

**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**

**40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**NORTHWESTERN**  
1969 **LEGAL SERVICES** 2009

*A Celebration  
of the  
40<sup>th</sup> 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 40<sup>th</sup> 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

		<b>1970</b>	<b>ECLSA opens temporary office in Central City NATO, 232 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Attorney R. Knickerbocker Smith is first staff attorney.</b>
<b>1876</b>	<b>German Legal Society of New York becomes first agency in U.S. to offer civil legal assistance to poor.</b>		
<b>1950s</b>	<b>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.</b>		<b>Attorney Dennis Sterrett joins staff, along with part-time attorneys Hobart Williams, Chester Vendetti, Robert Hain, Daniel Kuhn and Richard Barron.</b>
			<b>ECLSA relocates to 322 Commerce Building</b>
<b>1960s</b>	<b>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.</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>Attorney Norman Watkins appointed executive director.</b>
<b>1964</b>	<b>Economic Opportunity Act launches War on Poverty, making federal funds available for civil legal aid.</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>Attorney Francis Conte appointed executive director</b>
<b>1966</b>	<b>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 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Erie</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>ECLSA changes name to Legal Services for Northwestern Pennsylvania (LSNP) as it begins expansion into other counties in the region</b>
			<b>Legal Services Corporation Act enacted by Congress</b>
<b>1969</b>	<b>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.</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>LSNP moves offices from North Park Row in downtown Erie into Rothrock Building, 121 West Tenth Street in Erie</b>

**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 40<sup>th</sup> 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  
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