

# PBPSC?

## What is that?

BY NICHOLAS LARSON



**Nicholas Larson** is the managing partner for the Seattle office of Murphy, Pearson, Bradley & Feeney (MPBF). In that capacity, he represents and advises small and large businesses, executives, professionals, government agencies, and nonprofits in all phases of civil litigation in Washington and California. He is co-chair of WSBA's Pro Bono and Public Service Committee and was recently appointed to serve in that position for his third consecutive year. He can be reached at [nlarson@mpbf.com](mailto:nlarson@mpbf.com).

PBPSC? You may not know exactly what the WSBA Pro Bono and Public Service Committee (PBPSC) is or does. The PBPSC's purpose is to enhance a culture of service by promoting opportunities and best practices that encourage WSBA members to engage in pro bono and public service, with a particular emphasis on services to low- and moderate-income individuals. Over the past few years, the PBPSC has completed several important projects and initiatives that resonate across our state and communities. The most recent of these is the PBPSC's important work on proposed changes to the WSBA emeritus pro bono membership status. This action is the result of multiple years of planning and effort and is described in much greater detail by PBPSC member Althea Paulson on page 40.

In addition to work on the emeritus pro bono status, the PBPSC has completed several other important projects recently, including:

- The PBPSC proposed and received unanimous approval from the WSBA Board of Governors for model pro bono policies that law firms, government agencies, and in-house legal departments can adopt, adapt, and implement internally to enhance the culture of pro bono within their company or organization. These policies can be found on the PBPSC's website.<sup>1</sup>
- The PBPSC drafted a letter addressing due process and access to client issues at the Northwest Detention Center that was unanimously approved and sent out by the WSBA Board of Governors to local, state, and federal officials and agencies.
- The PBPSC is working on improving [probonowa.org](http://probonowa.org), the existing online clearinghouse for pro bono opportunities in Washington. Please check on the progress of the website over the next couple of months. We hope that the user experience will be more positive and accessible!
- The PBPSC developed several Continuing Legal Education (CLE) presentations, including Legal Lunchbox™ CLEs that addressed landlord/tenant issues<sup>2</sup> and suitable representatives in administrative hearings and administrative law issues.<sup>3</sup> Our next Legal

Lunchbox,™ scheduled for Oct. 27, will focus on family law for low-income families.

- The PBPSC drafted a statement in support of Northwest Justice Project's Private Attorney Involvement Plan (more information about the plan can be found here: <https://nwjustice.org/home>), which the WSBA Board of Governors has reviewed and unanimously approved.
- The PBPSC submitted comments in support of proposed amendments to RPC 6.5 and MCLE requirements, for initiatives led by other stakeholders inside and outside of the WSBA, aiming to remove legal barriers for survivors of domestic violence and eliminating bias in the legal profession.

These are just some highlights of recent work done by the PBPSC. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedicated volunteer service of all the wonderful PBPSC members, and the efforts and leadership of past, current, and incoming co-chairs Paul Okner, Nancy Chupp, and Bonnie Aslagson. Our committee is continuing to engage with stakeholders, groups, and individuals across the state to address our mission and goals. We meet on a monthly basis and have committee members across the state that identify, initiate, and address issues of need related to our mission. If you or anyone you know is interested in getting involved with the PBPSC, please do not hesitate to contact me, Bonnie, or the WSBA for more information. We would love to have your help!

#### NOTES

1. [www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Committees-Boards-and-Other-Groups/Pro-Bono-and-Public-Service-Committee](http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Committees-Boards-and-Other-Groups/Pro-Bono-and-Public-Service-Committee).
2. [www.mywsba.org/PersonifyEbusiness/CLEStore/A-Primer-in-Pro-Bono-Eviction-Defense-Legal-Lunchbox-Series/ProductDetail/14628578](http://www.mywsba.org/PersonifyEbusiness/CLEStore/A-Primer-in-Pro-Bono-Eviction-Defense-Legal-Lunchbox-Series/ProductDetail/14628578).
3. [www.mywsba.org/PersonifyEbusiness/CLEStore/WAC-10-24-010---Suitable-Representatives-in-Administrative-Proceedings-Before-the-Washington-State-Office-of-Administrative-Hearings-Legal-Lunchbox-Series/ProductDetail/17840424](http://www.mywsba.org/PersonifyEbusiness/CLEStore/WAC-10-24-010---Suitable-Representatives-in-Administrative-Proceedings-Before-the-Washington-State-Office-of-Administrative-Hearings-Legal-Lunchbox-Series/ProductDetail/17840424).