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[WSBA Info](#)
[For Lawyers](#)
[For the Public](#)
[For the Media](#)
[CLE](#)

| [Bench Bar Guidelines](#) | [News Releases](#) | [Publications](#) |

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[Lawyer Directory](#)
[MCLE Activity Search](#)
[Find Legal Help](#)
[Job Opportunities](#)
[Access to Justice](#)
[Pro Bono Opportunities](#)
[MCLE Website](#)
[Ethics Opinions](#)

[Admissions](#)
[Bar Leadership](#)
[Board of Governors](#)
[Committees](#)
[Diversity](#)
[Law Students](#)
[Sections](#)
[Young Lawyers](#)
[FAQs](#)
[WSBA Store](#)
[Bar News](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Law Links](#)
[Contact Us](#)

Home > [For the Media](#) > [News Releases](#)

SEARCH [GO](#)

[SITE INDEX](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2007

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Washington State Bar Association and Access to Justice Board to Host 12th Annual Access to Justice and Bar Leaders Joint Conference June 1-3 in Wenatchee

Seattle, Washington, May 25, 2007 — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) and the Access to Justice (ATJ) Board will host the 12th annual ATJ Conference in conjunction with the Bar Leaders Conference June 1-3 at the Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel. The conference theme is "Valuing Leadership: Ensuring Justice for All."

The joint conference will bring together representatives from virtually every sector of the legal community to discuss equal-justice issues as they relate to the delivery of legal services to low-income people, including the Washington State Alliance for Equal Justice – a network of legal-services programs providing legal aid to those with nowhere else to turn – and supporters of the Alliance, which include members of the judiciary and the private bar, court clerks and facilitators, law librarians, paralegals, law school administrators, legal-services programs, pro bono programs, specialized legal services, community services, and the alternative dispute resolution community. Bar leaders in attendance will include individuals from Washington's county, minority, and specialty bar associations, and WSBA committees and sections. For the first time, law students from all of the state's three law schools will participate in the conference.

The conference will begin on Friday, with several preliminary meetings throughout the day, including a public hearing conducted by the Practice of Law Board about a proposed court rule that would authorize "legal technicians" – nonlawyers who would be trained, tested, and licensed to provide specifically defined legal services under strictly controlled and limited circumstances. The Board of Governors will also meet on Friday. Friday evening's welcome reception will feature opening remarks from ATJ Conference Chair Colleen Kinerk and Bar Leaders Conference Chair Zulema Hinojos-Fall; greetings from WSBA President Ellen Conedera Dial and ATJ Board Chair Judge Gregory Tripp; presentation of the WSBA 2007 Pro Bono Award to Richland lawyer Shelley Ajax; presentation of the donation by the WSBA Administrative Law Section of the Public Records Act Deskbook to county law libraries throughout the state; and the traditional conference skit.

The conference gets into full swing on Saturday with a variety of workshops, including a roundtable discussion featuring members of the Washington State Supreme Court and WSBA Board of Governors discussing judicial selection and election; a "Leadership for Justice" panel discussion plenary session led by Dean of the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Affairs Sandra Archibald; a session about Grant County's Juvenile Justice Reform Project; and a session about the King County Bar Association's Drug Policy Initiative and Coalition. Other session topics include "Striding Toward Equality: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification"; "Asset Building and Asset Protection for Low-Income People"; "Cognitive Disabilities in Administrative Hearings"; "Alliance and Law School Partnerships"; "Forging New Partnerships in Pro Bono"; "Leadership: A Focus on Chelan County"; and "Continuing Our Civil Gideon Discussion." Two sessions will focus on tribal courts – "Tribal Leadership and the Tulalip Wellness Court: Treatment Courts in Indian Country" and "Public Defense in Washington Tribal Courts."

A highlight of Saturday's events will be the luncheon keynote address by former U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington John McKay, who is currently a visiting professor of law at Seattle University School of Law. Mr. McKay has long worked on behalf of equal access to justice – he previously served as president of the Washington, DC-based Legal Services Corporation, a private, nonprofit corporate established by Congress to ensure justice under the law for all low-income Americans.

Several awards will also be presented at the luncheon – the Civil Equal Justice Community Partnership Award to TVW, Washington's public-affairs network; the Access to Justice Leadership Award to John Purbaugh, of Northwest Justice Project; the ATJ Board Judicial Leadership Award to King County Superior Court Judge Catherine Shaffer; and the Council on Public Legal Education Flame of Democracy Award to the League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund (award to be accepted by Karen Verrill).

The conference will conclude at noon on Sunday, after a session about enhancing communications across diverse audiences with Dr. Wanda Hackett, and a session facilitated by Charles Wynder Jr. from the National Legal Aid and Defender Association about applying leadership principles.

About the Access to Justice Board

The ATJ Board was established by the Washington State Supreme Court in 1994 at the request of the WSBA Board of Governors, in response to a growing need to coordinate the access-to-justice efforts throughout the state and ensure continuity and focus. Its mandate is to ensure access to the civil-justice system for low- and moderate-income Washington residents. The board consists of nine members nominated by the WSBA Board of Governors and appointed by the Washington State Supreme Court. Spokane County District Court Judge Gregory Tripp is the current chair.

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA is part of the judicial branch, exercising a governmental function authorized by the Washington State Supreme Court to license the state's 30,600 lawyers. The WSBA both regulates lawyers under the authority of the Court and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. As a regulatory agency, the WSBA administers the bar admission process, including the bar exam; provides record-keeping and licensing functions; and

administers the lawyer-discipline system. As a professional association, the WSBA provides continuing legal education for attorneys, in addition to numerous other educational and member-service activities.

The governance of the WSBA is vested in its Board of Governors. There are three governors from the seventh congressional district; one from each of the other eight districts; and three at-large members, one of whom represents the Young Lawyers Division. The president is Ellen Conedera Dial, of Seattle. The 2006-2007 president-elect is Stanley A. Bastian, of Wenatchee, and the immediate past-president is S. Brooke Taylor, of Port Angeles. The Board meets regularly (every six weeks) at various locations around the state, and its meetings are open to the public. Much of the work of the Bar is carried out through 23 standing committees; 26 sections; and a Young Lawyers Division, with its many committees.

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Contact stephaniep@wsba.org for feedback or questions about this page.

Last Modified: Friday, May 25, 2007

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