

**Summary of SMRLS'
Volunteer Attorney and Staff Partnerships
Pro Bono Programs**

RCBA/SMRLS East Metro volunteer program and Attorney General's Panel: The oldest organized pro bono program is the RCBA/SMRLS' Tuesday program where attorneys come to SMRLS' offices and are matched up with cases in their area of interest and expertise. SMRLS' staff provides support. A long-standing feature of this program is the Attorney General's advice only panel, which handles brief service and advice cases in a variety of areas over the phone.

3M/Briggs and Morgan/William Mitchell College of Law/Mayo Clinic/SMRLS Project HALO: This nationally recognized program features volunteers from these organizations who work with SMRLS' staff on substandard housing cases. Cases are done in cooperation with local community groups and cities. Lawyers obtain court orders requiring landlords to repair substandard housing, making it safe and habitable, and preventing homelessness.

Mayo/3M/SMRLS Immigration Law Project: Corporate and private attorneys from Mayo and in the Rochester area and 3M attorneys in St. Paul work with SMRLS' RIMS staff and handle administrative law cases which will result in families either becoming citizens or being reunified with their families.

SMRLS' Rural Volunteer, Hotline, and Pro Se Programs: In these program, trained volunteer attorneys handle advice and brief service cases on SMRLS' rural hotline (the first of its kind in the upper Midwest); work with local judges, the Minnesota Justice Foundation, and others to prepare persons for pro se family law cases (initiated in Brown County, with the help of Judge Rodenberg and the Gislason and Hunter Law Firm). In the 28 counties, rural volunteers handle a variety of staff priority cases in the domestic abuse, family, disability, and other areas.

SMRLS' Senior Law Initiative: This new firmwide initiative was recommended by the private attorneys on the SMRLS Board, as part of its Futures (Strategic Plan) Initiative. SMRLS recruits private attorneys from the Twin Cities and the rural areas to provide community education seminars to senior citizens, with support from SMRLS staff. These attorneys have produced a model training book, which can be used by other volunteers. In 2007, this new initiative will create a special advice and referral panel to cover all of SMRLS' 33 counties for senior citizens and will hold a major kick-off event in October.

SMRLS' Farm Law Contract Program: This program, created in the mid-80s, matches about 30 private law firms throughout southern Minnesota with SMRLS' staff to handle complex farm law cases. In these cases, SMRLS reimburses the volunteer attorney at \$40 an hour, the client pays \$15 an hour, and the remainder is pro bono.

SMRLS Housing Discrimination Co-counseling Cases: SMRLS' Housing Equality Law Project (HELP) co-counsels with private attorneys throughout its 33 county area on housing cases which involve illegal race, gender, disability, or other discrimination. These co-counseling cases result in a rich blend of legal services and private expertise.

Robins, Miller, Kaplan, and Ciresi/SMRLS Complex Family Law Project: SMRLS' lead family staff work closely with senior attorneys at Robins to place complex family law cases with volunteer attorneys. Appropriate SMRLS staff support and training are provided;

SMRLS/Hamline Law School Education Law Advocacy Project: This nationally featured project involves Hamline law students and clinic professors working with SMRLS' staff to provide legal representation to low-income children of color who are facing school suspension, expulsion, discrimination, or special education problems in school programs.