

**ELDER LAW SECTION  
MEMBER EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
JULY 22, 2009**

**Present:** Laura Zdychnec, Brian Bell (MSBA), John Freeman (LSC ), Nick Halbur (U. St. Thomas Law School)

The Elder Law Section's Member Education Committee, in conjunction with the Minnesota State Bar Association and Minnesota Legal Services Coalition, met Wednesday, July 22, 2009, to discuss collection and organization of elder law resources for use by attorneys representing low-income clients. MSBA and MLSC administer the website [ProJusticeMN.org](http://ProJusticeMN.org), which provides resources for pro bono and legal services practitioners representing low-income or disadvantaged clients. Access to these resources is invaluable to those assisting low-income elders.

John and Brian provided an introduction and "tour" of the ProJustice website. The website was first introduced in 2002, and was subsequently redesigned in 2008 based on user-testing. The entry page identifies individual practice areas, including family law, real estate, and civil (which acts as a "catch-all" and currently includes Elder Law). Each practice area has a Library, Calendar and News section.

The purpose of this collaborative effort is to establish a fully-functioning separate Elder Law section. Focusing on the Library initially, the group discussed appropriate "subject folders" to be included and preliminarily identified as follows:

- Advance Directives
- Elder Abuse
- Guardianship/Conservatorship
- Government Benefits Planning
- Administrative (M.A.) Appeals
- Medicare & Medicare Part D
- Powers of Attorney
- Probate & Probate Alternatives
- Wills, Trusts & Estate Planning
- Grandparent Custody
- Veterans Benefits
- Elder Care/Long-term care Rights

The "subject folders" may also include MSBA Elder Law Section Resources, with links to the Section's current website (meeting notices, newsletter, etc.)

Our current objective is to solicit materials from section members for each of the subject folders above that fall generally into the following categories:

- Pleadings, Letters, Forms
- Practice Aids
- Legal Research Library
- Links

In addition to preliminary references already submitted by Laura, Nick indicated his willingness to provide forms and information for the appeals section. Laura will contact various section members and other appropriate parties requesting materials for other subjects. Additional request for targeted submissions may be placed in the e-newsletter.

One of the exciting features of the ProJustice website is that anyone can submit resources under the “Create Resources” option. Accordingly, the Elder Law resources will be open to ongoing and timely updates and additions of information. Information submitted under this option is first reviewed by John before being added.

The ProJustice website’s materials may be accessed by those working with legal aid or other pro bono and low income situations. In that respect, “membership” to the site requires approval. However, one area that does not require “membership” to access is the MSBA Pro Bono Directory. This section allows anyone to search for volunteer and/or pro bono opportunities, which is responsive to specific information obtained through the e-newsletter’s most recent survey of secmembers. Brian will be summarize information about the Pro Bono Directory for dissemination to section members, most likely through the e-newsletter.

Consideration was also given to numerous resources appropriate for inclusion in the Elder Law “library” that cost money to access or purchase (e.g. the MSBA’s Elder Law Handbook). The group discussed the need to differentiate these resources from those donated by section members. Brian will talk with MN CLE about reduced/low cost access to these materials as well as MN CLE’s on-line library for ProJustice membership.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laura Zdychnec, Member Education Committee Chair