



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephanie Hemphill, Kesh Marketing

Phone: (360) 464-8133

Email: stephanie@keshmarketing.com

THURSTON COUNTY VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES NOW SERVING THE COMMUNITY AS SOUND LEGAL AID

Providing legal aid services and access to justice for the residents of Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Lewis, and Pacific Counties just got a lot stronger.

OLYMPIA, WA, MAY 9, 2024 – Founded in 1981, the Thurston-Mason Pro Bono Project began by organizing attorneys willing to provide legal representation to low-income residents of the two counties. In the last 40+ years, the organization has expanded to five local counties and has proudly served low-income and vulnerable populations with non-criminal, civic legal issues including domestic violence, family law and tenant services.

“Our organization has a strong mission and we serve our clientele proudly.” said President, Jon Pitel. “Our clients never pay for their services and our hope is that they feel valued and supported as we help them through very difficult, overwhelming, and often times, traumatizing events. We are able to ensure clients are heard and feel supported in high-stress situations and environments that are unfamiliar to them.”

Sound Legal Aid provides a mix of volunteer legal advice and direct representation by staff attorneys that is sensitive to each client’s individual situation and legal needs. Their services empower their clients, who are generally members of vulnerable and under-served populations that fall below 200% of the Federal poverty level and often in crisis.

“I will never forget my first-time volunteering, the first time someone said to me ‘that attorney there is your mentor for the evening. Ask them anything.’ I cannot understate the important feeling of having a safe place as a new attorney to provide what is sometimes simple advice to an immensely grateful client.” Said Ingrid Zerpa, our VP & president-elect who unveiled the new name at a fundraising breakfast in early May.

At its core Sound Legal Aid is a volunteer, community-based non-profit. The organization began with one director a legal clinic coordinator, then a staff attorney, and in the last couple of years, have expanded and evolved into a law firm *and* a volunteer legal clinic. Building and uplifting the legal community by providing a means for legal professionals and others dedicated to increasing access to justice complements their goal of providing services to clients.

“I imagine the confidence that an attorney gets from giving good advice, now imagine the confidence felt by the recipient of that advice, a person who 20 minutes earlier felt lost in a mist of legalese. The legal clinics do not have restrictions or limitations on the populations we can serve. We fill a gap in legal services in five counties. Our main goal moving forward is to ensure that our legal clinics remain a strong presence in our communities.” Said Zerpa

As the Board of Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services ruminated on their roots, their origin, founding values, and mission, they embraced those values in their new name: Sound Legal Aid. As Sound Legal Aid continues to expand their existing presence and legal clinics in Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor, and Pacific County, their name will show their clients and supporters their dedication to serving the entire region (not just Thurston County). It will show that volunteers are located all over the south sound area.

Sound Legal Aid provides a critical service to the community by breaking down barriers and ensuring everyone has access to free and sound legal advice when they need it most. The goal with the new branding is to reinforce this message to current and potential clients. For the community to know that Sound Legal Aid is providing a sound and strong service that clients can feel confident in.

"We have always viewed our mission as providing quality legal services to clients throughout our community and our new name reinforces that. We know that when our clientele meets with the Sound Legal Aid team, either through our direct representation services, or meeting with our dedicated volunteers, they will feel supported, seen and heard." said Pitel. "Imagine the secure feeling our clients will feel when they receive sound legal aid."

The Logo:



The Color Blue represents trust and loyalty. It has a calming effect, and makes us feel confident and secure. It is an honest, reliable, and responsible color and you can always count on its support.

The Color Brown signals stability and reliability. Brown is dependable. A great counselor and friend full of wisdom.

The Logo represents the waves of the sound while also being grounded, stable, and strong. The design also has an Indigenous inspiration paying homage to the history of our region. It is colorful to inspire positivity and support.

About Sound Legal Aid: Sound Legal Aid promotes access to justice through the coordinated efforts of trained volunteers and community partners. Sound Legal Aid strives to enable low-income clients to resolve their civil legal problems by providing legal advice, information, and direct representation in a manner sensitive to individuals and their legal needs. Visit www.soundlegalaid.org for more information.

###