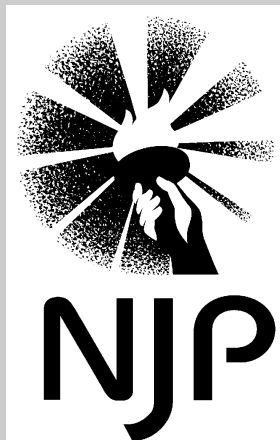


# Northwest Justice Project

## Advocacy Report Fourth Quarter, 2006



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2006 FOURTH QUARTER ADVOCACY REPORT  
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## INTRODUCTION

The latter part of 2006 was a period of transition for the Northwest Justice Project. A new executive director took the helm and expectations for increased funding for civil legal aid in the upcoming legislative session were high. Statewide, NJP staff participated in regional planning teams that were examining service needs and identifying gaps in existing legal aid services in local communities. NJP also undertook new service delivery initiatives to expand services in rural areas of the state, including matters arising in tribal courts.

As NJP moves forward, its focus will remain on the mission of providing high quality civil legal services to those in Washington who have compelling legal needs and for whom the assistance of a qualified lawyer makes a difference in their daily lives. During the last quarter of 2006, NJP's CLEAR hotline system provided advice, brief or limited services, referrals or other information to 4,677 low income persons with serious legal needs such as the two below:

- A 74 year-old non-English proficient man who received paperwork from the state claiming he was the father of a child and assessing child support. The elderly man and his frail wife had been married for over 50 years. He had no knowledge of the young mother of the child at issue and he was worried that his wife would learn of the case and suffer further debilitation. A CLEAR advocate provided the Prosecuting Attorney's office with documentation of the client's identity, including his age and his picture. The Prosecuting Attorney agreed that there was a mistaken identity and dismissed the paternity case. Without NJP's help, the man faced entry of a court order that he fathered a child and held him responsible for paying child support, exposing him and his wife to debt and serious impairment of their relationship and health.
- A woman whose personal property had been improperly seized and disposed of by her landlord because the apartment building managers mistakenly thought that she had moved out when in fact she was on a short vacation. Upon her return home, the client found that all of her property had been thrown away. CLEAR helped the client get compensation for the value of the property. Without NJP's help, the client would have lost all her household items and have no means of replacing the lost property.

While these cases may appear to have relatively simple solutions, the consequences of no legal intervention would be extreme. In other matters, NJP attorneys throughout the state continued to address the critical legal needs of clients by providing more intensive legal help to low income persons engaged in litigation or other complex procedures. Of course, it still remains true that for every person NJP is able to help, many more go without the level of service they need to meaningfully access justice. Once again, this report illustrates in stark terms the important role legal aid plays in preserving the health and safety of individuals and families in our communities.

## **OVERVIEW OF GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Bellingham (Whatcom, Island, Skagit, San Juan Counties)**

- NJP's Bellingham office has 4 attorneys, 1 paralegal and 2 legal assistants. During this quarter, the Bellingham office played a key role in the assessment phase of civil legal aid regional planning for its four-county region. Staff also worked with regional and community partners to plan for individual representation and system improvements in Whatcom, Skagit and Island Counties for domestic violence victims.

### **CLEAR and NJP Web Site**

- In the fourth quarter of 2006 CLEAR answered 6,641 calls, resulting in 4,677 new cases or clients. During this quarter, the Washington LawHelp web site experienced over 104,000 visitor sessions and 443,000 page views. Also during this quarter, NJP launched the CLEAR DV Project adding bilingual capacity, to provide direct legal assistance to domestic violence survivors and indirect assistance through support and consultation provided to domestic violence advocates statewide.

### **Contract Attorney Program**

- NJP's Contract Attorney Program (CAP) consists of two part-time attorneys who receive client referrals from CLEAR and other Alliance for Equal Justice members for clients with issues in eleven counties (Asotin, Benton, Clallam, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Walla Walla, and Whitman). CAP staff assess the case and, if appropriate, refer it to one of its contract private attorneys (in any one year, CAP uses 30 to 40 attorneys who practice in those counties). CAP staff continue to assist, as needed, providing ongoing consultation and assistance. The case-type priorities of CAP include but are not limited to public benefits, consumer law, housing and family law. During this quarter, the CAP staff and its contract attorneys provided advice, brief service and/or representation in approximately 100 cases.

### **Everett (Snohomish, Island Counties)**

- During the fourth quarter of 2006, the expanded staffing in NJP's Everett office allowed it to move into the area of consumer law. The office continues to represent elderly and disabled residents of a manufactured home park slated for closure and to serve clients with a range of civil legal problems in the areas of family law, health care law, housing, and public benefits. The Indian Estate Planning Project continued under a grant from the Indian Land Tenure Foundation to do estate planning for Native Americans. A total of seven tribes from around the state have had these services available to them. In this quarter, outreach was also expanded to the Makah Indian Reservation.

### **Farm Worker Unit**

- NJP's Farm Worker Unit consists of 3 attorneys and a community worker based in Yakima and an attorney based in Wenatchee. The Unit continued to conduct outreach in

major agricultural regions throughout the State and continued assisting an empowered group of farm worker women addressing domestic violence issues in their community.

### **Native American Unit**

- NJP's Native American Unit (NAU) serves Native American communities statewide in matters primarily involving tribal law and federal Indian law. The NAU conducts outreach, provides community legal education, and assists other legal services providers working with Indian clients. The NAU currently has one staff attorney in Spokane and one in Seattle, whose targeted work is supplemented by three advocates in the Indian Estate Planning Project. A Native American Advocacy Coordinator located in Seattle leads the NAU outreach, regional planning, and capacity building efforts.

### **Olympia (Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor, Pacific Counties)**

- The Olympia NJP office is responsible for a five county region including Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties. The office is staffed by 4 attorneys and two part-time legal assistants. The fourth attorney, who joined the office in December 2006, speaks Spanish, allowing the office to provide greater access to legal services for Spanish speaking clients. During this quarter, the office served clients with family law, housing, health care, public benefits and consumer problems. The office also provides targeted representation to seniors.

### **Seattle (King County)**

- NJP's Seattle based King County office consists of 11 attorneys and 3.5 legal assistants and several other support staff. The office hosts special programs targeted to underrepresented populations: (1) The Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project, operated in conjunction with the University of Washington School of Law, assists immigrants and refugees in the areas of public benefits and naturalization; (2) The Cross Cultural Family Law Clinic, a collaboration with the King County Bar Association through which volunteer attorneys assist domestic violence victims who have emergent family law matters and who are unable to access traditional legal resources due to language, culture, or other barriers; and (3) The Domestic Violence Community Legal Project, a collaborative project with Consejo Counseling and Referral Services and the Refugee Women's Alliance, which provides legal assistance to domestic violence victims served by those agencies. The *King County* office has lead local regional planning pursuant to the revised *State Plan*.

### **Spokane (Spokane, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Lincoln, Ferry Counties)**

- NJP's Spokane office emphasizes work on family law issues, housing, consumer issues, public benefits and Native American law. The office is staffed with 5 attorneys and three support staff and houses NJP's eastern Washington Native American Unit attorney.

### **Tacoma (Pierce, Kitsap Counties)**

- NJP's Tacoma office is staffed by eight attorneys, two paralegals, and three legal assistants and represents Pierce and Kitsap County clients in public benefits, family, housing, consumer, education and youth law, elder law and disability and civil rights cases including assistance to a wide range of community groups. The office is co-located with Volunteer Legal Services and TeamChild. NJP's Kitsap satellite office is staffed three days each week and is co-located with Kitsap Legal Services in Bremerton. The office is planning a training for community service providers on NJP's services in Kitsap County and is actively involved in regional planning for the region. NJP's Tacoma office also provides legal services to indigent Western State Hospital (WSH) residents through a DSHS (Health and Rehabilitative Services Administration, Mental Health Division) contract and advocates meet clients at WSH two days each week. Under a contract with the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, NJP Tacoma has spearheaded a statewide project that provides legal services to developmentally disabled persons in the DSHS Community Protection Program.

#### **Vancouver (Clark, Klickitat, Skamania, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum Counties)**

- During this quarter, the NJP Vancouver office's five attorneys, and two legal assistants continued their focus on serving clients with economic security, health care, housing, homeownership matters, custody and visitation matters involving serious allegations of domestic violence or other risk to the children, and serving senior citizens and youth.

#### **Walla Walla (Benton/Franklin, Walla Walla)**

- During this quarter, NJP's Walla Walla office, with a satellite office in Pasco, was staffed by three attorneys and one legal assistant. The Walla Walla office focuses on areas of family law, housing, public benefits and consumer needs.

#### **Wenatchee (Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Okanogan Counties)**

- NJP's Wenatchee office is staffed by five attorneys and three legal assistants and includes a staffed satellite office in Omak serving clients on a full range of legal needs in Okanogan County. The office also functions as the North Central Washington component of NJP's Farm Worker Unit. Case service priorities include non-payment of wages, health and safety violations, employment discrimination, access to health care benefits and income assistance, subsidized housing, utility shut-offs, predatory lending, home foreclosure, education access, and family law.

#### **Yakima (Yakima, Kittitas Counties)**

- NJP's Yakima office work continues to be focused on the areas of domestic violence, economic security and housing. The basic field staff consists of four attorneys and a Jesuit Volunteer, who assists in interviewing, research and case development for clients with economic security and domestic violence problems.

## **CASE EXAMPLES AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADVOCACY EFFORTS**

### **NJP FIELD OFFICE SERVICES\***

#### **Consumer**

- NJP's Seattle office represented an elderly woman whose SSI was garnished from her bank account by a collection agency. The woman did not understand the garnishment papers and only realized her SSI was garnished when one of her checks bounced. After NJP contacted the collection agency, requesting that they cease any further garnishment because the woman's only income is exempt, all her SSI income was restored.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a man with disabilities whose only income was SSI. The man was subletting his apartment to a friend. The sub-tenant had his payee, a mental health agency, issue a check to the client for rent. After the client asked the sub-tenant to leave, the sub-tenant asked the client to reimburse his last rent check so he could have money to find a new place. The client cashed the check and then gave the sub-tenant the money. The client later learned that a stop payment was placed on the check. Apparently, the sub-tenant had lied to his payee, telling them that the check was stolen and the payee placed a stop payment on the check. NJP contacted the payee and the mental health agency agreed to reissue a check to cover the client's costs.
- NJP's Vancouver office negotiated a dismissal of a debt collection case worth approximately \$6,000 for a domestic violence victim. The debt collector had violated consumer protection laws by seeking to collect a spousal debt created without the client's knowledge, after separation, and with no benefit to the client.
- After NJP's Wenatchee office discovered that no free tax preparation site was planned for anywhere in Okanogan County, it commenced recruiting volunteers, convincing Wenatchee Valley College to provide computers in a confidential space, and recruiting trainers to travel from Walla Walla, Idaho, and Wenatchee to Omak to train the volunteers. The site opened February 3, 2007, providing bilingual services and e-filing. NJP partnered with Community Action Council to do education about split refunds, Earned Income Tax Credit, Individual Development Accounts, and to warn taxpayers about the consequences of refund anticipation loans.
- NJP's Wenatchee office is assisting a retired farm worker couple who were served with a summons and complaint from a creditor alleging they owed about \$5,000. The clients deny knowing anything about the debt. NJP answered the summons and complaint, and is investigating the alleged debt.

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\* For case examples from NJP's Native American Unit and Farm Worker Unit see pages 22-23 and 23-24 respectively. For case examples from the Contract Attorney Program and CLEAR see pages 24-25 and 25-29 respectively.

### **Economic Stability (Employment)**

- NJP's Bellingham office represented an agricultural worker who received a notice of eviction from employer-provided housing. The client had come to Washington from Texas to work in the cucumber harvest. After his employer fired him several weeks into the harvest the client reported questionable living conditions in the labor camp, including a lack of hot water. The Department of Health inspected the camp and found that the client's complaints were valid. The client then received an eviction notice requiring him to vacate within 24 hours. NJP successfully negotiated an agreement with the landlord/employer for a reasonable amount of time to complete the client's arrangements, and the client and his family were able to move out without further problems.

### **Economic Stability (Public Benefits)**

- NJP's Everett office represented a disabled client terminated from General Assistance for Unemployable persons based upon a lack of medical evidence to establish her continued incapacity. The evaluation was performed not by her treating mental health provider but by a psychologist who was unable to interpret her condition with one brief assessment. Ultimately, DSHS authorized a far more detailed evaluation, which documented the client's continued incapacity, and her benefits were preserved.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Mason County mother of two teenagers to leave her marriage after years of serious abuse. During the divorce proceedings, the husband continued to harass and control his wife, including telling DSHS that the children were living with him. Based on his allegations, DSHS established a \$3,600 benefits overpayment against the client. NJP requested a hearing and provided evidence of the children's residence over the two-year time period. DSHS then entered into a negotiated agreement to substantially reduce the overpayment to \$140.
- NJP's Seattle office assisted a client whose TANF and Basic Food benefits were substantially reduced for several months as a "sanction" for non-compliance with work requirements. The client's husband, who suffered from a history of back problems, re-injured his back and was unable to participate in WorkFirst requirements. The case worker placed the family on sanction because the husband did not seek treatment. However, the family did not have transportation, and the husband was unable to use public transportation to obtain the treatment needed. NJP intervened and helped the client establish an appropriate plan to meet the WorkFirst requirements. DSHS agreed to lift the sanction, and provided the client with retroactive benefits for all the prior months that the family had received reduced benefits.
- NJP's Seattle office assisted a disabled mother of one child and her nephew. The family had been in WorkFirst "sanction" status and her benefits were reduced for the past year and a half. She was not able to comply with WorkFirst requirements because of her multiple health problems and had been unable to get her doctor to sign a particular DSHS required form even though he had been willing to speak with DSHS about the mother's limitations. Because DSHS failed to properly screen for, and accommodate, the mother's disabilities, NJP was able to negotiate a settlement in which DSHS agreed to lift her



sanction retroactively and reinstate her full benefits providing the family with over \$2,500 in financial help and \$3,000 in food stamps. NJP also helped in applying for emergency funding through DSHS which prevented a threatened utility shut-off and eviction from federally subsidized housing.

- NJP's Vancouver office helped a Clark County senior who is a recent refugee from Ukraine to obtain a year's retroactive General Assistance (GA) benefits. When the client's time-limited Refugee Assistance expired, she applied for GA. DSHS denied her twice even though the physical examiner selected by DSHS clearly stated both times that her multiple medical problems limited her to at most "sedentary" work, in which she had no experience. DSHS acknowledged its error and awarded full retroactive benefits.
- NJP's Vancouver office helped a cancer survivor maintain his General Assistance benefits. Although the client's cancer was in remission, he was experiencing other medical problems including anemia, kidney failure, peptic ulcers, fatigue, and pain from nerve damage. NJP helped the client provide medical documentation which ultimately led to the client's re-approval for benefits.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a young man with a history of extensive cognitive impairment, anxiety disorder, severe depression, and personality disorder, in a Social Security overpayment case. After reviewing years of financial and medical records, and conducting intensive legal research, NJP represented him at a personal conference before the SSA hearing examiner. A few weeks later SSA notified the client that his \$16,446 overpayment was completely withdrawn.

### **Education**

- NJP's Seattle office represents the parent of a student with a disability whose school has not been providing sign language instruction as promised to the parent and as mandated in the Individualized Education Program ("IEP"). After the parent filed a complaint, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction required the District to conduct a comprehensive education evaluation. The student returned to school after several months at home with sign language assisted instruction.
- NJP's Seattle office represents a parent of a student with a disability who was inappropriately placed on home instruction during which time the student was barely receiving any educational services at all. The home instruction followed several unsuccessful placements in other settings. The IEP team is working on securing an appropriate private placement for the student, where the student can get "wraparound" services needed for him to be successful in school. The parent and student will also be seeking compensatory education for the time he was on home "instruction."

### **Family Stability, Safety & Security**

- NJP's Bellingham office represents the young mother of a 21-month old child, who was referred for legal help by the local domestic violence agency after her husband severely beat her in the presence of the client's young son, breaking a rib and three facial bones and causing permanent nerve damage in her face. When the client petitioned for an Order of Protection the husband requested mutual protection orders, claiming that he had acted in self-defense. The court denied the husband's request and entered a one-year protection order for the client that restricted the husband's visitation with his son pending the entry of temporary orders in the dissolution case she also filed. NJP obtained temporary orders that name the client as the primary residential parent and limit the husband's visitation to two short periods each week under professional supervision and give the client the use of the family home, child support and spousal maintenance. NJP has since filed a Notice of Intended Relocation of Children to allow the client to take her son to her family home in Ireland, and the dissolution case is proceeding forward.
- NJP's Bellingham office represents a single mother who sought help from NJP after the father of her four-year-old daughter went to the client's home and removed the child without notice or any court authorization. Parentage had not been formally established and the mother provided all of the child's care since birth. The father kept the girl for over three weeks without revealing where he and the child were located or allowing the child any contact with the mother. Eventually, the father's acquaintances relayed the message that the sheriff's department was looking for him. The father then quietly dropped the child off at the mother's home. NJP has filed a parentage action to resolve the custody and visitation issues, but the father so far continues to avoid service.
- NJP's Everett office represented a mother who was in danger of losing custody of her 11 year old child. The father had been absent from the child's life for 9 years, and had only recently returned. The father made numerous allegations against the mother in an attempt to obtain custody. The mother had suffered some setbacks in her life after she was the victim of a kidnapping. At the time NJP became involved, the court was inclined to change custody from the mother to the father due to the father's allegations, and the GAL's recommendations. NJP was able to show that the father's allegations were unwarranted. As a result, the father decided that he would no longer pursue custody and agreed that the child should remain with the mother.
- NJP's Everett office represented a client who was a victim of rape by her husband. NJP assisted the client in obtaining an Order for Protection and temporary dissolution orders. The client had not worked outside the home for 10 years and relied solely on her husband for financial support. The husband had stopped providing financial support for approximately 3 months, which put the client at risk of being evicted from her home. The court awarded spousal maintenance, in addition to child support. The temporary parenting plan gave the client custody of the parties' child, with supervised visits for the husband. The husband was also ordered to obtain drug and alcohol treatment.
- NJP's Everett office represents a domestic violence victim disabled by PTSD, whose abusive husband attempted to coerce her into signing an agreed parenting plan that would give him liberal visitation with the children in violation of her separate protection order. The husband also tried to obtain a dissolution order in Snohomish County Superior Court

giving him primary residential time with the children in contravention of an order in Island County restraining him from all contact. NJP successfully intervened and obtained temporary orders protecting the children from contact with the father. NJP then successfully represented the client at a two day trial. The trial court fully adopted the client's parenting plan and increased child support by \$214.

- NJP's Olympia office helped a mother of two children who finally decided to leave her husband and seek protection after he beat her so severely she had to be hospitalized. The client and her children had endured years of controlling and abusive behavior. Prior attempts to leave had been met with threats, and more abuse, including the father shooting guns over the children's heads. When the father was in jail for the most recent beating, the client sought help from the domestic violence shelter and contacted NJP. NJP helped her obtain a very restrictive parenting plan which was coordinated with the children's counseling. The plan requires the father to complete batterer's and mental health treatment. Before the divorce was finalized, NJP also defended the client in court after the husband got an anti-harassment order against her. The husband alleged that because their daughter's counseling was at the same agency as his the court should prohibit the mother from being at the counseling center. He alleged that he would get in trouble for violating his criminal no-contact order if they were at the agency at the same time. After a court commissioner granted the order to him, NJP moved for revision. The reviewing judge agreed that the husband did not meet the legal standard for harassment and vacated the order. In addition to granting final orders protecting the client and her children, the court ordered the husband to turn over the client's property still in his possession and to pay child support.
- NJP's Olympia office assisted a single mother regain custody of her children in an improperly filed third party custody dispute. The client and her two children are enrolled members of an American Indian tribe. The client had left the children temporarily with the grandmother of one of the children. When the client attempted to have the children returned to her, the grandmother refused. The police told the client they could not help unless she had a court order giving her custody. The client filed dissolution and paternity petitions in Grays Harbor County and sought temporary orders. While the court initially denied the temporary orders because the grandmother alleged that the client had abandoned her children and was unfit, the grandmother never filed a non-parental custody action as she had been ordered by the court. The children presently live with their mother pending a decision regarding final orders in the case.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a mother who had obtained a permanent parenting plan for her two daughters in 2003, with restrictions against the father due to domestic violence. In the fall of 2006, without notice to the mother, the father filed a petition for modification and ex parte restraining order based on false allegations, obtaining temporary emergency custody of the children. The woman was unrepresented at the return hearing and lost temporary custody. NJP represented the client in filing a revision of both hearings. The reviewing court reversed the temporary orders and dismissed the father's petition for lack of adequate cause, thereby returning the children to the mother.

- NJP's Seattle office represented a Chinese immigrant who was a victim of domestic violence by her husband. After a criminal assault charge and issuance of a No Contact order, the husband moved back into the home threatening the woman if she asserted her rights. NJP represented the woman in filing a dissolution and obtaining a restraining order directing the husband to vacate the family home.
- NJP's Seattle-based Domestic Violence Community Legal Project (DVCLP) represented a Vietnamese immigrant woman in an action to establish a residential schedule for her six-year-old daughter. The client had previously been granted a domestic violence protection order against the father of her child prohibiting all contact between the father and the client or the child. Shortly after the expiration of the protection order, the client agreed, without benefit of counsel, to participate in a settlement conference in the paternity case initiated by the state. Although the client raised the issue of the protection order and the history of domestic violence by the father, the client felt pressured by the mediator and the father to sign a parenting plan which did not reflect the father's history of domestic violence and gave him unrestricted visits with the child. The father was allowed to have overnight visits with the child after one year of no contact whatsoever. NJP filed a motion to vacate the agreed order. The motion was denied by a pro tem family law commissioner and NJP successfully sought revisions by the Superior Court Judge. A temporary order was entered which allows limited contact between the father and child while protecting the safety of the mother.
- NJP's Seattle-based DVCLP successfully represented an immigrant woman in an Order for Protection action. The client was married and had two children with her controlling and abusive husband, who had made her a prisoner within her own home, including nailing the drapes shut so that she could not see outside. The client somehow managed to leave the home and obtained an Order for Protection. Her husband, represented by an attorney, then sought to get the Order terminated without giving notice to the client. Upon failing, he filed a motion for revision for which NJP first appeared for the client. The husband then hired a second attorney who filed a second motion for revision and several additional motions alleging new evidence and issues outside of the scope of the Protection Order action. NJP successfully defended against all the motions and the client and her children were granted a Protection Order that limited the husband's contact with the children pending compliance with treatment requirements.
- NJP's Tacoma office is assisting a monolingual Spanish-speaking victim of domestic violence living in Kitsap County to obtain a divorce from her abusive husband. The couple's four-year-old child has special medical needs, which require a feeding tube in her stomach. Though the father does not know how to care for the child, he sought extended visitation. NJP helped the client to limit the father's visitation and obtain child support and temporary maintenance.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a Native-American mother of two young children who was trying to obtain an order allowing her visitation with her children. The client had prior substance abuse issues, but in the last three years she had successfully completed an intensive recovery program, regularly attended AA meetings and had maintained her sobriety. She had attempted to see her children, but the father refused her any contact

with them. NJP filed a notice of appearance and a motion for visitation. After three additional hearings, the client was granted liberal visitation with her children.

- NJP's Vancouver office helped a Skamania County mother retrieve her child from the father who had improperly obtained a court order without prior notice to her allowing him to remove the child to a far away state in the middle of the school year on the basis of vague and misleading allegations. NJP represented the client at the return hearing which resulted in the father being ordered to immediately return the child to the client.
- NJP's Vancouver office helped a nine-months' pregnant monolingual Russian-speaking woman defeat an inappropriate domestic violence protection order brought by her boyfriend to remove her from their home after he sexually assaulted her. After the boyfriend's Protection Order was dismissed, NJP helped the client to obtain an order which awarded her temporary possession of the disputed home. The boyfriend then paid the client the value of her investment in the home, allowing her to find housing elsewhere where she felt safe.
- NJP's Vancouver office filed a modification of a parenting plan on behalf of a mother who had been denied contact with her two children for over five months. The father recently plead to a charge of abusing one of the children and then moved the children to another county without providing a forwarding address, a forwarding phone number, or filing the required request for relocation. The court found adequate cause to proceed on the modification after a hearing and also reestablished visitation for the mother through a temporary parenting plan. The case was sent to Family Court Services for a recommendation and is scheduled to be reviewed after the report is completed.
- NJP's Wenatchee office represented a woman with disabilities who at the age of fourteen and pregnant had run away from home with her abuser. Fifteen years later, after extreme physical and sexual abuse, the client finally fled the relationship with the parties' four children. The father had been stalking the client in a small town, yelling obscenities at her in public and encouraging their 13 year-old daughter to do the same. NJP helped the client obtain temporary orders providing appropriate visitation restrictions and safety protections.
- NJP's Wenatchee office represents a victim of severe domestic violence in a custody action. In egregious and protracted violation of a court order, the father had prevented the client from seeing her child for a period of four years. The case was complicated by the severity of the domestic violence: the client was forced to go "underground" to protect herself from the father, including entering into a state-sponsored protection program through which the client was given a new identity. NJP brought a motion for contempt. The father engaged in very deliberate and highly sophisticated attempts to evade service of the contempt motion, including disguising himself as another person. NJP eventually obtained a bench warrant for his arrest. Before he could be arrested, however, he swiftly moved out of the area, taking the child with him and leaving no forwarding address. After two weeks, NJP was able to locate the child. Once the child was located, NJP arranged for the father to be arrested. NJP then obtained temporary orders giving the client custody of the child, and imposing very tight restrictions on the father's access to the child.

- NJP's Wenatchee office successfully defended a client against a motion for summary judgment in a disputed parenting plan. The father physically, sexually and emotionally abused the client over a number of years, not allowing her to be away from the house except to work, and following her to and from work. After he held a gun to her head and threatened to kill her, the client fled. After temporary orders were entered to protect the client the father tried to have the custody action dismissed, alleging that his marriage to the client was not valid because she was married to another man. The court denied the motion, and the matter was set for trial.
- NJP's Wenatchee office advised a Native American Veteran of the Iraq war about child custody. The client's wife had commenced a custody action in tribal court seeking to deny him access to his children. The wife obtained a protection order but then continued to appear at the client's place of work, and continued to enter his home. She also entered his home repeatedly when he was not there and rifled through his belongings, taking Christmas presents the client was saving for when he would see his children. The mother also refused to take the children to the extremely culturally important funeral of their paternal great-great-grandmother.
- The NJP Yakima office represented the paternal aunt and uncle of a young boy in a third party non-parental custody case. The child's parents were unfit to care for the child because they both abused drugs, had a history of domestic violence and drug trafficking, and allowed drug abusers and a sex offender to live in their home while the child was there. The family court investigator recommended the mother's visitations be suspended and the court adopted her recommendations. The child's therapist later recommended visitations with the father be suspended because the father's failure to exercise visitation was having a negative effect on the child. The child eventually was allowed to relocate to another county with his aunt and uncle after his uncle had secured a job in the other county. Final orders were entered barring further visitations by either parent until the parents complied with a number of requirements including obtaining current drug and alcohol assessments and following up with any treatment recommendations. A number of visitation restrictions were also imposed.
- The NJP Yakima office represented a mother of seven who was terrified of her husband in a dissolution action. The client had been physically and emotionally abused in the presence of her children throughout her 11-year marriage. His beatings during their marriage caused two miscarriages and one rape resulted in the conception of her twins. Although her husband appeared at the temporary orders hearing, he never filed a response. The client obtained all the relief she requested including no visitation until her husband complied with a number of requirements and thereafter very limited visitation.
- The NJP Yakima office represented the father of a toddler in a paternity case. The child's mother lost physical custody of the child when she was cited for drunk driving while the child was in the vehicle. The father obtained legal temporary custody and the mother was allowed supervised visitation. The father requested that the mother's visitations be reduced due to, among other things, inappropriate supervision of the child. Visitations were reduced to once a week. The mother failed to exercise several visitations and after a

few months, final orders were entered by default. The final parenting plan provided for no further visits until the mother complied with a number of requirements including taking a drug and alcohol assessment and following up with any treatment recommendations.

- NJP's Yakima office reached a settlement agreement in a case involving a very unfair final dissolution and custody arrangement involving a young monolingual Spanish-speaking woman who was the victim of domestic violence. After being threatened by her husband, the woman had signed a joinder agreement that relinquished all property and limited her access to her children. After filing motions to vacate the final judgment, the parties reached a much more equitable settlement.

### **Healthcare, Access and Quality of Care**

- NJP's Everett office represents a senior whose cash, medical, and food assistance have been disrupted repeatedly since mid-2006 due to computer difficulties at SSA. Each change at Social Security causes automatic changes to DSHS benefits as well. NJP helped the client appeal terminations and reductions by the DSHS and SSA and arranged for urgent payments when the computer problems left her without income. The client's change in status also changed her medication coverage from Medicaid to Medicare Part D, causing disruption in her medication supply. NJP assisted her in getting access to medications through this new system. Finally, NJP advocated for the client to obtain long-term care services through Medicaid. This program now serves her need for personal care services, provides a case manager, and will allow her to keep her Medicaid benefits during the months she does not receive SSI payments.
- NJP's Everett office represented a senior denied Medicaid coverage for replacement dentures because Medicaid had paid for dentures previously. Medicaid in general limits replacements to one set in 10 years under a state budget cut made several years ago. NJP collected documentation and submitted it to DSHS, showing: the client's dentist's opinion that the dentures were substandard in construction; the denture maker had made several unsuccessful attempts to adjust them; the dentist's opinion that the dentures could not be repaired or made suitable for the client; and the client's physician's statement that faulty dentures caused medical problems, including sores and pain requiring medications. DSHS' dental consultant ultimately agreed to authorize new dentures.
- NJP's Olympia office was lead counsel in a Washington State Supreme Court case challenging the "shared living rule," a regulation that requires that the amount of personal care persons with serious disabilities receive be cut by 15% when they live in the same home as their caregiver. The rule applies to over 10,000 elderly and disabled Washingtonians who receive personal care services to help with things like dressing, bathing and cooking. The state cuts hours even when a client's needs are not met by his or her shared living situation. The Supreme Court found the rule violates federal Medicaid law.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a young woman in her appeal of DSHS's proposed reduction of her in-home personal care services. Extremely disabled by cerebral palsy

and mental retardation, she had been able to remain living at home and in the community as a result of the long-term care services and could not afford to have them reduced. In preparation for the administrative hearing, NJP secured medical evidence that supported her position and DSHS agreed to fully restore her long-term care services.

- NJP's Seattle office assisted an elderly LEP client with disabilities who was denied Medicaid coverage for dental procedures and prosthetics. The client had her tongue, parts of her mouth and jaw removed as a result of oral cancer. The cancer treatment also resulted in the removal of all of her teeth. The client was unable to wear dentures without the necessary dental procedures and prosthetics. Without dentures or teeth, the client was unable to eat semi-solid food, and was forced to sustain herself with liquid nutrition. With parts of her mouth missing, the client had to tilt her head back in order to orally retain and swallow liquids. The client waited over a year for her fair hearing. NJP intervened, obtained the necessary information from the client's medical providers, and submitted an "Exception to Rule" request. Based on the information, DSHS immediately granted Medicaid coverage for the needed health care services.
- NJP's Wenatchee office is assisting a client with disabilities and a debilitating back injury that is compounded by Parkinsons Disease. The client will not be eligible for Social Security disability insurance until he has been disabled for 24 months. He requires ongoing medical attention to retain some mobility. His wife recently broke her leg in two places. NJP has helped the couple obtain medical insurance through Basic Health, and is advising the client about charity care laws, and what to do when he qualifies for Social Security disability insurance.
- NJP's Yakima office represented a woman in a dispute with DSHS regarding payment for dentures. As a result of a serious head injury, a metal plate was inserted in her skull. When she later developed an infection in her gums and jaw bone her treating doctor recommended that she have all of her teeth removed to prevent the infections from spreading to the area of her head injury and the metal plate. The Department paid for the teeth extractions but then refused to pay for dentures. NJP requested a hearing and obtained medical evidence which proved that the dentures were medically necessary. Prior to hearing, the Department authorized the requested dentures.

### **Individual Rights**

- NJP's Olympia office represented a Thurston County senior who received court papers ordering her to show cause why she had not paid a judgment against her in the amount of \$25,460. The woman knew nothing about this judgment, although she recognized the creditors as her neighbors. Upon investigation, it became evident that her ex-husband had borrowed money from the neighbors "to invest" in some Alaska venture and then had lost it all gambling. The neighbors believed the client and her ex-husband were still married, and so she was named in the lawsuit. The ex-husband did not tell the client about the case and did not respond to the court papers, resulting in a default judgment against them both. NJP filed a motion to vacate the judgment against the client and dismiss the action as to her. NJP also contacted the ex-husband, who signed a declaration fully confessing his actions and promising to repay the debt. Given the declarations of the client and ex-



husband, a copy of the order of legal separation, and the recitation of law supporting the motion the creditors signed a joint order to vacate the judgment against NJP's client and dismiss the action against her with prejudice.

- NJP's Wenatchee office helped a client with disabilities enforce a judgment the client, pro-se, obtained in Small Claims Court of approximately \$500. At the same time, NJP assisted this client in a landlord-tenant matter that arose from the client having been forced to vacate an uninhabitable mobile home pursuant to a condemnation by the county.

### **Preservation of Housing & Habitability Issues**

- NJP's Bellingham office represented a single mother of two young children after her local housing authority threatened to terminate her federal rent subsidy. The client was a recent victim of domestic violence and had filed a petition for a protection order against her ex-partner, who had not been living with her. The day after she served him with the temporary protection order, his family made unfounded complaints against her with Child Protective Services and the housing authority. CPS promptly conducted a home visit and declined to pursue the allegations any further. The ex-partner's mother also faxed the housing authority a letter falsely claiming that the ex-partner had lived with the client and provided her with money, which would have violated reporting requirements. The housing authority sent the client a notice terminating her rent assistance subsidy based on those allegations, without inquiring into their substance. The client appealed and NJP sent a letter explaining the client's history of domestic violence, that she had obtained a domestic violence protection order, and that her ex-partner's family was apparently retaliating against her. The housing authority then rescinded the client's termination notice and reinstated her assistance. After a hearing on the temporary order, the court awarded the client a one-year protection order.
- NJP's Everett office represented a federal rent assistance tenant with young children whose child support had been reduced by 90% and the housing authority failed to timely reduce her portion of the rent accordingly. The client faced eviction because she accidentally failed to respond to the summons and complaint filed by the landlord. NJP successfully prevented the eviction and negotiated a back rent payment plan that excluded late fees, attorney fees, and court costs. NJP also convinced the housing authority to reduce the client's portion of the rent to an amount she can afford.
- NJP's Everett office represented an elderly disabled woman plagued with numerous health problems who was in need of a live-in caregiver. The housing authority planned to reduce her two bedroom federal rental assistance housing voucher to one bedroom. Because of the client's disabilities, she had difficulty submitting a change of circumstances form to the housing authority. NJP prevented a reduction of the client's two bedroom rental assistance voucher and the housing authority reasonably accommodated the client by adding a family member to her household to serve as her live-in caregiver.

- NJP's Everett office represents 12 households in a manufactured home park that has been given a notice that their tenancy will be terminated and that they are to leave the park by May 1, 2007. The land is being converted to retail-sales use. Most of the park residents are seniors, and many have disabilities. NJP is negotiating with the park owner to obtain more time for the residents and for funds to help them relocate, given the dearth of manufactured home parks in Snohomish County.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Grays Harbor County man with disabilities when the trailer he rented was condemned. The client, however, had no place to go and no money to move. NJP worked with the County and the landlord using the Relocation Assistance laws to get the client one month rent-free, plus \$1,500 damages which allowed him to move to a new home. NJP also worked with Grays Harbor County to develop a process for tenants to request inspections of rental properties.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Thurston County family of five after their landlord served them with eviction papers demanding over \$3,400 in past due rent, late fees, attorney's fees, and costs. Although the husband worked full time, his monthly income of \$1,200 was not enough to cover these expenses. The clients' rental home had several serious defects, including holes in the floors and roof, no electricity in some of the rooms, no water in the kitchen, and raw sewage draining under the trailer and into the yard. After months of paying the \$650 rent on time and broken promises from the landlord to repair these defects, the clients had stopped paying rent. They were immediately served with eviction papers. The clients wanted to move, but they needed more time in part because their 2-year-old was having surgery in one week. They also needed the money they had been saving from not having to pay rent to move out. After NJP demonstrated that the condemnable condition of the trailer would entitle them to at least \$2,000 in damages if they had it inspected, the landlord agreed to dismiss the eviction, give the family extra time to move out, and forego any damages or fees for the three months' rent and eviction suit. The family found a new home and was able to get a rent subsidy so they can better afford their monthly rent payments.
- NJP's Olympia office helped preserve housing for a young woman with Huntington Chorea Disease. The client cannot read or write and can speak only with difficulty and must repeat simple phrases several times to be understood. She is completely reliant on caregivers for mobility and all her basic needs. The Grays Harbor Housing Authority notified her they were terminating her housing subsidy based on criminal activity during her former tenancy. The criminal activity consisted of the client's caregiver manufacturing and using methamphetamine. During this time, the caregiver and her boyfriend locked the client in her room for hours on end without any food or other basic necessities. They threatened the client that if she reported them, they would kill her. The Area Agency on Aging Senior Information and Assistance stepped in to find the client reliable caregivers and put her up in a hotel while she found new housing. Then the Housing Authority said they were terminating her assistance because of the eviction for criminal activity. NJP represented the client at an administrative hearing and presented evidence from the client and her current caregiver, as well as police and other records to prove that the client was a victim and not a perpetrator of the criminal activity. The

hearing officer agreed, and the Housing Authority not only continued her subsidy, but reserved a fully accessible unit for her.

- NJP's Seattle office represented a disabled tenant in public housing who faced eviction due to compulsive hoarding and cluttering behavior. After assisting the client in obtaining services needed to clean up his apartment, NJP negotiated a settlement agreement that enables the client to continue his tenancy, provided he maintains the unit in good condition. The settlement agreement provided for monthly inspections and, in the event of a violation, a right to cure the problem prior to further eviction proceedings. Nonetheless, the settlement negotiations almost failed due to the housing authority's insistence that the tenant agree that, in the event the housing authority determined him to be in violation of the agreement, he could be automatically evicted. The housing authority maintained that it required similar clauses in all public housing settlement agreements. NJP obtained a court order declaring such settlement provisions illegal, and the court has approved the settlement with the requirement that the tenant receive notice and have an opportunity for a hearing in the event the housing authority declares a violation. The housing authority has appealed the ruling, but has promised to abide by the court's decision in all public housing eviction cases for the time being.
- NJP's Seattle office represents a client whose two-year old dispute with a housing authority continues. In the most recent chapter, the housing authority (HA) failed to adjust the client's rent downward after her household decreased in number by one person, as the client and her spouse separated pending their divorce. The HA continued to charge an inappropriate amount and then tried to evict the client for nonpayment of rent. The HA's attorney obtained a default judgment in the unlawful detainer case after NJP had filed and served a Notice of Appearance. The HA's attorney vacated the default, dismissed the unlawful detainer case, refunded the client's rent money that had been overpaid, and wrote a letter to potential future landlords stating that the eviction case had been dismissed.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a mentally ill Kitsap County man who was being evicted from his public housing unit. The housing authority had terminated the man's lease without providing an informal conference or a grievance hearing, despite the client's requests. The housing authority filed an unlawful detainer (UD) action and NJP filed an answer setting out the housing authority's failures to follow state and federal law. Shortly after the Answer was filed, the housing authority's attorney notified NJP that the case was being voluntarily dismissed and the client's subsidized housing was preserved.
- NJP's Tacoma office successfully defended a federal housing assistance subsidy tenant in an unlawful detainer action based on a false allegation of unpaid rent. Although the tenant was current in rent, she had been served a three-day "pay or vacate" notice and a summons and complaint alleging that she owed \$647 in unpaid rent plus a \$75 late fee. The \$647 was not "rent," but was instead alleged attorney's fees and court costs from a previous unlawful detainer action between the parties. This previous action had been dismissed with prejudice without an award of costs or fees to either party. The landlord was then billed for his attorney's fees and court costs and attempted to collect these from the tenant in contravention of the court's order. The same lawyer again represented the

landlord in this second unlawful detainer action. NJP filed an Answer and Motion to Dismiss showing the mischaracterization of the alleged attorney's fees and costs as rent. This second unlawful detainer action was also dismissed with prejudice.

- NJP's Vancouver office assisted a mobile home park's tenants group in response to the manager's threat to remove a disabled client's home from the park by force without any court process. NJP sent the park owner a letter informing of the clients' rights and sent a copy to the Clark County Sheriff and the prosecutor's civil division. The park owner repudiated the threat and fired the manager. The clients report that the residents feel the park is much better now.
- NJP's Vancouver office prevented the unlawful eviction of a disabled Native American man from federally subsidized housing. The landlord sought to evict the client from his home of twenty years for breaches of the client's lease that stemmed solely from his mental disabilities. The landlord granted the client's request for reasonable accommodation, reinstated the client's tenancy, and the parties developed a protocol for involving the client's family should future problems arise.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a wheelchair-bound client in keeping her federal rental assistance voucher and the home she has lived in for almost two decades. The client had been harshly penalized after her son and daughter were arrested during drug sweeps. NJP first convinced the client's landlord to cease eviction proceedings if the Housing Authority continued her subsidy. NJP then represented the client at her Housing Authority hearing. The Hearing Officer granted a conditional reinstatement of her subsidy, pending entry of restraining orders against her two children. NJP then helped the client obtain these orders.
- NJP's Walla Walla office represented a woman whose landlord had served her with a 20-day notice to vacate very soon after she complained about having no heat just as winter was hitting Southeast Washington. NJP negotiated resolution of numerous contentious issues and the landlord finally agreed to fix the heat.
- NJP's Wenatchee office advised a senior couple in a mobile home landlord-tenant act case. The clients had been long-term residents at a small mobile home park when the landlord illegally raised the rent twice in two years, then attempted to enforce a new lease and new rules prior to the effective date on the documents. NJP advised the clients of their claims against the landlord and encouraged the clients to submit a complaint to the State Office of Manufactured Housing.
- NJP's Wenatchee office prevented a client with disabilities from being evicted. The client paid her rent with a voucher from the local housing authority. Her landlord, who is an attorney, attempted to intimidate the client and convince her that she did not have a right to remain in the unit. He filed an eviction action against her alleging that she had committed "waste." The client's son had mistakenly set a piece of incense on a countertop leaving a burn mark. NJP filed an Answer asserting that the landlord had served the client with an improper notice, and that he had waived his right to declare the client in unlawful detainer because he accepted rent from her after he filed the eviction

action. Moreover, the client had not committed “waste.” The client had offered to replace the small vanity countertop. The landlord agreed to dismiss the complaint.

- NJP’s Yakima office, together with a private bankruptcy attorney, obtained relief in bankruptcy court when a bail bond company had refused to relinquish the title to a mobile home after the debt owed to the bail bond company had been discharged. The bankruptcy court ordered the bail bond company to immediately transfer the title to the mobile home because the bail bond company’s actions violated the discharge injunction provided by the bankruptcy court.
- NJP’s Yakima office obtained a temporary injunction requiring that a private landlord immediately allow a tenant access to his apartment and personal property after the landlord had illegally locked the tenant out of his apartment for failure to pay rent.
- NJP’s Yakima office negotiated a postponement of a trustee sale in a foreclosure action where a disabled woman was awaiting a social security back pay award after prevailing on an appeal. Fortunately, the postponement gave the client sufficient time to receive the back pay award so she avoided foreclosure of her home.

### **Targeted Populations (Persons with Disabilities, Limited English, Cultural and Other Barriers to Accessing Legal Services)**

- NJP’s Bellingham office helped a disabled mother of two children file a complaint with the Washington State Human Rights Commission when her local housing authority terminated her federal rental subsidy and refused to reasonably accommodate her disability. Due to serious Attention Deficit Disorder compounded by depression and an anxiety disorder, the client is unable to manage information and complete paperwork, keep track of appointments, meet deadlines and follow through on tasks. The housing authority has on file medical documentation of the client’s disability and had previously acknowledged her need for extra time to complete the federal housing assistance program requirements. However, when the client missed two appointments for her annual recertification her subsidy was terminated and the housing authority refused to consider her appeal. NJP successfully defended against an eviction by her landlord and arranged an adequate period of time for her to move out. After the housing authority refused NJP’s request to allow the client’s appeal and reinstate her rental subsidy the client, who by then was homeless and staying temporarily with friends, filed a civil rights complaint. After preliminary research by a Human Rights Commission investigator, the housing authority agreed to reinstate the client’s rent subsidy.
- NJP’s Everett office assisted a Deaf woman to revise a court order that was entered at a hearing where the client had no interpreter. Most of the issues presented at the hearing were agreed to by all parties including the client; however, one issue had not been presented to the client before the hearing and she had no way to express her objection. The Court relied on the opposing party to interpret for the client. A Superior Court Judge revised the order, sending it back to the original commissioner for a new hearing. At that hearing the client participated telephonically with a visual relay interpreter and presented her position on the disputed issue.

- NJP's Olympia office helped a disabled Pacific County Vietnam veteran after his landlord refused to let the client's service dog into communal buildings and required that his rent be paid at the office, which was inaccessible for the client's wheelchair. The landlord also insisted that the client store the trailer for his electric wheelchair off the premises. NJP negotiated a settlement in which the landlord agreed to remedy the problems. The landlord also promised to take longer term steps to make the mobile home park more accessible in general, such as installing ramps and paving walkways.
- NJP's Seattle-based Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP) represented a trafficking client who had been brought to the United States with a promise of wages and other benefits but then kept in virtual slavery for over a year. NJP was able to negotiate the payment of past wages and other benefits as part of the criminal prosecution, and is in the process of filing for a trafficking visa that would allow the client to remain in the U.S.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a monolingual Vietnamese-speaking client who had been wrongly assessed a \$10,601 overpayment by DSHS for cash assistance received in 2000. When the client asked for a hearing DSHS argued that the appeal was untimely. An ALJ found that there was good cause to hear the case because the overpayment notice issued to the client in 2000 was inadequate as it was not fully translated into the client's primary language. A hearing on the merits of the overpayment was then scheduled. Several days prior to the hearing, DSHS reversed the overpayment and agreed to refund all monies collected.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a 31-year-old Western State Hospital patient in appealing a determination by DSHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) that he was no longer eligible for DDD-funded services. DDD claimed there was inadequate documentation of the client's lifelong mental retardation despite medical evidence in the client's records including several IQ scores from tests conducted on the client from ages eight through 24 with results in the mentally retarded range.
- NJP's Tacoma office represents a 53-year-old former Western State Hospital patient in the Washington State Court of Appeals, Division II, on a Petition for Judicial Review to appeal a Department of Social and Health Services' administrative order requiring him to pay for part of the cost of his hospital care. The client, who had been committed to the hospital to assess and restore his competency to stand trial on criminal charges, argued that ordering him to pay for his competency restoration commitment violated the state constitutional prohibition against charging a criminal defendant for any costs associated with his prosecution. A Thurston County Superior Court Judge agreed and reversed the administrative order invalidating the agency rule requiring that patients in this situation pay for their commitments. The state's appeal is pending.
- NJP's Tacoma office represents a 71-year-old disabled man in a claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act that the Pierce Transit Authority (PTA), wrongfully denied his request for paratransit shuttle service. PTA denied the client's request despite medical evidence that the client's cognitive difficulties limits his ability to use the regular

bus service and that he has pulmonary disease that limits his ability to walk the 1.5 miles from his group home to the nearest bus stop. Trial is pending.

- NJP's Wenatchee office secured access to public transportation on behalf of a wheelchair bound client who is severely disabled and lacks muscle control. The client used public transportation to travel to his medical appointments and contacted NJP because he was at risk of losing all access to public transportation after a public transit bus driver had accused the client of inappropriately touching her while she was securing his wheelchair into a paratransit van. The bus driver had secured a temporary restraining order against the client and was seeking a permanent order that would have prevented the client from using the public transportation system. NJP negotiated with the transit system to craft an agreed order that allows the client to continue using public transit

### **NATIVE AMERICAN UNIT - STATEWIDE (NAU)**

#### **Indian Estate and Probate Project (IEPP)**

- During this quarter NJP's Everett-based Indian Estate Planning Project staff conducted a three-day Indian Wills Clinic on the Makah Indian Reservation, a very remote area located in the most north-west corner of the Olympic Peninsula. The clinic provided community education on the benefits of making a will and the recent fundamental changes in federal law which directly impact Indian trust-land owners and drafting and execution of estate planning documents for individual clients. Over the course of the clinic, the NJP staff executed 26 wills and other requested documents.
- NJP's Yakima Indian Wills Project executed a will for a client who is one of the last people in his family enrolled as a member of the Yakama Nation. The client's grandmother and father both had wills which prevented the land from being split among other family members and the client owns significant trust land holdings as the sole owner. If the client did not make a will or if the client used a will to give this trust land to his non-enrolled children, then the lands could be sold without the children's consent because they are not enrolled in the Yakama Nation. With the will created by NJP, the client is able to leave a life estate in the family land to his children, which will allow the children to use and collect income from the land during their lifetime with the remainder going to an eligible enrolled family member.
- NJP's Indian Wills Project collaborated with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Portland, Oregon and Nespalem, Washington, to correct a serious error of record for a client who lived in Yakima. The client's mother had passed away leaving interests in several allotments on the Colville Indian Reservation to her children. However, the client's Indian Trust land report showed no record of the land. The client had tried repeatedly to correct the problem but was unsuccessful. NJP was able to expedite the correction and the client's Trust land report now shows the Colville interests.

### **FARM WORKER UNIT - STATEWIDE (FWU)**

#### **Economic Security (Employment)**

- NJP's Wenatchee based FWU successfully recovered a stolen paycheck for an older migrant farm worker from California who travels each year to Washington during the fruit harvest, arriving in July for cherries and returning at the close of the apple harvest. After picking cherries near Pasco, this client moved north to the Wenatchee area for his next job before his \$500 paycheck was ready. Although he had asked his supervisor to forward the check to his new workplace, the check was sent to a California address instead. There, someone took the check, forged an endorsement, and deposited it in their own account. The client contacted NJP when the employer informed him that they would not issue another check as payment had been made. NJP then assisted the client in providing evidence to the banks that the funds had been stolen. The employer refused to issue a new paycheck, and went so far as to accuse the client of trying to defraud the employer. Finally, the employer's bank received confirmation from the California bank that its customer had fraudulently endorsed the client's paycheck and reimbursed the stolen funds. The employer then issued the client a new paycheck.
- NJP's Wenatchee based FWU represents two migrant farm workers who are owed unpaid wages from the cherry harvest. At the time of hire, the clients were told that they would receive a one dollar bonus for each box of cherries that they picked if they completed the harvest season with this employer. Upon completion of the harvest, the employer explained that payment of the bonus had been conditional on the fruit quality. Since the fruit quality had been low, he had received a lower price for the fruit and there would be no bonus. NJP worked with the Department of Labor and Industries to file crop liens securing the workers' wages. When the Department released those liens the workers availed themselves of L&I's administrative wage claim process.

### **Economic Security (Public Benefits)**

- NJP's FWU helped a 75 year old farm worker to establish his eligibility for Social Security retirement benefits. Despite many years of farm work in the United States, the client had insufficient earnings on record with the Social Security Administration to qualify for benefits. NJP helped him document employers for whom he had worked in past years. One of those employers remembered him and sent a declaration as to his period of employment and earnings with their farm.
- NJP's FWU successfully represented a woman in her unemployment benefit appeal. She had been denied benefits after being terminated from a beef processing plant, allegedly for failing to keep up with her work. The client testified that she had been doing her job to the best of her ability and as well as anyone else and that she believed that the real reason she was terminated was because of complaints she had made about harassment by a supervisor and a co-worker corroborated her version of events. As a result of NJP's advocacy, the client received her benefits.

### **Housing**

- NJP's Wenatchee FWU successfully represented a retired farm worker couple who purchased a mobile home from the owner of the mobile home park. The park owner



agreed to sell the mobile home to the elderly couple pursuant to a purchase contract. With assistance from their adult children, the couple made several accelerated payments and paid the entire contract amount to the mobile home seller. Upon paying the full contract price, the couple asked the owner to provide them with title to the mobile home. When the owner refused, the couple contacted NJP. NJP discovered that the owner was not the legal or registered owner of the home, and that he had sold several additional homes to other mobile home park residents also failing to deliver the title to the home purchasers upon their making full payment. NJP filed a complaint against the seller who was living in Arizona. Upon investigating the case, the seller's attorney advised his client to settle the claim. The seller then secured all legal documents required to transfer title, paid the back property and excise tax and completed the title transfer.

### **NJP'S CONTRACT ATTORNEY PROGRAM (CAP)**

- An NJP Asotin County CAP attorney represents a client in a restraining order modification proceeding. The client was a victim of domestic violence during her marriage and obtained a three-year restraining order against her husband when their dissolution was final. The restraining order contained a provision limiting the husband from coming within 200 feet of the client. A few months later, he obtained employment that would bring him into her work place, thereby violating the restraining order and he hired an attorney to modify the order. The CAP attorney is defending the client against the modification.
- An NJP Benton County CAP attorney represented a 98 year-old nursing home resident in a Medicaid overpayment matter. DSHS mistakenly undercalculated the client's co-payment to the nursing home facility for a year before DSHS discovered its mistake. Now DSHS wants the client to repay an almost \$5,000 overpayment. A fair hearing to contest the overpayment is pending.
- An NJP Franklin County CAP attorney represents a monolingual Spanish-speaking, victim of domestic violence to obtain custody of her children. After years of physical and sexual abuse by the father of her children, the client took the children from the home and the father is now seeking custody. The CAP attorney represents the client in a parentage action and is also helping to resolve property issues between the parties.
- An NJP Kitsap County CAP attorney represents a victim of domestic violence in a dissolution. Last year, after the client's husband was charged with felony assault for attempting to strangle her, she was able to obtain a no-contact order to protect herself and her child. Following his release from jail, the husband had his girlfriend obtain an anti-harassment order against the client and had the client and the child removed from the family home. NJP continues to provide representation to ensure that the client and her child are kept safe and that she receives her fair share of the community property.
- An NJP Kitsap County CAP attorney represented a severely disabled man in an SSI termination proceeding. Social Security terminated his medical coverage and cash benefits based on a finding of "medical improvement" even though the client had medical

evidence that his condition had remain unchanged. An administrative hearing to continue SSI benefits is pending.

- An NJP Whitman County CAP attorney represented a monolingual Hindi-speaking Indian immigrant in a dissolution. The client and her children had been subjected to years of physical abuse prior to the husband leaving the home. NJP seeks protections for the client and an equitable financial settlement.

## **COORDINATED LEGAL EDUCATION, ADVICE AND REFERRAL** **(CLEAR)**

### **CLEAR DV (Specialized Domestic Violence Hotline System)**

- NJP's CLEAR DV assisted a victim of domestic violence maintain her Protection Order. The abuser violated the Order by repeatedly calling the client and insisting that she have it nullified. He promised that he would leave her alone if she dropped the Order. The client, worn down by his pleading, agreed to do so. Immediately regretting this, the client contacted CLEAR DV who worked with the local YWCA to get a declaration to the court and facilitated a referral to NJP's Vancouver office to help with her ongoing dissolution and custody issues.
- NJP's CLEAR DV helped a survivor of domestic violence who attempted suicide to defend against an attempt to obtain a Protection Order placing custody of the children with the father. NJP coordinated with a local domestic violence advocate and NJP's Spokane office to get the client legal assistance. At the Show Cause hearing the court dismissed the father's Petition.

### **Consumer**

- NJP's CLEAR\*Sr assisted a woman whose wages were garnished for a debt arising from a fraudulent used car purchase. A salesman had the client sign an illegible contract that he said would allow the dealership to locate a vehicle for her. The client paid a deposit and signed the contract, which was actually for the purchase of a used van the client had verbally declined three times. She stopped payment on the "deposit" check and attempted several times to void the contract, but the dealership refused to honor the client's request. The dealership sold the car at auction and pursued the client for the costs associated with the dishonored check and a deficiency judgment. NJP wrote a letter to the dealership detailing the consumer abuses, and sent a complaint to the Washington State Attorney General's Office. The dealership voluntarily vacated the judgment for the costs associated with the dishonored check and released the garnished funds to the client. The Seattle University Law School clinic agreed to take the case to vacate the deficiency judgment.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a 64 year-old man after his car was impounded by the police. The man discovered that the individual from whom he had bought the car, and who was currently incarcerated, had failed to complete the paperwork for the title to be transferred. In addition, the state had a lien on the car based on child support owed by the seller. NJP

assisted the client in getting the seller to complete the paperwork, and in getting the state to lift its lien. NJP also negotiated with the impound company to reduce impound fees and the client was able to get his car back a day before it was to be sold at auction.

### **Economic Security (Employment)**

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a woman after she had been suspended from her job as an in-home health care worker based on a child neglect "finding" by CPS. The client was never notified that CPS made the "finding" against her and had not been afforded the opportunity to appeal that "finding" until six years later. NJP helped the client appeal and negotiated with the Assistant Attorney General to modify the "finding." The client was reinstated in her former job.

### **Economic Security (Income Maintenance)**

- NJP's CLEAR preserved a woman's health care benefits after she was terminated from the GA-U program as the ineligible spouse of an SSI recipient. NJP determined that she was eligible for non-grant medical assistance, which DSHS should have considered before terminating the GA-U benefits. NJP helped her develop medical evidence and the client's application for medical assistance was approved. The client was also tentatively approved for Social Security Disability and is awaiting receipt of these benefits.
- NJP's CLEAR\*Sr helped an elderly man maintain his sole source of income, Social Security benefits. In June of 2006, the client received notice from the Social Security Administration (SSA) that his retirement benefits would be terminated because he was a "fleeing felon," apparently based on an unresolved probation violation from a long ago conviction for a minor offense. NJP assisted the client in resolving the probation violation and SSA restored benefits but assessed a \$17,787 overpayment. NJP wrote a waiver request for the client. SSA waived \$14,087. The SSA further agreed to permit the client to reimburse the \$3,400 balance at \$25 per month.

### **Family Stability, Safety and Security**

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking woman when the Division of Child Support (DCS) fined her \$600 for failing to respond to a subpoena regarding her brother's whereabouts. DCS sent the subpoena and all notices of her rights and responsibilities in English, even though it knew that the client's primary language was Spanish. When DCS refused to withdraw the fine, NJP requested a hearing and a copy of the DCS policy regarding notices to limited English proficient clients. DCS continued to send the client notices in English and also froze the client's bank account to collect the fine. After NJP contacted the official responsible for overseeing DCS LEP policy, DCS agreed to withdraw its Notice of Noncompliance, remove the fine, and release funds taken from the client's bank account.
- NJP's CLEAR\*Sr assisted a 74 year-old monolingual Spanish-speaking client after he received paperwork from the state claiming he was the father of a child and assessing child support. The client had been married to the same woman for over 50 years and did

not know the young woman with whom he had allegedly fathered a child. The client was worried that his wife, who was ill, would hear of the paternity case and he was very ashamed and embarrassed at receiving the papers. NJP contacted the Prosecuting Attorney's office and provided a copy of the client's driver's license clearly showing his age and his picture. The Prosecuting Attorney agreed that there was a mistaken identity and dismissed the paternity and child support actions.

### **Healthcare, Access and Quality of Care**

- NJP's CLEAR\*Sr helped a client prepare for a fair hearing appeal after DSHS miscalculated her contribution as the community spouse of a Medicaid recipient. The ALJ ruled in favor of the client and ordered DSHS to credit the client \$5,000.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a man obtain Charity Care coverage of medical bills. A collection agency sued the client for medical bills incurred as a result of a job-related accident. The client had applied for all of his bills to be covered by Charity Care, and, though he was eligible, the hospital claimed that it was too late for this program to cover one of his bills because it had already been sent to collection. NJP helped the client respond to the collection lawsuit and referred the client to the Department of Health (DOH) to file a complaint. DOH determined that the bill should have been fully covered by Charity Care and the collection lawsuit was dismissed.

### **Preservation of Housing**

- NJP's CLEAR helped preserve a subsidized housing tenancy for a woman who had lived in her apartment for 11 years. To her surprise, the landlord served a 20-day notice to vacate. The client was distraught about the prospect of having to move; she could not afford it and her daughter was in the hospital. After NJP advised the landlord that "good cause" was required to evict this client, the landlord rescinded the notice.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a monolingual Spanish-speaking mother of four maintain her subsidized housing after she received a notice terminating the tenancy because her disabled 13 year-old son had allegedly shot a bb gun on the premises. The woman had sold the bb gun and the boy maintained that he had not used a bb gun since. NJP helped the client to present her case at an informal hearing, upon which the Housing Authority agreed to reinstate the tenancy.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a single mother restore water service to her rented home after the landlord attempted to illegally evict her by having the water service terminated. After NJP contacted the water utility it immediately restored the water services.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a client whose personal property had been improperly seized and disposed of by the landlord. The apartment building managers mistakenly thought that the client had moved out when in fact she was only on a short vacation. Upon the client's return after her vacation she found that all of her property had been thrown away by the management. The client was reimbursed for the value of the property.

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a man after he returned home from work to find that the landlord had changed the locks on his door and had posted an abandonment notice. The client had fallen behind on his rent but had informed the landlord that he was getting the money together. He had only recently returned to work after loss of a job and came home on a daily basis. NJP negotiated the client's return to the apartment.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking man after a property owner tried to collect two months rent from him even though he never lived in the apartment and never signed a lease or rental agreement with the owner. The client had a federal housing subsidy with the Yakima Housing Authority and told the owner that he could not move in to the specific unit unless it passed an inspection conducted by the Yakima Housing Authority. The unit never passed inspection, so the client did not move in or sign a lease. Since NJP's contact with the owner he has not pursued any collection action.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking single mother of three who received a notice immediately terminating her tenancy in a transitional housing program for women and children. The termination was based on minor damage to the wall caused by the woman's child while he was playing. NJP advised the director of the housing program that the notice was invalid under the Residential Landlord Tenant Act, and the notice was rescinded.
- NJP's CLEAR and the Vancouver NJP office collaborated to prevent an illegal eviction of a mother and her children by a private landlord. Despite the fact that the client had paid all rent due, she received a 3-day notice to "pay or vacate," which was improperly served. The client met with the landlord and outlined the rent she had paid. Next, the landlord left an unfiled Unlawful Detainer action on the client's door. The client timely responded, explaining in writing the rent she had paid. Without any further notice to the client, the landlord then filed the action in Cowlitz County Superior Court and at the same time, obtained a Writ directing the sheriff to evict the client and her children from the home. The client was shocked to find a Writ taped to her door. With NJP's assistance, the client obtained a stay of the Writ just in time. In retaliation, a few hours later the landlord left a handwritten note on the client's door stating she was increasing the client's rent to \$45 per day although the lease set the rent at \$600 per month. NJP assisted the client with preparing and filing a supplemental Answer with the court, with collecting evidence, and with obtaining a subpoena for some of the landlord's records. After the matter was set for trial, NJP's Vancouver office helped to prepare the client to represent herself at trial. At the trial the client prevailed and the judge dismissed the action.
- NJP's CLEAR\*Sr assisted an Island County senior after she received an eviction notice from the mobile home park where she had lived for several years. The client originally moved in to be a caretaker for her elderly parents. At the time, the client was asked to sign a "live-in caregiver agreement" that specified that she was not a tenant. After her parents died, the client bought a different mobile home in the same park and paid rent monthly for that space. After she became active with a newly-created tenants association, the park owner served her with a notice of eviction because she was no longer caring for her parents. NJP established that the client had the status and rights of a "tenant" and

referred the case to the local Area Agency on Aging attorney who took the case to trial. The judge found that the client was a tenant and that the mobile home park's attempt to evict her was in retaliation for her tenants' association activities.

## **CLIENT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

### **BELLINGHAM**

- NJP's Bellingham advocates are involved in the County's Coordinated Judicial Response committee of its Law and Justice Commission, working toward common best practices involving representatives of superior, district and municipal courts, law enforcement agencies, social service agencies, batterers' treatment programs, and domestic violence advocates. An advocate also participates in the state-mandated effort to develop local protocols involving Child Protective Services, court systems, and law enforcement to promote child and victim safety in domestic violence situations.

### **FARM WORKER UNIT (FWU)**

- NJP's Wenatchee FWU made a presentation to the Bridgeport EPIC Parent Group concerning employment rights, field sanitation, workers' compensation and wage law. Most of those in attendance were employed in area orchards and packing sheds. Approximately 20 people attended.
- NJP's FWU advocates continued to visit migrant farm workers living in labor camps through October. The increased use of the H-2A temporary visa program in Eastern Washington meant that there were a number of new workers in the area with little familiarity with their legal rights or local services. These workers' ability to access services such as medical clinics was limited by their lack of transportation as they had arrived from Mexico by bus and did not have cars.
- NJP's FWU advocates participated in the Attorney General Office's Latino Consumer Summit in Yakima.
- NJP's FWU joined with the Walla Walla NJP office to bring a presentation about NJP services to a group of farm worker parents at a Walla Walla Washington State Migrant Council parent meeting.

### **OLYMPIA**

- An NJP Olympia office attorney trained 8 new volunteer long term care ombudsman and related advocates for Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties. Training covered guardianship, powers of attorney, living wills, and alternative decision-making solutions, as well as legal resources for seniors.

### **SEATTLE/KING COUNTY**

#### **Basic Field Office**

- An NJP Seattle office attorney was a co-presenter at a training in St. Paul, Minnesota by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women in partnership with Praxis International for grantees under the Safe Havens Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program, on the topic of domestic violence and the loss of custody. The same attorney was also a presenter on a similar audio training.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney gave a Spanish presentation on family law topics to bilingual advocates from Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN).
- An NJP Seattle office attorney gave a presentation as part of panel on “Interstate Custody and International Child Abduction: Domestic Violence and the Hague Convention.” The panel was sponsored by the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission for the 49<sup>th</sup> Washington Judicial Conference.
- Two NJP Seattle office attorneys were client organizers of the Washington State Coalition for Language Access (WASCLA) Summit II held in Ellensburg. One led a discussion on developing LEP plans for courts and law enforcement in the state. The conference was attended by interpreters, representatives from the courts and the Administrative Office of the Courts, medical providers, domestic violence advocates, representatives from various state, county, and local agencies, representatives from Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and, representatives from law enforcement and legal service providers amongst others.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney participated in ABA Commission on Domestic Violence Working Group trainings on the “Use and Integration of Interpreters in Civil Representation of Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking National Training Institute” and on the “Standards of Practice for Attorneys Representing Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking in Civil Protection Order Cases.”
- NJP Seattle office attorneys collaborated with a financial literacy program manager from Fremont Public Association to present a “Know Your Consumer Rights” training to clients at the Community Psychiatric Clinic. The attorneys presented on shortfalls and consumer rights concerning short-term high-cost lending (i.e. payday lending) and the nuts and bolts of debt collection and garnishment.
- NJP Seattle and Everett offices attorneys attended the Washington State Attorney General’s Latino Consumer Summit in SeaTac. The attorneys joined other advocates from the Western Washington area to discuss and develop ways to reach the Latino communities to educate, prevent and address consumer problems they are facing.

#### **Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP)**

- NJP’s RIAP attorney presented a training on cross cultural communication and mental illness on a panel covering “Effective and Ehtical Communication with the Mentally Ill Client” as part of a CLE entitled “Effective Representation of the Mentally Ill Client in Legal Service and Defender Practices”.

- NJP's RIAP attorney taught a class on immigrant and benefit issues in the Seattle University Law School Poverty Law Class.
- At the NLADA conference in Charlotte, North Carolina NJP's RIAP attorney was on two panels on interpreter access, one entitled "Language Access Advocacy 101: Ensuring Hope through Civil Rights Advocacy for English Language Learners" which described how federal and state laws provide access to services, and the other entitled "Language Access: Serving LEP Clients 101" which dealt with legal services programs provision of services. She is a member of the newly created National Language Access Advocates Network (N-LAAN) and helped lead an initial meeting at the conference.

### **TACOMA/PIERCE COUNTY**

- An NJP Tacoma office attorney serves as a board member of a Pierce County not-for-profit social service agency that operates five group homes, a day program and a farm and garden work program for developmentally disabled adults.
- An NJP Tacoma office attorney is an adjunct professor of poverty law at the Seattle University School of Law.
- An NJP Tacoma office attorney is a member of the Pierce County Planning Commission and also participates in a county-wide Affordable Housing Task Force.
- An NJP Tacoma office attorney organized a CLE on predatory lending and foreclosure defense in Tacoma in collaboration with the Tacoma Pierce County Bar Association's Volunteer Legal Services. The attorney also chairs the Predatory Lending Subcommittee of the Pierce County Asset Building Coalition,.

### **VANCOUVER**

- An NJP Vancouver office attorney gave a presentation to the Clark County Kinship Care Coalition on the law allowing caregivers to consent to healthcare for minors.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney partnered with a local real estate attorney to present the Landlord-Tenant Law 101 hour of a Clark County Bar Association CLE.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney gave a presentation on the legal system and legal rights to students in a special education class at Prairie High School in Clark County.

### **WALLA WALLA**

- NJP's Walla Walla office sponsored an all-day seminar titled "The Law of Mobile Home Tenancy," featuring speakers and a roundtable discussion about advocacy strategies to support mobile home residents, with a particular focus on residents facing park closures.
- NJP's Walla Walla office teamed up with the Christian Aid Center, the largest long-term homeless shelter in Walla Walla, to develop targeted legal support for very low-income



and homeless people. NJP meets with CAC guests once each month to discuss NJP services and show them how to use WashingtonLawHelp. NJP also agreed to develop a system to receive direct referrals from CAC staff for those guests who, in their opinion, are unable to access the CLEAR process.

- An NJP Walla Walla office attorney gave a presentation to the Benton-Franklin domestic violence advocate's office on the services offered by NJP field offices and by CLEAR.
- NJP's Walla Walla office staff gave a presentation to the Benton-Franklin County Bar Association about NJP and civil legal aid. The Walla Walla staff also conducted outreach visits to Walla Walla Habitat for Humanity, Walla Walla United Way, Benton-Franklin Community Action Committee, Walla Walla Commitment to Community Steering Committee, and the Walla Walla DSHS office.

### **WENATCHEE**

- NJP's Wenatchee office made a community legal education presentation to a group of approximately 30 families who are all residents of a mobile home park located in a rural area and who received a notice from the park landlord notifying them that anyone who did not provide proof that all of the people living in the park were either US citizens, or were otherwise properly documented would be evicted. NJP informed the residents of their rights under the Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act, and other applicable laws.
- An NJP Wenatchee attorney appeared with the Executive Director of the local Aging and Adult Care (AAC) office on a cable television talk-show program. The subject was Health Care Directives (aka Living Wills).
- An NJP Wenatchee attorney is working with the local office of Aging and Adult Care (AAC) to form the Chelan-Douglas Elder Abuse Prevention Council. The Council will serve as a networking and outreach organization to help people identify elder abuse and know what to do about it.
- NJP Wenatchee advocates educated farm workers through outreach to migrant farm worker labor camps in Chelan and Douglas counties. Attorneys provided information to hundreds of workers, including information about their employment rights, and also about local community resources including food bank locations and hours.
- NJP's Wenatchee office provided a community legal education presentation to the Chelan-Douglas Counties' Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center.
- An NJP Wenatchee attorney wrote an editorial on multi-culturalism in the community for the local newspaper Wenatchee World.

### **NETWORKING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES**

- An advocate in NJP's Bellingham office continues to play a leadership role in the Whatcom Alliance for Healthcare Access (WAHA), a comprehensive effort to expand the availability of health insurance and services for low-income persons. In the fourth quarter of 2006, the NJP advocate helped establish new WAHA initiatives that implemented a county-wide school outreach effort in several school districts to promote coverage for families without current health insurance, and also launched a collaborative effort with the local hospital and the county medical society to arrange an organized and expanded system of referrals to free necessary medical care from volunteer specialists.
- An NJP CLEAR attorney continues to serve as the secretary of the board for the Seattle Community Law Center, an organization that provides assistance and advocacy to low income individuals, including the homeless, for matters relating to their eligibility for Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income benefits.
- An NJP Everett office attorney participates in a Snohomish County group addressing implementation of Medicare Part D. The group conducts community education and outreach to assist clients with enrollment choices, to train case managers and advocates concerning implementation issues, and to seek clarification and resolution of enrollment and access problems.
- An NJP Everett office attorney attends meetings with the Snohomish County Domestic Violence Coalition. This group includes attorneys, advocates and social services providers working with victims of domestic violence.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney serves on the statewide Economic Services Advisory Council. The Council meets monthly to review DSHS policy around public assistance programs and provide feedback to DSHS about the impact on clients of current or proposed policies. The attorney also serves on a DSHS-based policy committee to revamp the Department's system to identify and serve clients with special physical, cognitive, or mental health needs.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney serves on the board of the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Long Term Care Ombudsman Advisory Council, which generates referrals and consultations from volunteer ombudsmen regarding the rights of residents in long term care facilities.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney continues her long-time service as a board member for Lewis County Bar Legal Aid, an Alliance for Equal Justice partner serving Lewis County residents through a pro bono program, legal clinic, facilitator services and more.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney serves on the Board of Directors of Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services which provides free legal clinics and pro bono representation to low income people in Thurston and Mason Counties.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney is a member of the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission. This commission provides training and supports projects dealing with equity issues in Washington courts. The Commission has recently focused its efforts on increasing the ability of courts to respond to domestic violence cases.

- NJP's Seattle-based RIAP attorney continues to participate with advocates at Fremont Public Association, the Social Security Advocacy Project, Northwest Health Law Advocates, the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition, the Children's Alliance in a King County Benefits Advocates Project and other Alliance partners to advocate with the Region IV DSHS Administrator.
- NJP's RIAP attorney continues to work with advocates and agency staff from around the state to improve legal services to victims of trafficking in Washington State. She is a member of the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking (WASHACT) and the Rescue and Restore campaign to work on both coordination of legal resources and community education and outreach.
- NJP's Seattle-based RIAP attorney continued to serve on the Immigrant Families Advocacy Project (IFAP) Advisory Board. IFAP is a University of Washington Law School organization, supervised by an attorney at the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, which pairs students with pro-bono attorneys to help battered immigrants file self petitions under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
- An attorney from NJP's Seattle office continues to participate in the Washington Coalition for Responsible Lending which is currently focusing its efforts on advocacy for payday lending victims.
- An attorney in NJP's Seattle office participates in the Washington State Bar Foundation's Loan Repayment Assistance Program Advisory Committee, which has developed a new LRAP for public interest attorneys across the state. The Committee has chosen its 2007 recipients of the LRAP.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney continues to participate on the DSHS Standing Committee on Administrative Hearings with an aim of improving client access to justice in the DSHS administrative hearing process.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney participated in the Medicaid Assistance Advisory Committee (MAAC), which includes members from the advocacy community, individuals who receive public benefits, medical providers and other health professionals, and representatives from the Health and Recovery Services Administration (HRSA), to discuss health and medical care service issues for Medicaid recipients.
- NJP Seattle office attorneys are working with staff from the King County Bar Association and Seattle University School of Law to develop a child support legal clinic for low-income people.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney continues to serve on the Governor-appointed Washington State Collection Agency Board.
- An NJP Tacoma office attorney serves occasionally as a *pro tempore* Superior Court Judge and Commissioner.

- An NJP Tacoma office attorney is a longtime board member of the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Foundation.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney continues to chair the Advisory Board of the Clark County Community Action Program.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney serves as Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program (CCVLP).
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney serves as a Board Advisor to the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid Program.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney continues to participate as the legal aid representative in a DSHS workgroup that is reviewing the agency's application for benefits form.
- An NJP Walla Walla office attorney was asked to be part of the Steering Committee of the first-ever Walla Walla Valley Affordable Housing Summit. More than 200 community leaders attended this important day-long event. The attorney spoke at the event, and was asked to be part of the follow-up team.
- An NJP Walla Walla office attorney was appointed to serve a two-year term on the Pasco Historical Preservation Commission.
- NJP Wenatchee office staff serve on a variety of community boards, including the Wenatchee Community Center, Community Foundation of North Central Washington, Chelan-Douglas County Volunteer Attorney Services, Charity Golf Classic for Kids, North Central Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and United Way.