

**Northwestern Legal Services Staff
With More Than
20 Years Service**

**Kathy Landis - 36 years
James Montero - 34 years
Debbie Place - 33 years
Judy Wilson, Esq. - 30 years
John Gandrud, Esq. - 24 years
Caulene Sanford - 24 years
Mary Jane Weed - 24 years
Connie Nicholson - 23 years
Keith Kirsch, Esq. - 23 years
Julia Bandecca, Esq. - 22 years
David Baxter, Esq. - 21 years**

No Longer on Staff

**Paul Troskosky, Esq. - 32 years
Nancy Bach - 28 years
Kel McDonald - 24 years**

**40th ANNIVERSARY
NORTHWESTERN
1969 ————— 2009
L E G A L S E R V I C E S**

*A Celebration
of the
40th Anniversary Of Our Mission
and the
Incorporators
Who Made it Possible*



May 2009

THE INCORPORATORS
OF
NORTHWESTERN LEGAL SERVICES

JUNE 19, 1969

Charles D. Agresti
James E. Beveridge
Warren W. Bentz
John E. Britton
John E. Dwyer
Edward W. Goebel
Robert D. Hain
Frederick F. Jones
T. Warren Jones
Wallace Knox
James E. Marsh
Joseph F. MacKrell
Fred P. Anthony
Gabriel A. Bifulco, Jr
Richard F. Brabender
James R. Dailey
Roger M. Fischer
M. Fletcher Gornall, Jr.
Gary J. Shapira

Herbert J. Johnson, Jr.
Stephen E. Jones
R. Gordon Kennedy
George Levin
Edwin McKean
Joseph T. Messina
Daniel L.R. Miller
Irving Olds Murphy
Conrad Pearson
John M. Quinn
Norman H. Stark
Joseph M. Walsh, Jr.
Charles K. Moffatt
J. Leonard Ostrow
Bernard F. Quinn
Robert N. Spaeder
James F. Toohey
Vedder J. White
Peter G. Schaaf

Executive Director Reflections . . .

In the late 1960's, 36 attorneys in Erie County believed in the notion of equal justice under law. To make this notion a reality, they organized and incorporated the Erie County Legal Services Association, now known as Northwestern Legal Services. Access to justice was not only their dream but was, and still is, a reality.

Forty years ago, many of us were doing other things. For instance, I was still in high school. Some of the staff members at Northwestern Legal Services delight at reminding me that they were yet to be born. I am humbled by the commitment and dream of these 38 attorneys, who we recognize on this, our 40th anniversary. Over the years, Northwestern Legal Services, now serving 10 counties, helped countless low income people with their legal problems giving them access to justice.

Although these 38 attorneys signed the incorporation papers and performed *pro bono* services, we must also recognize the staff that kept the dream alive over these 40 years. Our volunteer board has also contributed greatly to our mission and helped us move toward achieving our goals. I would also like to recognize the attorneys that give their time *pro bono* to help our client community, the wonderful support we receive from the Erie County Bar Association, and the support we receive from the entire community.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Oakley, Esq.
NWLS Executive Director

Northwestern Legal Services Timeline

		1970	ECLSA opens temporary office in Central City NATO, 232 East 21st Street. Attorney R. Knickerbocker Smith is first staff attorney.
1876	German Legal Society of New York becomes first agency in U.S. to offer civil legal assistance to poor.		
1950s	Legal Aid Office of the Family and Child Service Agency provides legal assistance to indigent families in Erie. Dana Sherwood Jones is staff attorney for agency funded by the Community Chest.		Attorney Dennis Sterrett joins staff, along with part-time attorneys Hobart Williams, Chester Vendetti, Robert Hain, Daniel Kuhn and Richard Barron.
			ECLSA relocates to 322 Commerce Building
1960s	Erie County Legal Aid Society provides free legal assistance to persons on government assistance. Attorneys Charles Moffatt and Roger Fischer are retained by the organization.	1972	Attorney Norman Watkins appointed executive director.
1964	Economic Opportunity Act launches War on Poverty, making federal funds available for civil legal aid.	1973	Attorney Francis Conte appointed executive director
1966	Erie County Bar Association (ECBA) President Stephen E. Jones creates pilot project to assess civil legal needs of poor in Erie. ECBA attorneys offer free legal aid at Central City NATO, 232 East 21st Street, Erie	1974	ECLSA changes name to Legal Services for Northwestern Pennsylvania (LSNP) as it begins expansion into other counties in the region Legal Services Corporation Act enacted by Congress
1969	38 attorneys from the ECBA sign original articles of incorporation creating Erie County Legal Services Association (ECLSA). Attorney Stephen E. Jones is board president and Attorney J. Leonard Ostrow is executive director.	1975	LSNP moves offices from North Park Row in downtown Erie into Rothrock Building, 121 West Tenth Street in Erie

1979 **A 28-foot trailer dubbed the “Mobile Law Office” brings legal aid to rural communities. The law office on wheels is staffed with an attorney and secretary.**

1981 **LSNP changes name to Northwestern Legal Services (NWLS)**

Federal funds for legal aid are drastically cut under Reagan Administration, leading to reductions in legal aid staff

NWLS moves into second floor of United Way Building, 110 West Tenth Street

1982 **ECBA and NWLS create the Legal Aid Volunteer Attorney (LAVA) program. Private attorneys in Erie County accept *pro bono* cases for low-income clients in a project administered by NWLS.**

1985 **NWLS moves offices into the Baldwin Building, now called the Renaissance Center, at East Tenth and State Streets**

1995 **Attorney Robert A. Oakley is appointed NWLS executive director**

2009 **NWLS celebrates 40th anniversary**

**NORTHWESTERN LEGAL SERVICES
40TH ANNIVERSARY
RECOGNITION COMMITTEE**

**RICHARD A. BLAKELY, ESQ.
MARY PAYTON JARVIE, ESQ.
ROBERT C. LESUER, ESQ.
LARRY D. MEREDITH, ESQ.
JAMES E. MARSH, JR., ESQ.
MATTHEW W. MCCULLOUGH, ESQ.
DAVID G. RIDGE, ESQ.
THOMAS A. TUPITZA, ESQ.**

**NWLS STAFF
ROBERT A. OAKLEY, ESQ.
VINCENT BROCKI
KATHY LANDIS**

**SPECIAL THANKS
TO
THE FOLLOWING LAW FIRMS
FOR THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

**QUINN BUSECK LEEMHUIS TOOHEY & KROTO
MACDONALD ILLIG JONES & BRITTON
MARSH SPAEDER BAUR SPAEDER & SCHAAF
KNOX MCLAUGHLIN GORNALL & SENNETT
ELDERKIN MARTIN KELLY & MESSINA**