

Northwest Justice Project

Advocacy Report First Quarter, 2008



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**NORTHWEST JUSTICE PROJECT
2008 FIRST QUARTER ADVOCACY REPORT
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION	1
OVERVIEW OF GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY	2
CASE EXAMPLES	5
NJP Basic Field Office Services	5
Civil Rights	5
Consumer	5
Economic Stability (Public Benefits)	7
Education	8
Family Stability, Safety & Security	8
Healthcare, Access & Quality of Care.....	14
Preservation of Housing & Habitability Issues.....	15
Targeted Populations (Persons with Disabilities, Limited English, Cultural and Other Barriers to Accessing Legal Services).....	20
Native American Unit - Statewide (NAU)	21
Family Stability.....	21
Preservation of Housing.....	22
Farm Worker Unit - Statewide (FWU)	22
Economic Security (Employment).....	22
Contract Attorney Program (CAP)	23
Coordinated Legal Education, Advice and Referral (CLEAR)	24
CLIENT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING.....	26
NETWORKING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES	31

INTRODUCTION

During the first quarter of 2008, the Northwest Justice Project (NJP) completed its expansion with three new offices and several new staff attorneys now in place. The added attorney staff has allowed NJP to more effectively address the legal needs of low income persons in the farthest reaches of the state. Examples include:

- NJP was able to get heat quickly restored for a wheel-chair bound woman in Okanogan County whose landlord cynically told her to “do some jumping jacks” to stay warm during a particularly cold spell.
- NJP’s new Port Angeles office helped residents of an assisted living facility avoid eviction after the facility stopped accepting Medicaid payments to cover the cost of care for the low income residents.
- NJP’s new Longview office helped a limited English speaking survivor of domestic violence protect herself and five children after her husband had been arrested and charged with second degree assault for beating her.
- NJP’s Longview office also helped a low income deaf father establish paternity and obtain custody of his two minor children after the mother left the children with him to move out of state.

These cases represent just a few examples of the many ways NJP makes a difference by providing individuals and families meaningful access to the legal system and advocating for their legal rights. With continuing and enhanced resources made available by the Washington state legislature through the Office of Civil Legal Aid and the national Legal Services Corporation, NJP is able to ensure the protection of basic human needs when those needs become intertwined with the legal system. These cases further demonstrate that NJP targets its resources to the most vulnerable persons in critical need of legal assistance.

Due to limited resources, NJP must make difficult decisions about what cases it can take, who it can help, and the extent of assistance it can provide to the many people who seek its services each year. Because NJP is not able to assist every person who seeks its help, NJP works closely with its Alliance for Equal Justice partners, including the local volunteer attorney programs, Courthouse Facilitators, human services organizations, tribes and others, to ensure that its limited resources are most effectively targeted to the greatest needs.

This report provides just a sample of the important role legal aid and community partnerships play in helping to sustain our most vulnerable residents and families.

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL SERVICE DELIVERY

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

- During the first quarter of 2008, NJP Bellingham advocates continued to represent vulnerable clients affected by disabilities, domestic violence, and language barriers with a variety of legal problems. Also, the NJP Bellingham office expanded its priorities to assist clients with consumer law issues, while maintaining a focus on housing preservation, family safety and stability, and financial security.

CLEAR and NJP Web Site

- In the first quarter of 2008 CLEAR answered 8,771 calls, resulting in 6,255 calls handled by advocates and 4,832 new cases. The Washington LawHelp web site experienced over 446,000 page views and over 97,000 visitor sessions.

Contract Attorney Program

- NJP's Contract Attorney Program (CAP) receives referrals for clients with issues in eleven counties (Asotin, Benton, Clallam, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Walla Walla, and Whitman). The CAP advocate will provide a brief service and/or refer the case to a private attorney who has agreed to handle high priority cases at a highly discounted fee (in any one year, CAP uses 30 to 40 attorneys). Once a contract attorney agrees to take a case, the CAP advocate provides ongoing consultation and assistance. The case-type priorities of CAP are similar to those of other legal services offices across the state; i.e., compelling issues which impact a critical need of the client.

Everett (Snohomish, Island Counties)

- During this quarter NJP's Everett office continued to represent clients in the Tulalip and Stillaguamish tribal courts and continued its legal advice clinic on the reservations with an Everett office attorney meeting with clients every first Friday of the month. The clinic provides help with family law matters in the Tulalip Tribal Court, housing and leasing issues exclusive to the Tulalip reservation, and information on the probate process involving Indian Trust land. The office has done outreach on consumer issues, continues participation in the Housing Justice Project, and continues to serve clients with family law, health care, housing and public benefits legal needs.

Farm Worker Unit

- NJP's Farm Worker Unit (FWU) consists of four attorneys and two community workers based in Wenatchee and 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, as well as issues of farm worker women who experience work place sexual harassment and/or domestic violence.

Longview

- NJP's Longview office serves eligible clients in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties. The office includes three attorneys and one legal assistant and enjoys a collaborative relationship with the Cowlitz County Legal Aid program.

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 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 four attorneys and two part-time support staff and is responsible for serving Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties. The Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services Program is co-located with the Olympia NJP office. During the first quarter of 2008, the Olympia office served clients with family law, housing, health care, public benefits and consumer problems and provided targeted representation to seniors and members of tribes in the region.

Port Angeles

- NJP's Port Angeles office consists of three attorneys and one support staff and serves Jefferson and Clallam counties. Clallam/Jefferson Pro Bono Lawyers program is co-located with the office. During this quarter, the office represented clients in family law, housing, employment and consumer cases and conducted outreach to the community and to the five Indian Tribes located on the Olympia Peninsula.

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.

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

- NJP's Spokane office emphasizes work on family law issues, housing, consumer issues, public benefits and Native American law. The office is staffed with eight attorneys, including a Native American Unit attorney, a Community Protection Program attorney, two legal assistants and a receptionist. During this quarter NJP's Spokane office opened a new satellite in Colville, which is staffed by two lawyers and a legal assistant, to serve the Northeast Washington Tri-County region of Stevens, Ferry and Pend O'Reille Counties.

Tacoma (Pierce, Kitsap Counties)

- NJP's Tacoma office consists of eight attorneys, two paralegals and two legal assistants who assist Pierce and Kitsap County clients in public benefits, family, housing, consumer, education, youth and elder law, disability and civil rights cases, and services Kitsap County clients through a satellite office. The advocates also serve a wide range of community groups and special client populations. The office is co-located with Volunteer Legal Services and TeamChild. Through funding provided by special population targeted contracts the office provides general legal services to indigent Western State Hospital (WSH) residents, to certain developmentally disabled persons who are either currently enrolled in, or are being considered for, the Community Protection Program, and to Pierce County senior citizens on a wide range of issues including elder abuse, exploitation and long-term care.

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

- NJP's Vancouver office has a staff of five attorneys and two legal assistants and houses NJP's website manager. 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)

- During the first quarter of 2008, NJP's Walla Walla office was staffed by four attorneys and one legal assistant. The Walla Walla office continues to focus on areas of family law, housing, public benefits, and consumer needs.

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

- NJP's Wenatchee office has five attorneys and three legal assistants and includes a two attorney, one legal assistant satellite office in Omak serving Okanogan County. The office 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, discrimination, access to public benefits, housing, 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 paralegal, who assists in interviewing, research and case development for clients with economic security and domestic violence problems.

CASE EXAMPLES AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT ADVOCACY EFFORTS

NJP FIELD OFFICE SERVICES*

Civil Rights

- NJP’s Wenatchee office represented a group of monolingual Spanish speaking victims of domestic violence and their supporters in advocating with the US Department of Justice in its effort to reach a favorable settlement of a civil rights complaint filed by NJP on behalf of the group. The complaint alleged violations of the Civil Rights Act for the failure of the Town of Mattawa to adequately provide police protection to its Limited English Proficient (LEP) residents who comprise approximately 83% of the Town’s population. The complaint was based on a number of incidents, including ones in which the police used children and neighbors to interpret at the scene of domestic violence, and one incident in which the police let a suspected perpetrator escape the scene of a crime on the ruse that the suspect was going to bring back someone bilingual to interpret for the police. Under the terms of the settlement agreement, the Town of Mattawa has adopted a “Language Assistance Plan.” The Plan requires the Town to contract with qualified interpreters, and to engage these interpreters when a police officer comes into contact with an LEP individual and determines that an interpreter is necessary. It also requires interpreters to be sent to a location near the scene of an emergency before the police arrive at the scene, as soon as dispatch notifies Mattawa Police that an LEP person is involved. NJP continues to monitor the Plan implementation.

Consumer

- NJP’s Bellingham office represented a deaf woman on a fixed income who purchased a vehicle from a local car dealership. The woman’s income includes disability benefits of \$600 per month. She was approved for a car loan with a monthly payment of well over \$400. After several months of struggling to make payments, she took the car back to the dealership to return it. The client, who communicates in part by reading lips, told the salesman that she could not afford the car on her limited income. The salesman told the

* For case examples from NJP’s Native American Unit and Farm Worker Unit see pages 21-22 and 22-23 respectively. For case examples from the Contract Attorney Program and CLEAR see pages 23-24 and 24-26 respectively.

client that he would sell her another car but the client responded that she just wanted to cancel the purchase and go home. After being kept at the dealership for almost eight hours and facing constant heavy pressure from the salesman, the client ended up agreeing to purchase another car for almost the same monthly payment as the car she had returned. She was crying when she signed for the second car because she did not want it, but felt she had no choice. The client then contacted NJP for assistance. After reviewing the paperwork from the sale, NJP discovered discrepancies in the credit application, including inaccurate and altered financial information. NJP sent a demand letter to the dealership and the dealer immediately agreed to a satisfactory resolution of the case.

- NJP's Omak office coordinated a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance tax preparation site in Nespelem on the Colville Reservation, staffed by three volunteers. The percentage of Earned Income Tax Credit recipients who took out refund anticipation loans is higher in the Nespelem zip code than in anywhere else in the state of Washington. The top five zip codes in Washington for earned income tax credit filers who got potentially abusive refund anticipation loans are on or adjacent to the Colville Reservation. The volunteer tax preparers are also helping at special events on the Colville reservation to prepare stimulus payment applications.
- NJP's Port Angeles office represented a woman who had moved into a house with her boyfriend and began to make mortgage payments out of her funds. After a few years of living together, she moved out and her former boyfriend filed a petition in Clallam County Superior Court claiming a meretricious relationship seeking to hold her partially liable for the mortgage. After preliminary litigation, NJP was able to secure a hold harmless agreement that relieved her of the mortgage debt.
- NJP's Seattle office successfully represented a victim of a foreclosure rescue scam in which the client lost \$200,000 in equity. Prior to the trial, several of the defendants settled and NJP was able to prove at trial that the remaining defendants acted fraudulently resulting in judgments against the remaining defendants for the value of the remaining \$100,000 lost in the scheme.
- NJP's Spokane office assisted a client in vacating a default judgment and decree of foreclosure of her home. This was a construction defects case originating from a contract that the client entered into with a local contractor. The contract was for the construction of a new garage on the property. The contractor built the garage in the wrong location which resulted in the electric cables, phone wires and television cables needing to be relocated for the entire neighborhood. The client withheld payment to the contractor until the issues with the wires and cables were resolved. The issues were not resolved, and the contractor sued the client for the non-payment. The client sought legal assistance from a law firm and was advised that she did not have to respond to the summons and complaint. Approximately thirty days later, the client received the default orders and decree of foreclosure. The client then contacted NJP. NJP was able to have the orders vacated and to refer the client to another attorney who specializes in construction law who agreed to take the case pro bono. The attorney succeeded in obtaining a highly favorable resolution to the case.

- NJP’s Spokane office assisted a mentally impaired woman rescind a contract for a home-based internet sales business after attending a “free seminar” at a local hotel. The contract was for almost \$6,000. During the formation of the contract, the opposing party asked the client if she had a credit card with that high of limit, and asked her to fill out paperwork for their financing. Then the company representative encouraged the client to use her own credit card for the contract, which the client did. When the client asked if someone would teach her to use the internet, because she did not know how, she was told, “of course.” The company representative also made promises of wealth and commented on the client’s religious beliefs. The client sat through two days of the “orientation” seminar and did not understand what was going on, nor did she understand what she had paid for. The client then took her “business” materials to her mental health case manager and asked for help learning to use the internet. At that point, the case manager suggested the client call to cancel the contract and referred the client to NJP. The company refused to provide a refund. NJP was able to negotiate a complete refund for the client and was able to get the client set up with a trustworthy and appropriate protective payee so as to avoid a similar problem in the future.
- NJP’s Spokane office represented a client in a Chapter 13 bankruptcy filed over four years ago in an effort to save her home from foreclosure. NJP has monitored this case making sure that the client was making her monthly payments to the trustee and generally making sure that the case proceeded to completion smoothly. In the 59th month of a 60-month plan, the trustee made a motion to change the base amount of the bankruptcy plan. This motion, if granted, would have required the client to pay over \$1,200 in addition to her regular payment of \$516, in the last month of the plan. NJP objected, brought a counter motion for a “hardship discharge.” The trustee’s motion was denied, and the client was granted the discharge. This allowed the client to avoid having the entire bankruptcy case dismissed, which would have revived all the unsecured debts, which have now been discharged, and she continues in possession of her home.

Economic Stability (Public Benefits)

- NJP’s Bellingham office represented a 43-year-old physically and mentally impaired woman after the Social Security Administration terminated her SSI disability benefits and required her to repay \$1869 in prior benefits, both due to owning an excess resource that made her ineligible. The client’s excess resource was a residential property in another state which she had inherited, but did not even know about until months after the property was deeded to her. The client appealed the termination of her benefits, but chose not to request continued benefits during that appeal because of her fear of an additional overpayment. NJP assisted her separately in filing an amended request to waive the repayment of the prior benefits. Her waiver request was subsequently approved because NJP made a clear showing that the repayment would cause her undue financial hardship. The client then chose to withdraw her appeal of the termination and to move to the state in which her new property was located. NJP informed her how to request a portable federal housing assistance voucher from the local housing authority to transfer her rent subsidy to the other state, in order to afford interim housing there while she made necessary repairs and improvements to the inherited property to make it livable. NJP also advised the client how she could re-qualify for SSI benefits once she moved into the

inherited property. The client was thus able to formulate a realistic plan for supporting herself through this transition.

- NJP's Spokane office assisted a young single mother resolve her TANF sanctions with DSHS. The client contacted NJP after having been in "sanction" for six months. When DSHS sought to terminate her from the program. The client has significant neurological problems and frequent seizures which impact her ability to understand directions. DSHS had been providing most of the directions for the WorkFirst program by phone, and did not provide written directions, even though the client had asked that DSHS accommodate her medical condition by providing written directions. NJP assisted the client in updating her medical information and negotiated with DSHS supervisors. DSHS agreed to categorize the client as in "need of supplemental assistance" so that all future directions and requirements will be written down for her and to provide her with a partial exemption from the WorkFirst requirements because of her seizure disorder. Thus, NJP was able to get the client out of sanction status and get her six months of back benefits restored after proving that she could not participate in all WorkFirst activities.
- NJP's Vancouver office assisted a client who suffers from severe agoraphobia in obtaining GA-U. The client's ability to travel any real distance from his home is severely impeded making normal social interaction, or maintaining employment impossible. NJP worked with the client's counselor and persuaded DSHS to agree first to obtain a new psychiatric evaluation of the client and, ultimately, to approve benefits. The client's psychiatric evaluation concluded that the client was not malingering and was probably seriously underreporting the extent of his agoraphobia.

Education

- NJP's Tacoma office successfully represented a client in seeking readmission to high school. The client was expelled last year and NJP prepared a readmission petition on his behalf addressing the client's significant progress and personal achievements since his expulsion. The student's readmission was approved at the readmission hearing.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a 15-year-old student who was emergency-expelled from high school based on his alleged participation in threats to attack the school by a neighborhood gang. The student adamantly denied any such activities, and the school had only hearsay evidence to support the expulsion. NJP represented the student in challenging the expulsion and negotiated his return to school with continued participation in sports and with an opportunity to make up missed work.

Family Stability, Safety & Security

- NJP's Aberdeen office assisted a client whose wife absconded to another state with their infant child when he tried to serve her with dissolution papers and a restraining order. The client was very concerned because his wife had recently shaken their infant child, had recently written troubling notes about hurting herself, and had a history of other children being removed by Child Protective Services. The local police department refused to take a police report, because they did not believe it was a crime for a parent to

leave with her child in the absence of a parenting plan or custody order prohibiting it. NJP contacted the police department and advised the chief of police about the section of Washington's custodial interference statute that applies in the absence of a parenting plan or custody order. The police department subsequently took a report from the client, filed charges against the wife for custodial interference, and worked with law enforcement in the other state to bring the wife and child back to Washington.

- NJP's Aberdeen office assisted a client in securing protection for her three year old child who was the victim of sexual abuse during a visit with the father. Child Protective Services became involved after the mother took the child to the hospital, resulting in a report of suspected abuse against the father. CPS instructed the client that she must modify the prior parenting plan, which allowed for unsupervised contact between the father and the child. NJP assisted the client in securing an emergency order from the court which granted the mother full placement of the child, with a restraining order allowing no contact by the father with the child or with the client until a full CPS and criminal investigation could be completed.
- NJP's Everett office represents a mother in a tribal court child dependency case and was successful in stopping a permanent out of home placement for the client's young children. NJP negotiated with the child welfare agency to schedule visitation between the mother and her two children after over a year of no contact. While the children continue to be placed in foster care, the agency has agreed to recommend reunification pending the mother's continued compliance with services for ninety days.
- NJP's Everett office represents a monolingual Spanish-speaking domestic violence survivor with four minor children in a parentage action. Once the client sought refuge in a domestic violence shelter with her children and obtained a temporary Protection Order, the father of her children filed motions for contempt and Temporary Orders against her in retaliation. NJP represented the client at her Protection Order hearing and the Contempt and Temporary Orders hearing and NJP successfully obtained a one year Protection Order for the client, Temporary Orders that provided the father with only professionally supervised visits, and denial of the father's contempt motion.
- NJP's Longview office helped a monolingual Spanish-speaking domestic violence victim with obtaining a temporary parenting plan that protects her five children. The client's husband had been arrested and charged with second degree assault after beating the client for hours and trying to strangle her. The husband continued to try to harass the client from jail and influence negotiations in her family law case. When the husband tried to get unrestricted visits with his children, NJP obtained a temporary domestic violence protection order that covered the children. NJP eventually negotiated an agreed temporary parenting plan that ensures professionally supervised, limited visitation, conditioned on the husband's enrollment in a certified batterer's treatment program, and restraining orders to protect the client and children.
- NJP's Longview office obtained a default judgment in a parentage case for the father of two small girls. Both he and the mother of the girls are deaf. The mother left the children

with their father and moved out of state to be with a new boyfriend. NJP obtained the order, awarding the father full custody of the children.

- NJP's Olympia office assisted a Spanish speaking survivor of domestic violence modify a final parenting plan, giving her substantially more residential time with her three children and increasing her decision making rights significantly. The prior plan gave her only day time visitation with no holidays and no time for Mother's Day. The father was not permitting very much visitation and requiring her to exercise all visitation at his house under his personal supervision. This was particularly troubling because of the father's history of domestic violence towards the client, including at least one arrest. The new Final Parenting Plan gives the client full weekends, permission to pick the children up from school, shared holidays and joint decision making power.
- NJP's Omak office reached a favorable settlement on behalf of a monolingual Spanish speaking victim of domestic violence trying to protect herself and her child from the child's father, who has a history of perpetrating domestic violence. NJP succeeded in obtaining a parenting plan that protects the child by allowing the father only limited and supervised visitation.
- NJP's Omak office assisted a young mother to correct errors in a temporary parenting plan. At the original hearing on the parenting plan neither parent was represented. The parenting plan that resulted contained errors creating such ambiguity that the parties were calling the sheriff repeatedly to settle visitation disputes. The court facilitator declined to assist in drafting and filing a motion because there is no court-mandated form for a motion to clarify a parenting plan. The parenting plan, read literally, would have resulted in the five year old child staying overnight six times each week in a homeless shelter that does not accommodate children. NJP prepared the motion to clarify the order, which the court entered.
- NJP's Omak office represents a mother of five in tribal court to obtain permanent custody, permanent protection order, and child support. The mother suffered beatings and sexual abuse from the father until they separated. At a point when the father was represented and the mother was pro se, the mother lost custody of the children, even after an expert recommended no unsupervised contact between the daughter and the father. Because she was pro se, the mother was not able to properly submit evidence of the domestic violence. The children are currently residing with the mother after the father assaulted his most recent girlfriend, and while various criminal charges are pending against him.
- NJP's Port Angeles office represented a mother who lived in Oregon who allowed her daughter to visit the child's father in Port Angeles for a two week period. The father refused to return the child and obtained emergency ex parte orders which gave him temporary custody of his daughter. NJP entered the case and sought dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction and that there was no actual emergency. The Clallam County Superior Court dismissed the father's motion and ordered the child returned to her mother. The child was returned to the mother later the same day and is doing well in Oregon.

- NJP's Port Angeles office represented a woman in a dissolution in which there was a significant history of domestic violence. The couple had adopted a grandchild and while the parties eventually agreed upon a parenting plan, there were major disagreements about family loans. During the marriage the parties had taken a large amount of money from the husband's parents and in the dissolution, the husband asked that the client be ordered to repay half of the husband's debts. After trial the court ruled the moneys were gifts and that the client was not responsible for their repayment and The client is able to remain in the family residence with her grandchild.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a Russian immigrant who was a victim of domestic violence in a protection order case involving her husband. The husband had been physically and emotionally abusive to her and their five children. Months after the issuance of her protective order, the husband obtained representation and filed for a protection order based on false allegations of stalking and harassment. NJP represented the mother and the protection order was denied.
- NJP's Seattle office represented a deaf woman who had been of victim of domestic violence by the father of her two daughters. The woman had been previously represented by NJP in the parties' parenting plan litigation several years ago. The father had continued to engage in abusive use of conflict such as withholding the children, and false reporting to Child Protective Services. When the father proceeded to obtain an ex parte restraining order permitting him to remove the children from their school, NJP represented the woman in immediately quashing the orders and obtaining an order for immediate return of the children to her custody.
- NJP's Seattle Domestic Violence Project represented a client who is of Moroccan descent and who needed an Order for Protection as a result of repeated emotional, physical and sexual abuse by her husband. The rapes that were inflicted upon the client were particularly horrific because of her cultural and religious background. After the client fled the abuse, her husband began stalking her. After the Order for Protection was granted, the husband, through his attorney, filed a Motion for Revision. The motion was denied and the client's Protection Order remained in place.
- NJP's Seattle Domestic Violence Project represents a client who is from the Philippines. The client was compelled to leave her family in the Philippines because she became pregnant. After the client arrived in the United States, her husband isolated, exploited, and physically abused her. She fled the abusive relationship, and her husband later filed for dissolution of marriage and custody of their one child in common. Trial is pending.
- NJP's Seattle office successfully defended an appeal of a lower court ruling in which the client was awarded custody with serious restrictions on the non-residential parent's time with the child. The client relocated to Brazil as a result of the courts ruling and had no means to respond to the appeal which objected to all aspects of the lower court's ruling including the relocation and the restrictions on the father's contact with the child. As a result of the successful appeal the client can now register her final orders with the Brazilian courts for full enforcement in her home jurisdiction.

- NJP's Spokane office represented a Ferry County single mother in a Colville Tribal Court action to modify her existing parenting plan. NJP previously obtained a domestic violence protection order for the client. The modified parenting plan did two things: it included the parties' second child, and reflected the restrictions from the domestic violence protection order. Also, the modified parenting plan included substantial restrictions on the father's contact with the young children until he participates in a domestic violence perpetrator's program and engages in drug and alcohol counseling and treatment. Even after those are completed, the father's travel with the children is limited to a four-county area of eastern Washington. NJP was also successful in getting the client increased child support.
- NJP's Spokane office represented a woman in a family law matter in Stevens County which was begun by the client as a dissolution action. Once NJP became involved, the client decided that she didn't want a divorce, but instead wanted a decree of invalidity, a permanent restraining order against the opposing party, an award of all real and personal property in her possession, and a money judgment for the expenses that she incurred bringing the husband from Russia. There were facts in evidence that supported the client's stated objectives and was complicated by the need for Russian interpretation. The judge ruled entirely in the client's favor, granting all the relief requested.
- NJP's Spokane office represents a father in an action to modify a parenting plan. The parents were never married, but paternity was established years ago and a parenting plan was entered at that time granting placement with the mother. The mother disappeared with the child and the father had no idea where they were. In January of 2007, the State removed the child from the mother's care, and filed a dependency action. The father was located and he agreed to join the dependency. The child was placed with the father and NJP initiated a modification action in superior court, seeking primary placement with the father and very limited, supervised visitation with the mother. At the temporary orders hearing, the court adopted the father's proposed parenting plan.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a client in reaching a negotiated settlement in a dissolution action with children. Because of the opposing party's history of violence and his lack of bonding with the very young child, who is in the primary custody of the client, the parties agreed that the father should have professionally supervised visitation only. The parties also agreed to a child support amount and the distribution of debts and assets.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a grandmother in a third-party custody case. The client was granted custody of her grandchildren, but a portion of the child support money that the father had sent was held by DSHS. DSHS would not return the money, stating that it was a reimbursement from a time period when the grandmother cared for an older grandchild who was not a child of the child support-paying father. NJP requested an administrative hearing on this issue.
- NJP's Tacoma office successfully defended a recent Ugandan immigrant woman in a domestic violence protection order case. The client had offered refuge to her two teenaged nieces from their father's home where they had been subjected to severe discipline, including physical abuse. The father retaliated by bringing this case and by

arranging for relatives to kidnap the client's adult children in Zaire. The domestic violence case threatened the client's asylee status in which she was represented by a volunteer attorney.

- NJP's Walla Walla office represented a father of two children in a custody modification proceeding. The children had been assaulted while living with the mother, due to the mother's drug use. The children had also failed to attend school and showed signs of neglect while in the mother's care. NJP negotiated a parenting plan which granted custody to the father and required the mother to remain sober and complete treatment before seeing the children unsupervised.
- NJP's Wenatchee office obtained final orders including a parenting plan which awarded custody of twins to NJP's client. The client suffered a long history of domestic violence including an episode where she was knocked unconscious by the father. Prior to seeking help from NJP, the court had awarded temporary custody of the children to the father. This decision was overturned at a bench trial in 2007. The attorney representing the father, however, refused to enter the final orders per the court's decision and the father kept the children and refused support. NJP entered those final orders, and the client was granted a substantial award of back child support.
- NJP's Vancouver office successfully represented a 20-year-old mother of an infant child in a parentage action. The infant's father, who was 15 years older than the client, had become involved with the client when she was 16 and when they were both living in her home state of Nevada. The client followed her boyfriend to southwest Washington, where his family was located, but where the client knew no one. The boyfriend then became increasingly unsupportive and controlling, eventually becoming physically abusive. The client returned to Nevada and her support network, with her baby, then 5 months old. The father filed a parentage action alleging, among other things, that the client was "mentally ill" due to crying during the pregnancy and after their daughter's birth. The boyfriend also alleged that the client had "fled Washington's jurisdiction" by moving back to Nevada, and demanded that custody of the baby be awarded to him and that the client move back to Washington. NJP obtained a declaration from a counselor who treated the client during her pregnancy and after her child was born. The counselor explained that the client had been depressed, in no small part due to the emotionally and then physically abusive relationship with her boyfriend. With NJP's assistance, the mother was able to remain in Nevada with the baby.
- NJP's Wenatchee office obtained temporary child custody for a mother who was being threatened with deportation if she would not give custody of the child to the father. The client was the victim of severe and protracted domestic violence by the father. When NJP entered an appearance in the case, the father and his counsel threatened to call Immigration and Customs Enforcement and have the client deported if she refused to give the father custody of the child. This was after the father had himself refused to have contact with the child, and refused to pay child support. When the client refused, opposing counsel argued that despite the history of abandonment and domestic violence, the father should be awarded custody on the sole basis that the mother's immigration status made her an unfit parent. The court summarily dismissed this argument, awarded

custody to the mother, and restricted the father's visitation with the child until he complies with court ordered conditions.

Healthcare, Access and Quality of Care

Veterans' Benefits

- NJP's Everett office helped an elderly woman living in an alternate care facility to get her VA benefits fully restored. The Veteran's Administration mistakenly believed the special benefits were no longer payable because she resided in a "nursing home," when in fact she resided in a community-based facility. The funds, if restored, would typically go to DSHS to defray state Medicaid expenses, and are available to the veteran only if needed to pay for a service not covered by Medicaid. The woman needed the benefits for dental services not covered by Medicaid and the DSHS Home and Community Services regional office worked with the state's VA liaison program to get the benefits restored.

Medicaid

- NJP's Omak office assisted a woman who was denied Medicaid coverage for necessary dental work. The client needs a crown. Medicaid will pay for crowns for only select categories of adults, such as certain developmentally disabled adults. The client does not fit into these categories. She does, however, suffer from severe systemic Lupus which causes dry mouth, which causes teeth to decay at a faster rate and to become fragile. The alternatives to crowns that might work for people who do not suffer from Lupus, are not viable for this client because her teeth are so fragile. NJP has asked DSHS for an exception to rule (ETR) for severe and urgently needed dental care.
- NJP's Seattle office assisted an elderly disabled client who was facing a penalty period of Medicaid benefits. The client resided in a nursing home and the costs and expenses were covered by her Medicaid benefits. The client received a notice that she could not receive Medicaid coverage for several years, because she allegedly transferred property for less than fair market value. The client's name appeared on the title of her daughter's home, and the client had removed her name from the title through the transfer. The client did not have any actual ownership in the home, but had originally placed her name on the title because the client's good credit history allowed her daughter to obtain an affordable home loan. If the client's medical benefits were terminated, she would not be able to reside in the nursing home. Her health would be at risk as the daughter would not be able to afford nursing home level care or provide medical coverage for her mother. NJP helped the client submit documents to DSHS to show that the client had no actual ownership in the home. DSHS agreed and removed the penalty period.
- NJP's Seattle office assisted a client who required replacement dentures. The client's replacement dentures had been stretched to the point where the dentures would not fit properly inside her mouth, and would continuously slip out of placement and she experienced both physical and emotional pain and discomfort. DSHS denied her request for replacement dentures because the regulations only provide coverage for one pair of replacement dentures within a 5 year period, and the client still had a considerable

amount of time to wait before she could receive a new set of dentures. NJP sought an Exception to Rule and DSHS agreed to cover the cost for the replacement dentures.

- NJP's Tacoma office assisted a monolingual Cambodian-speaking client who was referred for assistance regarding a denial of medical coverage by DSHS that had been terminated without proper notice. The termination notice was sent to the client in English only, and contained no client-specific information as to why benefits were being terminated. NJP represented the client at hearing and argued that because DSHS failed to provide adequate notice of the termination of medical benefits in the client's primary language, benefits must be reinstated. The ALJ agreed and the client's medical benefits were reinstated, thereby covering medical bills of over \$50,000 for cancer treatment.

Preservation of Housing & Habitability Issues

Subsidized Housing

- NJP's Bellingham office represented a domestic violence survivor when the local Housing Authority terminated her federal rental assistance voucher because of an alleged failure to report all of her household income on time. The income had been earned by her now-estranged husband at a new job he started a few months before they separated. The client had reported the new job, but the Housing Authority claimed that her husband had worked and had earnings for a longer period than she reported. The client believed she had promptly reported their changed circumstances, but she also knew that she had been dealing with considerable chaos and extreme stress leading up to her separation and may have missed a deadline, and also knew her estranged husband may not have been truthful with her about whether he was working. NJP presented strong evidence of the domestic violence the client was dealing with and the hearing officer concluded that any reporting error had not been intentional. Her federal rental assistance was fully reinstated.
- NJP's Everett office assisted a long-time public housing tenant who had received a 3-day notice to vacate based on a nuisance complaint. The housing authority indicated that he was under suspicion due to high traffic and suspicious activity at his apartment. The man denied this and was concerned that he had been targeted for complaints due to his Iraqi national origin. To complicate matters, he had recently been approved for permanent resident status and was awaiting his documentation. The client was willing to move, but had been informed that if the documentation could not be delivered to him at his current address he would have to begin the application process again. NJP negotiated with the housing authority and the client was able to remain in his apartment for an additional 3 months allowing him to receive his permanent residency status.
- NJP's Everett office represented several residents of a manufactured home community that had been sold and was slated for closure and redevelopment. The residents, most of whom were seniors or disabled, needed more time to find new living arrangements. NJP negotiated with the community's new owner to get the residents a six month extension and a reduction in rent during the extension period. All the residents were able to use this time to locate new housing and were able to recover their security deposits and refunds of

rent overpayments. Additionally, one resident who had potential claims under the Mobile Homes Landlord Tenant Act, was able to settle those claims to his satisfaction.

- NJP's Longview office assisted a single mother with five children with her subsidized housing case. The client's federal housing assistance voucher was threatened with termination based on the Housing Authority's allegation that the client had abandoned her rental property. At the termination hearing, NJP helped the client present her case and question the property manager's story. The client was able to show that she had gone on a trip for a shorter time than required notice to the Housing Authority, leaving all of her furniture and most belongings in her rental home. During her absence, the property had been burglarized and almost everything inside stolen and the property manager disposed of the client's remaining belongings. The hearing examiner ruled in favor of the client, finding no evidence that she intended to abandon the property. The client's voucher was reinstated, allowing her to find new rental housing.
- NJP's Port Angeles office represented a client who was terminated from the Jefferson County Housing Authority's federal rental assistance voucher program for failing to submit accurate financial information for her voucher eligibility. She lives with her disabled son for whom she is the sole caretaker. The client had significant mental health problems and after being injured at work, was prescribed numerous medications. She made an unemployment claim which, after initially being denied, was awarded in March 2007. The client notified DSHS of the receipt of Unemployment Benefits but failed to notify the Housing Authority until her annual recertification in January 2008. She received a termination notice and at the informal hearing, NJP introduced evidence that the client's various medications interacted with each other to cause significant cognitive problems. These cognitive problems impaired the client's understanding of the notification requirements. The hearing officer rescinded the termination notice and the client will keep her voucher.
- NJP's Seattle office assisted a crime victim to preserve her federal housing subsidy. The client had testified against a gang member and was living in fear when other members of the gang discovered her residence. Her automobile was vandalized, her life had been threatened, and bullet holes were found in the walls of her building. She sought to move to a different state to escape the violence, but her landlord was unwilling to release her from liability for the substantial remaining term of her lease. The landlord's lack of cooperation threatened to prevent her from using her housing voucher at a new location, which she needed to afford rent. NJP negotiated with the landlord, the local housing authority, and the out-of-state housing authority to enable the woman to surrender the lease without financial penalty and successfully move her voucher to the new location.
- NJP's Seattle office represents a single mother who was assaulted by her boyfriend after she refused his request to move permanently into her apartment. Upon learning of the violent incident, the landlord threatened the tenant with eviction unless she signed a document purporting to terminate her tenancy "voluntarily" after four days. The tenant did not want to move, but signed the document anyway due to her belief that the landlord could make good on his threat. When the tenant reported this matter to her domestic violence counselor, she was referred to NJP. Meanwhile, as the tenant had been unable to

vacate her home within four days, the landlord commenced an eviction lawsuit against her. NJP persuaded the landlord to dismiss the action unconditionally and permit her tenancy to continue indefinitely. NJP then asked the court to seal the court file to avoid any adverse effect of the eviction filing. The request was denied and NJP has appealed the issue to the Court of Appeals.

- NJP's Seattle office was appointed counsel for a mentally-ill man attempting to defend himself *pro se* in an eviction trial. At stake was the man's housing and with it a federal rental assistance voucher upon which he relied to afford his rent. The Court appointed a guardian ad litem (GAL) for the tenant after finding that he lacked the ability to appreciate his peril and to cooperate meaningfully in his defense, and the court appointed NJP after the GAL requested counsel to handle the unlawful detainer action. NJP brought a motion to have the eviction action dismissed for insufficient evidence, and prevailed on the motion. NJP also secured an agreement with the landlord designed to protect the tenant's housing voucher in the case of a future lease violation. NJP continues to work with the GAL, the tenant, and student volunteers from the Seattle University School of Law's Access to Justice Institute, to implement safeguards to enable the client and other tenants to comply with the lease terms in light of his mental illness.
- NJP's Vancouver office assisted a client to preserve her federal housing assistance. The client faced a subsidy reduction of over \$200 per month because the local Housing Authority included the client's adult son's income as part of the client's household income in determining the client's subsidy amount, removing his status as her live-in-aide. The Housing Authority's decision left the client in the position of not being able to afford rent, risking loss of housing and voucher, or asking the son to move out (which would increase her subsidy), leaving her without a caregiver of her choice. The client's son in fact was a live-in-aide and there was no evidence to suggest that the Housing Authority doubted that the son was actually caring for his mother. With NJP's assistance, the Housing Authority agreed to recalculate the client's subsidy, to make the recalculated subsidy amount retroactive, and to allow her son to remain as caregiver.
- NJP's Vancouver office prevented the eviction of a disabled tenant from a low income housing tax credit property based on repeated late payments of rent. Due to circumstances beyond her control, the client paid rent late three times in the six months before the attempted eviction. The landlord proceeded with the unlawful detainer action based on legally deficient notice to terminate the tenancy and before the notice period expired. The landlord agreed to dismiss the action and allow the client to stay; in exchange the client obtained a payee to ensure timely rent payments in the future.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a disabled senior woman to preserve her federal rental subsidy. The client was a hoarder and had lived in her residence for many years. Her landlord passed away, and the home moved into probate. The personal representative of the estate wished to sell the home and, therefore, served the client with a notice to vacate. Through the process, it came to light that the client had not paid her portion of the rent for nearly two years. NJP was able to negotiate with the opposing attorney to obtain additional time for the client to move her extensive belongings and the personal representative agreed to assist with the cost of dumping any trash the client did not wish

to move. Further, the personal representative agreed not to seek any of the back rent owed by the client. An unlawful detainer was not filed, preserving the client's much needed federal rental assistance voucher.

- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted in preserving a single mother and her seven children's tenancy. The client was served with a notice to pay or vacate. The amount of rent the landlord claimed was due to an improperly initiated rent increase. NJP was able to negotiate with the landlord to reach an agreement whereby, the client was not responsible for any back rent derived from the improper rent increase and the landlord agreed not to file an unlawful detainer. The client then agreed to pay the new increased rent from the date of the agreement forward.

Mobile Home Park Issues

- NJP's Bellingham office continued to represent five recreational vehicle owners who were threatened with eviction from a mobile home park. The home owners had notified their landlord about problems with the septic system after raw sewage leaked into their yards from the park's septic tank. When the park management failed to respond to their complaints or to the situation, one of the home owners filed complaints with the Attorney General's office and with the county health department. The health department inspector found several violations, fined the park owner and ordered the owner to remedy the problem. After receiving the health department inspection report, the park management sent the home owners notices terminating their tenancies at the park. The park management claimed that the park was an RV park, not a mobile home park, which allowed them to terminate the tenancies with 20 days' notice. Three of the home owners had lived in the park for eighteen months and all the home owners signed leases specifically indicating that the tenancies were governed by the Mobile Home Landlord-Tenant Act. NJP identified and presented the park owners' with the bases for their violations of the Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act, the Consumer Protection Act and the warranty of habitability. The home owners continued to reside in the park for several months and experienced substantial harassment during that time. After a period of negotiation, a favorable settlement was reached.
- NJP's Olympia office helped a disabled Thurston County senior who was being evicted from his mobile home park. Although the client was amenable to moving, he needed time to find a new place to live. NJP negotiated with the park's attorney to allow the client three more months to move out. The client used the time to buy a mobile home in a park which is much more willing to work with senior and disabled tenants thereby averting homelessness and loss of his personal property. NJP also arranged for the former park to waive all fees, damages, and costs of demolishing and removing the old mobile home.
- NJP's Walla Walla office assisted a family in retaining their mobile home. The family had been served with a notice to pay rent or vacate. The family was under the misunderstanding that they had an oral agreement with the property manager of the mobile home park to pay the lot rent and other expenses owed by a particular date. An unlawful detainer was initiated. NJP was able to negotiate with the landlord's attorney in

order to allow the family to pay the amount owed and to retain their mobile home and space in the park. A late payment fee was waived.

Home Ownership

- NJP's Longview office assisted a client who was being wrongfully evicted as part of a guardianship action involving his nursing home-bound mother. The client, who had lived with and been the main caregiver for his mother for more than ten years, was threatened with eviction because the guardian needed to sell the mother's home to pay back nursing home bills. NJP assisted the client with filing briefs arguing that the court had no jurisdiction to issue an eviction order in a guardianship case, and that the client was entitled to an equitable lien on the home his mother had always intended for him to inherit in exchange for his services. NJP eventually helped the client negotiate a settlement that gave him a month and a half to vacate the home and awarded him a \$10,000 share of the proceeds from the home sale after other creditors' claims were satisfied.
- NJP's Wenatchee office preserved housing for a low-income senior and his disabled wife who were being threatened with foreclosure/forfeiture of their mobile home because they had failed to make their monthly payments for almost two years. The clients were considering a highly suspect internet loan in order to obtain cash necessary to cure the default. NJP negotiated with the opposing party to modify the contract to extend the term of the contract so that the clients could resume payments, and drafted and executed a contract modification to the satisfaction of both parties. NJP also provided the clients with advice regarding the dangers of unconventional and internet loans, and advised the 63 year old husband regarding obtaining social security benefits, and the rules about working while receiving social security retirement benefits.

Nursing Home and Other Institutional Evictions

- NJP's Port Angeles office represented a Port Townsend resident who resided in an assisted living facility and was served an eviction notice pursuant to the facilities allegation that they could no longer adequately provide her services. Due to her having exhausted her personal resources, the resident's housing payments were made by the State of Washington and the facility no longer accepted State payments for residents. Ten other residents were also given notice to vacate. The area senior ombudsmen contacted NJP. After complex negotiations the facility agreed to let the client remain in the facility until she could find another suitable place to live.

Other Housing

- NJP's Omak office assisted a disabled woman restore heat to her apartment during a particularly cold spell. The client, who suffers from both physical and mental disabilities, was originally told by her landlord to just "do some jumping jacks" if she was cold. The client called NJP for assistance while sitting in her wheelchair in front of her oven, the one remaining source of heat in her apartment. NJP advised the client of her rights and

she was able to negotiate effectively with the landlord, who immediately installed a new heater in the client's apartment.

- NJP's Wenatchee office represents a family who lived in a rental home that was condemned because the conditions made it unsafe to occupy. The family contacted NJP after they had already been evicted for non-payment of rent. Having appeared *pro-se* at the eviction hearing, the client was unable to effectively assert a warranty of habitability defense to her non-payment of rent. The client had not paid rent because the landlord refused to make the home habitable. NJP is defending the client against the landlord's claim that he is owed rent for the time the client lived in a home that was deemed unlawful to occupy.

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

- NJP's Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP) represented a family from East Africa who applied for political asylum. Although they had applied for benefits several years ago explaining that they were here legally while their asylum application was pending, the DSHS office had only granted assistance to their US citizen child and had never provided proper notice as to why their application was denied. DSHS agreed to grant almost \$5000 in retroactive benefits as settlement of the fair hearing.
- NJP's Seattle office represented an elderly hospitalized disabled veteran who had been evicted from public housing. Due to dementia, depression, and the effects of a massive stroke, he was unable to protect himself and deal with the Housing Authority about getting his property moved. Property left at his former apartment included his hearing aids, his dentures, all his photographs and personal effects, financial records, golf clubs and family heirloom china. State Adult Protective Services had applied for establishing guardianship over the client. NJP was contacted by the court-appointed GAL in the guardianship proceeding, as the Housing Authority had refused to continue storing his property until a guardian could be appointed to handle this matter for him. NJP filed a motion to delay the Housing Authority's disposal of the client's property until a guardian could be appointed. The court granted the motion and allowed the prospective guardian six weeks to obtain the property before the Housing Authority would be allowed to dispose of any remaining property.
- NJP's Seattle-based Domestic Violence Community Legal Project (DVCLP) represented a Cambodian woman in her action for dissolution of marriage. The client was 20 years old when she was brought to the United States by her 60 year old husband. NJP had previously represented the woman in obtaining a ten-year protection order against the husband based on the husband's brutal physical and sexual assault of the client. After the protection order was granted, the husband filed a petition to have the marriage invalidated, in an effort to have the client deported. The client responded and asked for a proper dissolution of the marriage. After trial, the Court found that the marriage was valid and granted the client's petition to dissolve the marriage, thereby protecting her immigration status.

- NJP's Tacoma office represented a mentally impaired Western State Hospital patient in Thurston County Superior Court on judicial review of a DSHS final agency order terminating the client's eligibility for services provided by the DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). After trial, the Superior Court Judge concluded that the client's mild mental retardation and his associated treatment and habilitation needs qualify him for ongoing DDD eligibility and services. The court's reversal of the DDD eligibility termination in this case allows planning to begin for the client's discharge from the state psychiatric hospital to an appropriately structured and supervised DDD-funded, community-based placement.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a mentally impaired client of DSHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), whose mother and guardian passed away in 2004, to request that DDD assist the client in obtaining a new legal guardian. After a longtime family friend was appointed as the client's new legal guardian, NJP was retained to advocate for a less restrictive DDD-funded placement for the client. A professional assessment concluded that the client was not in any way dangerous and does not require the 24-hour-a-day, line-of-sight supervision that he had been subjected to in DDD's Community Protection Program.
- NJP's Tacoma office represented a wheelchair-bound disabled veteran in an administrative hearing to appeal the local transit authority's denial of his request for year-round "paratransit" disability shuttle service. The client had been offered only seasonal paratransit services despite substantial evidence that the combination of his physical and cognitive limitations prevented him from ever utilizing the regular bus service. The transit authority's decision was reversed on appeal.
- NJP's Tacoma office represents a Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) client in an ongoing patient complaint case at Western State Hospital. The client has been repeatedly placed in restraints and seclusion for extended periods of time, and the release criteria did not take into account the client's developmental disability. NJP met with hospital staff and administrative personnel who agreed to have the ward staff consult with DDD experts on creating an individualized protocol for the client.

NATIVE AMERICAN UNIT (NAU)

Family Stability

- NJP's Native American Unit represented a mother in a nonparental custody action. The petitioner is the former girlfriend of the children's paternal grandfather. The mother is Nez Perce and the children's father is a member of the Navajo Nation. The client had heard that a temporary restraining order was issued, but had not been served with any of the pleadings. NJP reviewed the court file, confirming that the former girlfriend had obtained an ex parte order granting her temporary custody of the children. Upon NJP's motion the judge invalidated the ex parte order pursuant to the Indian Child Welfare Act and the children remain with their mother.

- NJP’s Spokane-based NAU represented the interests of an Alaska Native village in a state court dependency involving two of its member children. NJP has been successful in the Village’s efforts to reunify the member parent with her children.
- NJP’s Spokane-based NAU represented the mother of infant twins in a state court Indian Child Welfare Act case. The client was the victim of domestic violence and DSHS sought out of home placement based on its belief that the client could not protect the children from their violent father. As part of the NAU’s focus on the “active efforts” requirement under the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, NJP succeeded in getting DSHS to provide structured housing for the client and her children where the father would not have access. The client and children have been successfully reunited. The client is receiving additional supportive services and has a restraining order in place.

Preservation of Housing

- NJP’s Omak office obtained clear title to real property on the Colville Reservation on behalf of a 91 year old Native American woman. The client wants to convert her parcel to “trust” land. As trust land the Colville tribe will have more control over the land after the client dies. Also, as trust land, the client’s children will not run the risk of losing the parcel to tax foreclosure by Okanogan County. The matter has now been turned over to the Bureau of Indian Affairs agency in Nespalem. The cloud on the title arose in the 1970s when a creditor of the client’s deceased husband foreclosed on the land. The client was doing missionary work in Canada at that time. The client’s son bought the property back for her at the foreclosure sale, but the deed from the purchase at the sheriff’s sale was never recorded.

FARM WORKER UNIT - STATEWIDE (FWU)

Economic Security (Employment)

- NJP’s Yakima FWU represented nine farm workers in a federal court case seeking relief for violation of their H2A temporary worker contracts. The workers were all brought to the United States under the H2A temporary visa program to perform agricultural work. They each paid large amounts of money for their visas and travel expenses and were not told the terms of employment including that they could be sent home if they failed to meet a production standard. The production standard was set too high, making it difficult for many of them to meet the standard. All nine were sent home to Mexico before the end of the contract for failure to meet the production standard and many of them were unable to pay back the money that they borrowed to come to work in the U.S. The case alleged claims under the Fair Labor Standards Act for failure to pay minimum wage when the expenses the workers incurred to come to the job are factored in, as well as state common law claims. The case was settled favorably to the clients.
- NJP’s Yakima FWU successfully represented two farm workers in obtaining much needed unemployment benefits initially denied them because of underreporting of hours by their agricultural employers. Farm workers are eligible to receive benefits only if they have worked at least 680 hours in the past 12 months. One of the clients had worked

seasonally for 7 different employers in that time. The majority of these employers had failed to provide the client with pay stubs showing hours worked, and according to the client's calculations, they had significantly underreported his hours worked to the Department of Employment Security. One employer had paid with a personal check and failed to report any hours to the Department. The Department's Telecenter employees initially advised the client that there was nothing they could do for him since he had accepted payment by personal check. After numerous contacts with the Department, the employers and finally a telephone hearing to resolve the number of hours worked with one employer, the Department determined that the client had worked sufficient hours and awarded him his unemployment benefits. The second client had worked for several months pruning and training grape vines for a vineyard owner who had not reported hours worked for any employees. The Department of Employment Security informed this client that since she had accepted payment by cash, there was nothing that they could do. On the morning of the administrative hearing the Department issued a redetermination showing sufficient hours for the client to receive her benefits.

- NJP's Yakima FWU successfully mediated a case filed in 2007 in the Western District of Washington on behalf of 12 migrant farm workers who had traveled to Whatcom County to perform promised work in the berry harvest, only to be told upon arrival that there was no work for them and that they should leave the property immediately. Ten plaintiffs traveled to Seattle to participate in the mediation with the opposing party. The plaintiffs worked together to agree on a highly favorable settlement of their claims.

NJP'S CONTRACT ATTORNEY PROGRAM (CAP)

- An NJP CAP attorney in Kitsap County represents a woman to obtain Veterans Administration benefits. The client is a senior citizen whose late husband became 100% disabled due to service during World War II. After the client's husband died the Veterans Administration cut off his disability pension and determined the client to be ineligible for survivor benefits.
- An NJP CAP attorney represented a monolingual Spanish speaking man in Benton County in a family law matter. The client has a child with a woman who is currently in jail. The mother gave the child to her sister in Benton County and the sister started an adoption proceeding without notifying the client. The client is seeking to prevent the adoption and get custody of his child.
- An NJP CAP attorney assisted a mentally ill client to retain his federal rental assistance voucher. The Housing Authority threatened to terminate the client's voucher because he refused to submit to an annual inspection. The client's mental illness prevented him from complying. The CAP attorney successfully negotiated with the Housing Authority to allow the client to keep his voucher and make alternate arrangements for the inspection to go forward.
- An NJP CAP attorney assisted a young Benton County man who had been expelled from school for being involved in fights. The client claimed that he was fighting because he was defending himself from bullying. The CAP attorney negotiated a settlement that

allowed the student to return to school, change schools to one where he was not afraid of bullying, and required the school to address the client's disabilities.

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

Consumer and Debt

- NJP's CLEAR prevented a woman from being wrongfully assessed a fee and the resulting negative impacts on her credit rating. A retail store claimed that the client owed a \$201 fee for stealing a \$1.08 item from the store and sent the alleged debt to collection. The collection agency relied on a law that provides for a civil penalty when someone unlawfully takes goods or merchandise from a store. The client did not steal the disputed item from the store; nevertheless, the collection agency insisted that the client owed this fee and threatened that if she did not pay the fee, it would submit negative information to the credit reporting agencies. CLEAR disputed the fees and also explained that as there was no theft involved, the statute could not be applied against the client. CLEAR also informed the collection agency that submitting this false information to the credit reporting agencies would be a violation of the Fair Credit Reporting Act and also the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. The collection agency ceased its efforts to collect the fee and no negative information has been reported to the credit reporting agencies.
- NJP's CLEAR*Sr helped a woman protect personal property that was inappropriately seized by a storage facility. The client, who had recently lost her home, stored all of her belongings temporarily in a self-storage facility. The client fell behind on her payments for some of the storage units, but was current on payments for other units. The storage facility exercised its lien rights against the unpaid units and additionally, locked the client out of her paid storage units. CLEAR*Sr negotiated a resolution that allowed the client to make a security deposit and retrieve all of her property. The security deposit was also ultimately returned to the client.

Family Stability, Safety and Security

- NJP's CLEAR DV, with the assistance of NJP's Tacoma office, helped a young mother get her baby back from her abusive and controlling husband. The client left her husband after he choked her son. In addition, just months earlier, the husband's teenage son was sexually inappropriate with the client's daughter. The husband filed for a Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) against the client and attempted to get custody of the baby. The court granted the DVPO but did not award custody to the father. Nevertheless, the father refused to give the mother physical custody of the child. Subsequently, the client obtained her own DVPO against her husband and was granted custody of the baby. The police would not help her get the baby because they interpreted the husband's custody petition as controlling. CLEAR DV helped the client obtain an emergency order requiring the police to help recover the child, but they again refused to do so. NJP was able to locate an officer who agreed to help and the client and police officer went to get the baby. The father again alleged that the mother was to have no contact and now claimed that Child Protective Services should be called. NJP worked through each of the

documents with the police officer, who eventually agreed that the two orders gave custody to the mother, no order gave custody to the husband and there was no need to call CPS. The client finally got her baby back after 3 days.

- NJP's CLEAR DV helped a limited English proficient woman protect her rights in a dissolution by rescinding her Joinder to the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage and filing a Response to Petition for Dissolution of Marriage. The client was coerced by the opposing party to join his Petition for Dissolution of Marriage and sign a contract by his threats to have her deported and to evict her from her home if she did not comply. The client did not understand that she was a permanent resident and had rights based on this status. CLEAR DV assisted the client by drafting pleadings for her, reviewed the pleadings with the client and advised the client on applicable divorce law.
- NJP's CLEAR assisted a monolingual Spanish-speaking man obtain regular visitation with his son after visits were withheld by the mother. After CLEAR helped the client prepare pleadings, the client was able to obtain regular visitation with his son on the weekends.
- NJP's CLEAR helped a woman living in a remote rural area to obtain a telephonic hearing for a protection order against her estranged husband. Due to the client's disabilities, the inclement weather, and the lack of transportation in the remote area where the client lived, the client was not able to drive to a hearing. The client's request to appear telephonically had been denied by the court because it only allowed two people to appear by phone and the telephone slots had already been filled. CLEAR drafted a GR 33 request to allow the client to appear by phone. The request was granted and the client was able to appear by phone at her protection order hearing.

Individual Rights

- NJP's CLEAR helped a state-licensed day care provider regain her day care license after it was summarily suspended due to allegations of child abuse in her day care. CLEAR reviewed the file, determined that there was no basis for the summary suspension to continue, and filed a Motion for Summary Judgment requesting that the summary suspension be lifted. The Administrative Law Judge agreed and ordered that the summary suspension be dismissed and that the provider be entitled to reopen her day care home.

Preservation of Housing & Habitability

- NJP's CLEAR assisted a federal housing assistance voucher recipient in successfully defending herself in an Unlawful Detainer in December 2007. In January 2008, the tenant called again because her landlord was continuing to threaten to evict her for not paying additional rent each month which the landlord characterized as a security deposit. CLEAR sent a letter to the landlord's attorney explaining that it was illegal to demand rent from a tenant in excess of the amount in the lease. The landlord subsequently acknowledged that the client did not owe any additional rent and did not pursue an eviction action against the tenant.

- NJP’s CLEAR helped a monolingual Spanish-speaking woman obtain a hearing with the Kennewick Housing Authority to dispute debts she did not owe and to request removal of utility charges incurred after the client moved out. The client made two written requests for an informal hearing to dispute the charges. Instead of providing a hearing, the Housing Authority sent the client a letter threatening to send her account to collection. CLEAR wrote a letter to the Kennewick Housing Authority requesting a hearing, a stay on collection proceedings, and reimbursement for charges on the electric bill for the period after the client moved out. The Housing Authority immediately contacted the client and set up a hearing. CLEAR then referred the case to NJP’s Walla Walla office for assistance with the hearing.
- NJP’s CLEAR helped an elderly couple obtain insurance benefits that had been denied following the loss of the couple’s home due to flooding. The clients suffered the loss of their home and almost all of their belongings during the December 3, 2007 floods. The couple owned a manufactured home and land and had purchased flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and even paid for additional coverage as their mortgagor directed. Following the flood, NFIP determined that due to a FEMA policy, the couple’s manufactured home was not to be categorized as a “manufactured home” with the result that the couple would receive \$36,000 less. CLEAR intervened and, after several telephone discussions with the NFIP representative, NFIP obtained approval from FEMA to pay the additional \$36,000 to the couple.

CLIENT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ABERDEEN

- NJP’s Aberdeen office was provided several outreach opportunities to educate the community about disaster recovery issues following the December 2007 storm, e.g., how to apply and comply with FEMA assistance, etc. Outreach included interviews on local access TV, local AM talk radio, and in a local newspaper column, as well as materials distributed at various meetings in both Pacific and Grays Harbor counties, including town hall meetings coordinated by the Pacific County Sheriff.
- NJP’s Aberdeen office was honored with an invitation by the tribe to do outreach at the Quinault Indian Nation’s Annual General Council Meeting in Taholah.
- NJP’s Aberdeen office and CLEAR DV met with the new executive director of a local domestic violence shelter to discuss the mutual goals and cooperative roles that the offices will focus on for the future.
- The Grays Harbor County Chamber of Commerce invited NJP Aberdeen to do outreach at a local trade show that reaches a broad demographic of the local community.

BELLINGHAM

- NJP Bellingham and Spokane office advocates attended a dinner sponsored by the Ventures Program on the Lummi Reservation as part of NJP's commitment to increased outreach to tribal communities. The NJP advocates discussed NJP CLEAR and the Washingtonlawhelp website, specialized assistance from NJP Native American advocates, and the kinds of assistance available through the local NJP office. The advocates also solicited information on the most important legal needs of Lummi tribal members. The event was attended by 40 persons.
- An NJP Bellingham office advocate participated in the Whatcom County Transition Fair, an annual event to provide information and community resources to students with disabilities. Thirty three community agencies set up booths and provided information about their services to students who came from all county high schools along with their families and some of the teachers. NJP provided information about CLEAR, Washington Law Help, and local office priorities.

CLEAR

- On January 8, 2008, an NJP CLEAR*Sr advocate provided a consumer training at the Redmond Senior Center.

EVERETT

- An NJP Everett office attorney provided training to Snohomish County Senior Services information and assistance staff and housing social services staff. Topics included resources and their effects on eligibility for needs-based medical assistance programs and SSI cash assistance, reverse mortgages and impact on needs-based programs; program changes affecting clients receiving long-term care program services; Medicaid waiver program rules; and accessing legal services through CLEAR *Sr.
- An NJP Everett attorney updated the Mental Health Resource Manual posted on Washingtonlawhelp to ensure proper links to mental health access resources found on the internet.
- An NJP Everett office attorney gave two presentations on consumer law to seniors advocates to help them identify consumer law issues their clients might have and to provide some resources available to them.
- An NJP Everett office attorney gave a consumer law presentation to women enrolled in the YWCA's Pathways for Women program, educating them on the legal options and providing answers to some of the common consumer issues that affect low income women such as debt collections, used cars and payday loans.
- An NJP Everett office attorney led a general legal forum given by the ARC of Snohomish County, attended by parents of disabled children. Topics at this forum included Medicaid and other benefit programs, special education and general legal topics.

FARM WORKER UNIT (FWU)

- NJP's FWU continues working on the Amparo project to help farm worker women avoid sexual discrimination and harassment in the work place. The goals of the project are to do community education and empower the women by educating them about their rights and resources available to assist them.

LONGVIEW

- An NJP Advocacy Coordinator and an NJP Longview attorney gave a joint presentation on "Domestic Violence and Child Custody Disputes: Legal Perspectives" at the Justice and Hope Conference. The annual conference focuses on domestic violence issues and was attended by more than a hundred Cowlitz County social service providers, teachers and law enforcement personnel.
- NJP's Longview office presented at Longview Housing Authority's Ready to Rent Program. The program is a tenant education curriculum that provides housing readiness strategies to low-income people who have had past difficulties being successful renters.

NATIVE AMERICAN UNIT (NAU)

- NJP's Spokane-based NAU attorney provided a one day Indian Child Welfare Act training for the King County Juvenile Court CASA Program as part of an ongoing partnership with Washington State CASA aimed at improving the quality of advocacy for Indian children in the state's dependency system.

OLYMPIA

- An NJP Olympia office attorney attended a meeting for Spanish speaking Seniors to discuss the availability of legal services provided by NJP.
- NJP's Olympia office presented information and answered questions about free legal resources, consumer rights related to "hot scams", and decision-making issues to the following client and client-provider groups: 20 seniors and family members participating in a Thurston County Early Memory Loss group; 15 seniors at the Vietnamese Senior Association Nutrition Site (with translator) in Thurston County; and 15 volunteer ombudsman trainees for nine Southwest Washington counties.
- An NJP Olympia office attorney presented at two CLE programs, one hosted by the Thurston County Superior Court about collateral legal issues related to protective orders. NJP's presentation related to tenants' rights, public assistance issues/rights, and the Address Confidentiality Program; and the other program was part of a full-day WSBA Annual Elder Law CLE focusing on "Lessons From Litigation".
- An NJP Olympia office attorney participated in a local Olympia radio show and discussed the range of services available from NJP and Alliance for Equal Justice partners in Thurston County.

PORT ANGELES

- NJP's Port Angeles office did outreach to the Quileute Tribe and attended a senior/family law meeting at the La Push Reservation, establishing significant contacts with various Tribal social service providers. NJP is working with the tribe to conduct an on reservation Indian Wills project clinic later this year.
- An NJP Port Angeles attorney participated in a community education event in Port Townsend about grandparents raising grandchildren at Lutheran Social Services. About 15 people participated. NJP distributed materials and provided general advice about how Washington law impacts grandparents.
- Port Angeles Bridge Builders invited an NJP Port Angeles attorney to make a presentation about the Vulnerable Adult Protection Act to a group of guardians meeting in Silverdale. The NJP attorney spoke to a group of about fifty guardians, providing information about the Act and distributing materials.
- An NJP Port Angeles attorney attended the March Senior Meeting, organized by the CARE Alliance, in Forks. The event drew approximately forty individuals and was intended to inform senior citizens of legal services available to them. The NJP attorney spoke about the IRS economic stimulus program, wills and advance directives.

SEATTLE/KING COUNTY

Basic Field

- NJP continues to host the Cross Cultural Family Law Clinic through which clients with family law legal matters involving child custody and who have experienced domestic violence and who experience cultural or legal barriers meet with volunteer attorneys for advice, consultation and brief service. NJP provides the space for the clinic to occur and the administrative support and attorney oversight of the project which is run in collaboration with the King County Bar Association's Neighborhood Legal Clinic Program. The clinic assisted approximately 37 clients in the first quarter of 2008.
- An NJP Seattle attorney continues to work with a group of attorneys and legal advocates from the King County Bar Association, the King County Prosecutor's Office Protection Order Advocacy Program, and the private bar to build a "Revision Squad" designed to assist low income clients in obtaining necessary reconsiderations and revisions of commissioner's rulings in protection order cases, especially when a necessary protection order is denied improperly. The group organized and presented a continuing legal education program for the second year in a row for the general legal public and to train volunteer attorneys who serve on a panel to assist clients that come through the program. The attorney also continues to serve in an advisory capacity to the attorney who coordinates the volunteer program and the volunteer attorneys of the panel.
- NJP's Seattle office presented a training with Northwest Health Law Advocates and Solid Ground on medical coverage issues to health care providers and social workers.

- An NJP Seattle office attorney and CLEAR Sr. attorney gave a presentation on consumer issues affecting seniors at the Redmond Senior Center.
- NJP Seattle office attorneys helped to organize and present a 2-day predatory mortgage lending CLE co-sponsored by NJP, the National Consumer Law Center, Seattle University Law School Office of Continuing Legal Education, and Columbia Legal Services. More than 90 attorneys from across the state attended the training. The goal was to train attorneys to handle the coming wave of predatory loan foreclosures.

Refugee and Immigrant Advocacy Project (RIAP)

- NJP's Seattle office Senior Attorney presented a two hour training including a basic overview of immigration status and immigrant eligibility for benefits (including public housing) to approximately 40 participants from King County Northshore Health district and also to Seattle Public Health Department staff serving the immigrant population.

TACOMA/PIERCE COUNTY

- NJP Tacoma advocates organized and facilitated a meeting with representatives of other legal services providers at Western State Hospital to discuss each agency's advocacy focus and priorities and to coordinate inter-agency intake and referrals.
- NJP Tacoma advocates, as part of an ongoing collaboration with two local housing authorities to improve the fairness of their termination and grievance policies with respect to federal rental assistance subsidy terminations and public housing evictions, gave a presentation to Pierce County Housing Authority management and staff on due process requirements for hearings.

VANCOUVER

- An NJP Vancouver attorney provided community education to the SHARE transitional housing program for formerly homeless individuals on various topics.
- An NJP Vancouver attorney made a presentation about NJP's services, the Alliance for Equal Justice, and current issues affecting our clients as part of the day-long session on the justice system for this year's class of Leadership Clark County, a year-long leadership training program that includes more than 30 participants from diverse backgrounds.

WALLA WALLA

- NJP's Walla Walla office began a bimonthly tenant education seminar at the Benton Franklin Community Action Committee, giving a two-hour presentation to low-income clients on tenant rights and responsibilities.
- NJP's Walla Walla office gave a presentation to Lourdes Auxiliary on reverse mortgages.

- NJP’s Walla Walla attorneys held a community education meeting for tenants in a mobile home park in Prosser to educate them about their rights per the Manufactured Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act. Several tenants had been victims of improper rent increases, code violations and possible racial discrimination. Over 30 people attended the meeting.

WENATCHEE

- An NJP Omak attorney appeared on a Spanish language radio program to discuss the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers, and free tax preparation sites. The show was recorded for four future re-broadcasts.
- An NJP Omak attorney made an educational presentation to the staff of Aging and Adult Care about guardianships and powers of attorney.
- An NJP Wenatchee attorney provided community education in Spanish to farm worker women in Royal City on domestic violence victims’ rights in regards to custody, VAWA and U Visa eligibility.
- An NJP Wenatchee attorney participated as a panelist at a local Parent Action Committee meeting informing parents of current VAWA and U Visa eligibility.
- 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 concerned the Economic Stimulus Act and seniors’ eligibility for stimulus checks.
- NJP’s Wenatchee office made a community legal education presentation to approximately 25 residents of a mobile home park concerning their rights under the Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act after receiving calls from several park residents complaining. The NJP attorney educated the residents about the requirements of the Act and remedies available through the Washington State Office of Manufactured Housing.

NETWORKING AND DEVELOPING COMMUNITY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

- An NJP Bellingham office advocate participates in monthly meetings of the Whatcom County Community Resource Network, along with staff from three dozen other local service agencies. In January, the NJP advocate was a featured speaker, in coordination with a representative from LAW Advocates, presenting information on the very successful Disabilities Benefits Advocacy Program, a joint NJP/LAW Advocates program to assist homeless disabled persons obtain GA and SSI cash and medical benefits, to give them a measure of financial stability along with access to medical care.
- An NJP CLEAR advocate is participating on the ATJ Pro Se Committee and prepared a training focusing on the difficulties faced by pro se individuals in courts and administrative proceedings at the 2008 ATJ Conference.

- An NJP Olympia attorney is an elected trustee for the WSBA Indian Law Section and worked with the other trustees to plan the annual WSBA Indian Law CLE.
- An NJP Olympia attorney sits on the advisory board for a local tribal domestic violence program and works with them to address domestic violence in the Indian community.
- An NJP Olympia 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 attorney attends monthly advocacy coordination meetings with other Thurston County low income service providers, members of the local welfare rights organization, Homeless Outreach and Advocacy center, Community Youth Services, Tenants' Union, low income credit union, and mental/behavioral health services.
- An NJP Olympia attorney serves on the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission and participated in a subcommittee to determine the disbursement of VAWA Stop Grant funds to projects housed in courts throughout the state.
- An NJP Olympia attorney is a member of the Supreme Court Task Force on Dissolution, and serves as chair of a subcommittee developing rules to establish consistent standards for parenting evaluators.
- An NJP Olympia Attorney is the Vice-president and board member for the Thurston Volunteer Legal Services Program; and an NJP Olympia attorney is on the Thurston County Bar Board of Trustees.
- An NJP Olympia attorney participated in the Domestic Relations Pattern Forms Subcommittee of the Office of Administration of the Courts significantly contributing to correct a key passage that had erroneously limited the federal firearm prohibition for persons restrained in a Protection or Restraining Order applied only to marital abuse, claiming that the federal law actually applies to "intimate partners."
- NJP's Olympia Office provides weekly mentoring advice to volunteer attorneys who staff the Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services Housing Justice Project at the Thurston County Courthouse.
- The NJP Port Angeles office conducted an Indian Wills training in the Port Angeles office in preparation for a will clinic hosted by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe at which individual NJP attorneys will meet with clients and begin the process of drafting wills and related documents. The response has been overwhelming and the clinics will be available to all five of the Olympic Peninsula Tribes.
- 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 RIAP attorney continues to work with the Seattle University Law School Community Advisory Board for the Access to Justice Institute to improve student involvement in providing legal services to the poor.
- NJP's RIAP attorney continues to serve on the Immigrant Families Advocacy Project (IFAP) Advisory Board. IFAP is a University of Washington Law School organization, supervised by an attorney at the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, which pairs students with pro-bono attorneys to help battered immigrants file self petitions under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
- NJP's Seattle office Senior Attorney/RIAP attorney and the King County Project Facilitator continue to meet with the King County Regional Planning Group and have assisted in implementation of coordinated referral in King County with the use of 211 and a limited CLEAR hotline for King County cases., They continue to work with King County civil legal aid providers on training screeners, developing a referral process and monitoring for problems in implementation.
- NJP Seattle attorneys continued 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. The group is presently planning a two day conference to be held in Wenatchee on October 24 and 25. The conference will bring together interpreters and translators along with advocates and agency staff. In the meantime the group has monthly conference calls and continues to work on expanding language access in the following areas: developing policies for deaf and hard of hearing clients, including training on how to work with American Sign Language (ASL) and CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreters) to serve clients who do not know ASL; development of LEP policies; and working with community colleges, interpreters and translators, and staff from the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts, Washington Department of Corrections, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, and other agencies to develop a statewide interpreter and translator directory to insure that agencies and courts around the state have access to trained and qualified interpreters and translators. The RIAP attorney also co-wrote articles on WASCLA and language access for the spring Washington Minority and Justice Commission newsletter.
- NJP Seattle based attorneys continue to work with staff of Children's Hospital, Odessa Brown Clinic and Harborview Hospital to develop a Medical Legal Partnership Project that would provide assistance to doctors and social workers to improve children's access to legal services to improve access to health care, housing, education, immigration, and public benefits. The group submitted a successful application for funding and will begin the project in the fall of 2008.
- An NJP Seattle office attorney continues to serve on the DSHS Standing Committee on Administrative Hearings with the aim of improving client access to justice in the DSHS administrative hearing process.

- NJP's Seattle Domestic Violence Project attorneys gave two presentations to advocates from community agencies in King County and from the City of Seattle Attorney's Office. In January, the attorneys attended a meeting of the Seattle Domestic Violence Prevention Council, where they gave an update of the Project's progress. The attorneys attended the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence meeting and met with staff of the Seattle Indian Health Board Domestic Violence Program, among other agencies.
- Two NJP Seattle office attorneys participate in the Seattle-King County Assetbuilding Coalition and serve on subcommittees focused on client populations that are unbanked, and on a Coalition pilot project.
- An NJP Seattle attorney serves on the Washington State Bar Foundation's Loan Repayment Assistance Program Advisory Committee, which has developed an LRAP program for public interest attorneys across the state.
- NJP's Spokane-based Native American Unit attorney worked as a member of the newly formed Kalispel Tribal CASA program's advisory board to build a community based program of advocates for children in the Tribe's Youth In Need of Care system.
- Two NJP Spokane office attorneys serve on the Whitman County Legal Services Advisory Board.
- An NJP Spokane attorney serves on the Spokane County Bar Association Board of Trustees, and also on the Volunteer Lawyer's Program Board of Directors.
- NJP Tacoma-Kitsap advocates met with a representative from the Bremerton Housing Authority (BHA) to review changes to the Admissions Continued Occupancy Policy for the Public Housing Program.
- An NJP Tacoma attorney serves as a board member of a Pierce County not-for-profit social service agency that operates five group homes, a day program, and a farm and garden work program for developmentally disabled adults.
- An NJP Vancouver attorney attends all Klickitat and Skamania County inter-agency social services consortium meetings.
- An NJP Vancouver attorney serves as a director on the board of the Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program.
- An NJP Vancouver attorney serves as a member of the statewide Domestic Relations Pattern Forms Sub-committee.
- An NJP Vancouver attorney completed participation as the legal aid representative in a DSHS workgroup that reviewed and revised the agency's application for benefits form to clarify the sections that relate to expedited applications, improve the explanations of when and why DSHS requires information about immigration status and Social Security

numbers, and otherwise promote qualifying for the maximum benefits as early as possible.

- NJP's Walla Walla office collaborated with Domestic Violence Services of Benton Franklin Counties on a project to educate prosecuting attorneys, sheriffs, chiefs of police, and judicial officers in Benton/Franklin Counties. The project is part of an ongoing effort of the Domestic Violence Task Force to address problems with victims of domestic violence obtaining law enforcement assistance to enforce their protection orders. NJP and DVS are working on promoting a solution with law enforcement and judicial officers.
- NJP staff serve on a number of boards in their communities, including the United Way, the Wenatchee Community Center, the Chelan-Douglas County Volunteer Attorney Services, the Grant-Adams county pro bono program, the Okanogan County pro bono program, and the Community Foundation of North Central Washington.
- NJP's Wenatchee office Senior Attorney serves as President of the Chelan-Douglas Bar Association.