



News Release

For Immediate Release

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April 11, 2013

PRO BONO APPEALS PROGRAM HELPING LOWER-INCOME NEW YORKERS EXPANDS TO FOURTH JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

Attorneys in Western New York are offering lower-income individuals a second chance to have their day in court, by volunteering to handle appeals of selected civil cases in the Fourth Judicial Department.

The Pro Bono Appeals Program, created by the New York State Bar Association, is offering free representation to individuals of modest means in civil (non-criminal) cases involving the essentials of life, such as family stability, unemployment insurance, education, housing and health.

Experienced appellate attorneys will handle the appeals for individuals who lost civil cases in trial court, as well as individuals who won in lower court but must respond to appeals by the opposing party.

The State Bar's Committee on Courts of Appellate Jurisdiction will select cases based on several factors, including the merits of the issues raised and the potential impact of the case. For example, appellate decisions can set precedents, having far-reaching impact beyond a single case.

The new program in the Fourth Department builds upon the experience of the State Bar Pro Bono Appeals Program in the Third Judicial Department, which the State Bar Association launched with The Legal Project and the Rural Law Center of New York in 2009. Since then, it has handled cases involving child custody, grandparent visitation, abuse and neglect, family offenses, unemployment insurance, constitutional issues, divorce and workers compensation benefits.

"The New York State Bar Association is proud to offer this innovative program in the Fourth Department as part of our long-standing commitment to increasing access to justice for all New Yorkers," said President-elect David M. Schraver of Rochester (Nixon Peabody).

Schraver praised Presiding Justice Henry J. Scudder for his invaluable support for the Pro Bono Appeals Program in the Fourth Department.

"The appellate attorneys handling the pro bono appeals in the Fourth Department all practice in Western New York. As a result, they will be familiar with our Court's decisions, judges and procedures," said Scudder. "This initiative should be a great success, given the talent and generosity of our attorneys and our public service programs."

Litigants who would like to learn more about the program and apply for legal assistance should go to www.nysba.org/probonoappeals.

Appellate attorneys interested in volunteering to handle appeals in the Fourth Department can contact the Pro Bono Appeals Program at info@probonoappealsny.org.

The Pro Bono Appeals Program is supported by the New York State Bar Association and with grants from The New York Bar Foundation, the state Office of Court Administration and the Interest on Lawyer Accounts Fund. The grants help make possible staff support for the program.

The Fourth Judicial Department covers 22 counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates.

The 76,000-member New York State Bar Association is the largest voluntary state bar association in the nation. It was founded in

