal clinics in the eight counties that make up the First Judicial Chancery District. There has been quarterly *pro se* family law legal clinic in Lee County since February 2014. Judge Mask worked closely with attorneys in Alcorn, Itawamba, Monroe, Union, Pontotoc, Prentiss and Tishomingo Counties to develop similar events in their communities. As of December 14, at least one clinic was held in all eight counties, with Lee County hosting three and Alcorn County hosting two. Each of the eight counties is scheduled to have a legal clinic in 2016.

Other counties are now looking to Northeast Mississippi to develop their own clinics and the Commission has helped to connect the Mississippi Board of Bar Commissioners, county bar

associations and others with legal nonprofits that can provide administrative support for these events, including the University of Mississippi's *Pro Bono* Initiative, Mission First Legal Aid Office and the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project, among others. The Commission will continue to provide guidance to courts, bar associations and legal service providers that desire to provide these local initiatives. It has been extremely encouraging to participate in the expansion of the legal clinics and witness the number of people who have received assistance and the number of attorneys who are engaged in *pro bono* service as a result of the growth in these local access to justice initiatives. Without question, the amendments to Rule 6.1 which were handed down by the Mississippi Supreme Court in 2011 and allow attorney to unbundle their legal services to the poor have contributed substantially to the increase in the number of attorneys who volunteer at these legal clinics and other limited representation activities.

Pro Se Litigant Data Collection

The Commission consulted with the Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) to ascertain the number of *pro se* filers in chancery court. The Delivery System Committee engaged in many discussions this past year about the experiences self-represented litigants have in civil courts and whether there are barriers that prohibit them from fully resolving their legal matters. Many of the providers have received calls from self-represented litigants who have encountered challenges when filing and at the pre- and post-hearing phases of their cases. According to the data provided by the AOC, the top ten counties in which litigants filed *pro se* in 2014 were as follows: Harrison, Jackson, Hinds, Clarke, Lamar, George, Jones and Panola (tied), Forrest, Adams and Scott (tied) and Marshall. In all, 1,516 people filed *pro se* in those counties last year. The top ten case types of *pro se* filings in 2014 were the following: debt collection, child support, irreconcilable differences divorce, paternity, commitments, fault-based divorce, testate estate, intestate estate, guardianship and custody/visitation.

The Commission will work with the AOC to better capture *pro se* litigant data, as there were discrepancies between the data that was collected from electronic and manual filings. The Delivery System Committee expects to actively pursue court rules, policies and procedures that will help educate court staff on how to effectively deal with self-represented litigants. Having accurate data on how many people are representing themselves in civil courts will essential to helping the Commission prioritize where to concentrate its efforts, both geographically and based on the types of cases for which these type filings are most prominent.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Among its more significant accomplishments of the past year, the Commission was able to increase its exposure and bring more awareness to the services offered by the nonprofit legal service provider community as recommended in its stated goals. The Commission also developed new marketing materials and other resources to direct people in need to free legal resources.

Speaking Engagements

This year, the Commission gave presentations to the following: the Healthy Linkages Committee of the Myrlie Evers-Williams Institute for the Elimination of Health Disparities (Jackson); the University of Mississippi School of Law (Oxford); the Biloxi Lions Club (Biloxi); the Chancery Judges' Summer Study Committee (Oxford); the Gulfport Kiwanis Club (Gulfport); the Newly-Elected Circuit and Chancery Court Clerks (Jackson); and the Newly-Elected Justice Court Judges (Jackson).

Published Blogs and Articles

In March, Commission Executive Director, Tiffany Graves, wrote an article for the newsletter of the Myrlie Evers-Williams Institute for the Elimination of Health Disparities titled, "The Mississippi Access to Justice Commission and Medical-Legal Partnerships: Addressing Legal Needs as Part of Healthcare." The article is available here: https://www.umc.edu/uploadedFiles/UMCedu/Content/Administration/Centers_and_Institutes/EversWilliams_Institute/Connect%20Volume%201%20Issue%203.pdf.

In June, Commission Executive Director, Tiffany Graves, wrote a blog piece for the Women's Foundation of Mississippi about using social media to expand awareness of access to justice issues, initiatives and innovations. The blog is available at <http://www.womensfoundationms.org/becoming-a-fan-of-social-media-one-executive-directors-transformation/>.

The Commission was featured twice in publications in July. The Mississippi Economic Policy Center posted an interview with the Commission as part of its "What Works in Mississippi" blog on July 24. The blog post is available here: <http://hopepolicy.org/blog/what-works-in-mississippi-mississippi-access-to-justice-commission/>.

On July 30, the Commission participated in its first-ever podcast with Do Good Mississippi. Do Good Mississippi seeks to showcase the good in Mississippi and compel others to action by creating partnerships with and bringing awareness to organizations that are on the front lines of positive change in our state. The podcast is available here: <http://www.dogoodmississippi.com/dgms-podcast-episode-2-with-tiffany-graves-from-ms-access-to-justice-commission/>.

The Commission was profiled twice in publications in the fall. In September, the Capital Area Bar Association included an article about the Commission in its quarterly newsletter here: <http://caba.ms/articles/features/ms-access-justice-commission.html>.

In October, the American Association for Justice's Women Trial Lawyers' Caucus published an article written by the Commission titled, "How Civil Legal Aid is Helping to Close the Gender Poverty Gap." The article is available at <http://www.msatjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/How-Civil-Legal-Aid-is-Helping-to-Close-the-Gender-Poverty-Gap-The-American-Association-For-Justic.pdf>.

Newsletters, Website, Social Media

The Commission published an electronic newsletter each month beginning in March and posted regular announcements in The Mississippi Bar's "Bar Briefs" weekly newsletter. The Commission also unveiled a newly-designed website in the first quarter of 2015 and increased its presence on social media through active Twitter and Facebook pages.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Among its many directives, the Commission was empowered to develop strategies and ideas to increase resources and funding for access to justice in civil matters. To that end, the Commission has worked closely with The Mississippi Bar, the state's legal services providers and others to procure additional support for civil legal services in the state.

Response to Proposed LSC Budget Cuts

In June, the Commission sent letters and made personal contacts to Mississippi's Congressional Delegation to request support for continued funding to the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). At the time, Congress was considering cuts to the LSC's budget by \$75 million. The funding cuts would have had a significant impact on Mississippi's Legal Services Programs. The programs currently receive 70% of their funding from the LSC. In the end, Congress did not cut the LSC budget and instead increased it by \$10 million. Mississippi was recently praised by the American Bar Association for its quick action and strategic response to the proposed budgetary cuts.

Bank of America Donation and Exploration of Cy Pres Funding

Throughout the second half of the year, the Commission assisted The Mississippi Bar Foundation with the development of the grant application for a donation received from Bank of America. The grant monies will enable legal nonprofit organizations to provide representation in foreclosure proceedings, among other services. The Commission also met with the Mississippi Legal Services Programs and staff with the American Bar Association to discuss ways to procure *cy pres* funds.

2016 Legislative Appropriation

The Resource Development Committee has begun discussing the possibility of seeking a general legislative appropriation in the 2016 Legislative Session to support the Mississippi Legal Services Programs and the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project through the existing Civil Legal Assistance Fund. The Committee will work closely with Jimmie Reynolds, the Legislative Liaison for The Mississippi Bar, on the proposed legislation. The Committee will meet immediately after the first of the year and throughout the Session.

The Faith-Based Initiatives Subcommittee began discussing a fundraising project with the religious community to help raise awareness of access to justice issues, direct people in need in their congregations to the right resources, and generate funds for the legal services programs.

The Commission actively scouted grant and other funding opportunities to support the nonprofit legal aid programs and made them aware of them as appropriate in accordance with its stated goals.

CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS AND SUMMITS

ABA Summit on Innovation in Legal Services in Palo Alto, California

The Commission was invited by the President of the American Bar Association to participate in the first-ever National Summit on Innovation in Legal Services at Stanford Law School in May. The Summit was aimed at challenging throughout leaders from the legal profession and other professions to rethink the delivery of legal services. The Commission's Executive Director, Tiffany Graves, participated in meetings and breakout sessions that discussed ways to support self-represented litigants through technology, education and judicial training, among other relevant topics.

2015 Equal Justice Conference in Austin, Texas

Several Commission members and legal service providers attended the Equal Justice Conference in Austin, Texas in May. Tiffany Graves participated in the State Access to Justice Chairs' Meetings and met with regional colleagues in Arkansas, Georgia and Tennessee to discuss the possibility of a regional conference or training for judges and court staff on self-represented litigants. New Commission member, Michael L. Jones, attended several sessions on medical-legal partnerships, a new area of focus for the Commission. Tiffany also attended a session led by Martha Bergmark on messaging civil legal aid. The Commission is ready to begin thinking strategically about how best to convey its work to actively engage stakeholders and the members of the public who can most benefit from the services offered by our civil legal service providers. As such, the Commission invited Ms. Bergmark to make a similar presentation at the December 1 meeting.

Access to Justice Commission at The Mississippi Bar Convention

The Commission hosted a panel at the Annual Meeting of The Mississippi Bar at the Sandestin Hilton in Destin, Florida in July. The session was titled "Getting to Yes: Why Your Law Firm Should Answer the Call of *Pro Bono*" and featured a panel of large and small law firm managing partners and associates discussing the importance of law firm *pro bono* engagement. Margaret Cupples (Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP), Jennifer Hall (Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz, P.C.), Hugh Keating (Dukes, Dukes, Keating & Faneca, P.A.) and Hank Spragins, Jr. (Hickman, Goza & Spragins, PLLC) shared how their law firms approach *pro bono*, the unintended benefits of *pro bono*, and how to successfully incorporate *pro bono* work into a busy law practice.

COMMITTEE & OTHER COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Mississippi Parent Representation Pilot Program Committee

The Administrative Office of Courts invited the Commission to serve on the Mississippi Parent Representation Pilot Program Committee. The Committee is currently exploring ways to diversify its funding structure. At present, it is mostly funded by the Casey Family Programs. A new pilot was recently established in Hancock County. There have been efforts to create pilots in Hinds and DeSoto Counties as well.

Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) Committee

The Administrative Office of Courts invited the Commission to serve on the Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) Committee, a grant-funded collaborative that will examine and suggest ways to improve the state's adult guardianship system. The Committee met twice in 2015, on September 18 and December 11. Tiffany Graves is a member of the Documentation Subcommittee of the Committee. Commission Co-Chair, Judge Denise Owens, is a member of the Committee as well.

Commission on Children's Justice

The Mississippi Supreme Court appointed Tiffany Graves to serve on the re-established Commission on Children's Justice (CCJ). The CCJ is charged with developing a statewide comprehensive approach to improving the child welfare system; coordinating the three branches of government in assessing the impact of government actions on children who are abused or neglected; and recommending changes to improve children's safety, to strengthen and support families, and to promote public trust and confidence in the child welfare system.

GOALS FOR 2016

In addition to continuing many of the efforts described in the preceding pages, the Commission will focus substantial time on the following objectives in 2016 to further increase access to civil justice:

Explore Ways to Better Support Self-Represented Litigants

According to the Self-Represented Litigant Network, nationally, an estimated 3 out of 5 people in civil cases go to court without a lawyer. The Commission believes that statistic also holds true in Mississippi. Recognizing that a growing number of individuals are forced to represent themselves in civil proceedings and acknowledging its directive to reduce barriers to the justice system, the Commission's Delivery System Committee will actively explore ways to provide critically-needed services and supports to *pro se* litigants in 2016. The Committee has already discussed reaching out to chancery judges and clerks to ascertain the issues faced by Mississippi's self-represented. Meetings with chancery judges and court staffs will begin in the first quarter of 2016. The Committee will also borrow from other states that have successfully developed training and educational programs and implemented court policies and procedures that provide guidance to court staffs about what they can and cannot do to assist self-represented litigants. The Commission will continue to work with the AOC to collect data on *pro se* filings as a way to potentially target pilot sites for "self-help centers" similar to what is being offered in states like California and Texas.

Expand Network of Healthcare and Faith Partners

The Medical-Legal Partnership Subcommittee will host a Medical-Legal Partnership Summit at the University of Mississippi Medical Center Conference Room on May 4. The purpose of the Summit will be to bring together medical and legal professionals to begin discussing how the two might collaborate to better address the issues faced by low-income Mississippians. The Subcommittee is sending a survey in early January to medical associations to solicit ideas for topics and encourage attendance at the summit.

The Faith-Based Initiative Subcommittee met twice in 2015, including a meeting at the Carroll Gartin Justice Center in December that brought together twelve clergy and seven legal service providers. The Subcommittee intends to meet quarterly and its clergy members are already considering ways to bring access to justice initiatives to their congregations. There are currently only two faith-based initiatives in Mississippi—Mission First Legal Aid and the "Lawyers in the Parish Hall" legal advice clinic at All Saint's Episcopal Church in Tupelo.

Develop Innovative Projects to Reach Low-Income Individuals Where They Are

The Commission recognizes the challenges that residents of rural communities face with accessing in-person legal assistance and services. As such, it is exploring several initiatives that will bring services to communities through technology that can be accessed through computers and smartphones and local libraries. These projects are in addition to Commission-sponsored

“Lawyers in the Library” events and legal clinics that also work to bring services to local communities with the assistance of county bar associations and community partners.

www.mslegalhelp.org — Mississippi’s Online Legal Help Resource

For the past year, the Commission has been working closely with the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project and the *Pro Bono* Initiative of the University of Mississippi School of Law to develop an online legal help resource similar to the Tennessee Access to Justice Commission’s OnlineTNJustice. The organizations expect the site to launch in early 2016. A “soft launch” of the site will likely occur in February. Assuming its success, the site will go live soon thereafter. The site will offer a way for members of the public who qualify for legal services to ask questions—on any legal topic—and receive responses from attorneys who can participate anonymously. The Commission will assist with announcing the site to the public and recruiting *pro bono* attorneys to respond to questions. The site has the potential to bring in government attorneys, corporate counsel and inactive attorneys who volunteer through Mississippi Rule of Appellate Practice 46(f), thereby expanding the state’s network of *pro bono* attorneys.

Expunge Mississippi App

The Commission is working with Expunge US to develop a web application that will help people to determine whether they have a criminal charge that can be expunged in Mississippi and connect them with legal organizations, clinic opportunities and lawyers who can handle their expungement matters. The anticipated launch of the application is February 2016. The developers are designing the application *at no cost* to the Commission and its partner organization, the Magnolia Bar Association.

Commemorate the Ten-Year Anniversary of the Commission

The Commission will celebrate ten years in June 2016. Preparations are being made to formally recognize the anniversary and to spotlight the Commission’s accomplishments and plans for the future. The Commission expects to invite a national speaker to keynote an afternoon summit-type event on August 28. The event will be free, include continuing legal education credits for attorneys, and conclude with a formal reception.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission wishes to acknowledge the generous support it receives from the Mississippi Supreme Court, The Mississippi Bar and the Mississippi Bar Foundation.

The Commission would like to commend the attorneys who give selfishly of their time and talents to help individuals who lack the resources to afford legal representation. Special appreciation is also extended to the judiciary for supporting the work of the Commission and providing information and insight to help improve the state's civil legal services delivery system.

The Commission wishes to recognize the support it receives from the state's two law schools—Mississippi College School of Law and the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Finally, the Commission would like to acknowledge the tireless work of the state's nonprofit legal services providers. They provide access to civil justice every day to Mississippi's most vulnerable and they do it with scarce resources, limited staffing and ever-diminishing capacity. The service providers help assure that the work of the Commission is timely, relevant and impactful.

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