

Northwest Justice Project

Advocacy Report Third Quarter, 2007



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**NORTHWEST JUSTICE PROJECT
2007 THIRD QUARTER ADVOCACY REPORT
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INTRODUCTION

During the Fall of 2007, the Northwest Justice Project (NJP) opened three new offices to better serve our client communities on the Olympic Peninsula and in Southwest Washington. With three attorneys and one legal assistant in each office, NJP opened its doors to much excitement and warm welcomes from the communities in Port Angeles, Aberdeen and Longview. The presence of attorneys in these regions, along with the continuing availability of CLEAR (Coordinated Legal Education, Advice and Referral) as the primary point of intake, referral and limited assistance, plus added capacity in other regions of the state provides NJP the opportunity to make significant inroads toward meeting the high priority civil legal needs of all low income persons in Washington.

While the new NJP offices have “hit the ground running”, NJP has continued to address the critical legal needs through ongoing case work, community education and other local advocacy activities. Daily, NJP staff help vulnerable individuals solve complex legal problems and simpler issues that become complex in the absence of immediate legal help. For example, in the third quarter of 2007, NJP’s Tacoma office helped a former Western State Hospital patient avoid a large debt for the cost of his care when the state Court of Appeals ruled that the state could not require patients such as NJP’s client to personally bear these costs. NJP’s Tacoma office also helped a 63 year old quadriplegic man retain his right to use paratransit services, which were terminated by the local public transportation authority solely because the man obtained a power wheelchair.

This quarter, a significant portion of NJP’s work was in the area of housing preservation. NJP now assists more clients threatened with losing homes through foreclosure, some due to fraudulent predatory lending practices. In one case, NJP’s Seattle office helped a couple who after a substantial period of unemployment, fell behind on their mortgage. To save their home, they entered into a “sale-leaseback transaction”, which proved to be a fraudulent refinance loan at an excessive interest rate. When the “lenders” sought to remove the couple from the home, NJP was able to stave off the eviction and negotiate a settlement that gave the couple most of the equity value they had built in the home. The problems faced by this couple are similar to those of many other people who in desperation enter into financial schemes (such as payday loans and tax refund anticipation loans) that only result in greater more onerous debt. In addition to helping individuals who have been victimized by predatory lenders, NJP is working with others to identify lower interest financial options and other remedies for low-income persons statewide.

These are just a few examples of how public investment in legal aid helps people to help themselves and to prevent other costly problems such as homelessness and onerous debt. Even with the added state support that allowed for NJP expansion, we continue to meet only a fraction of the total need.

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY

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

- During the third quarter NJP's Bellingham office continued to lead the regional process for planning delivery of civil legal aid services in its four-county service area. Office staff also continued serving domestic violence victims and supporting their lay advocates in Whatcom and Island counties, and increased advocacy on behalf of other immigrant victims of domestic violence.

CLEAR and NJP Web Site

- NJP's CLEAR program handled 6,440 calls during the third quarter of 2007, resulting in 3,171 new cases or clients. CLEAR also began the process of incorporating non-lawyer screeners into its intake model to quickly determine eligibility, identify conflicts of interest and screen out problem types on which CLEAR is not able to provide assistance. Also during this quarter the Washington LawHelp web site experienced over 100,000 visitor sessions and over 450,000 page views. NJP also hired a CLEAR Native American Specialist, who will work with the Native American Unit to improve outreach to Native American communities in Washington.

Contract Attorney Program

- NJP's Contract Attorney Program (CAP) receive referrals for clients with legal needs in eleven counties (Asotin, Benton, Clallam, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Walla Walla, and Whitman). CAP refers cases to private attorneys who agree to take on representation at highly discounted hourly rates and are supported by CAP staff as needed, including ongoing consultation and assistance. The case-type priorities of CAP are similar to those of other legal services offices across the state and include but are not limited to public benefits, consumer law, housing and family law.

Everett (Snohomish, Island Counties)

- NJP's Everett office continued to expand its representation of clients in the Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribal courts. The office holds a monthly legal advice clinic at the Tulalip Reservation. Posters and flyers posted around the reservation have generated more calls from Indian individuals who need extended representation. This quarter the office added an attorney who will focus on consumer law. The office also continues to serve clients with a wide range of legal problems in the areas of family law, health care law, housing and public benefits.

Farm Worker Unit

- NJP's Farm Worker Unit consists of 4 attorneys and 2 community workers. One attorney is based in Wenatchee and 3 are based in Yakima. The FWU has been helping mobile home park tenants maintain affordable housing options in the face of park closures and continues to assist workers with their employment related legal needs.

Native American Unit

- NJP's Native American Unit (NAU) serves Native American communities 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's targeted work is supplemented by advocates in NJP's field offices. A Statewide Native American Advocacy Coordinator leads the NAU outreach, regional planning and capacity building efforts, in support of NJP's expanded Native American advocacy program.

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

- NJP's Olympia office has been responsible for a five county region including Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties. The office includes four attorneys and two part-time support staff. The Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services Program is co-located with the office. During the third quarter NJP opened a new office in Aberdeen serving Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties allowing the Olympia office to refocus its services in Mason, Thurston and Lewis Counties.

Seattle (King County)

- NJP's Seattle office consists of 13 attorneys and 4.5 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; and (4) a City of Seattle funded domestic violence advocacy project. 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 has seven attorneys, including a Native American Unit attorney, two legal assistants and a receptionist.

Tacoma (Pierce, Kitsap Counties)

- NJP's Tacoma office is co-located with Volunteer Legal Services and TeamChild. Ten Tacoma advocates (eight attorneys and two paralegals) represent Pierce and Kitsap County clients in public benefits, family, housing, consumer, education, youth and elder law, and disability and civil rights cases. The advocates also advise and represent a wide range of community groups, provide general legal services to indigent Western State

Hospital (WSH) residents through a contract with DSHS Health and Rehabilitative Services Administration, and head a statewide project that provides services to developmentally disabled persons under the Community Protection Program through a contract with the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council. Advocates meet clients at the NJP satellite office at WSH two days each week. Kitsap County clients are provided a broad range of legal services by Tacoma-based advocates at the NJP Kitsap office which is co-located with Kitsap Legal Services in Bremerton. The office is expanding outreach efforts in Kitsap County and has also been actively involved in regional planning for the Kitsap County region.

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

- NJP's Vancouver office is staffed by five attorneys and two legal assistants. The office continued its focus on economic security (especially the General Assistance program), health care, housing (primarily public and subsidized housing, homeownership, and private landlord-tenant matters involving longer-term tenancies), custody and visitation matters (primarily where there are serious allegations of domestic violence or other risk to the children from the opposing parent), and serving both senior citizens and youth.

Walla Walla (Benton/Franklin, Walla Walla)

- NJP's Walla Walla office, with a satellite office in Pasco, was staffed by two attorneys and one legal assistant. The Walla Walla office focuses on areas of family law, housing, public benefits and consumer needs, and lead regional planning in regions 3 and 4.

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

- NJP's Wenatchee office is staffed by five attorneys and three legal assistants and includes a satellite office in Omak serving Okanogan County. The office also serves 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 office has four attorneys and a Jesuit Volunteer, who assists in interviewing, research and case development for clients with economic security and domestic violence problems. The office also houses three Farm Worker Unit attorneys and an FWU community worker.

CASE EXAMPLES AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADVOCACY EFFORTS

NJP FIELD OFFICE SERVICES*

Civil Rights/Land Use

- NJP’s Tacoma office has finalized the settlement of a Growth Management Act (GMA) case in which NJP represented disabled Tacoma residents who challenged city development regulations restricting housing for persons with “special needs” (those who receive cleaning, meal preparation, health care or other services in connection with their housing). These regulations were also challenged by Disability Rights Washington (formerly Washington Protection and Advocacy) and DSHS. In a consolidated administrative proceeding, the City of Tacoma agreed to revise its regulations to remove language discriminating against persons with disabilities, to specifically allow residential chemical treatment facilities, and to relax parking requirements for special needs housing facilities. Amended regulations implementing this agreement were adopted by the City Council and the case has recently been dismissed based on these changes.

Consumer

- NJP’s Everett office represented a disabled client in an automobile fraud case. The client had agreed to act as a cosigner for a friend, who wished to buy a car but did not qualify for financing. Still believing she was acting as a cosigner, she signed paperwork at the dealership office. During the course of the transaction, nobody asked what her income was or the source of that income. As she got into the car to leave, the salesperson gave her a handwritten note stating “(1) The car is for you; (2) you make \$3,800 in retirement.” In fact, the client’s actual monthly income was \$475 from Social Security Disability. After the client called the original lender and told them the situation, financing for the vehicle was declined. However, the dealer continued to search for a lender and eventually found one. The client attempted to return the car, but the dealer told her the deal was completed and there was nothing she could do. In the end, she left the car with the dealer. Soon after that, she received a letter claiming that she would be charged \$50 a day as a “storage” fee. NJP sent a letter to the dealer demanding that the transaction be rescinded and contacted the Attorney General’s office, with whom the client had already filed a complaint. The Attorney General had closed her file, but after hearing the full story, worked with NJP to get copies of all of the dealer’s paperwork. The dealer agreed to rescind the transaction, accept return of the car, and cancel the loan.
- NJP’s Olympia office assisted a low income elderly couple to resolve a consumer dispute. The clients were allowed to return a hearing aid they were pressured into purchasing and were given a full refund of their purchase price.

* For case examples from NJP’s Native American Unit and Farm Worker Unit see pages 23 and 24 respectively. For case examples from the Contract Attorney Program and CLEAR see pages 25 and 25-28 respectively.

- NJP's Seattle office represents another client who was defrauded by a used car dealership. The client, a senior, agreed to co-sign a car loan for his granddaughter, but was tricked by a car salesman into signing fraudulent documents that made the client the sole purchaser of the car. A local credit union funded the loan, even though the information on the loan application, which the salesman had filled in after the client signed the documents, was clearly erroneous. The credit union is holding the client financially responsible for costs associated with the car's repossession.

Economic Stability (Public Benefits)

- NJP's Bellingham office represented a woman with severe mental illness who had been assessed a \$12,000 overpayment of her SSI disability benefits. The Social Security Administration made the overpayment determination after it found that she had an outstanding warrant while she was receiving benefits, which can make an individual ineligible as a "fleeing felon." In fact, the client had a past conviction for forging a check during an uncontrolled spending spree that was part of a manic episode in her illness. The criminal court overseeing her probation issued a warrant after the woman failed to appear at a review hearing, but the client never knew about the hearing because the court had sent all notices in the case to a decade-old former address. Given these facts, NJP obtained an administrative waiver of the entire overpayment because she was not at fault in its occurrence and could not afford to repay the money.
- NJP's Bellingham office represented a 54-year old woman who was approved for cash and medical benefits under the DSHS General Assistance (GA) program, but who had \$765 in unpaid medical bills from the three month period prior to her approval for GA. The client is diagnosed with degeneration of the cerebellum and axonal neuropathy, resulting in cognitive and behavioral impairments that prevent her from working. Under DSHS rules for the GA program, she was approved for medical coverage that began as of the date of DSHS' eligibility determination and does not provide coverage for medical costs incurred prior to that date. NJP requested that DSHS evaluate the client's eligibility for a different DSHS medical program that provides a broader scope of covered services and includes the possibility for three months of retroactive coverage. On review, the client was approved for the latter program with the additional period of retroactive coverage. NJP then instructed her to notify each of the medical providers she owed that she had received DSHS medical coverage for their date(s) of service; the providers then stopped billing her and subsequently billed and were paid by DSHS. NJP also advised her about her potential eligibility for a property tax exemption on her home, based on her disability. The client followed that advice and reported back that the county assessor was approving her application for a full exemption, saving her hundreds of dollars more.
- NJP's Everett office represented a client terminated from General Assistance on the grounds that she had failed to cooperate in obtaining a drug and alcohol assessment. Although she timely appealed, DSHS failed to keep her benefits in place pending the hearing. As a result she was unable to get needed medical care. NJP was able to get her benefits restored pending the hearing. The client actually had cooperated with the drug and alcohol assessment, which determined the client did not need treatment; however, the assessing agency failed to send the report to DSHS because it did not have a release form

from the client. Once the facts were documented and the missing report received, DSHS agreed to the client's eligibility and resolved the appeal.

- NJP's Olympia office helped a Pacific County senior who received notice from Social Security (SSA) that he had an overpayment of over \$19,000 which made him ineligible to receive his retirement benefits. The overpayment was based on a 10 year old warrant the client knew nothing about. The client was arrested after he did not pull over when an officer tried to stop him for a traffic violation. He completed his terms of probation, but had not paid off his entire fine. Since Social Security is not available to anyone with an outstanding warrant, SSA terminated his benefits, retroactive to the date the warrant was issued. Once the client learned of the warrant, he immediately called the court and started making payments on the fine and the court quashed the warrant. NJP provided Social Security with documentation that the warrant was quashed and the client was in compliance. Social Security reinstated the client's benefits. NJP also helped the client request a waiver of his overpayment, which Social Security granted in full.
- NJP's Spokane office was successful in preserving a client's GAU benefits. The client had two evaluations from different psychologists. DSHS determined that both evaluations were inconclusive due to alleged past drug use. NJP represented the client at the administrative hearing and provided a declaration from one psychologist outlining why his evaluation was not inconclusive. The Administrative Law Judge held that DSHS incorrectly terminated the client's GAU because they failed to provide clear and convincing reasons for discounting the evaluations. DSHS requested reconsideration of the final order based on the same arguments presented at the hearing, and the ALJ denied the request.
- NJP's Spokane office represented an eighteen-year-old man suffering from frequent seizures to establish eligibility for services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), which had been denied because DDD determined that the client's seizures were controlled with medication and that the client's ICAP (DDD assessment tool) score was insufficient to categorize him as developmentally disabled. NJP obtained a declaration from the client's doctor verifying that the seizures were not under control and in fact the client's seizures were so frequent he could not coherently follow any conversation, which provoked paranoid and aggressive behaviors. NJP obtained additional testing, which established that the client was eligible for DDD services and eligible for either the Community Protection Program or the CORE waiver. DDD is currently completing a risk assessment to determine the appropriate program for the client.
- NJP's Tacoma office assisted a disabled mother of two with a DSHS overpayment issue. The client had received a notice of overpayment for Social Security (SS) benefits she received on behalf of her son. She had received TANF for a period of time and when her TANF benefits ended, she received a lump sum SS payment for her son. Due to inaccurate information provided by the Social Security Administration (SSA), DSHS believed that the client was receiving SS payments for quite some time during the period when she was also receiving TANF; that she did not report the SS income while she was on TANF; and that she was therefore responsible for paying DSHS back over \$10,000.

The client was very concerned because she did not know why she received the overpayment notice nor did she have the money to repay. NJP contacted both DSHS and the SSA to gather more information, and after much discussion the SS office agreed to forward to DSHS the proper records which indicated that the lump sum SS payment was received by the client after she stopped receiving TANF. DSHS reviewed the information and reversed the overpayment.

- NJP's Vancouver office successfully negotiated a settlement with DSHS awarding \$675 per month in food stamps to a Russian-speaking family with eight children. DSHS had claimed the father's self-employment income put the family over the eligibility limits. NJP gathered income documentation, created a spreadsheet of income sources and verification, and verified a bona fide loan from family member. DSHS approved benefits based on the clarified information.
- NJP's Vancouver office represented a Cowlitz County man who continues to have excruciating pain years after an on-the-job accident where he fell off the bed of a truck that pulled away from a loading dock. The client's benefits were terminated because the DSHS office believed his primary physician's report lacked sufficient evidence of his condition. NJP persuaded DSHS to consider additional evidence from the workup by several specialists, which in combination with a physical therapist's physical capabilities evaluation confirmed his continuing eligibility.
- NJP's Walla Walla office represented a young family with a dependent child who was in TANF sanction, resulting in benefits reduction. NJP advised the family and represented it at a prehearing conference. DSHS failed to use proper procedures when imposing the sanction and at the prehearing conference agreed to dismiss the sanction and reinstate the full benefit amount for the family.
- NJP's Wenatchee office succeeded in reinstating food stamps for a developmentally disabled senior adult client. The client came to NJP seeking help after DSHS claimed he received a significant overpayment in food stamps and substantially reduced his food stamps. This occurred after a change of the client's DSHS caseworker. The new caseworker miscalculated the client's rent and utility expenses, and did not believe the client's caregiver who was attempting to assist the client. NJP represented the client in a meeting with a fair hearing coordinator. As a result of that meeting, the client's food stamp benefit was increased, and the overpayment charge was dropped.

Education

- NJP's Tacoma office represents three 19-year-old developmentally disabled young men who had been placed in the Community Protection Program (CPP) by the DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) due to their history of inappropriate physical or sexual contact with other students in school. The school district in which these young men currently live has delayed or declined to enroll them in school for many months, contending that because their need for close supervision is not due to an educational disability, the school is not obligated to pay for their supervision. NJP is currently

negotiating with the district to obtain appropriate special education and other educational services for these students.

Family Stability, Safety & Security

- NJP's Bellingham office represented the mother of a 4-month-old child in obtaining a writ of habeas corpus and emergency temporary orders for custody, after her child was taken by the father in violation of a criminal no-contact order. The mother, a victim of severe domestic violence, was lured to another jurisdiction by the father, who forced her to leave the child with him. To insure she did not call the police, he had two relatives accompany her on a bus back to Bellingham. When the writ was obtained, NJP succeeded in having the child returned safely to the mother, and having the court enter a temporary parenting plan that allowed only supervised visitation for the father.
- NJP's Bellingham office represents an immigrant mother of three in obtaining authorization pursuant to the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to legally reside in the United States. During her 18-year marriage to a lawful permanent resident, he repeatedly threatened to deport her so she would lose her children, treated her in demeaning ways and exercised extreme control over her actions, and was physically violent with her and their sons. The process of preparing the VAWA application was slowed because the woman still resided with the abuser, had no access to a telephone, and often could not leave her home to call NJP due to her husband's controlling behavior. Due to these barriers and the client's lack of any transportation, NJP went to the woman's town to meet with her privately and to prepare the VAWA paperwork. NJP has also advised the woman on options for public assistance and domestic violence shelter services, and has sought to connect her with a local domestic violence advocate. NJP is now assisting the client in obtaining employment authorization so that she can support herself and her sons and live independently of her husband.
- NJP's Bellingham office assisted a deaf domestic violence victim, in obtaining a temporary parenting plan and temporary child support order. As an access-to-justice issue, NJP has requested that the court pay for an interpreter to accompany the guardian ad litem in her interviews with the client, rather than rely on the client's family members to interpret.
- NJP's Everett office assisted a Tulalip grandmother to establish guardianship over her grandchildren. The children's mother had died and the location of the father was unknown. A guardianship will allow the children to receive all the benefits of Tulalip tribal members, including use of per capita funds for the children's needs.
- NJP's Olympia office represented a domestic abuse survivor in a child custody case involving two young boys. While divorce proceedings were pending, the husband became volatile and suicidal. He was charged with a DUI, videotaped himself coaching and drilling the children, and his behavior established his complete inability to be alone with the children. At trial, the client was awarded full custody and the court required the father's visitation to be professionally supervised.

- NJP's Olympia office assisted a monolingual Spanish speaking domestic abuse survivor keep primary residential care of her four year old daughter. The court appointed Guardian Ad litem recommended that the supervised visits of a few hours each week continue at least until the abuser completes six months of a 52 week batterer's treatment program.
- NJP's Olympia office assisted a survivor of domestic abuse with a child custody matter in Pacific County. Prior to the involvement of NJP, the judge deprived the client of the opportunity to present her own case. The judge had permitted the other parent to put on several days of testimony at trial from various witnesses. Although the client had subpoenaed many witnesses, the judge refused to let her call a single witness, chastised her for her poor parenting and gave the father substantially more visitation pending a report from the Guardian Ad Litem. At this point, NJP became actively involved. The client and the domestic violence advocate from the local shelter both perceived that the very presence of an NJP attorney changed the judge's attitude. Although a final order was entered, the other parent filed a Request for Reconsideration. NJP filed a response on behalf of the client and the Request was subsequently denied. NJP continues to represent the client because of ongoing problems with visitation.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Grays Harbor woman escape an abusive marriage and protect herself from further abuse. Only a few months after they got married, the client's husband became incredibly jealous when she started volunteering at the local food bank. He accused her of cheating on him and assaulted her so badly she was hospitalized. The husband was arrested, but released the next day. The court issued a criminal no contact order prohibiting the husband from contacting the client for one year. After helping the client complete and file her initial papers, NJP negotiated an agreed settlement with all terms requested by the client and advised the client regarding remedies to ensure her safety once the no contact order expires.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a woman whose son was taken to the Middle East by her ex-husband who continued to reside in the United States. The woman had been a victim of domestic violence and was under duress when she was made to sign dissolution paperwork giving the husband custody and visitation with her by agreement only. The client filed a petition for a protection order, and the husband then filed a counter petition. With NJP's assistance, a temporary order was issued requiring the immediate return of the child and ordering a domestic violence risk assessment. The child was returned and a review hearing scheduled. NJP is representing the mother in attempting to vacate the dissolution orders.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a woman at a temporary orders hearing in a paternity action filed by the State of Washington. The father had serious mental health and substance abuse problems. There had been domestic violence during the relationship which led to criminal charges. The father had obtained a private attorney and was requesting immediate visitation with the parties' two year old child. NJP obtained a protective temporary order preventing any visitation pending an evaluation and recommendations by a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

- NJP's Seattle-based Domestic Violence Community Legal Project (DVCLP) represented an Ethiopian woman in her Protection Order and custody case. The client fled the family home because of the husband's abuse and moved into a shelter with the parties' four children. She sought a protection order against the husband, who hired a lawyer and filed for divorce, requesting primary custody of the children. Following an investigation by a court-appointed social worker, the court granted the protection order and prohibited all contact between the father and children until the father completes six months of state-certified domestic violence batterer's treatment.
- NJP's Seattle-based DVCLP successfully represented an immigrant woman who was trafficked into the United States as a minor from a small, isolated rural area in Mexico. Her identity and age were changed when she got to the U.S. border and she was sexually assaulted the evening she arrived in the Seattle area where she was told she was brought to be the wife of her abuser, a man twice her age and someone she had never met before. What followed was a history of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. After the woman had her first child, the abuser was arrested for an incident of domestic violence against her. In retaliation, he fled bail and took the woman and child to Mexico whereupon he continued abusing her and took the child, only a few months old at the time, and placed the child with his family. The woman remained with the abuser, and returned with him to Washington hoping that she would eventually be able to recover her child. When the child was returned to her, four years later, she was pregnant with another child and felt that she had to stay with the abuser because she had no other options. However, the abuse continued and it occurred while she was holding the new baby. Fearing for her children's safety, she finally left the abuser. In retaliation, he complained to Child Protective Services (CPS) that she was abusing the children and the oldest child was removed from her care and placed with the abuser. NJP successfully represented the client in the CPS action where the finding of abuse against her was reversed and the child was returned to her care. Then, at trial in the parentage action, the court entered a Parenting Plan giving the client absolute custody and sole decision-making over the children; prohibiting the husband from having any contact with the children pending treatment requirements; granting the client and the children a Continuing Restraining Order and an Order for Protection until both children are adults; ordering that the children's birth certificates be amended to reflect the client's correct name and date of birth; and ordering the husband to pay child support.
- NJP's Spokane office assisted a young mother in establishing a residential schedule for her three-year-old child. The father had committed acts of domestic violence against the client, and assaulted her sister and a friend on separate occasions. There were also concerns regarding alcohol abuse, resulting in the father being convicted of several DUIs. NJP made several attempts to settle the case but ultimately went to trial. At trial, the court found that the father's contact with the child should be limited based on his abandonment of the child for over one year, his failure to perform parenting functions, the history of domestic violence toward the client, the history of assaultive behavior, and alcohol abuse that interfered with his ability to parent. The court granted the father only four hours of supervised visitation with the child each week and the father was also ordered to attend, and satisfactorily complete, alcohol treatment, domestic violence perpetrator treatment, and a parenting class whereupon he would have the right to petition the court for

additional time with the child. The court also restricted contact between the parties to issues directly relating to care of the child.

- NJP's Spokane office represented a single father who needed assistance getting custody of his daughter due to his ex-wife's anticipated entry into an extended in-patient mental health care program. NJP worked with the client and his ex-wife to draft and file agreed orders, and in doing so resolved the custody situation without disrupting the parties' amiable relationship.
- NJP's Spokane office was successful in protecting a mother and her three children at the temporary orders stage from a violent father who had previously been convicted of arson for burning down the mother's family home, and was recently released from jail after conviction for unlawful possession of a firearm. The mother was sixteen years old at the time of the marriage and the father was forty-nine. The father was recently convicted of assault, and had previous violations of a domestic violence protection order. The mother is free to relocate with the children without notice to the father; the father's visits have been suspended until he obtains a domestic violence perpetrator evaluation, an alcohol and drug evaluation, a psychological evaluation, and parenting classes.
- NJP's Spokane office represented a 75-year-old woman in a divorce action. The parties' primary asset was a home, which the parties owned outright and which the husband sought to be awarded the entire interest in. With the assistance of a settlement judge, NJP successfully negotiated a settlement with the husband and his attorney which provided the wife with a transfer payment equal to half the current fair market value of the home.
- NJP's Vancouver office successfully represented a client to obtain temporary orders to protect the client and child from a violent father. During the most recent incident the father fired a weapon into the house with the client and child there and then shot himself. He survived the suicide attempt and now wanted visitation. The court imposed significant procedural safeguards so that both the mother and child remain safe.
- NJP's Vancouver office represented a Clark County mother to successfully modify a vague custody order to provide specific and limited visitation for the child's father, who has a history of domestic violence against the mother. The father had retained the child out-of-state after a visit last summer. The new parenting plan includes safeguards to prevent future abduction, and requires the father to register the Parenting Plan in his home state. A permanent restraining order was also entered.
- NJP's Walla Walla office, in collaboration with an attorney from NJP's Spokane office, tried a case in Walla Walla County Superior Court on behalf of a young mother fighting for custody of her two children. During the marriage, the husband had committed serious domestic violence against the client. Prior to trial, the husband alleged that the mother physically abused the children, and had tried on two occasions to gain custody of the children on an ex-parte basis. The five-day trial examined the history of the relationship, the character of the parents, and the parents' respective parenting skills. It included testimony from medical professionals, counselors, and other witnesses. The client successfully obtained primary custody of her two young children.

- NJP's Wenatchee office obtained a temporary parenting plan and child support order for a victim of domestic violence. The parenting plan allows the father only supervised visitation with the child. The father beat the client throughout the relationship. He threw her to the ground, punched her, and kicked her in the head and body while she was pregnant. The father also followed the client and stalked her when she tried to get away from him and threatened to deport the client and take the child. He then abandoned the client and their child and refused to pay child support or have any contact with the child. The father asked the court to grant him custody of the child based purely on the allegation that the mother is unfit due to her immigrant status.
- NJP's Wenatchee office obtained an order for protection on behalf of a victim of domestic violence. NJP also obtained a parenting plan awarding the client custody of the children, an order allowing the client back into the family home, and providing that the father must make the mortgage payments on the house and pay child support. The client was sexually assaulted and harassed by the father on numerous occasions and in front of the children. The client sought representation from NJP after the father filed a petition for dissolution and a motion for an Ex Parte Restraining Order that prohibited the client from seeing her children or going to the family home.
- NJP's Yakima office successfully settled a custody modification matter involving a young child who had been sexually assaulted by her uncle when the father had custody. As a result of the modification, the child was placed with the mother and received appropriate counseling and services to address the trauma of the sexual assault.
- NJP's Yakima office successfully settled a custody modification matter involving a monolingual Spanish speaking woman who was a victim of domestic violence. Her husband had obtained a default judgment in a dissolution 11 years ago, granting the husband custody and ordering the wife to pay child support. This occurred despite the fact that the couple continued to live together for 11 more years. The wife raised the children and took care of the household and worked extensively outside the home. After a violent incident, the couple separated and the husband requested the assistance of the Division of Child Support to force the wife to pay a huge child support arrearage. In addition, the old order granted custody to the husband of the last children still living in the household. NJP filed a modification action on behalf of the wife and obtained custody of the 13-year old daughter. The court ordered that the husband should have no contact with the children until he receives treatment and/or successfully completes parenting classes.
- NJP's Yakima office represents a monolingual Spanish speaking woman who resides in Walla Walla. She was obtaining a parenting plan and temporary orders in the Superior Court in a parentage action when the father filed a competing action in the Yakama Tribal Court. NJP is representing the client in tribal court while a private attorney participating in NJP's Contract Attorney Program (CAP) is representing the client in the Superior Court matter.
- NJP's Yakima office represents a monolingual, illiterate, Spanish speaking victim of sexual and domestic violence in a dissolution matter. The client fled to another county

and the husband filed for custody in Yakima County. At a temporary orders hearing, the court ordered that the children shall reside with the client and the father's visits shall be supervised. NJP Yakima worked with domestic violence advocates to provide substantial assistance and services to this woman and her children, one of whom has special needs.

- NJP's Yakima office represents a father in a case involving a *de facto* parentage matter. The children have resided with the father for several months because the mother is accused of abusing the children. At a recent hearing on temporary orders, the court held that the father is a *de facto* parent and the children shall remain with the father.

Healthcare, Access and Quality of Care

- NJP's Everett office assisted a senior client who survived cancer but had many other health problems and inadequate income for her bills. The client had regular Medicare for medical expenses but no coverage for medications. She expected to start Medicare Part D coverage for prescription drugs at age 65. Instead, she was denied enrollment on the ground that her disability status provided for an earlier enrollment period, which had now expired. She was told she had no new enrollment option at age 65 and had to wait to reapply for 2008. Although this analysis for the denial was legally correct, NJP documented the client's many contacts with Social Security during the time this problem could have been corrected. Agency staff had been confused about this new prescription program and gave the client incorrect information about enrollment. NJP presented the matter to the regional office of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid. The staff there granted the client a "special enrollment period" and set up the Medicare computers to allow her to enroll immediately. She now has coverage to pay for her medications.
- NJP's Everett office in conjunction with CLEAR staff assisted a disabled client terminated from the Medicaid personal care assistance needed for her to remain at home instead of in a nursing facility. NJP helped the client make an appeal, and advised the client concerning an opportunity for a new assessment. The agency then reassessed and reversed the termination, restoring the assistance to the earlier level. Because the assistance level was still below the client's need and below the level NJP had identified as appropriate, NJP continued its advocacy. Ultimately the agency agreed to correct several problems in the assessment, increasing the client's assistance level and settling the appeal.
- NJP's Everett office assisted a disabled client with severe health problems due to obesity. The client was initially denied entry into Medicaid's bariatric surgery program for weight loss. NJP's Everett office represented her in an appeal and won entry into the program. The program includes a substantial pre-surgery preparation period. The client experienced very surprising success with the pre-surgery diet and exercise program for weight loss. Her physician now recommends that she delay the surgery and continue with the weight loss program of diet and exercise. Because the nutrition services she needs are covered by Medicaid only for a limited time and only through the surgery program, NJP worked with the client to identify a different way to fund the needed services. Ultimately DSHS agreed to authorize the client to pay for this service with Social Security disability

benefits she otherwise would pay for her Medicaid in-home personal care services (COPES). This allows her to get the services with no impact on her budget.

- NJP's Olympia office helped a Lewis County client who needed medical care to treat and manage her COPD, high blood pressure, and other medical conditions. DSHS denied her application for medical benefits on the basis that she was not disabled enough. NJP obtained medical documentation and provided an analysis of why the documentation established her eligibility. DSHS approved the client's medical benefits so she can now get the treatment and medications she needs.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Mason County senior whose medical benefits were cut off each year due to a computer glitch. Once a year, DSHS's computer would get information from Social Security's computer about the client's widow's benefits. For some unknown reason, the DSHS computer doubled this income, which caused an automatic termination of the client's medical benefits. NJP worked with DSHS to ensure there was a permanent fix to this problem. As a back-up plan NJP persuaded DSHS to put a temporary fix in place that requires a worker to review the file before the client's medical benefits stop automatically.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a young man when the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) informed him of a reduction in his Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) hours from 150 to 72 hours per month. Although the client's condition had not changed, DDD changed the way some of the assessment criteria were defined. This change resulted in the reduction of 78 care hours the client needed to remain living independently in the community. While NJP prepared to challenge the reduction, DDD changed the rules it uses to award hours. NJP established that the client is eligible for 155 MPC hours per month under the new rules. In order to resolve the hearing, DDD agreed to waive any overpayment of continued benefits, including those received prior to the rule change.
- NJP's Spokane office assisted a client for whom DSHS denied a set of replacement dentures. Her original set of dentures were lost in a house fire. The client, who is physically disabled, was pulled out of the home through a living room window. The client was without dentures for over a year. She suffers from Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Syndrome, and has problems with the ligaments in her jaw. Her mouth would swell, her jaw made a clicking sound, and would sometimes "dislocate" to one side which she reported to be quite painful. As she could eat only soft foods, the client estimated that she lost approximately twenty pounds during the time she was without dentures. DSHS denied the client's initial request for dentures because she had already received one replacement set of dentures in the previous five-year period. NJP requested an exception to the rule, documenting the circumstances surrounding the denture loss. DSHS approved the request and the client received replacement dentures.
- NJP's Vancouver office helped a Clark County mother of a severely developmentally disabled child obtain Medicaid approval for a wheelchair lift to be installed in the mother's van. DSHS had twice before denied the request. The mother had injured herself by lifting the child and the wheelchair separately into the van by herself. NJP worked

with the mother to gather and present information to DSHS demonstrating the medical necessity and cost effectiveness of the wheelchair lift over other transportation services available to the family. The mother is now able to easily transport the child whenever necessary, greatly improving both the mother and the child's quality of life.

- NJP's Wenatchee office advised a client whose prescription drug healthcare coverage had suddenly been terminated. The client had for years been relying on her insurance company's coverage of a number of prescription medications. But when the insurance company hired a new claims management subcontractor, they suddenly cut off coverage. With the assistance of NJP, the client was able to resolve the issue with her insurance company and her prescription coverage was restored.
- NJP's Yakima office assisted an elderly man who was cut off Medicaid benefits when DSHS implemented the new federal citizenship documentation requirements. The client, who relied on his DSHS benefits to obtain cancer treatment, received a termination notice because he could not prove he was a U.S. citizen. NJP helped the client submit proof of his military service and citizenship status revealed through his military records. DSHS withdrew the termination notice and the client continued to receive his cancer treatment.
- NJP's Yakima office successfully negotiated with DSHS to replace a client's dentures. The client's former girlfriend destroyed his dentures when the client and she were having a disagreement. DSHS refused to pay for replacement dentures because of a rule limiting replacement to once every ten years. NJP successfully requested an exception to rule based on the client's medical need for proper nutrition.

Immigration

- NJP's Tacoma office recently assisted a 62-year-old client in resolving long-standing questions he had regarding his citizenship status. Working in conjunction with the client's congressman and United States Citizenship and Immigrations Services, NJP was able to determine and document that he had, as he had believed for over 50 years, derived citizenship through his mother's naturalization shortly after World War II.

Preservation of Housing & Habitability Issues

- NJP's Bellingham office represented a severely disabled woman with traumatic brain injury and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder who faced eviction from her mobile home park after multiple eviction notices prompted by her shouting at other tenants about perceived violations of park rules. The tenancy was particularly important to the client because she had invested all her savings in buying the mobile home and it could not be moved to another site. Additionally, her home's location in the park felt safe to her, a matter of special concern because her injury had occurred in a home invasion attack. NJP persuaded the landlord to accommodate the woman's disabilities by not proceeding on the eviction to allow her time to seek improved treatment for her conditions. NJP also requested mediation of the termination notices. NJP assisted the woman in obtaining improved treatment of her conditions, and a resulting change in medication apparently helped decrease the woman's conflicts with other residents. Finally, NJP also assisted her

during several mediation sessions, which have served to lessen tension between the woman and her landlord. As a result, she has been able to remain a tenant in the park.

- NJP's Everett office represented a disabled single mother whose Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher had been terminated by the housing authority. She had an outstanding balance on her utility bill from her former home. When the housing authority learned of this, they sent her a notice to terminate her voucher or she could pay the full outstanding utility by a deadline they set. This deadline came before the termination date. Acting on this notice, the client paid her utility bill and sent proof of that payment before the deadline. Regardless, her voucher was terminated. NJP filed a lawsuit claiming violation of the Federal laws governing the Section 8 program, denial of due process and deprivation of her rights, privileges and immunities. The case settled, with the housing authority agreeing to reinstate the voucher from the time of initial termination, pay her landlord any rent that had gone unpaid during that period and reimburse the client for rent she was forced to pay out of pocket. The client received 8 months of rental assistance and continuing eligibility for rental assistance.
- NJP's Everett office assisted a tenant in public housing who works evenings and graveyard shifts and was faced with termination of her housing on the basis that her evening babysitter was considered an unauthorized guest. NJP successfully negotiated the withdrawal of the 10 day notice due to procedural errors in the notice. NJP also educated the housing authority about the client's work schedule and her need for childcare.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a Grays Harbor senior whose landlord would not make requested repairs to her home. Her stove was dangerous, and neither the range nor the oven worked properly. Her residence was infested with cockroaches, her toilet leaked, her front door lock was broken, and the door did not fit the frame so badly that light came through the crack between the door and the frame. Although the client had requested repairs orally and in writing, the landlord did not follow up on promises to make repairs. NJP sent the landlord a demand letter, citing the landlord's legal obligation to resolve these deficiencies. The landlord started repairs immediately and also transferred the account to another real estate agent who is much more responsive to the client's concerns.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a couple who lost substantially all of their savings after a prolonged period of unemployment. The family owned a home in a Seattle suburb; however, by 2004 the couple had become insolvent and defaulted on the mortgage loan. Because they were still unemployed, the couple could not secure financing to reinstate or refinance their loan. Seeking to avoid foreclosure, the couple entered into a "sale-leaseback transaction" by which they conveyed their property to a group of "investors" for pennies on the dollar, in return for which the couple retained the right to live in the home as renters and buy back the property after they returned to work. The "sale-leaseback transaction" was a thinly-veiled refinance loan and an unqualified consumer scam; expressed as an annualized rate, the transaction bore interest at over 29% and ultimately caused the family to forfeit both the house and roughly \$300,000 in equity. NJP prevailed at hearings in August 2006 and July 2007, in which the investors had asserted their "title" to the home and sought to remove the couple from the property, and

after prolonged litigation, ultimately negotiated a settlement whereby the couple received \$97,000 cash up front, with the home to be sold and the family to receive an estimated \$190,000 more from the proceeds.

- NJP's Seattle office brought an action on behalf of a family facing termination from a local public housing authority's (PHA) Section 8 Voucher program, contending that the administrative tribunal that the PHA intended to hold by which to adjudicate the termination dispute would not afford constitutionally-required due process to the family. The federal court enjoined the PHA from holding the hearing, finding "serious questions" as to whether the tribunal would afford due process or not. In the opinion, the federal judge made clear that a PHA must afford all of the procedural safeguards of "full administrative review" prior to termination from the Section 8 program, not just the less-stringent "preliminary determination" safeguards (as the PHA had asserted).
- NJP's Spokane office assisted a Native American family obtain a judgment for money owed to them based on a housing contract. The husband and wife believed they entered into a lease to own contract for real property and a house on the Colville Indian Reservation. The house was not in sound condition when the clients moved in, but they made substantial improvements. The "seller" alleged that she and the clients never entered into a purchase agreement and that she should benefit from major improvements that the family had made to the home. The opposing party served the client with some type of "eviction" notice by email and notified all members of the tribal council and the client's boss at the tribal complex. The "seller" also engaged in other bullying tactics within the community. NJP appeared in Colville Tribal Court and sought reimbursement for the improvements they made to the house pursuant to the contract. At the end of the hearing, the judge found that an equitable remedy was appropriate and that the opposing party had been unjustly enriched and ordered the "seller" to pay the clients \$6,680. The "seller" still had not paid after several months, so NJP filed an enforcement action. After a hearing the parties were able to reach an appropriate settlement.
- NJP's Spokane office represented a client who was facing eviction because the landlord wanted to terminate the lease. Through NJP negotiations with the landlord, the client obtained a new one-year lease, which included use of the garage associated with the property, which had been excluded in the past. Simultaneously the Spokane Housing Authority would not change her Housing Choice Voucher to allow for a two bedroom voucher needed for health reasons causing the client to have to pay a significantly higher share of the contract rent. NJP made a request for reasonable accommodation, which was granted, retroactively. The housing authority issued a \$700 credit for rent she had previously overpaid, and a review of the landlord's bookkeeping also identified an additional \$150 in rent credits to the client's account.
- NJP's Tacoma office helped a disabled Kitsap County woman whose Section 8 housing benefits were being terminated. The client had been very ill and had been hospitalized repeatedly after which she was unable to live alone and had been staying with a friend. The Housing Authority scheduled a routine inspection of the client's housing unit, but the client missed the appointment because she hadn't been home to receive the notice. The Housing Authority had recently imposed a very strict appointment policy issuing

termination notices after one missed appointment. The client had difficulty dealing with the Housing Authority and a hearing was subsequently scheduled. This client suffers from several mental and physical disabilities which interfere with her ability to keep appointments. NJP prepared a reasonable accommodation request and submitted it to the Housing Authority and also obtained written confirmation from the client's medical provider that she was hospitalized and required assistance after her discharge. The Housing Authority reviewed all the information presented and, after negotiation, agreed to reverse the decision terminating the client's Section 8 housing benefits.

- NJP's Tacoma office continues to litigate a foreclosure rescue scam case in which two disabled, vulnerable and almost completely illiterate homeowners were scammed out of legal title to a home they had owned for nine years. Desperate to prevent the imminent foreclosure sale of their home and told that they had no other options, the homeowners signed documents they did not understand that transferred title to the scammers and retained only a lease option which could never be exercised. The scammers promptly refinanced the property, stripping out \$50,000 in equity. Subsequently, the scammers commenced an unlawful detainer action against the homeowners. NJP simultaneously filed an affirmative action against the scammers and their employers and defended the unlawful detainer action. The scammers have now filed for bankruptcy, staying the proceedings in state court. NJP has submitted objections to discharge in bankruptcy.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a tenant who was threatened with eviction and whose apartment had been condemned by municipal authority. NJP's representation of the tenant resulted in dismissal of the eviction action as well as cash settlement to the tenant, permitting the tenant to move to safe, code-compliant housing.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a senior resident of a mobile home park. Park management had threatened to restrain the tenant's sale of her mobile home and force clean-up of areas adjacent to but not formally a part of the tenant's yard. Following NJP's representation of the tenant, park management rescinded the demand and allowed the tenant to proceed to list her mobile home for sale.
- NJP's Wenatchee office assisted a client with six children (including three foster children) preserve her home. The client's home was in foreclosure and the bank failed to provide the client with proper notice of the foreclosure action. NJP was able to negotiate a reduction of approximately \$1,000 in the amount the client was required to pay off to avoid foreclosure. The client was able to pay off the lower balance and stop the foreclosure proceedings.
- NJP's Wenatchee office is providing services to a developmentally disabled senior who is being threatened with eviction from the home in which she has lived for over 30 years. The home belonged to the client's mother who is now in her nineties, suffers from dementia and was recently moved into an assisted living facility. The client, while developmentally disabled, is highly functional and now lives independently in her mother's home. The client's nephew is claiming 50% ownership of the home, and is attempting to sell it. He has served the client with several "termination of tenancy" notices in an attempt to force the client out of the home. The client does not want to leave

the home and appears entitled to inherit a 100% interest in the home under her mother's will. NJP is working with Adult Protective Services to prevent the client's eviction and to investigate allegations of elder abuse.

- NJP's Wenatchee office represents a low-income client in a complicated home preservation case. The client is purchasing a manufactured home from her former employer, while also leasing the land it sits on from him. The relationship between the two parties has soured and the former employer is harassing the client and using specious legal actions in an effort to get her to abandon her home and lease. NJP represented the client in bringing a petition for a civil anti-harassment order. NJP also defended the client against a frivolous unlawful detainer action which was withdrawn prior to the hearing in order to avoid Rule 11 sanctions. NJP filed a separate action to enforce the purchase and sale agreement which remains pending in Superior Court.
- NJP's Wenatchee office continues to represent a Wenatchee mobile home park residents' association in an effort to preserve 40 units of affordable housing. The park owner is seeking to create a "replacement" park to move the residents. Recently, the park owner submitted an application for a conditional use permit to construct the replacement park in Chelan County. NJP and its clients submitted letters in support of the conditional use permit. A decision by the County is pending.
- NJP's Wenatchee office represents a mother trying to preserve her subsidized housing for herself and her disabled son. Before contacting NJP, the client had requested a first floor apartment to accommodate her son's disability. He is blind and has difficulty negotiating the stairs to the second floor apartment. He is also autistic, and creates noise that passes through the floors of the unit and bothers the downstairs neighbor. The client also made requests for repairs that the landlord ignored. In retaliation, the landlord is now seeking to evict the client. Since receiving NJP's demand letter citing both the Residential Landlord Tenant Act, the Washington Law Against Discrimination, and the federal Fair Housing Act, the landlord is considering the reasonable accommodation and repairs requests, and has not filed an eviction action against the client.
- NJP's Wenatchee office successfully defended a disabled senior from being evicted from a mobile home park where she has lived for many years. She owns her mobile home, one of her only assets. The park filed an eviction action alleging the client was in arrears for rent dating back roughly one year. The park, however, had kept poor records of rental payments, and had applied the client's payments to another mobile home lot that belonged to the client's friend. After the client tendered the amount that was in fact owed, the landlord continued to pursue the eviction. NJP appeared on the client's behalf in court, and successfully prevented the court from issuing an order to evict. NJP subsequently settled the case and the client remains a park tenant.
- NJP's Wenatchee office responded to an emergency call from two families on a late Friday afternoon after their rental units had been flooded earlier that day with raw sewage that had backed up from a clogged sewer line. The landlord was insisting that the units were safe for human habitation even though the flooring and walls were still damp with sewage, and there was at least one child on the premises who was still crawling. NJP

assisted the clients in obtaining emergency hotel vouchers from a local non-profit, documented the condition of the units, and arranged for inspections by local code enforcement agencies. NJP then referred the case to a private attorney.

- NJP's Yakima office successfully assisted two disabled men with their housing. Two lawsuits were filed on behalf of the clients against a single landlord, who tried to change the rent amount due during a lease agreement; violated the Washington Residential Landlord Tenant Act by requiring prohibited lease terms, retaliated against the clients, and belittled and made fun of the clients because of their disabilities. NJP negotiated a settlement which allowed the clients to terminate their lease agreement before the terms expired and obtain small settlements.
- NJP's Yakima office successfully restored a woman's home to her after her daughter fraudulently induced her to convey title to the daughter. NJP filed an action in Yakima County Superior Court for quiet title. Rather than answer the lawsuit, the daughter agreed to return the title to the mother.

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

- NJP's Olympia office helped a senior couple who both receive DSHS long term care benefits. Because DSHS counted income that the couple did not actually receive, they were \$400 short each month on the payment to their assisted living facility. Family members loaned money to the clients for several months to cover the bill, but those resources were soon exhausted. After many months of working with DSHS to fix this with no success, the facility was forced to send clients a Notice of Discharge saying they had to move out by the end of the month. The couple was already in debt from borrowing money for the incorrect bill and could not afford to move, nor did they want to leave the facility that had been their home for years. NJP analyzed the clients' income and deductions and obtained verification from the VA proving that the clients did not and could not have received the \$400 income that DSHS was counting. NJP sent this verification to DSHS, along with a demand letter citing the applicable laws and requesting that DSHS correct the clients' bill. Based on this information, DSHS corrected their figures and paid the outstanding back amount due to the facility. The facility withdrew the Notice of Discharge and the clients are no longer threatened with unwarranted monthly bills or eviction.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a 90-year-old Thurston County woman who received a discharge notice from her long term care facility. A few years prior, the Superior Court found the woman incapacitated and appointed a paid guardian. Unfortunately, that guardian did a poor job transitioning the client from paying privately for her long term care facility to using Medicaid benefits. At the time the court replaced that guardian, the facility claimed the woman owed them over \$10,000 and issued a notice that she had to pay the bill or move out within 30 days. The client had spent all her money and had no way to pay. NJP worked with the new guardian to determine the accurate amount owed, which turned out to be only \$1,500. The new guardian was able to convince the former guardian to cover all but \$620 of this amount. Because the facility's records had so many

inaccuracies and the resident notices were so inconsistent, NJP and the guardian convinced the facility to write off the remainder. The facility withdrew the discharge notice and adjusted the client's invoice to reflect that she is current with all her payments.

- NJP's Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP) represented a Russian client who had been denied citizenship due to her inability to pass the citizenship exams and was in need of a disability waiver. The case was complicated by the fact that she had suffered through surgery as a young child in Russia for a brain infection which had left her with a number of permanent emotional and cognitive disabilities which made her unable to learn new information. After NJP obtained adequate documentation of her disability and its impact on her ability to pass the exams, a disability waiver of the requirement was approved. As the client is now a citizen, she is able to again receive SSI to maintain her subsistence income.
- NJP's Seattle office continues to represent an immigrant client who is deaf and for whom English is a fourth language in a parenting plan action. The client fled with her child from a severely abusive relationship in another state, and has been in Washington for nearly two years. The father initiated an action to establish visitation with the child. NJP is assisting this client in limiting the father's contact with the child in order to protect the child and the mother's safety and to assure that appropriate supervised visitation will occur. This representation requires ongoing collaboration with Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services to effectively provide culturally competent services which are critical to the client's ability to meaningfully participate in the legal system.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a developmentally disabled client who requested a hearing regarding the termination of his DDD-paid services. The client had been placed in the very restrictive Community Protection Program (CPP) without legal justification after two evaluations were done by two psychologists. A specialist reviewed the evaluations and determined that they were not done in accordance with the profession's protocols and that the client should not have been placed in the CPP. She also evaluated the client and reported that he should receive supportive living benefits because he was not a threat to either the community or himself. The State then moved to dismiss the client's hearing but would not agree to place him in the CORE waiver program as the available alternative to CPP. With NJP's assistance, the client was subsequently reassessed and deemed to be appropriate for supportive living.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a 53-year-old, former Western State Hospital patient in judicial review proceedings to appeal a DSHS administrative order that he must pay for part of the cost of his care at the mental hospital. The client, who had been committed to the hospital to assess and restore his competency to stand trial on criminal charges, argued that the order that he must pay for his competency restoration commitment violated state statutory and constitutional prohibitions against charging a criminal defendant any costs associated with his prosecution. A Thurston County Superior Court Judge agreed and issued an order in June 2006 invalidating the regulation that requires such patients to pay for their commitment. The State Court of Appeals Division II affirmed the trial court in a published opinion issued in September 2007.

- NJP's Tacoma office represented a 63-year-old quadriplegic nursing home resident in an administrative hearing to appeal the local transit authority's decision to reduce the level of ADA paratransit services he receives. The transit authority reduced the paratransit services that the client had received for over 30 years, and began requiring that the client use regular bus service for certain trips after he obtained a power wheelchair that increased his functional ability to board and ride a regular bus. A hearing officer restored the client's full paratransit eligibility after an administrative hearing in which NJP presented testimony from the client's doctor who stated that requiring the client to wait for regular bus service in potentially inclement weather at bus stops and transit stations could seriously impact the client's health.

NATIVE AMERICAN UNIT (NAU)

Family Stability

- NJP's Seattle based NAU represented a mother in a tribal court step-parent adoption case. The client has three children, the oldest of whom was the child of a prior relationship. During the client's marriage, the client and her husband had talked about a step-parent adoption and eventually began the process in tribal court. Shortly after entry of an interlocutory adoption decree, the client's husband physically assaulted the client. The marriage disintegrated and the client initiated a state court dissolution action. Because the client's child from the previous relationship expressed a strong desire to terminate her relationship with the step father, the client sought NJP's help to get the interlocutory adoption decree vacated and the adoption dismissed.
- NJP's Spokane-based NAU represented a teen aged mother in two dependency actions; one in which she was the dependent child and the other in which her newborn baby was alleged to be a dependent child. At issue in the dependency involving the client's newborn was DSHS's failure to make active efforts to provide services to the client designed to prevent the "breakup of the Indian family" as required under the Indian Child Welfare Act. DSHS did not make any effort to provide services to the client because the foster placement the client herself had been in at the time of her child's birth failed and the client ran away. DSHS conceded that the client needed a different and better suited foster home. As a result of NJP's representation, the client was placed in an appropriately supportive foster home with her baby and the dependency on the baby was dismissed.
- NJP's Spokane-based NAU represented the mother of a newborn in a state court ICWA case. The client's child was born prematurely and had to stay in the hospital for about a month. DSHS placed a hold on the baby and then placed the baby in foster care when she left the hospital. The sole basis for DSHS's action was that the mother and father had relinquished their older two children a few years earlier. Both parents had previously been represented by lawyers who encouraged them to first enter into an agreed dependency and then later relinquish their parental rights in spite of the lack of any evidence of irremediable parental deficiencies. NJP was able to get the child returned to the client's care and the dependency dismissed.

FARM WORKER UNIT - STATEWIDE (FWU)

Economic Security (Employment)

- NJP's FWU filed a health and safety complaint with the Department of Labor and Industries on behalf of a farm worker employed at a winery. The client's complaint included: ladder safety issues, failure to provide proper safety equipment when cleaning tanks, entering fermentation tanks containing sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide and/or other chemicals before it was safe to do so and without receiving safety training. The last issue is particularly serious because it is life threatening. L&I found that the company had numerous violations and assessed penalties against the employer.
- NJP's FWU assisted a farm worker to clear up an unemployment insurance overpayment that resulted from identity theft. The farm worker had been assessed an overpayment for allegedly receiving unemployment benefits, even though the client explained that he had not claimed benefits for that period of time. It turned out that the tax preparer that he had gone to for years had used information that she obtained through that relationship to claim benefits on his behalf and keep those benefits for herself. NJP was able to show that the client did not receive these benefits, and he will not have to pay the assessed overpayment.
- NJP's FWU represents a group of migrant farm workers from Eastern Washington with claims against a berry packing company for the company's failure to abide by its promise of employment. Based on the company's promise of employment, these workers gave up other employment opportunities and traveled to the berry packing company, only to be told that they were not needed, as the company already had enough workers. Claims are being brought under the federal Agricultural Worker Protection Act and state promissory estoppel law.

Preservation of Housing

- NJP's FWU represents a woman and her two children who were removed from their housing by the Environmental Protection Agency when mercury was accidentally released into their home. The older child became very ill from the exposure. NJP assisted the family to negotiate relocation expenses and other issues resulting from the mercury clean-up.
- NJP's Wenatchee FWU convinced a mobile home park owner to rescind a 30 day notice to mobile home park residents to remove their homes from the park or face eviction, as the owner intended to close the park. NJP notified the park owner that, pursuant to the Manufactured Home Landlord Tenant Act, one year notice to residents was required to close the park. The owner ultimately relented, rescinded the 30 day notice and will now permit residents to remain until August 2008.

NJP'S CONTRACT ATTORNEY PROGRAM (CAP)

- An NJP CAP attorney assisted an Asotin County client in an action to establish a parenting plan. The children's father had physically abused the client. The CAP attorney obtained a parenting plan that restricted the father's visitation rights.
- An NJP CAP attorney assisted a 98 year old Benton County client to help her fight a Medicaid/COPEs overpayment. Just prior to the hearing the case settled when DSHS admitted that they had double billed the client and waived all erroneous charges.
- An NJP CAP attorney represented a Grant County monolingual Spanish speaking survivor of domestic abuse in a divorce case. At issue was division of community property and each spouse's pension. The CAP attorney completed the divorce and persuaded the court to grant the client more than half of the community property and half of the husband's pension. The court also ordered that the client keep all of her pension.
- An NJP CAP attorney in Franklin County represented a monolingual Spanish speaker in an action to establish a parenting plan. The client is the mother of one young child and she is currently pregnant with a second child. The children's father had choked the client and threatened to kill her. The client's goal is to get custody to protect the children from their abusive father.
- An NJP CAP attorney represents a monolingual Spanish speaker in Walla Walla to establish a parenting plan with limited visitation to help protect her asthmatic child from his father's cigarette smoke and alcoholism. The child's doctor insisted that the child should not be around anyone who smokes but the father refuses to stop smoking and drinking around the child.

COORDINATED LEGAL EDUCATION, ADVICE AND REFERRAL (CLEAR)

CLEAR DV (Specialized Domestic Violence Hotline System)

- NJP's CLEAR DV assisted a domestic violence survivor with a divorce and custody dispute. The client had been married seven years and had one child with the spouse. The husband had a history of prescription drug and alcohol abuse, which led to his becoming suicidal, angry and abusive. There were several incidents of physical abuse, including once when he drove off while the client's hand was closed in the car door. Another time the opposing party choked the client to the point of unconsciousness. When NJP received the referral, all of the local legal services provider agencies were at capacity and unable to accept family law cases. NJP drafted all of the paperwork the client needed to file for dissolution, and obtain both emergency and temporary orders. NJP advised the client on the court process and helped her prepare to represent herself. The client successfully obtained emergency protective orders as well as temporary orders that will protect her and her child as the divorce proceeds.

Consumer and Debt

- A man contacted NJP's CLEAR*Sr. after his bank account was garnished by the Employment Security Department (ESD). The client's son's name was on the client's bank account in case of an emergency. The client's son owed an overpayment to ESD, resulting in the garnishment of the client's pension funds and Social Security benefits from his account without providing him notice of his rights to claim exemptions. NJP provided proof of the exempt benefits and ESD refunded the garnished amount in full.
- NJP's CLEAR*Sr. assisted an 85 year-old woman living alone who received charges from an adult-themed phone service that claimed the client had made calls from her telephone to their line. The company first charged her credit card, but the client disputed the charges and her credit card company reversed them. Thereafter, the client received several letters threatening collection if she didn't pay. NJP contacted the company and it agreed not to bill the client further.

Economic Stability (Employment)

- NJP's CLEAR helped a Spanish-speaking woman regain her livelihood after termination of her daycare license. For 10 years, the client had been licensed by DSHS' Department of Early Learning (DEL) to run an in-home daycare for 12 children. In February 2007, DEL told the client that she had to immediately close her daycare for safety reasons, based on an alleged report to DEL about one of the client's adult sons, who did not live with the client. The client was verbally given the choice to voluntarily close her daycare immediately or have her license suspended until the investigation concerning her son was completed. DEL did not provide anything in writing explaining the client's rights. The client tried for six months to contact DSHS to find out the status of the investigation, but never got any response concerning the investigation or any date for reopening her daycare. NJP contacted the agency supervisors and got them to complete the investigation. DEL then authorized the client to reopen her daycare and she was able to work again after being unemployed for more than 6 months.

Economic Stability (Public Benefits)

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking family who contacted CLEAR after they received a notice assessing an overpayment of TANF benefits in excess of \$3,000, even though the family provided all of the information requested by DSHS at the time of application including proof that the father lived in the home and the amount of his income. After receiving TANF benefits for 6 months they received a notice they were overpaid \$3,205 because DSHS had incorrectly calculated their eligible benefits. DSHS acknowledged the error but continued its efforts to recoup the overpaid funds. NJP appealed. After DSHS received the Notice of Appeal, it agreed to terminate collection and entered into an agreed order confirming that the family did not owe the funds.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a disabled person who was denied General Assistance (GA-U) benefits based on a report from a DSHS contract physician who had not seen the client nor reviewed her complete medical file. CLEAR advised the client on how to obtain

evidence and present her administrative appeal. The client prevailed at the hearing and obtained approximately 7 months of retroactive benefits.

Health Care, Access and Quality of Care

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a man whose wheelchair was damaged on a Laidlaw Transit van when he was being transported from his doctor's office to his home. NJP contacted Laidlaw Transit and its insurance company and helped the client get the documentation that he needed to provide to the insurance company in order to prove his claim. Laidlaw's insurance company ultimately paid for the wheelchair.

Individual Rights

- NJP's CLEAR helped a client with severe autism preserve her sheltered employment when the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) cut her hours in half. The client receives a Home and Community Based Service Waiver, which provides for pre-vocational services. Despite the client's positive experience at a sheltered workshop, DDD suddenly decided to cut her hours in half without offering alternative services. No assessment preceded the decision and the notice did not properly indicate why the decision had been made. NJP prepared a letter and gathered information for the client to present at the fair hearing. The Administrative Law Judge found that: (1) the notice did not support DDD's action; (2) no assessment was provided to the client prior to the change; (3) there was no evidence of a change in the client's waiver services or needs; (4) DDD failed to offer other, better services to the client; and (5) DDD's offer of respite care services was not connected with the goal of providing employment in an integrated community setting. The judge ordered that the client's hours at the sheltered workshop be immediately restored.

Preservation of Housing & Habitability

- NJP's CLEAR helped a Spokane County client retain a Section 8 tenancy after her landlord threatened to evict her unless she paid full replacement costs for the 1970's era refrigerator that came with her apartment. The landlord alleged that the client broke the refrigerator but the client maintained that the refrigerator broke before she moved into the unit. The landlord also claimed the client owed a pet fee after telling her that he would not charge one. The client decided to move but she was unable to secure new housing because her landlord reported to prospective landlords that she owed monies for the refrigerator and the pet. NJP contacted the landlord who agreed to not pursue these claims.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking man who made numerous attempts to contact his local Housing Authority. The client had been unable to access services in his native language, and was unable to determine whether he was on a waitlist for housing. NJP contacted the Housing Authority's Limited English Proficient compliance officer, and the Housing Authority agreed to provide the client with direct access to a Spanish-speaking representative until the planned opening of an office where applicants could check on the status of their applications.

- NJP's CLEAR helped a client qualify for public housing after denial due to a debt she owed to a former landlord. The former landlord was unwilling to accept a reasonable payment plan and demanded full repayment of the debt, which the client could not afford to pay. NJP worked with the client on preparing a payment plan offer letter to send to the landlord. After the landlord refused to accept the client's offer, NJP documented the client's efforts to pay the debt and provided a copy of the offer letter to the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority then approved the client for public housing.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a client who was having difficulty moving her Section 8 Voucher from one Housing Authority to another. The client had been approved for a voucher with the Bellingham/Whatcom Housing Authority at the same time that she was accepted by a college in Seattle. The client inquired about moving her voucher to King County, but her caseworker denied the request. NJP spoke with the client's caseworker and discovered that a ban on moving vouchers had recently been lifted. NJP negotiated an extension of the voucher and worked with the client on submitting the correct paperwork to change her voucher to King County. The client is now attending college in Seattle.
- NJP's CLEAR*Sr. assisted a man who was sued by the County over code violations. The client was facing over \$14,000 in fines plus the county's costs if it removed the debris from his property. The client was undergoing cancer treatment and had neither the strength to remove the old cars and debris from his property nor sufficient income to pay someone else to do it for him. NJP assisted in negotiating a settlement that included extra time for removal of the debris and reduction of a fine by over \$13,000. The client was able to pay the fine and avoid the imposition of liens on his home.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a victim of domestic violence retain her rental housing after her boyfriend was arrested, and a no-contact order put in place. The woman called CLEAR because the landlord had threatened to evict her and to cut off her electricity. The landlord was a friend of the boyfriend's, and was trying to help him get back into the unit. NJP contacted the landlord who backed off, and allowed the client to remain in the unit.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a tenant in a mobile home park with no potable water file a complaint with the Attorney General's Mobile Home Enforcement Task Force. The complaint resulted in the landlord restoring water service within three days.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a tenant who was renting a house that was without water. NJP advised the tenant of her rights and faxed the relevant statutes to her. The tenant then properly requested that the repairs be made and showed the statutes to the landlord, who promptly fixed the problem.

CLIENT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

BELLINGHAM

- Two NJP Bellingham office attorneys conducted outreach and community education at a mobile home park in Bellingham slated for closure, in order to inform park occupants about possible relocation assistance and their legal rights under state mobile home landlord-tenant law.
- An NJP Bellingham office attorney provided training to the new Skagit County volunteer lawyer program coordinator about public benefits programs and issues to assist her in screening for benefits issues and making appropriate referrals.
- An NJP Bellingham office advocate made a presentation at Whatcom Community College to a group of WorkFirst students in a DSHS-required class on Financial Literacy. The students received information on CLEAR, the WashingtonLawHelp website, the local pro bono program, the courthouse facilitator and the local NJP office case priorities. Other topics included rental repairs and security deposits, dealing with collection agencies, getting child support and how amounts are calculated, DSHS emergency need programs, resources for bankruptcy and dissolution, sealing criminal history records, and how to hire an attorney.

CLEAR DV (Specialized Domestic Violence Hotline System)

- NJP's CLEAR DV visited 23 of Washington's Domestic Violence programs around the state. In these visits, staff explained CLEAR DV's services and provided a brief training on declarations. CLEAR DV staff also presented training at the Washington State Coalition against Domestic Violence's Annual Conference.

CONTRACT ATTORNEY PROGRAM

- NJP CAP staff conducted outreach to the Quinault Reservation along with NAU and NJP Aberdeen office staff.

EVERETT

- An NJP Everett office attorney participates in a Snohomish County group addressing mental health service access for older adults. The group has developed information about the continuum of mental health services available to seniors in the area and gaps in the continuum from the consumer and provider perspectives. The group will continue to work to develop short-term and long-term strategies to address the gaps.

FARM WORKER UNIT (FWU)

- NJP Wenatchee FWU advocates did a community education presentation to a dozen health promoters (or "promotores") with Columbia Valley Community Health and Quincy Community Health concerning farm worker employment rights. The promotores,

who conduct home visits and other health-related outreach to farm workers in their communities, sought answers to questions that had been posed to them by the farm workers that they encounter, many of whom live in isolation and have little access to legal information.

- NJP's Wenatchee FWU made a community education presentation at the North Central Washington Labor Council's *Worker's Rights Open House*. NJP spoke together with representatives from the Department of Labor and Industries on employment rights, field sanitation, workers' compensation and wage law. Workers had questions about employment discrimination and housing rights.
- NJP's Wenatchee and Yakima FWU visited migrant farm worker labor camps in the Wenatchee, Rock Island and Orondo areas during the cherry harvest. Advocates provided workers with information about farm worker rights and the names and phone numbers of governmental agencies and legal services offices to contact to enforce their rights. NJP advocates met with dozens of workers, many of whom recently arrived from Mexico under the H2A program which permits growers to secure foreign workers to fill positions when there is a demonstrated shortage of local labor. The workers were very interested in the information and many had questions about wage payment and workers' compensation. NJP is also following up with the Department of Labor and Industries to support the continued medical treatment of injured H-2A workers once they return home.
- NJP's Wenatchee office contacted approximately 600 farm workers during outreach and community education visits to farm labor camps. NJP distributed all of the 550 editions of the NJP-produced educational newspaper *El Faro*. In addition to outreach at labor camps, legal education materials were distributed at food banks, health care offices, and driver's licensing offices.
- NJP's Wenatchee FWU made a presentation to the East Wenatchee EPIC Parent Group concerning employment rights, field sanitation, workers' compensation and wage law. The group had an opportunity to ask questions about their rights in the workplace and questions concerning Social Security no-match letters sent to employers. Most of those in attendance were employed in area orchards and packing sheds. Approximately 60 parents attended meeting.
- NJP's FWU community worker has continued to make community presentations regarding sexual harassment and the availability of legal services at parent meetings set up by the Washington State Migrant Council and other organizations. During the third quarter, FWU advocates made monthly presentations on Spanish language radio KDNA about Social Security no-match letters and farm worker employment rights.

Native American Unit (NAU)

- The Native American Task Force, the Northwest Justice Project's Native American Unit and its Interns, CLEAR and other NJP field staff engaged in extensive outreach to Washington State's Native American communities while conducting a 2007 Native

American Legal Needs Assessment Survey. During this period, NJP set up informational booths at Pow-wows on the Muckleshoot and Yakama Indian Reservations and the Seafair Indian Days Powwow in Seattle. NJP also set up booths at outreach events including the South Puget Sound Intertribal Planning Agency Employee Fair at the Nisqually Indian Reservation, the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians Annual Conference at the Quinault Indian Nation and the Tlingit and Haida Culture Fair in Seattle. NJP's Statewide Native American Advocacy Coordinator and NJP staff visited the Suquamish Tribe, Colville Indian Nation, Stillaguamish Tribe, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, and the Quinault Indian Nation. At these visits, NJP staff gave presentations on NJP Native American initiatives, services and case priorities. Through these efforts, tribal members and service providers completed over 500 surveys.

- The Native American Advocacy Coordinator, the CLEAR Native American Specialist and an NAU Intern gave a presentation sponsored by the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians on NJP's Native American Advocacy Program initiatives and NJP services and case priorities.
- NJP's Spokane-based NAU attorney continued to provide Indian Child Welfare Act training for county juvenile court CASA volunteers around the state in an effort to improve the quality of advocacy for Indian children in the state's dependency system.
- NJP's Spokane-based NAU attorney provided training for the Region 1 Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC). LICWACs are organized under DSHS regulations to help the Division of Children and Family Services identify and provide services for Indian children and families who come into the state child welfare system. The LICWAC is comprised of lawyers, social service and health professionals and lay members of the community. NJP's training was designed to help clarify LICWAC's role and DSHS's obligations in these cases.

OLYMPIA

- Two NJP Olympia office attorneys conducted monthly legal advice clinics at the Nisqually Tribe. Issues addressed included advice on child custody, wills and probate, employment, discrimination, among others. These clinics generated referrals for cases to the Olympia office.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney provided training to volunteer attorneys on how to work with immigrant clients in a legal clinic setting.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney visited senior nutrition meal sites in Belfair, Shelton, and at the Skokomish Nation (which included elders from the Squaxin Island Tribe). The attorney gave presentations and provided materials about free legal resources for seniors and decision-making issues. Altogether, about 100 seniors attended these presentations.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney has conducted outreach to key sites throughout Lewis and Mason Counties. The attorney attended an Inmigrantes Unidos meeting to discuss the

services available through the Olympia NJP office. The attorney also has met with various key persons from local domestic violence agencies in Lewis and Mason Counties.

SEATTLE/KING COUNTY

Basic Field

- NJP's Seattle office co-presented "Know Your Rights" workshops on health law and consumer law for young women incarcerated at Juvenile Detention. The workshops were coordinated by the "Powerful Voices" program.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney together with an attorney from Solid Ground presented a workshop for service providers on SSI, SSDI and debtors' rights related to these benefits.

Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP)

- NJP's RIAP continued to work with the DVCLP attorney to coordinate the Washington State Coalition for Language Access (WASCLA). The group has continued to develop its website and to work on LEP policies and training around the state. A two day statewide conference was held on September 7 and 8 in Ellensburg Washington. Co-sponsored by the Washington State Court Interpreter and Translators Society (WITS) and the Northwest Interpreter and Translators Society (NOTIS) the conference drew over 150 participants from all around the state. The key note speaker from the Department of Justice, Christine Stoneman praised the state's commitment to language access. The conference featured presentations by the Administrative Office of the Court staff on the new requirement of language assistance plans and had panels discussing telephonic interpreting, translation transcription, court and medical interpreter ethics, law enforcement and language access, and working with interpreters to help trafficking victims. The conference also featured Robin Bronen from Alaska speaking about the Interpreter and Translator Bank currently being developed by that state collaborative of courts, agencies, businesses and medical providers.
- NJP's RIAP continued to work with other advocates to address issues of access to the courts and continued to meet with staff of the Administrator of the Courts and the judiciary to raise issues of lack of access and need for better access throughout the state for limited English court users. The group is providing feedback to courts around the state as they draft Language Assistance Plans in anticipation of increased funding.

SPOKANE

- NJP's Spokane office presents a seminar on tenant's rights and responsibilities each quarter to a class of adult students with developmental disabilities at one of the local community colleges. One NJP Spokane office attorney, in concert with other members of the private bar and local fair housing agencies spoke at two neighborhood community meetings on tenant's rights.

TACOMA/PIERCE COUNTY

- NJP's Tacoma office was one of over 75 agencies participating in the City of Tacoma's 36th Annual Senior Citizen Awareness Day (SCAD) in August 2007. This very popular and successful event is sponsored by the City of Tacoma each year to recognize the contributions of seniors living in the City of Tacoma and Pierce County. Every participating agency was assigned its own booth. NJP had printed pamphlets and brochures available on a variety of subject matters (*i.e.*, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, Elder Abuse, Medicaid, Estate Recovery, etc.).

VANCOUVER

- An NJP Vancouver office attorney, in conjunction with advocates from NJP's Yakima office, conducted outreach to agricultural guest workers in a remote area of Southwest Washington.
- Attorneys from both NJP's Bellingham and Vancouver offices participate in a legal services workgroup that is meeting with DSHS Mental Health Division and other state staff in efforts to make sure that this year's Children's Mental Health Services legislation (H.B. 1088) is implemented consistently with the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) requirements of federal Medicaid law.

WALLA WALLA

- NJP's Walla Walla office conducted outreach with a new local agency formed to assist Hispanic business owners in their efforts to be competitive in the local marketplace. NJP exchanged information about ways in which the two organizations can be helpful to one another's clients.
- NJP Walla Walla office attorneys presented two programs on tenants' rights and obligations as part of life skills training courses offered by various community organizations.

WENATCHEE

- NJP's Wenatchee office made a community legal education presentation to "Entre Mujeres," a group of farmworker women, about two programs through which immigrant victims of domestic violence can become legal permanent residents of the U.S. Most of the members of Entre Mujeres are victims or survivors of domestic violence or supporters of victims.
- NJP's Wenatchee office made another of its regular appearances on a local cable TV show ("Senior Moments") with the Executive Director of Aging and Adult Care of Central Washington to discuss legal issues related to seniors. The topic for September

was the Mobile Home Landlord-Tenant Act. There are a number of “seniors-only” mobile home parks in the Wenatchee area.

- NJP’s Wenatchee office gave a presentation to a meeting of Aging and Adult Care case managers for North Central Washington on how to access free legal services.

NETWORKING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

- NJP’s Bellingham office hosts a monthly meeting of Whatcom County agencies involved with domestic violence. The informal exchange includes training for the DV advocates who in turn alert NJP of any problematic issues that arise on the DVPO calendar.
- Four NJP attorneys were selected to serve on the WSBA Indian Law Section. The Native American Advocacy Coordinator is Chair-Elect, an NAU attorney is Secretary-Treasurer, and two NJP field attorneys are serving as Section Trustees. Additionally, an NJP attorney and the new CLEAR Native American Specialist were selected for the governing council for the Northwest Indian Bar Association.
- NJP’s Native American Unit and King County staff serves on an Urban Native American Legal Clinic steering committee sponsored by the Northwest Indian Bar Association to help coordinate a neighborhood legal clinic. The clinic will be situated at the new Chief Seattle Club and provide services to Native American residents in the King County area.
- 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 Equal Access to Justice partner serving low income Lewis County residents through a pro bono program, legal clinic, facilitator services and more.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney sits on the board of the Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services which provides legal clinics and representation to low income people with volunteer attorneys.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney is a member of the Gender and Justice Commission.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney has been appointed by the Washington State Supreme Court to serve as a member of the Supreme Court Task Force on Dissolution which will develop statewide protocols for dissolution cases.
- NJP’s Olympia office attorneys have worked closely with Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services to launch a Housing Justice Project at the Thurston County Courthouse. The project provides volunteer attorneys to assist people with advice and representation

at the unlawful detainer docket every Friday morning. NJP assisted with planning the project and providing mentoring and back-up support for the Friday dockets.

- 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 office continues to host the Cross Cultural Family Law Clinic through which individuals with family law legal matters involving child custody and domestic violence and who experience cultural or legal barriers meet with volunteer attorneys for advice, consultation and brief service. NJP provides the clinic space and administrative support and attorney oversight of the project which is run in collaboration with the King County Bar Association's Neighborhood Legal Clinic Program.
- Two NJP Seattle office attorneys, together with attorneys from the King County Bar Association and the CENTS financial education program, are working to produce an advocate's guide to consumer issues. The guide will consist of a National Consumer Law Center book, Surviving Debt, with a supplement containing Washington-specific law.
- NJP's Spokane office attorneys serve on the Whitman County Legal Services Advisory Board, to ensure effective access to the justice system for the low-income residents of the southeastern county in Washington served by both programs.
- NJP's Spokane office attorneys serve on the Spokane County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program Advisory Board, helping to coordinate services with NJP in meeting the legal needs of low-income residents in the region.
- An NJP Spokane office attorney serves on the Spokane County Bar Association Board of Trustees.
- An NJP Walla Walla office attorney made a presentation to one of the County Clerk's offices informing the Clerk's office what services are offered by the agencies and how those services are accessed by clients.
- An NJP Vancouver office attorney completed five years of service, the last two as chair, on 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 is a new member of the statewide Domestic Relations Pattern Forms Sub-committee.

- An NJP Vancouver office attorney continues to participate as the legal aid representative in a DSHS workgroup that is reviewing and revising the agency's application for benefits form.
- At the invitation of the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA), an NJP Vancouver attorney participates in a committee (organized by VHA) to review and comment on VHA's proposal to change to its current rent calculation methodology in Section 8 and public housing programs to a flat rent/subsidy scheme. This scheme will impact more than 3000 program participants; many of who face substantial rent increases and possible loss of affordable, decent housing.
- NJP's Wenatchee office is working with the courts of Okanogan, Grant and Adams counties to prepare Language Assistance Plans and grant applications to fund language access to the courts for hearing impaired or limited English proficient courthouse users.
- NJP's Yakima office has been working closely with Yakima Superior, Juvenile and District Courts and the County Clerk's office to adopt a Language Assistance Plan and to apply for special funding from the Administrative Office of the Courts to compensate the county for the cost of interpreters.