



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: James Reardon, Commissioner of Finance & Management
From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst
Date: March 20, 2008
Subject: JFO #2368

No Joint Fiscal Committee member has requested that the following item be held for review:

JFO #2368 — \$60,000 grant from Legal Services Law Line of Vermont to the Judiciary – Court Administrator's Office. These grant funds will be used to cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants (i.e., persons representing themselves in court proceedings) to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer.

[JFO received 2/18/09]

In accordance with 32 V.S.A. §5, the requisite 30 days having elapsed since this item was submitted to the Joint Fiscal Committee, the Governor's approval may now be considered final. We ask that you inform the Secretary of Administration and your staff of this action.

cc: Robert Greemore, Acting Court Administrator



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee Members
From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst
Date: February 19, 2009
Subject: Grant Requests

Enclosed please find two (2) requests which the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the Administration:

JFO #2367 — \$127,445 grant from the Office of Community Policing Services (COPS) to the Department of Public Safety – State Police. These funds will be passed through to the Rutland County Sheriff's Department (via sub-grant) to fund a School Resource Officer at Mill River Union High School.

[JFO received 2/18/09]

JFO #2368 — \$60,000 grant from Legal Services Law Line of Vermont to the Judiciary – Court Administrator's Office. These grant funds will be used to cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants (i.e., persons representing themselves in court proceedings) to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer.

[JFO received 2/18/09]

The Joint Fiscal Office has reviewed these submissions and determined that all appropriate forms bearing the necessary approvals are in order.

In accordance with the procedures for processing such requests, we ask you to review the enclosed and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Nathan Lavery at (802) 828-1488; nlavery@leg.state.vt.us) if you have questions or would like an item held for Joint Fiscal Committee review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by March 5th we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of this request.

cc: James Reardon, Commissioner
Thomas Tremblay, Commissioner
Lee Suskin, Court Administrator



JFO 2368

State of Vermont
Department of Finance & Management
109 State Street, Pavilion Building
Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

Agency of Administration

[phone] 802-828-2376
[fax] 802-828-2428

**STATE OF VERMONT
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| Grant Summary: | | This grant will cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer. | | | |
| Date: | | 1/26/2009 | | | |
| Department: | | Judiciary | | | |
| Legal Title of Grant: | | Law Line of Vermont/VT Supreme Court Partnership: Family Court Forms Development TIG 08043 | | | |
| Federal Catalog #: | | NA | | | |
| Grant/Donor Name and Address: | | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 Winooski Ave, Burlington Vermont 05401 | | | |
| Grant Period: | | From: | To: | | |
| | | 3/1/2009 | 2/28/2010 | | |
| Grant/Donation | | \$60,000 | | | |
| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Total | Comments |
| Grant Amount: | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | \$60,000 | The grant award letter states the grant goes through 2/30/10. But February is only 28 days. The number on this form has been adjusted to 2/28/10. |
| Position Information: | | # Positions | Explanation/Comments | | |
| | | 0 | | | |
| Additional Comments: | | This grant will help make it easier for low income litigants to represent themselves more effectively. | | | |

STATE OF VERMONT
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|
| Department of Finance & Management | <i>[Signature]</i> 2/2/09 | (Initial) |
| Secretary of Administration | KPM 2/2/09 | (Initial) |
| Sent To Joint Fiscal Office | 2/4/09 | Date |
| | | |



STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION

| | | | |
|--|---|--------|--------------------|
| 1. Agency: | Judiciary | | |
| 2. Department: | Supreme Court/Court Administrator's Office | | |
| 3. Program: | Pro Se Education | | |
| 4. Legal Title of Grant: | LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP:FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT TIG 08043 | | |
| 5. Federal Catalog #: | | | |
| 6. Grant/Donor Name and Address: | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 N Winooski Ave, Burlington ,VT 05401 | | |
| 7. Grant Period: | From: | 3/1/09 | To: 2/30/10 |
| 8. Purpose of Grant: | The Vermont Supreme Court is a subgrantee of Legal Services of Vermont, Inc., for purpose of using A2J Author Software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings in order to create accurate forms for court filings. | | |
| 9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted: | The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively, and is the first part of a larger strategy to create pro se service centers in the courts, and, in anticipation of the Court's new data management system, move the Court towards electronic filing capacity. If grant is not accepted it will slow down the Court's progress towards the above goals and will negatively impact Court's ability to provide access to justice for pro se litigants. | | |

10. BUDGET INFORMATION

| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Comments |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| | FY 09 | FY 10 | FY | |
| Expenditures: | | | | |
| Personal Services | \$17,333 | \$34,664 | \$ | |
| Operating Expenses | \$2,667 | \$5,336 | \$ | mileage/expenses |
| Grants | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Revenues: | | | | |
| State Funds: | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Cash | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| In-Kind | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Federal Funds: | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| (Direct Costs) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Statewide Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Departmental Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Other Funds: | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ | |
| Grant (source subgrantee of Law Line of Vermont, Inc.) | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|----|
| Appropriation No: | | Amount: | \$ |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|----|

REC'D JAN 05 2009

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc.

274 North Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

802-863-7153 800-639-8857

Fax: 802-651-4130 TTY: 802-651-4141, #81

www.vtlawhelp.org

December 22, 2008

Lee Suskin
Office of the Court Administrator
Vermont Supreme Court
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0801

Re: Grant Award

Dear Lee:

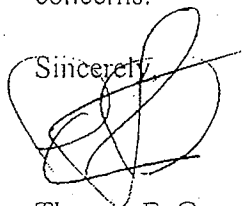
I am pleased to inform you that we have awarded the Office of Court Administrator a grant to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. The grant is for \$60,000. The award period is from 3/1/2009 to 2/30/2010.

Please note that receipt of this grant requires monthly reports and continuing progress toward the milestones established by Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grant #08043, a copy of which is attached.

Law Line will provide training, on going support, and overall management for the project.

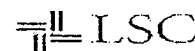
Please review the milestones carefully. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Thomas F. Garrett
Executive Director

cc: Bob Greemore

 LSC

Funded by the
Legal Services Corporation

Standard Application Form


| | |
|--|---|
| Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grants 2008 | TIG Number: 08043 |
| | Date: 5/2/2008 |
| Application Form | For LSC Use Only |
| --Statewide Web Sites-- <input type="radio"/> Renewal Web Sites <input type="radio"/> Continuation Web Site Funding --Special Projects-- <input checked="" type="radio"/> Open Category <input type="radio"/> Replication | Grant Term (check one) <input checked="" type="radio"/> one year <input type="radio"/> two year <input type="radio"/> three year <input type="radio"/> other (# of months) <input style="width: 40px; height: 15px;" type="text"/> |
| Total Grant Request: \$ 81166 | Total Project Budget: \$ 131882 |
| Brief Description of Proposed Project: (50 words or less) This is a collaborative project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Judiciary. We will use A2J software to develop an Interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. | |

Applicant Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| LSC Grantee Name / Number | Legal Services Law Line of VT / 146010 |
| Street Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington , VT 05401 |

Contact Information

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Contact Name | Tom Garrett |
| Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington , VT 05401 |
| Telephone Number | 8028637153 FAX - 8026514130 |
| E-mail Address | tgarrett@lawlinevt.org |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Name of Authorized Representative | Title |
| Thomas F. Garrett | Executive Director |
| Signature of Authorized Representative | Date Signed |
|  | 5/2/08 |

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[[View List of TIG Selections](#)] [[View Selected TIG Checklist](#)]

Prior Grants

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 00022 | 13550 | 11950 | Statewide legal services web site will provide information to the client community, including forms and information for pro se litigants. The site will also include a brief bank for advocates. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant began our work on a client information web site. The current grant is a continuation of that effort.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 02041 | 251418 | 249600 | The project will create the Legal Services Distance Learning Institute, which will make available nationally the core curriculum of the Legal Services Training Consortium of New England, and provide a platform for other legal services organizations to provide distance learning opportunities. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant required complex management of several partners and produced expertise in technology and the web.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 02042 | 50280 | 48462 | New Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility and utility of our client web site.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 03041 | 44478 | 42517 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont seeks funding for a statewide technology specialist who will assess and review the technology needs of Vermont legal services programs, including case management and web resources, and assist them in the development of a comprehensive statewide technology plan. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|---|
| 04041 | 27037 | 16713 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests \$25,000 from the Legal Services Corporation under the Statewide Web Sites category for second year web site continuation funding. This grant, if awarded, will provide resources for Law Line for continued hosting, maintenance, content development, and outreach in support of our Vermont Law Help (www.vtlawhelp.org) web site. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant also furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 04042 | 49202 | 42000 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests funding under the State Planning Implementation Category to purchase the PIKA Software case management system and develop enhancements that are necessary to Vermont's legal services programs. Since the PIKA system uses open source technology the enhancements would be available to other legal services program that use PIKA and would create a low cost, comprehensive, flexible case management system for legal services programs. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding and allowed us to implement a web based case management system.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 05041 | 27900 | 0 | Continuation Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant will further our web expertise and expand the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 05042 | 62900 | 50000 | Legal Aid University (LAU) is the only provider of online professional development courses for the national legal aid community. LAU is unique in two respects: we offer training experiences tailored to the specific needs and mission of legal aid practitioners and we offer these online, broadening the legal aid community's access to professional development through increased convenience and lowered costs. In 2006, LAU will offer a regular calendar of its existing five online courses to legal aid advocates around the country. The opportunity to receive a Technology Initiative Grant comes at a strategic moment in LAU's development. LAU is in the process of establishing itself as a separate non-profit organization dedicated to serving the national legal aid community. We seek funding to continue to offer online courses nationally and to enable us to enact our three-and five-year growth plans with the goal of increasing online course enrollments by at least twenty percent annually, serving 50 legal aid professionals in 2006. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant gave us further expertise in the management of a complex technology project.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 06042 | 19100 | 5000 | Law Line specializes in advice, information, and brief services for low income Vermonters. Perhaps the most critical area we work in is housing. Resources do not allow representation to all tenants in housing cases. Most tenants being evicted are pro se. Our research shows that pro se tenants do not succeed in eviction cases. They frequently default and are unable to present legitimate claims against landlords. We have developed several forms for tenants including answers, counterclaims, motions to dismiss, and motions to reopen default. The forms are not easy for pro se tenants to use. We want to use HotDocs with the A2J overlay to make the forms interactive and easier for low income tenants to use. This would strengthen our web site and help us empower tenants to protect their rights and preserve their housing. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant introduced us to HotDocs and A2J software. It enabled us to develop expertise and knowledge in the use of these tools. This expertise and knowledge will be critical in the current project.

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

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Lessons Learned from other Technology Projects

What other projects - either TIG or funded by another source - have sought to address this or similar issues?

This project will build on three other TIG funded projects. The first is the HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services. The second is the Idaho Supreme Court/Legal Services partnership grant to develop HotDocs forms. The third is the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Capstone Practice Systems and funded by ? Legal Services.

How will the proposed project differ from and incorporate the lessons from those projects?

The HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services is essential to our project. We will use the server to store our templates and make them available from our web site. There are many similarities between our project and the Idaho project. We have conferred with Idaho court and staff to discuss our proposal. This was particularly important in working out governance issues and planning for long term sustainability. Although we have not yet tested the Family Law Startup Kit, we believe that it will jump start our family court form development project.

Executive Summary

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

This is a joint project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Supreme Court, with support from Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. We propose to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. We will contract with the Court to create the A2J Author templates from the 60 forms which are located on the Supreme Court web site. Law Line will be able to provide training, on going support, and overall management for the project. The templates initially will be used to generate paper forms using HotDocs, which can be printed and filed. Parallel to this project the Court will implement a new case management system that will be able to accept filings directly from A2J Author so that low income families will be able to enter their data over the web and file their case electronically. This will allow us to channel information and assistance to pro se litigants that focuses on their particular problem. Additionally, in the second phase, it will allow people to file pleadings quickly and easily from anywhere in Vermont.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)[\[View List of TIG Selections \]](#) [\[View Selected TIG Checklist \]](#)**Budget Form**

Please round to the nearest dollar.

| | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Legal Services Corporation FY 2008 Technology Initiative Grants Budget Form | | | TIG Number: 08043 | | |
| | | | For LSC Use Only | | |
| Grantee Name: Legal Services Law Line of VT | | | | | |
| Grantee Number: 146010 | | | | | |
| | A | B | C | D | E |
| | LSC Grant Request | Program Project Contributions | Funds from Other LSC-Funded Partners | Funds from NON-LSC Funded Partners | Total Columns a through d |
| 1 Personnel | 10988 | 2000 | 0 | 18000 | 30988 |
| 2 Fringe Benefits | 1978 | 360 | 0 | 3240 | 5578 |
| 3 Space Cost (Rent/Lease) | 0 | 850 | 0 | 0 | 850 |
| 4 Travel | 1200 | 200 | 0 | 0 | 1400 |
| 5 Equipment (Purchase) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 Equipment (Rental) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 Telecommunications bandwidth charges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 Communications (Other) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 Software | 0 | 0 | 0 | 400 | 400 |
| 10 Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 Contracts | 60000 | 0 | 0 | 24666 | 84666 |
| 12 Project Evaluation Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 13 Training | 7000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7000 |
| 14 Project Audit Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 15 Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 81,166 | 4,410 | 0 | 46,306 | 131,882 |
| Percentages | 62% | 3% | | 35% | 100% |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| Application Amounts | 81166 | Total Requested | Total Project Budget | 131882 |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|

- Check this box and click 'Lock' to mark the Budget Form as complete
NOTE: You will not be able to change it once it is locked!
Clicking 'Save' button allows you to return and edit the Budget Form.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Budget Form.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Budget Narrative

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

1.A Personnel LSC Grant Contribution

This will fund salary for a Law Line staff attorney, Laura Blerley, to work on the project one day a week. It will also fund salary for the Executive Director to work on this for 2 hours a week.

1.B Personnel Program Project Contributions

This provides for staff work and support including office support and reading, testing, and commenting on forms.

1.D Personnel Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is a contribution by way of support from the Supreme Court and the Court Administrator's Office. It includes active involvement and contributions from judges and court staff.

2.A Fringe Benefits LSC Grant Contribution

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.B Fringe Benefits Program Project Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.D Fringe Benefits Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

3.B Space Cost Program Project Contributions

These are other space costs for Law Line staff working on this project.

4.A Travel LSC Grant Contribution

This includes travel around the state for meetings and discussions with court staff and travel out of state for training.

**4.B Travel
Program Project Contributions**

Additional travel costs.

**9.D Software
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

Costs of HotDocs, A2J Author, and any other necessary software.

**11.A Contracts
LSC Grant Contribution**

This is a contract with the Vermont Supreme Court which will do most of the form writing with support from Law Line. The court will bring in a full time form writer for this. The contract includes fringe and office costs, which is required by state budget rules.

**11.D Contracts
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

This includes administrative and supervisory support of the contract work from court staff and judges.

**12.B Project Evaluations Cost
Program Project Contributions**

Cost of evaluation work to be done by Law Line.

**13.A Training
LSC Grant Contribution**

This will be for training on A2J Author, HotDocs, and low literacy writing. It will also include training and assistance to be provided to Law Line and the form writer by Capstone Practice.

**14.B Project Audit Costs
Program Project Contributions**

These are the project's share of Law Line's audit costs.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

PROJECT NARRATIVE
LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP
FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT
TIG 08043

Need for the Project

Law Line focuses on advice, information and brief service to clients. Most of our legal services are provided over the telephone. We do a large volume of brief service cases in family law and frequently help people fill out forms. The volume of requests for assistance with family law cases is very high. We only provide assistance to households who are below 125% of the federal poverty levels. In order to maintain the volume we need technological solutions that can provide focused information to pro se litigants and make our practice more efficient.

Each of Vermont's 14 counties has a Family Court. The Family Courts are responsible for all family related legal matters, including divorce, child custody, dissolution of civil unions, child support, and orders of protection for victims of domestic violence. The Chief Administrative Judge for all of Vermont's trial courts is the Hon. Amy Davenport. The Family Court has developed more than 60 forms for use by pro se litigants in family legal matters. These forms are available at the Pro Se Services Center of the judiciary's web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They are displayed as Adobe .pdf forms and many can be filled out on line, then printed, signed and filed. They do not provide instructions for users who are filling them out.

Family court staff and case managers provide information and assistance to pro se litigants throughout the State. Much of this assistance is focused on explaining the forms.

Law Line and Vermont Legal Aid have developed a very successful web site with steadily increasing usage. Our experience and recent studies have shown that some clients will not complete forms if they are required to download a copy of the blank form and fill it in by hand. Nor will they use instructions that are separate from the form itself. A guided, easier to understand form filling process is a much more successful strategy to help insure that the client will understand the forms, complete them accurately, and file them with the court. In addition, with guided interactive forms available, Law Line advocates will be able to work more efficiently, directing clients to work with the on-line forms and focusing the attorney's time on coaching, strategizing, and answering questions. Similarly, court staff and lay advocates at shelters will be better able to guide pro se litigants through the process.

We have reviewed many different document assembly systems. We feel confident that A2J Author is the flexible, easy to understand tool that will provide empowering information and knowledge to clients and help them file the pleadings they need to be heard in Family Court.

Project Goals and Objectives

The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively in Vermont's Family Court. This will increase the ability of attorneys to assist them effectively and allow legal services attorneys to focus on critical legal issues. The Vermont Family Court has developed approximately 60 forms that are available as Adobe pdf forms on their web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They include forms for in forma pauperis, relief from abuse actions, child support forms, divorce forms, enforcement forms, forms for legal separation and parentage, forms for establishing custody and visitation, and forms for the dissolution of a civil union. We will begin with the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant to Legal Aid of Western New York. We hope to create A2J Author templates for every form but will begin by prioritizing the forms to be created in case we are unable to write all of the forms.

Creating the A2J Author templates is the first part of a larger strategy. When the forms are complete they will be used to generate pleadings from the NPADO server, linked from our web site, www.vtlawhelp.org. The grant will also create essential expertise in Vermont, at the Court as well as in legal services, for continuing the development of A2J Author templates in other areas. The Court is particularly eager to move forward on this in Probate Court, evictions, foreclosures, and Small Claims Court.

The availability of A2J Author templates also is an important step toward creating pro se service centers in Vermont courthouses and increasing the ability of court staff to provide assistance to litigants. This will allow us to focus resources more effectively to help pro se litigants.

Finally, the A2J Author templates will move the courts toward electronic filing in a way that will not jeopardize the ability of low income litigants who do not have lawyers to access the court system. The Court is currently receiving bids on a new case management system that will enable it to be more efficient and will allow it to accept electronic data and create cases. This step will require creating a transform to take the A2J Author data and convert it to the court's data, but this does not appear to be a major hurdle.

The Vermont Court has made a significant commitment to use the TIG grant to start this process and carry it forward to better pro se assistance and electronic filing.

State Justice Community Partnerships

The Vermont Supreme Court and the Office of the Court Administrator are the principal administrative managers for all state courts. They will be part of the advisory committee that will be guiding this project. They are committed to the sustainability of this effort as well. Attached to this application are letters from Hon. John Dooley, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, Hon. Denise Johnson, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, and Lee Suskin, Vermont Court Administrator. Justice Dooley is Chair of the Court Technology Committee, which developed and is implementing a plan for electronic filing in the Vermont

courts. He has written extensively on legal services and poverty law and has worked extensively to develop legal services in post Soviet Eastern Europe. Justice Johnson is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition and of the ABA Commission on IOLTA. She has written extensively on access to justice issues.

Vermont Legal Aid, a state wide legal services organization, will also partner with us and take part in the advisory group. They will also provide technical support.

Law Line is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. Other charter members are the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School, Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Bar Foundation. The Vermont Access to Justice Coalition is also a supporter of this project and will assist in oversight. The Access to Justice Coalition brings together members of the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Association, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid and Law Line of Vermont. The Coalition was created in January 2004 with four principle goals: to increase public awareness of and support for civil legal assistance in Vermont; to promote cooperation, effectiveness and efficiency in expanding access to justice; to expand participation by the private bar in pro bono efforts; and to increase services and funding available for civil access to justice.

Finally, this project will be assisted by Kate Bladow at the National Document Assembly Project.

Replication

This project will build on the work of the Family Law Startup Kit, developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant. A2J Author is well tested and widely used. Our project will continue work done by others and support continuing efforts in this area.

We have discussed the project with several others including the Idaho Supreme Court, ProBono.net, and A2J Author software. There is significant interest in creating the ability to link A2J data to a court case management system and thereby enable electronic filing for pro se litigants.

It has long been assumed that courts need to integrate form development and assistance with electronic filing. We intend to accomplish this. It will require solving some problems, such as how to enable the A2J Author software to communicate with a court case management system and how to provide a paper record for litigants using an electronic filing system. Solving these problems will enable significant improvements in the ability to understand and navigate the court system.

This technology will offer a workable, affordable solution to problems faced by every court system in the country. A critical part of this grant is to develop the understanding, knowledge and expertise in Vermont to sustain this project and enable us to carry it forward on our own, beyond family law, to the other courts and areas of practice in Vermont, as well as to share what we learn with other states engaged in similar projects.

Program Capacity and Project Staffing

Tom Garrett, Executive Director of Law Line of Vermont, will be responsible for supervising the project, documenting the work, and reporting on progress toward milestones. Laura Bierley, Web Content Coordinator at Law Line, will also provide assistance including editing and review of scripts.

Law Line has received several TIG grants and is currently completing a HotDocs/A2J grant in which we created five eviction templates for tenants. We will begin to make these forms available to Vermonters within a couple of weeks. We worked with Capstone Practice to create these templates. This work has allowed us to develop the expertise in HotDocs and A2J Author that will carry us to this larger project. Now that we have tested the software we are convinced of its value.

The Court will engage a full time staff person to work on this. Supervision of the person will be provided by Sandra Seidel, a senior administrative person at the court administrator's office. Overall supervision at the Court will be provided by the Hon. Amy Davenport, Chief Administrative Judge for the Vermont Courts.

Feasibility

This project builds on our earlier project and on work done by Capstone Practice, NPADO, Chicago-Kent Law School, and Idaho Legal Services. We have had thorough consultations with these organizations and with Marc Lauritsen of Capstone Practice, who has written several articles on electronic filing and document assembly. We have also discussed this with Judges and administrative staff who carried out a similar project in Idaho, and with other court staff in Western Missouri and Florida. We have reviewed this with technology specialists in the Vermont Courts. We are convinced that this project is affordable, feasible and practical.

Proposed Payment Schedule

TIG Requested Amount \$81166

| | Period Start Date | Period End Date | # of Milestones | Payment Requested |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Initial Payment | | | | 20000 |
| 2 June | 2008 | December 2008 | 4 | 20000 |
| 3 January | 2009 | April 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 4 April | 2009 | June 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 5 June | 2009 | October 2009 | 3 | 11166 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Proposed Payment Total | 81166 |
| Grant Requested | 81166 |
| Difference | 0 |

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Payment Schedule.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Statement of Additional Funds

Please use this section to describe any additional funds your project will receive from other sources. If you do not anticipate any additional project funding, please also indicate that in this section.

We do not anticipate funds from other sources on this project.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

...the needs of all Vermonters...
...provide excellent...
...flexibility of use...
...Online (NPA) system...
...staff at the Judicial...
...developed the...
...staff...
...discussed...
...of...
...of...

...the Vermont...
...provide the...
...represented by an attorney...
...we have taken many steps to make sure that Family Courts are open...
...70% of the...
...Family Court...
...to support...
...to support...
...to support...

Dear Ms. Barnett
Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TG #08043

Associate Justice

John A. Dooley

John A. Dooley

Sincerely,

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

John A. Dooley, President

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIC #00673

Dear Ms. Barnet:

I am pleased to support Legal Services Law Line of Vermont's application for funding to support the A2J project. The A2J project is a fully funded, multi-year project that will provide legal services to Vermonters who are unable to pay for legal services. The project will be implemented by the Vermont Law Line, which has been a leader in using technology to promote services to pro se litigants. By joining with Law Line in the A2J project, we hope to further both of our goals to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

The Vermont Law Line is a non-profit organization that provides legal services to Vermonters who are unable to pay for legal services. The Law Line has been a leader in using technology to promote services to pro se litigants. Our goal is to create an electronic pro se services center, but one that will be consonant with the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing. The A2J project will allow the court to expand services toward the services center model, and yet take full advantage of the technology that we expect to have in the near future.

We see this grant as an opportunity to substantially advance our goal of ensuring access to justice for all Vermonters.

10/12/2011
K. L. [unclear]

sustain this work once the TIC project is completed. The [unclear] and [unclear] Court templates as [unclear]

probono.net

151 West 30th Street
10th Floor
New York, NY 10001

TEL. 212.760.2554
FAX 212.760.2557
info@probono.net
www.probono.net

May 2, 2008

Helaine Barnett, Esq.
President, Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3522

Janice Munsterman
Executive Director, State Justice Institute
1650 King Street, Suite 600
Alexandria, VA 22314

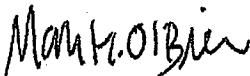
Dear Ms. Barnett and Ms. Munsterman:

Pro Bono Net strongly supports the Technology Initiative Grant application submitted by the Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line), which requests funding to develop additional online document assembly resources that will be integrated with the court's case management system. This project, if successful, will transform how self-represented litigants interact with the courts when filing forms.

The project that the Law Line, in collaboration with the Vermont Supreme Court, proposes is very innovative. To date, no other legal aid program has been asked to help develop content with A2J Author that will help self-represented litigants e-file. The lessons that the Law Line and the Vermont Supreme Court learn from this project will be invaluable to other states as they plan their e-filing initiatives.

Pro Bono Net is proud to partner with Law Line on this project and looks forward to working with them. I enthusiastically support this grant and strongly urge you to fund this important work.

Sincerely,



Mark O'Brien
Executive Director

Background Information on Law Line of Vermont
Available: <http://www.lawlinevt.org/>

WHAT IS LAW LINE?

Law Line is a non-profit legal services law firm, established in 1996, that provides free consultation, advice, and community education for low income Vermonters. We are supported by a grant from the Legal Services Corporation in Washington, D.C. We are available by telephone to any low income Vermonter with a civil legal problem. Law Line's cases are referred by Vermont Legal Aid who can be reached toll free from anywhere in Vermont by calling 1-800-889-2047.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND REFERRALS

In addition to counsel and advice, Law Line provides information, workshops, training, and referrals for low income Vermonters. Where possible, we try to connect a client with a full service attorney through the Vermont Volunteer Lawyers Project, the South Royalton Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid, or Vermont Protection & Advocacy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Law Line believes that people are often best helped when given the support, assistance and information they need to help themselves. In other words, people can get power in their lives by learning how to handle some legal problems on their own.

Law Line attorneys and paralegals help people represent themselves by learning the facts, explaining the law, helping with paperwork, and discussing the best strategies for winning. We help people with many different legal problems including family matters, housing, health care, disability, employment, and consumer law.

One phone call is often not enough, so Law Line attorneys and paralegals are available for follow-up calls and help prepare court papers and other documents for clients to use.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Law Line believes that the legal system must be open to everyone whether or not they have lawyers. We are concerned about barriers to justice such as high court fees, inaccessibility, lack of good, clear information, "legalese," and any other problems people encounter when trying to exercise their right to be heard. Law Line works with clients to narrow the gap between the promise of justice and the difficult reality of achieving it.

The mission of Legal Services Law Line of Vermont is to provide legal services to as many of the low income people of Vermont as possible. Law Line will seek to empower clients by providing the tools they need to help themselves. Law Line will seek to eliminate barriers that prevent low income people from access to justice and restrict their right to be heard. Law Line will seek to increase the knowledge and understanding of low income Vermonters through a variety of education strategies. Law Line will seek to enforce the obligations of courts, governmental agencies, and adjudicatory bodies to provide information, rules, forms, and laws that are clear, understandable and accessible.

Additional information:

N.Lavery conversation with Law Line of Vermont director Executive Director Tim Garrett (2/19/2009)
Law Line of Vermont receives most of its funding as a grant from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a national funding source for legal services programs. Law Line of Vermont also receives other small donations. LSC is funded via a direct appropriation from Congress. Law Line of Vermont was awarded these funds from LSC via a competitive grant process.

Lee
Cople
lee.sullivan@state.vt.us

Mailing Address
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0701

Telephone: (802) 828-3278
FAX: (802) 828-3457
TDD: (802) 828-3234



patrick.gibbs@state.vt.us

ROBERT YERGEAD
Director - Research & Info. Services
robert.yergead@state.vt.us

Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043

to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

We are beginning the process of developing a new court information system for the Vermont courts which will...

what we want...

development of family court templates as we begin to develop our forms. All are welcome to support this.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Director

VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

264 NORTH WINOOSKI AVE.
P.O. BOX 1367
BURLINGTON, VT 05402
802-863-2881 (VOICE AND TTY)
FAX 802-863-7152

Helaine Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043

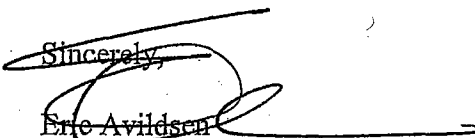
Dear Ms. Barnett:

I am writing to support the application from the Supreme Court of Vermont and Law Line of Vermont for funding to create pro se templates using the A2J Author software. This will increase our ability to help Vermonters who are representing themselves in Family Court.

The volume of inquiries we receive from low income litigants in Family Court is far too great for us to be able to provide direct service to everyone. This proposal will build on the work we have done to create HotDocs/A2J templates for tenants facing eviction. It will allow us to provide directed information to individuals and families who need help and can use the web. We know that many low income Vermonters have access to the web and that their numbers are constantly increasing. I have seen how A2J Author works and I believe it will significantly increase access to justice for low income people in Family Courts across Vermont.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Eric Avildsen
Executive Director

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[\[View List of TIG Selections \]](#) [\[View Selected TIG Checklist \]](#)

Milestone Narratives

Milestone #1 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Create Advisory Committee and meet to discuss and plan project.

Milestone #2 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Negotiate and execute contract with Court.

Milestone #3 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Prioritize forms for development. Decide which forms to start with and set a schedule for form development.

Milestone #4 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Train all staff on A2J Author, low literacy writing, and Hotdocs.

Milestone #1 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Develop forms for testing.

Milestone #2 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Review forms with advisory committee and incorporate suggestions into forms.

Milestone #3 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Continue training and support of court staff.

Milestone #1 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Finalize first forms and put them on web for client testing.

Milestone #2 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Continue testing and reviewing forms with court staff.

Milestone #3 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Meet with advisory group to review forms.

Milestone #1 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Publish all forms on web.

Milestone #2 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Final review and revisions of forms and training of court staff in their use.

Milestone #3 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Complete evaluation.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Milestone Narratives.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

SP0 2368



State of Vermont
Department of Finance & Management
109 State Street, Pavilion Building
Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

Agency of Administration

[phone] 802-828-2376
[fax] 802-828-2428

**STATE OF VERMONT
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| Grant Summary: | | This grant will cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer. | | | |
| Date: | | 1/26/2009 | | | |
| Department: | | Judiciary | | | |
| Legal Title of Grant: | | Law Line of Vermont/VT Supreme Court Partnership: Family Court Forms Development TIG 08043 | | | |
| Federal Catalog #: | | NA | | | |
| Grant/Donor Name and Address: | | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 Winooski Ave, Burlington Vermont 05401 | | | |
| Grant Period: | | From: | To: | | |
| | | 3/1/2009 | 2/28/2010 | | |
| Grant/Donation | | \$60,000 | | | |
| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Total | Comments |
| Grant Amount: | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | \$60,000 | The grant award letter states the grant goes through 2/30/10. But February is only 28 days. The number on this form has been adjusted to 2/28/10. |
| Position Information: | | # Positions | Explanation/Comments | | |
| | | 0 | | | |
| Additional Comments: | | This grant will help make it easier for low income litigants to represent themselves more effectively. | | | |

**STATE OF VERMONT
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|
| Department of Finance & Management | <i>[Signature]</i> 2/2/09 | (Initial) |
| Secretary of Administration | RPM 2/2/09 | (Initial) |
| Sent To Joint Fiscal Office | 2/4/09 | Date |
| | | |

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

BASIC GRANT INFORMATION

| | | | |
|--|---|--------|--------------------|
| 1. Agency: | Judiciary | | |
| 2. Department: | Supreme Court/Court Administrator's Office | | |
| 3. Program: | Pro Se Education | | |
| 4. Legal Title of Grant: | LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP:FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT TIG 08043 | | |
| 5. Federal Catalog #: | | | |
| 6. Grant/Donor Name and Address: | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 N Winooski Ave, Burlington ,VT 05401 | | |
| 7. Grant Period: | From: | 3/1/09 | To: 2/30/10 |
| 8. Purpose of Grant: | The Vermont Supreme Court is a subgrantee of Legal Services of Vermont, Inc., for purpose of using A2J Author Software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings in order to create accurate forms for court filings. | | |
| 9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted: | The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively, and is the first part of a larger strategy to create pro se service centers in the courts, and, in anticipation of the Court's new data management system, move the Court towards electronic filing capacity. If grant is not accepted it will slow down the Court's progress towards the above goals and will negatively impact Court's ability to provide access to justice for pro se litigants. | | |

TO BUDGET INFORMATION

| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Comments |
|--|----------|----------|-------|------------------|
| | FY 09 | FY 10 | FY | |
| Expenditures: | | | | |
| Personal Services | \$17,333 | \$34,664 | \$ | |
| Operating Expenses | \$2,667 | \$5,336 | \$ | mileage/expenses |
| Grants | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Revenues: | | | | |
| State Funds: | | | | |
| Cash | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| In-Kind | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Federal Funds: | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| (Direct Costs) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Statewide Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Departmental Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Other Funds: | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ | |
| Grant (source subgrantee of Law Line of Vermont, Inc.) | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|----|
| Appropriation No: | | Amount: | \$ |
|--------------------------|--|----------------|----|

REC'D JAN 05 2009

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------|----|
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | | \$ |
| | | Total | \$ |

PERSONAL SERVICE INFORMATION

11. Will monies from this grant be used to fund one or more Personal Service Contracts? Yes No
 If "Yes", appointing authority must initial here to indicate intent to follow current competitive bidding process/policy.

Appointing Authority Name: Lee Suskin, Court Administrator Agreed by: LS (initial)

| 12. Limited Service Position Information: | # Positions | Title |
|---|-------------|-------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Total Positions | | |

12a. Equipment and space for these positions: Is presently available. Can be obtained with available funds.

13. AUTHORIZATION AGENCY/DEPARTMENT

I/we certify that no funds beyond basic application preparation and filing costs have been expended or committed in anticipation of Joint Fiscal Committee approval of this grant, unless previous notification was made on Form AA-1PN (if applicable):

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Signature: <u>Lee Suskin</u> | Date: <u>12/30/08</u> |
| Title: Lee Suskin, Court Administrator | |
| Signature: <u>Lee S</u> | Date: _____ |
| Title: _____ | |

14. ACTION BY GOVERNOR

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Check One Box: Accepted | <u>[Signature]</u> (Governor's signature) | Date: <u>2/3/09</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rejected | | Date: _____ |

15. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Check One Box: Request to JFO | <u>[Signature]</u> (Secretary's signature or designee) | Date: <u>2/2/09</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Information to JFO | | Date: _____ |

16. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

Required GRANT Documentation

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Dept. project approval (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Award <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Donation (if any) <input type="checkbox"/> Grant (Project) Timeline (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Extension (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Form AA-1PN attached (if applicable) |
|---|--|

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc.

274 North Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

802-863-7153 800-639-8857

Fax: 802-651-4130 TTY: 802-651-4141, #81

www.vtlawhelp.org

December 22, 2008

Lee Suskin
Office of the Court Administrator
Vermont Supreme Court
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0801

Re: Grant Award

Dear Lee:

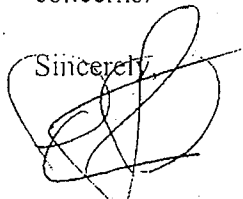
I am pleased to inform you that we have awarded the Office of Court Administrator a grant to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. The grant is for \$60,000. The award period is from 3/1/2009 to 2/30/2010.

Please note that receipt of this grant requires monthly reports and continuing progress toward the milestones established by Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grant #08043, a copy of which is attached.

Law Line will provide training, on going support, and overall management for the project.


Please review the milestones carefully. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

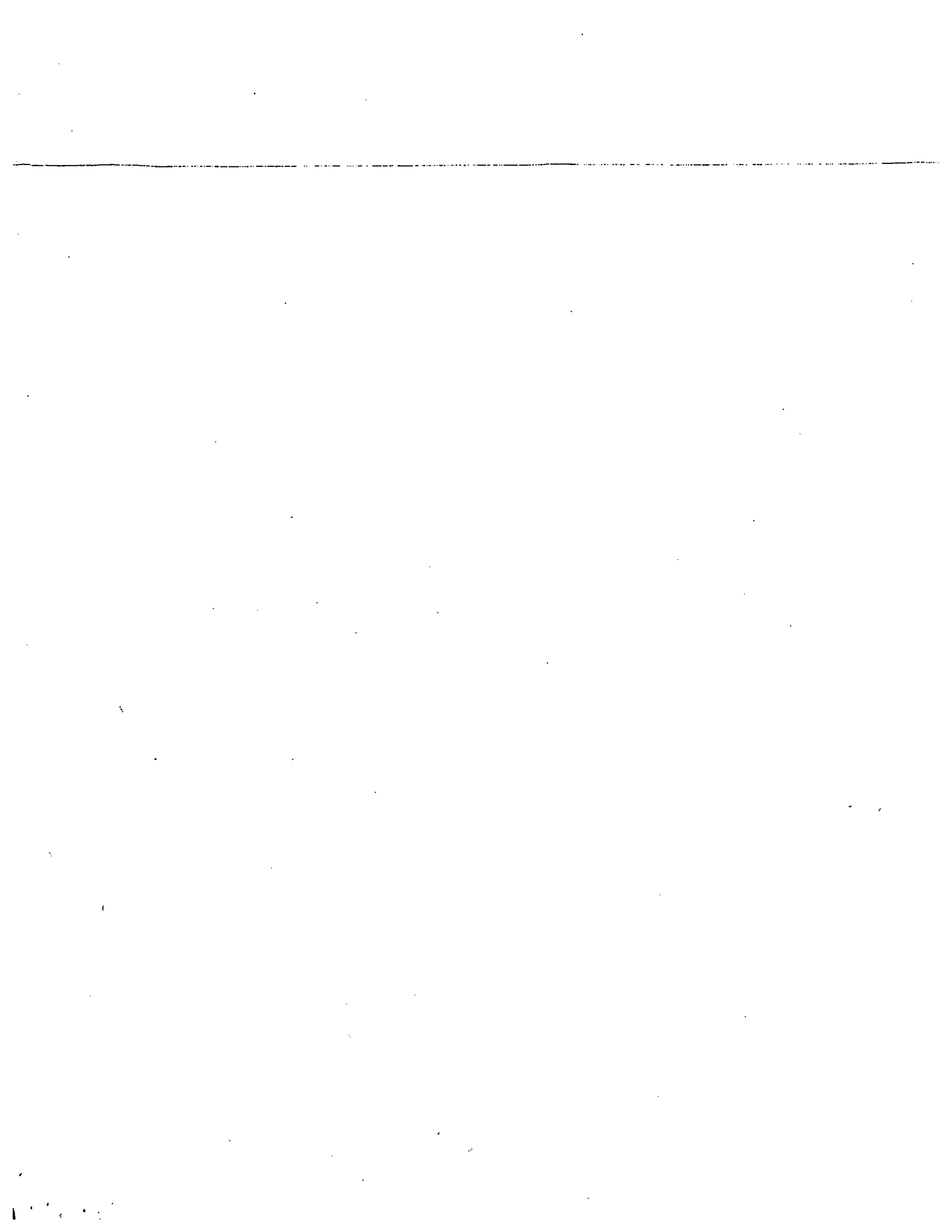


Thomas F. Garrett
Executive Director

cc: Bob Greemore

 LSC

Funded by the
Legal Services Corporation



Standard Application Form


| | |
|--|---|
| Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grants 2008 | TIG Number: 08043 |
| | Date: 5/2/2008 |
| Application Form | For LSC Use Only |
| --Statewide Web Sites-- <input type="radio"/> Renewal Web Sites <input type="radio"/> Continuation Web Site Funding --Special Projects-- <input checked="" type="radio"/> Open Category <input type="radio"/> Replication | Grant Term (check one) <input checked="" type="radio"/> one year <input type="radio"/> two year <input type="radio"/> three year <input type="radio"/> other (# of months) <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/> |
| Total Grant Request: \$ 81166 | Total Project Budget: \$ 131882 |
| Brief Description of Proposed Project: (50 words or less) This is a collaborative project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Judiciary. We will use A2J software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. | |

Applicant Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| LSC Grantee Name / Number | Legal Services Law Line of VT / 146010 |
| Street Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington, VT 05401 |

Contact Information

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Contact Name | Tom Garrett |
| Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington, VT 05401 |
| Telephone Number | 8028637153 FAX - 8026514130 |
| E-mail Address | tgarrett@lawlinevt.org |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Name of Authorized Representative | Title |
| Thomas F. Garrett | Executive Director |
| Signature of Authorized Representative | Date Signed |
|  | 5/2/08 |

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[[View List of TIG Selections](#)] [[View Selected TIG Checklist](#)]

Prior Grants

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 00022 | 13550 | 11950 | Statewide legal services web site will provide information to the client community, including forms and information for pro se litigants. The site will also include a brief bank for advocates. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant began our work on a client information web site. The current grant is a continuation of that effort.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 02041 | 251418 | 249600 | The project will create the Legal Services Distance Learning Institute, which will make available nationally the core curriculum of the Legal Services Training Consortium of New England, and provide a platform for other legal services organizations to provide distance learning opportunities. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant required complex management of several partners and produced expertise in technology and the web.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 02042 | 50280 | 48462 | New Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility and utility of our client web site.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 03041 | 44478 | 42517 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont seeks funding for a statewide technology specialist who will assess and review the technology needs of Vermont legal services programs, including case management and web resources, and assist them in the development of a comprehensive statewide technology plan. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| 04041 | 27037 | 16713 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests \$25,000 from the Legal Services Corporation under the Statewide Web Sites category for second year web site continuation funding. This grant, if awarded, will provide resources for Law Line for continued hosting, maintenance, content development, and outreach in support of our Vermont Law Help (www.vtlawhelp.org) web site. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant also furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 04042 | 49202 | 42000 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests funding under the State Planning Implementation Category to purchase the PIKA Software case management system and develop enhancements that are necessary to Vermont's legal services programs. Since the PIKA system uses open source technology the enhancements would be available to other legal services program that use PIKA and would create a low cost, comprehensive, flexible case management system for legal services programs. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding and allowed us to implement a web based case management system.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 05041 | 27900 | 0 | Continuation Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant will further our web expertise and expand the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 05042 | 62900 | 50000 | Legal Aid University (LAU) is the only provider of online professional development courses for the national legal aid community. LAU is unique in two respects: we offer training experiences tailored to the specific needs and mission of legal aid practitioners and we offer these online, broadening the legal aid community's access to professional development through increased convenience and lowered costs. In 2006, LAU will offer a regular calendar of its existing five online courses to legal aid advocates around the country. The opportunity to receive a Technology Initiative Grant comes at a strategic moment in LAU's development. LAU is in the process of establishing itself as a separate non-profit organization dedicated to serving the national legal aid community. We seek funding to continue to offer online courses nationally and to enable us to enact our three-and five-year growth plans with the goal of increasing online course enrollments by at least twenty percent annually, serving 50 legal aid professionals in 2006. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant gave us further expertise in the management of a complex technology project.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 06042 | 19100 | 5000 | Law Line specializes in advice, information, and brief services for low income Vermonters. Perhaps the most critical area we work in is housing. Resources do not allow representation to all tenants in housing cases. Most tenants being evicted are pro se. Our research shows that pro se tenants do not succeed in eviction cases. They frequently default and are unable to present legitimate claims against landlords. We have developed several forms for tenants including answers, counterclaims, motions to dismiss, and motions to reopen default. The forms are not easy for pro se tenants to use. We want to use HotDocs with the A2J overlay to make the forms interactive and easier for low income tenants to use. This would strengthen our web site and help us empower tenants to protect their rights and preserve their housing. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant introduced us to HotDocs and A2J software. It enabled us to develop expertise and knowledge in the use of these tools. This expertise and knowledge will be critical in the current project.

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[\[View List of TIG Selections \]](#) [\[View Selected TIG Checklist \]](#)

Lessons Learned from other Technology Projects

What other projects - either TIG or funded by another source - have sought to address this or similar issues?

This project will build on three other TIG funded projects. The first is the HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services. The second is the Idaho Supreme Court/Legal Services partnership grant to develop HotDocs forms. The third is the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Capstone Practice Systems and funded by ? Legal Services.

How will the proposed project differ from and incorporate the lessons from those projects?

The HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services is essential to our project. We will use the server to store our templates and make them available from our web site. There are many similarities between our project and the Idaho project. We have conferred with Idaho court and staff to discuss our proposal. This was particularly important in working out governance issues and planning for long term sustainability. Although we have not yet tested the Family Law Startup Kit, we believe that it will jump start our family court form development project.

Executive Summary

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

This is a joint project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Supreme Court, with support from Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. We propose to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. We will contract with the Court to create the A2J Author templates from the 60 forms which are located on the Supreme Court web site. Law Line will be able to provide training, ongoing support, and overall management for the project. The templates initially will be used to generate paper forms using HotDocs, which can be printed and filed. Parallel to this project the Court will implement a new case management system that will be able to accept filings directly from A2J Author so that low income families will be able to enter their data over the web and file their case electronically. This will allow us to channel information and assistance to pro se litigants that focuses on their particular problem. Additionally, in the second phase, it will allow people to file pleadings quickly and easily from anywhere in Vermont.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)[\[View List of TIG Selections \]](#) [\[View Selected TIG Checklist \]](#)**Budget Form**

Please round to the nearest dollar.

| | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Legal Services Corporation FY 2008 Technology Initiative Grants Budget Form | | TIG Number: 08043 | | | |
| | | For LSC Use Only | | | |
| Grantee Name: Legal Services Law Line of VT | | | | | |
| Grantee Number: 146010 | | | | | |
| | A | B | C | D | E |
| | LSC Grant Request | Program Project Contributions | Funds from Other LSC-Funded Partners | Funds from NON-LSC Funded Partners | Total Columns a through d |
| 1 Personnel | 10988 | 2000 | 0 | 18000 | 30988 |
| 2 Fringe Benefits | 1978 | 360 | 0 | 3240 | 5578 |
| 3 Space Cost (Rent/Lease) | 0 | 850 | 0 | 0 | 850 |
| 4 Travel | 1200 | 200 | 0 | 0 | 1400 |
| 5 Equipment (Purchase) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 Equipment (Rental) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 Telecommunications bandwidth charges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 Communications (Other) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 Software | 0 | 0 | 0 | 400 | 400 |
| 10 Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 Contracts | 60000 | 0 | 0 | 24666 | 84666 |
| 12 Project Evaluation Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 13 Training | 7000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7000 |
| 14 Project Audit Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 15 Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 81,166 | 4,410 | 0 | 46,306 | 131,882 |
| Percentages | 62% | 3% | | 35% | 100% |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| Application Amounts | 81166 | Total Requested | Total Project Budget | 131882 |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|

Check this box and click 'Lock' to mark the Budget Form as complete
NOTE: You will not be able to change it once it is locked!
Clicking 'Save' button allows you to return and edit the Budget Form.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Budget Form.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Budget Narrative

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

1.A Personnel LSC Grant Contribution

This will fund salary for a Law Line staff attorney, Laura Blerley, to work on the project one day a week. It will also fund salary for the Executive Director to work on this for 2 hours a week.

1.B Personnel Program Project Contributions

This provides for staff work and support including office support and reading, testing, and commenting on forms.

1.D Personnel Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is a contribution by way of support from the Supreme Court and the Court Administrator's Office. It includes active involvement and contributions from judges and court staff.

2.A Fringe Benefits LSC Grant Contribution

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.B Fringe Benefits Program Project Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.D Fringe Benefits Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

3.B Space Cost Program Project Contributions

These are other space costs for Law Line staff working on this project.

4.A Travel LSC Grant Contribution

This includes travel around the state for meetings and discussions with court staff and travel out of state for training.

**4.B Travel
Program Project Contributions**

Additional travel costs.

**9.D Software
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

Costs of HotDocs, A2J Author, and any other necessary software.

**11.A Contracts
LSC Grant Contribution**

This is a contract with the Vermont Supreme Court which will do most of the form writing with support from Law Line. The court will bring in a full time form writer for this. The contract includes fringe and office costs, which is required by state budget rules.

**11.D Contracts
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

This includes administrative and supervisory support of the contract work from court staff and judges.

**12.B Project Evaluations Cost
Program Project Contributions**

Cost of evaluation work to be done by Law Line.

**13.A Training
LSC Grant Contribution**

This will be for training on A2J Author, HotDocs, and low literacy writing. It will also include training and assistance to be provided to Law Line and the form writer by Capstone Practice.

**14.B Project Audit Costs
Program Project Contributions**

These are the project's share of Law Line's audit costs.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

PROJECT NARRATIVE
LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP
FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT
TIG 08043

Need for the Project

Law Line focuses on advice, information and brief service to clients. Most of our legal services are provided over the telephone. We do a large volume of brief service cases in family law and frequently help people fill out forms. The volume of requests for assistance with family law cases is very high. We only provide assistance to households who are below 125% of the federal poverty levels. In order to maintain the volume we need technological solutions that can provide focused information to pro se litigants and make our practice more efficient.

Each of Vermont's 14 counties has a Family Court. The Family Courts are responsible for all family related legal matters, including divorce, child custody, dissolution of civil unions, child support, and orders of protection for victims of domestic violence. The Chief Administrative Judge for all of Vermont's trial courts is the Hon. Amy Davenport. The Family Court has developed more than 60 forms for use by pro se litigants in family legal matters. These forms are available at the Pro Se Services Center of the judiciary's web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They are displayed as Adobe .pdf forms and many can be filled out on line, then printed, signed and filed. They do not provide instructions for users who are filling them out.

Family court staff and case managers provide information and assistance to pro se litigants throughout the State. Much of this assistance is focused on explaining the forms.

Law Line and Vermont Legal Aid have developed a very successful web site with steadily increasing usage. Our experience and recent studies have shown that some clients will not complete forms if they are required to download a copy of the blank form and fill it in by hand. Nor will they use instructions that are separate from the form itself. A guided, easier to understand form filling process is a much more successful strategy to help insure that the client will understand the forms, complete them accurately, and file them with the court. In addition, with guided interactive forms available, Law Line advocates will be able to work more efficiently, directing clients to work with the on-line forms and focusing the attorney's time on coaching, strategizing, and answering questions. Similarly, court staff and lay advocates at shelters will be better able to guide pro se litigants through the process.

We have reviewed many different document assembly systems. We feel confident that A2J Author is the flexible, easy to understand tool that will provide empowering information and knowledge to clients and help them file the pleadings they need to be heard in Family Court.

Project Goals and Objectives

The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively in Vermont's Family Court. This will increase the ability of attorneys to assist them effectively and allow legal services attorneys to focus on critical legal issues. The Vermont Family Court has developed approximately 60 forms that are available as Adobe pdf forms on their web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They include forms for in forma pauperis, relief from abuse actions, child support forms, divorce forms, enforcement forms, forms for legal separation and parentage, forms for establishing custody and visitation, and forms for the dissolution of a civil union. We will begin with the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant to Legal Aid of Western New York. We hope to create A2J Author templates for every form but will begin by prioritizing the forms to be created in case we are unable to write all of the forms.

Creating the A2J Author templates is the first part of a larger strategy. When the forms are complete they will be used to generate pleadings from the NPADO server, linked from our web site, www.vtlawhelp.org. The grant will also create essential expertise in Vermont, at the Court as well as in legal services, for continuing the development of A2J Author templates in other areas. The Court is particularly eager to move forward on this in Probate Court, evictions, foreclosures, and Small Claims Court.

The availability of A2J Author templates also is an important step toward creating pro se service centers in Vermont courthouses and increasing the ability of court staff to provide assistance to litigants. This will allow us to focus resources more effectively to help pro se litigants.

Finally, the A2J Author templates will move the courts toward electronic filing in a way that will not jeopardize the ability of low income litigants who do not have lawyers to access the court system. The Court is currently receiving bids on a new case management system that will enable it to be more efficient and will allow it to accept electronic data and create cases. This step will require creating a transform to take the A2J Author data and convert it to the court's data, but this does not appear to be a major hurdle.

The Vermont Court has made a significant commitment to use the TIG grant to start this process and carry it forward to better pro se assistance and electronic filing.

State Justice Community Partnerships

The Vermont Supreme Court and the Office of the Court Administrator are the principal administrative managers for all state courts. They will be part of the advisory committee that will be guiding this project. They are committed to the sustainability of this effort as well. Attached to this application are letters from Hon. John Dooley, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, Hon. Denise Johnson, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, and Lee Suskin, Vermont Court Administrator. Justice Dooley is Chair of the Court Technology Committee, which developed and is implementing a plan for electronic filing in the Vermont

courts. He has written extensively on legal services and poverty law and has worked extensively to develop legal services in post Soviet Eastern Europe. Justice Johnson is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition and of the ABA Commission on IOLTA. She has written extensively on access to justice issues.

Vermont Legal Aid, a state wide legal services organization, will also partner with us and take part in the advisory group. They will also provide technical support.

Law Line is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. Other charter members are the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School, Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Bar Foundation. The Vermont Access to Justice Coalition is also a supporter of this project and will assist in oversight. The Access to Justice Coalition brings together members of the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Association, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid and Law Line of Vermont. The Coalition was created in January 2004 with four principle goals: to increase public awareness of and support for civil legal assistance in Vermont; to promote cooperation, effectiveness and efficiency in expanding access to justice; to expand participation by the private bar in pro bono efforts; and to increase services and funding available for civil access to justice.

Finally, this project will be assisted by Kate Bladow at the National Document Assembly Project.

Replication

This project will build on the work of the Family Law Startup Kit, developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant. A2J Author is well tested and widely used. Our project will continue work done by others and support continuing efforts in this area.

We have discussed the project with several others including the Idaho Supreme Court, ProBono.net, and A2J Author software. There is significant interest in creating the ability to link A2J data to a court case management system and thereby enable electronic filing for pro se litigants.

It has long been assumed that courts need to integrate form development and assistance with electronic filing. We intend to accomplish this. It will require solving some problems, such as how to enable the A2J Author software to communicate with a court case management system and how to provide a paper record for litigants using an electronic filing system. Solving these problems will enable significant improvements in the ability to understand and navigate the court system.

This technology will offer a workable, affordable solution to problems faced by every court system in the country. A critical part of this grant is to develop the understanding, knowledge and expertise in Vermont to sustain this project and enable us to carry it forward on our own, beyond family law, to the other courts and areas of practice in Vermont, as well as to share what we learn with other states engaged in similar projects.

Program Capacity and Project Staffing

Tom Garrett, Executive Director of Law Line of Vermont, will be responsible for supervising the project, documenting the work, and reporting on progress toward milestones. Laura Bierley, Web Content Coordinator at Law Line, will also provide assistance including editing and review of scripts.

Law Line has received several TIG grants and is currently completing a HotDocs/A2J grant in which we created five eviction templates for tenants. We will begin to make these forms available to Vermonters within a couple of weeks. We worked with Capstone Practice to create these templates. This work has allowed us to develop the expertise in HotDocs and A2J Author that will carry us to this larger project. Now that we have tested the software we are convinced of its value.

The Court will engage a full time staff person to work on this. Supervision of the person will be provided by Sandra Seidel, a senior administrative person at the court administrator's office. Overall supervision at the Court will be provided by the Hon. Amy Davenport, Chief Administrative Judge for the Vermont Courts.

Feasibility

This project builds on our earlier project and on work done by Capstone Practice, NPADO, Chicago-Kent Law School, and Idaho Legal Services. We have had thorough consultations with these organizations and with Marc Lauritsen of Capstone Practice, who has written several articles on electronic filing and document assembly. We have also discussed this with Judges and administrative staff who carried out a similar project in Idaho, and with other court staff in Western Missouri and Florida. We have reviewed this with technology specialists in the Vermont Courts. We are convinced that this project is affordable, feasible and practical.

Proposed Payment Schedule

TIG Requested Amount \$81166

| | Period Start Date | Period End Date | # of Milestones | Payment Requested |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Initial Payment | | | | 20000 |
| 2 June | 2008 | December 2008 | 4 | 20000 |
| 3 January | 2009 | April 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 4 April | 2009 | June 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 5 June | 2009 | October 2009 | 3 | 11166 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Proposed Payment Total | 81166 |
| Grant Requested | 81166 |
| Difference | 0 |

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Payment Schedule.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Statement of Additional Funds

Please use this section to describe any additional funds your project will receive from other sources. If you do not anticipate any additional project funding, please also indicate that in this section.

We do not anticipate funds from other sources on this project.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

OFFICE OF THE CLERK
COURT OF FAMILY MATTERS

April 25, 2008

Honorable Justice of the Peace
COURT OF FAMILY MATTERS
MONTPELIER, VERMONT

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TEG #08043

Dear Ms. Bennett:

I am pleased to hear that you are interested in the Law Line of Vermont. The Law Line of Vermont is a free, confidential, 24-hour telephone service that provides legal information and advice to Vermonters. It is staffed by attorneys who are trained to provide legal information and advice to Vermonters. The Law Line of Vermont is a free, confidential, 24-hour telephone service that provides legal information and advice to Vermonters. It is staffed by attorneys who are trained to provide legal information and advice to Vermonters.

Our most recent data shows that more than 70% of the litigants in Family Court are not represented by an attorney. We have taken many steps to make sure that Family Courts are open to everyone and that court staff provide the right help to those who need help. Similarly, Law Line of Vermont focuses attention on pro se litigants with the same goal in mind, to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

We are beginning the process of developing a new, comprehensive case management system for Family Court. This system will be used to manage all Family Court cases. It will be used to manage all Family Court cases. It will be used to manage all Family Court cases. It will be used to manage all Family Court cases.

We have discussed this with many experts, including the Illinois Supreme Court which has developed a similar project, but without electronic filing, staff at Chicago-Kent Law School, which developed the A2I Author software, and staff at the National Public Automated Documents Online (NPA/DO) system. After reviewing what is available we have decided that the A2I Author software offers the flexibility, ease of use, and clarity that we want along with the ability to manage all Family Court cases. We are currently in the process of testing the software and will be implementing it in the near future.

CONFIDENTIAL
L. J. B. J.

Sincerely,

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

pro se users of all of our com

Page Two

allow the court to expand services toward the services center model, and yet take full advantage of the technology that we expect to have in the near future.

concomitant with the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing. The A2J project will be a key component of the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing. The A2J project will be a key component of the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing. The A2J project will be a key component of the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing.

we hope to further both of our goals to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters. technology to promote services to pro se litigants. By joining with Law Labs in the A2J project,

Line of Vermont, which focuses attention on pro se litigants, has already been a leader in using technology to promote services to pro se litigants. By joining with Law Labs in the A2J project, we hope to further both of our goals to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

Best, Ms. Barron

Re: Local Services Law Line of Vermont - THE RECORDS

sustain this work once the litigation is complete. The greatest pro se need, the development of family Court templates is a good place to appreciate your willingness to support this.

James K. Brown

probono.net

151 West 30th Street
10th Floor
New York, NY 10001

TEL 212.760.2554
FAX 212.760.2557
info@probono.net
www.probono.net

May 2, 2008

Helaine Barnett, Esq.
President, Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3522

Janice Munsterman
Executive Director, State Justice Institute
1650 King Street, Suite 600
Alexandria, VA 22314

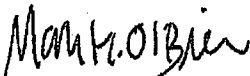
Dear Ms. Barnett and Ms. Munsterman:

Pro Bono Net strongly supports the Technology Initiative Grant application submitted by the Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line), which requests funding to develop additional online document assembly resources that will be integrated with the court's case management system. This project, if successful, will transform how self-represented litigants interact with the courts when filing forms.

The project that the Law Line, in collaboration with the Vermont Supreme Court, proposes is very innovative. To date, no other legal aid program has been asked to help develop content with A2J Author that will help self-represented litigants e-file. The lessons that the Law Line and the Vermont Supreme Court learn from this project will be invaluable to other states as they plan their e-filing initiatives.

Pro Bono Net is proud to partner with Law Line on this project and looks forward to working with them. I enthusiastically support this grant and strongly urge you to fund this important work.

Sincerely,



Mark O'Brien
Executive Director

Background Information on Law Line of Vermont
Available: <http://www.lawlinevt.org/>

WHAT IS LAW LINE?

Law Line is a non-profit legal services law firm, established in 1996, that provides free consultation, advice, and community education for low income Vermonters. We are supported by a grant from the Legal Services Corporation in Washington, D.C. We are available by telephone to any low income Vermonter with a civil legal problem. Law Line's cases are referred by Vermont Legal Aid who can be reached toll free from anywhere in Vermont by calling 1-800-889-2047.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND REFERRALS

In addition to counsel and advice, Law Line provides information, workshops, training, and referrals for low income Vermonters. Where possible, we try to connect a client with a full service attorney through the Vermont Volunteer Lawyers Project, the South Royalton Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid, or Vermont Protection & Advocacy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Law Line believes that people are often best helped when given the support, assistance and information they need to help themselves. In other words, people can get power in their lives by learning how to handle some legal problems on their own.

Law Line attorneys and paralegals help people represent themselves by learning the facts, explaining the law, helping with paperwork, and discussing the best strategies for winning. We help people with many different legal problems including family matters, housing, health care, disability, employment, and consumer law.

One phone call is often not enough, so Law Line attorneys and paralegals are available for follow-up calls and help prepare court papers and other documents for clients to use.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Law Line believes that the legal system must be open to everyone whether or not they have lawyers. We are concerned about barriers to justice such as high court fees, inaccessibility, lack of good, clear information, "legalese," and any other problems people encounter when trying to exercise their right to be heard. Law Line works with clients to narrow the gap between the promise of justice and the difficult reality of achieving it.

The mission of Legal Services Law Line of Vermont is to provide legal services to as many of the low income people of Vermont as possible. Law Line will seek to empower clients by providing the tools they need to help themselves. Law Line will seek to eliminate barriers that prevent low income people from access to justice and restrict their right to be heard. Law Line will seek to increase the knowledge and understanding of low income Vermonters through a variety of education strategies. Law Line will seek to enforce the obligations of courts, governmental agencies, and adjudicatory bodies to provide information, rules, forms, and laws that are clear, understandable and accessible.

Additional information:

N.Lavery conversation with Law Line of Vermont director Executive Director Tim Garrett (2/19/2009)
Law Line of Vermont receives most of its funding as a grant from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a national funding source for legal services programs. Law Line of Vermont also receives other small donations. LSC is funded via a direct appropriation from Congress. Law Line of Vermont was awarded these funds from LSC via a competitive grant process.

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR
SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT



ROBERT G. MORTON
Director of Court Services
rmorton@state.vt.us
MARGA GARET, Esq.
Director of Court Improvement & Involvement
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Telephone: (802) 828-3278
FAX: (802) 828-3457
TDD: (802) 828-3234

Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #98043

We are beginning the process of developing a new, comprehensive case management system for the Vermont courts which will create efficiencies that will ultimately ease the burden on judges and court staff and which will allow litigants to file pleadings electronically. We have selected the A12 Author software with many experts and after reviewing what is available, we have decided that this software offers the flexibility, ease of use, and clarity that we want.

We are committed to this project and we accept the responsibility to maintain our software. We have advanced this project and we will continue to increase our efforts to support this project. We are committed to our clients and we will continue to support this project.

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you.

VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

264 NORTH WINOOSKI AVE.
P.O. Box 1367
BURLINGTON, VT 05402
802-863-2881 (VOICE AND TTY)
FAX 802-863-7152

Helaine Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043

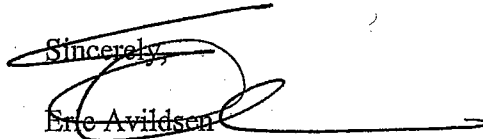
Dear Ms. Barnett:

I am writing to support the application from the Supreme Court of Vermont and Law Line of Vermont for funding to create pro se templates using the A2J Author software. This will increase our ability to help Vermonters who are representing themselves in Family Court.

The volume of inquiries we receive from low income litigants in Family Court is far too great for us to be able to provide direct service to everyone. This proposal will build on the work we have done to create HotDocs/A2J templates for tenants facing eviction. It will allow us to provide directed information to individuals and families who need help and can use the web. We know that many low income Vermonters have access to the web and that their numbers are constantly increasing. I have seen how A2J Author works and I believe it will significantly increase access to justice for low income people in Family Courts across Vermont.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Eric Avildsen
Executive Director

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

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Milestone Narratives

Milestone #1 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Create Advisory Committee and meet to discuss and plan project.

Milestone #2 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Negotiate and execute contract with Court.

Milestone #3 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Prioritize forms for development. Decide which forms to start with and set a schedule for form development.

Milestone #4 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Train all staff on A2J Author, low literacy writing, and Hotdocs.

Milestone #1 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Develop forms for testing.

Milestone #2 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Review forms with advisory committee and incorporate suggestions into forms.

Milestone #3 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Continue training and support of court staff.

Milestone #1 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Finalize first forms and put them on web for client testing.

Milestone #2 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Continue testing and reviewing forms with court staff.

Milestone #3 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Meet with advisory group to review forms.

Milestone #1 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Publish all forms on web.

Milestone #2 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Final review and revisions of forms and training of court staff in their use.

Milestone #3 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Complete evaluation.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Milestone Narratives.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Representative William Lippert

From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst

Date: February 19, 2009

Subject: JFO #2367 & 2368

Representatives Michael Obuchowski asked that I forward to you a copy of the enclosed requests and cover memo. He requests your observations regarding the enclosed items.

cc: Rep. Michael Obuchowski
Stephen Klein

INFORMATION NOTICE

The following items were recently received by the Joint Fiscal Committee:

JFO #2367 — \$127,445 grant from the Office of Community Policing Services (COPS) to the Department of Public Safety – State Police. These funds will be passed through to the Rutland County Sheriff's Department (via sub-grant) to fund a School Resource Officer at Mill River Union High School.
[JFO received 2/18/09]

JFO #2368 — \$60,000 grant from Legal Services Law Line of Vermont to the Judiciary – Court Administrator's Office. These grant funds will be used to cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants (i.e., persons representing themselves in court proceedings) to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer.
[JFO received 2/18/09]

State of Vermont
 Department of Finance & Management
 109 State Street, Pavilion Building
 Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

Agency of Administration

[phone] 802-828-2376
 [fax] 802-828-2428

**STATE OF VERMONT
 FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| Grant Summary: | | This grant will cover the cost of developing an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings and accurately fill out the forms on the computer. | | | |
| Date: | | 1/26/2009 | | | |
| Department: | | Judiciary | | | |
| Legal Title of Grant: | | Law Line of Vermont/VT Supreme Court Partnership: Family Court Forms Development TIG 08043 | | | |
| Federal Catalog #: | | NA | | | |
| Grant/Donor Name and Address: | | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 Winooski Ave, Burlington Vermont 05401 | | | |
| Grant Period: | | From: | To: | | |
| | | 3/1/2009 | 2/28/2010 | | |
| Grant/Donation | | \$60,000 | | | |
| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Total | Comments |
| Grant Amount: | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | \$60,000 | The grant award letter states the grant goes through 2/30/10. But February is only 28 days. The number on this form has been adjusted to 2/28/10. |
| Position Information: | | # Positions | Explanation/Comments | | |
| | | 0 | | | |
| Additional Comments: | | This grant will help make it easier for low income litigants to represent themselves more effectively. | | | |

STATE OF VERMONT
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| Department of Finance & Management | <i>J 2/2/09</i> | (Initial) |
| Secretary of Administration | <i>FPM 2/2/09</i> | (Initial) |
| Sent To Joint Fiscal Office | <i>2/4/09</i> | Date |
| | | |

STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)

| BASIC GRANT INFORMATION | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Agency: | Judiciary | | | |
| 2. Department: | Supreme Court/Court Administrator's Office | | | |
| 3. Program: | Pro Se Education | | | |
| 4. Legal Title of Grant: | LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP:FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT TIG 08043 | | | |
| 5. Federal Catalog #: | | | | |
| 6. Grant/Donor Name and Address: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc. 274 N Winooski Ave, Burlington ,VT 05401 | | | | |
| 7. Grant Period: | From: | 3/1/09 | To: | 2/30/10 |
| 8. Purpose of Grant: The Vermont Supreme Court is a subgrantee of Legal Services of Vermont, Inc., for purpose of using A2J Author Software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create family court pleadings in order to create accurate forms for court filings. | | | | |
| 9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted: The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively, and is the first part of a larger strategy to create pro se service centers in the courts, and, in anticipation of the Court's new data management system, move the Court towards electronic filing capacity. If grant is not accepted it will slow down the Court's progress towards the above goals and will negatively impact Court's ability to provide access to justice for pro se litigants. | | | | |
| 10. BUDGET INFORMATION | | | | |
| | SFY 1 | SFY 2 | SFY 3 | Comments |
| Expenditures: | FY 09 | FY 10 | FY | |
| Personal Services | \$17,333 | \$34,664 | \$ | |
| Operating Expenses | \$2,667 | \$5,336 | \$ | mileage/expenses |
| Grants | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Revenues: | | | | |
| State Funds: | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Cash | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| In-Kind | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Federal Funds: | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| (Direct Costs) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Statewide Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| (Departmental Indirect) | \$0 | \$0 | \$ | |
| Other Funds: | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ | |
| Grant (source subgrantee of Law Line of Vermont, Inc.) | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Total | \$20,000 | \$40,000 | \$ | |
| Appropriation No: | | Amount: | \$ | |

REC'D JAN 05 2009

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc.

274 North Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

802-863-7153 800-639-8857

Fax: 802-651-4130 TTY: 802-651-4141, #81

www.vtlawhelp.org

December 22, 2008

Lee Suskin
Office of the Court Administrator
Vermont Supreme Court
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0801

Re: Grant Award

Dear Lee:

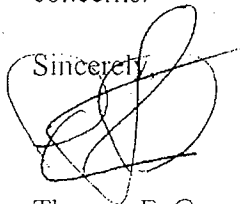
I am pleased to inform you that we have awarded the Office of Court Administrator a grant to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. The grant is for \$60,000. The award period is from 3/1/2009 to 2/30/2010.

Please note that receipt of this grant requires monthly reports and continuing progress toward the milestones established by Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grant #08043, a copy of which is attached.

Law Line will provide training, on going support, and overall management for the project.


Please review the milestones carefully. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Thomas F. Garrett
Executive Director

cc: Bob Greemore

 LSC

Funded by the
Legal Services Corporation

Standard Application Form


| | |
|--|--|
| Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grants 2008 | TIG Number: 08043 |
| Application Form | Date: 5/2/2008 |
| --Statewide Web Sites-- <input type="radio"/> Renewal Web Sites <input type="radio"/> Continuation Web Site Funding --Special Projects-- <input checked="" type="radio"/> Open Category <input type="radio"/> Replication | For LSC Use Only Grant Term (check one) <input checked="" type="radio"/> one year <input type="radio"/> two year <input type="radio"/> three year <input type="radio"/> other (# of months) <input style="width: 40px; height: 15px;" type="text"/> |
| Total Grant Request: \$ 81166 | Total Project Budget: \$ 131882 |
| Brief Description of Proposed Project: (50 words or less) This is a collaborative project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Judiciary. We will use A2J software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. | |

Applicant Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| LSC Grantee Name / Number | Legal Services Law Line of VT / 146010 |
| Street Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington, VT 05401 |

Contact Information

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Contact Name | Tom Garrett |
| Address | 274 North Winooski Avenue Burlington, VT 05401 |
| Telephone Number | 8028637153 FAX - 8026514130 |
| E-mail Address | tgarrett@lawlinevt.org |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Name of Authorized Representative | Title |
| Thomas F. Garrett | Executive Director |
| Signature of Authorized Representative | Date Signed |
|  | 5/2/08 |

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[[View List of TIG Selections](#)] [[View Selected TIG Checklist](#)]

Prior Grants

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Grant Description |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| | Amount Received | |
| 00022 | 13550 11950 | Statewide legal services web site will provide information to the client community, including forms and information for pro se litigants. The site will also include a brief bank for advocates. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant began our work on a client information web site. The current grant is a continuation of that effort.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Grant Description |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| | Amount Received | |
| 02041 | 251418 249600 | The project will create the Legal Services Distance Learning Institute, which will make available nationally the core curriculum of the Legal Services Training Consortium of New England, and provide a platform for other legal services organizations to provide distance learning opportunities. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant required complex management of several partners and produced expertise in technology and the web.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Grant Description |
|-------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | Amount Received | |
| 02042 | 50280 48462 | New Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility and utility of our client web site.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Grant Description |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| | Amount Received | |
| 03041 | 44478 42517 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont seeks funding for a statewide technology specialist who will assess and review the technology needs of Vermont legal services programs, including case management and web resources, and assist them in the development of a comprehensive statewide technology plan. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding.

| TIG | AwardedAmount | Grant Description |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| | Amount Received | |
| 04041 | 27037 16713 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests \$25,000 from the Legal Services Corporation under the Statewide Web Sites category for second year web site continuation funding. This grant, if awarded, will provide resources for Law Line for continued hosting, maintenance, content development, and outreach in support of our Vermont Law Help (www.vtlawhelp.org) web site. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant also furthered our web expertise and expanded the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 04042 | 49202 | 42000 | Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line) requests funding under the State Planning Implementation Category to purchase the PIKA Software case management system and develop enhancements that are necessary to Vermont's legal services programs. Since the PIKA system uses open source technology the enhancements would be available to other legal services program that use PIKA and would create a low cost, comprehensive, flexible case management system for legal services programs. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant strengthened our technology support and understanding and allowed us to implement a web based case management system.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 05041 | 27900 | 0 | Continuation Web Site Grant |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant will further our web expertise and expand the flexibility of our client web site.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 05042 | 62900 | 50000 | Legal Aid University (LAU) is the only provider of online professional development courses for the national legal aid community. LAU is unique in two respects: we offer training experiences tailored to the specific needs and mission of legal aid practitioners and we offer these online, broadening the legal aid community's access to professional development through increased convenience and lowered costs. In 2006, LAU will offer a regular calendar of its existing five online courses to legal aid advocates around the country. The opportunity to receive a Technology Initiative Grant comes at a strategic moment in LAU's development. LAU is in the process of establishing itself as a separate non-profit organization dedicated to serving the national legal aid community. We seek funding to continue to offer online courses nationally and to enable us to enact our three-and five-year growth plans with the goal of increasing online course enrollments by at least twenty percent annually, serving 50 legal aid professionals in 2006. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant gave us further expertise in the management of a complex technology project.

| TIG | Awarded Amount | Amount Received | Grant Description |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 06042 | 19100 | 5000 | Law Line specializes in advice, information, and brief services for low income Vermonters. Perhaps the most critical area we work in is housing. Resources do not allow representation to all tenants in housing cases. Most tenants being evicted are pro se. Our research shows that pro se tenants do not succeed in eviction cases. They frequently default and are unable to present legitimate claims against landlords. We have developed several forms for tenants including answers, counterclaims, motions to dismiss, and motions to reopen default. The forms are not easy for pro se tenants to use. We want to use HotDocs with the A2J overlay to make the forms interactive and easier for low income tenants to use. This would strengthen our web site and help us empower tenants to protect their rights and preserve their housing. |

Does the current grant(s) requests build on knowledge or expertise gained from this Grant?

This grant introduced us to HotDocs and A2J software. It enabled us to develop expertise and knowledge in the use of these tools. This expertise and knowledge will be critical in the current project.

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

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Lessons Learned from other Technology Projects

What other projects - either TIG or funded by another source - have sought to address this or similar issues?

This project will build on three other TIG funded projects. The first is the HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services. The second is the Idaho Supreme Court/Legal Services partnership grant to develop HotDocs forms. The third is the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Capstone Practice Systems and funded by ? Legal Services.

How will the proposed project differ from and incorporate the lessons from those projects?

The HotDocs server developed by Ohio Legal Services is essential to our project. We will use the server to store our templates and make them available from our web site. There are many similarities between our project and the Idaho project. We have conferred with Idaho court and staff to discuss our proposal. This was particularly important in working out governance issues and planning for long term sustainability. Although we have not yet tested the Family Law Startup Kit, we believe that it will jump start our family court form development project.

Executive Summary

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

This is a joint project between Law Line of Vermont and the Vermont Supreme Court, with support from Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. We propose to use A2J Author software to develop an interface for pro se litigants to create Family Court pleadings, in order to enable pro se litigants to easily create accurate forms to file in Court. We will contract with the Court to create the A2J Author templates from the 60 forms which are located on the Supreme Court web site. Law Line will be able to provide training, on going support, and overall management for the project. The templates initially will be used to generate paper forms using HotDocs, which can be printed and filed. Parallel to this project the Court will implement a new case management system that will be able to accept filings directly from A2J Author so that low income families will be able to enter their data over the web and file their case electronically. This will allow us to channel information and assistance to pro se litigants that focuses on their particular problem. Additionally, in the second phase, it will allow people to file pleadings quickly and easily from anywhere in Vermont.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)[\[View List of TIG Selections \]](#) [\[View Selected TIG Checklist \]](#)**Budget Form**

Please round to the nearest dollar.

| | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Legal Services Corporation FY 2008 Technology Initiative Grants Budget Form | | TIG Number: 08043 | | | |
| | | For LSC Use Only | | | |
| Grantee Name: Legal Services Law Line of VT | | | | | |
| Grantee Number: 146010 | | | | | |
| | A | B | C | D | E |
| | LSC Grant Request | Program Project Contributions | Funds from Other LSC-Funded Partners | Funds from NON-LSC Funded Partners | Total Columns a through d |
| 1 Personnel | 10988 | 2000 | 0 | 18000 | 30988 |
| 2 Fringe Benefits | 1978 | 360 | 0 | 3240 | 5578 |
| 3 Space Cost (Rent/Lease) | 0 | 850 | 0 | 0 | 850 |
| 4 Travel | 1200 | 200 | 0 | 0 | 1400 |
| 5 Equipment (Purchase) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 Equipment (Rental) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 Telecommunications bandwidth charges | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 Communications (Other) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 Software | 0 | 0 | 0 | 400 | 400 |
| 10 Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 Contracts | 60000 | 0 | 0 | 24666 | 84666 |
| 12 Project Evaluation Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 13 Training | 7000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7000 |
| 14 Project Audit Costs | 0 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 500 |
| 15 Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 81,166 | 4,410 | 0 | 46,306 | 131,882 |
| Percentages | 62% | 3% | | 35% | 100% |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| Application Amounts | 81166 | Total Requested | Total Project Budget | 131882 |
|----------------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|

- Check this box and click 'Lock' to mark the Budget Form as complete
NOTE: You will not be able to change it once it is locked!
Clicking 'Save' button allows you to return and edit the Budget Form.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Budget Form.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Budget Narrative

(Please limit to 250 words or less)

1.A Personnel LSC Grant Contribution

This will fund salary for a Law Line staff attorney, Laura Blerley, to work on the project one day a week. It will also fund salary for the Executive Director to work on this for 2 hours a week.

1.B Personnel Program Project Contributions

This provides for staff work and support including office support and reading, testing, and commenting on forms.

1.D Personnel Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is a contribution by way of support from the Supreme Court and the Court Administrator's Office. It includes active involvement and contributions from judges and court staff.

2.A Fringe Benefits LSC Grant Contribution

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.B Fringe Benefits Program Project Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

2.D Fringe Benefits Non-LSC Funded Contributions

This is the cost of fringe benefits at 18% of salary. It does not include office costs.

3.B Space Cost Program Project Contributions

These are other space costs for Law Line staff working on this project.

4.A Travel LSC Grant Contribution

This includes travel around the state for meetings and discussions with court staff and travel out of state for training.

**4.B Travel
Program Project Contributions**

Additional travel costs.

**9.D Software
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

Costs of HotDocs, A2J Author, and any other necessary software.

**11.A Contracts
LSC Grant Contribution**

This is a contract with the Vermont Supreme Court which will do most of the form writing with support from Law Line. The court will bring in a full time form writer for this. The contract includes fringe and office costs, which is required by state budget rules.

**11.D Contracts
Non-LSC Funded Contributions**

This includes administrative and supervisory support of the contract work from court staff and judges.

**12.B Project Evaluations Cost
Program Project Contributions**

Cost of evaluation work to be done by Law Line.

**13.A Training
LSC Grant Contribution**

This will be for training on A2J Author, HotDocs, and low literacy writing. It will also include training and assistance to be provided to Law Line and the form writer by Capstone Practice.

**14.B Project Audit Costs
Program Project Contributions**

These are the project's share of Law Line's audit costs.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

PROJECT NARRATIVE
LAW LINE OF VT/VT SUPREME COURT PARTNERSHIP
FAMILY COURT FORMS DEVELOPMENT
TIG 08043

Need for the Project

Law Line focuses on advice, information and brief service to clients. Most of our legal services are provided over the telephone. We do a large volume of brief service cases in family law and frequently help people fill out forms. The volume of requests for assistance with family law cases is very high. We only provide assistance to households who are below 125% of the federal poverty levels. In order to maintain the volume we need technological solutions that can provide focused information to pro se litigants and make our practice more efficient.

Each of Vermont's 14 counties has a Family Court. The Family Courts are responsible for all family related legal matters, including divorce, child custody, dissolution of civil unions, child support, and orders of protection for victims of domestic violence. The Chief Administrative Judge for all of Vermont's trial courts is the Hon. Amy Davenport. The Family Court has developed more than 60 forms for use by pro se litigants in family legal matters. These forms are available at the Pro Se Services Center of the judiciary's web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They are displayed as Adobe .pdf forms and many can be filled out on line, then printed, signed and filed. They do not provide instructions for users who are filling them out.

Family court staff and case managers provide information and assistance to pro se litigants throughout the State. Much of this assistance is focused on explaining the forms.

Law Line and Vermont Legal Aid have developed a very successful web site with steadily increasing usage. Our experience and recent studies have shown that some clients will not complete forms if they are required to download a copy of the blank form and fill it in by hand. Nor will they use instructions that are separate from the form itself. A guided, easier to understand form filling process is a much more successful strategy to help insure that the client will understand the forms, complete them accurately, and file them with the court. In addition, with guided interactive forms available, Law Line advocates will be able to work more efficiently, directing clients to work with the on-line forms and focusing the attorney's time on coaching, strategizing, and answering questions. Similarly, court staff and lay advocates at shelters will be better able to guide pro se litigants through the process.

We have reviewed many different document assembly systems. We feel confident that A2J Author is the flexible, easy to understand tool that will provide empowering information and knowledge to clients and help them file the pleadings they need to be heard in Family Court.

Project Goals and Objectives

The principal goal of this project is to make it easier for low income people to represent themselves effectively in Vermont's Family Court. This will increase the ability of attorneys to assist them effectively and allow legal services attorneys to focus on critical legal issues. The Vermont Family Court has developed approximately 60 forms that are available as Adobe pdf forms on their web site, www.vermontjudiciary.org. They include forms for in forma pauperis, relief from abuse actions, child support forms, divorce forms, enforcement forms, forms for legal separation and parentage, forms for establishing custody and visitation, and forms for the dissolution of a civil union. We will begin with the Family Law Startup Kit developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant to Legal Aid of Western New York. We hope to create A2J Author templates for every form but will begin by prioritizing the forms to be created in case we are unable to write all of the forms.

Creating the A2J Author templates is the first part of a larger strategy. When the forms are complete they will be used to generate pleadings from the NPADO server, linked from our web site, www.vtlawhelp.org. The grant will also create essential expertise in Vermont, at the Court as well as in legal services, for continuing the development of A2J Author templates in other areas. The Court is particularly eager to move forward on this in Probate Court, evictions, foreclosures, and Small Claims Court.

The availability of A2J Author templates also is an important step toward creating pro se service centers in Vermont courthouses and increasing the ability of court staff to provide assistance to litigants. This will allow us to focus resources more effectively to help pro se litigants.

Finally, the A2J Author templates will move the courts toward electronic filing in a way that will not jeopardize the ability of low income litigants who do not have lawyers to access the court system. The Court is currently receiving bids on a new case management system that will enable it to be more efficient and will allow it to accept electronic data and create cases. This step will require creating a transform to take the A2J Author data and convert it to the court's data, but this does not appear to be a major hurdle.

The Vermont Court has made a significant commitment to use the TIG grant to start this process and carry it forward to better pro se assistance and electronic filing.

State Justice Community Partnerships

The Vermont Supreme Court and the Office of the Court Administrator are the principal administrative managers for all state courts. They will be part of the advisory committee that will be guiding this project. They are committed to the sustainability of this effort as well.

Attached to this application are letters from Hon. John Dooley, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, Hon. Denise Johnson, Associate Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, and Lee Suskin, Vermont Court Administrator. Justice Dooley is Chair of the Court Technology Committee, which developed and is implementing a plan for electronic filing in the Vermont

courts. He has written extensively on legal services and poverty law and has worked extensively to develop legal services in post Soviet Eastern Europe. Justice Johnson is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition and of the ABA Commission on IOLTA. She has written extensively on access to justice issues.

Vermont Legal Aid, a state wide legal services organization, will also partner with us and take part in the advisory group. They will also provide technical support.

Law Line is a member of the Vermont Access to Justice Coalition. Other charter members are the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School, Vermont Legal Aid and the Vermont Bar Foundation. The Vermont Access to Justice Coalition is also a supporter of this project and will assist in oversight. The Access to Justice Coalition brings together members of the Vermont Supreme Court, the Vermont Bar Association, the Vermont Bar Foundation, the Vermont Law School Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid and Law Line of Vermont. The Coalition was created in January 2004 with four principle goals: to increase public awareness of and support for civil legal assistance in Vermont; to promote cooperation, effectiveness and efficiency in expanding access to justice; to expand participation by the private bar in pro bono efforts; and to increase services and funding available for civil access to justice.

Finally, this project will be assisted by Kate Bladow at the National Document Assembly Project.

Replication

This project will build on the work of the Family Law Startup Kit, developed by Legal Semantics in an earlier TIG grant. A2J Author is well tested and widely used. Our project will continue work done by others and support continuing efforts in this area.

We have discussed the project with several others including the Idaho Supreme Court, ProBono.net, and A2J Author software. There is significant interest in creating the ability to link A2J data to a court case management system and thereby enable electronic filing for pro se litigants.

It has long been assumed that courts need to integrate form development and assistance with electronic filing. We intend to accomplish this. It will require solving some problems, such as how to enable the A2J Author software to communicate with a court case management system and how to provide a paper record for litigants using an electronic filing system. Solving these problems will enable significant improvements in the ability to understand and navigate the court system.

This technology will offer a workable, affordable solution to problems faced by every court system in the country. A critical part of this grant is to develop the understanding, knowledge and expertise in Vermont to sustain this project and enable us to carry it forward on our own, beyond family law, to the other courts and areas of practice in Vermont, as well as to share what we learn with other states engaged in similar projects.

Program Capacity and Project Staffing

Tom Garrett, Executive Director of Law Line of Vermont, will be responsible for supervising the project, documenting the work, and reporting on progress toward milestones. Laura Bierley, Web Content Coordinator at Law Line, will also provide assistance including editing and review of scripts.

Law Line has received several TIG grants and is currently completing a HotDocs/A2J grant in which we created five eviction templates for tenants. We will begin to make these forms available to Vermonters within a couple of weeks. We worked with Capstone Practice to create these templates. This work has allowed us to develop the expertise in HotDocs and A2J Author that will carry us to this larger project. Now that we have tested the software we are convinced of its value.

The Court will engage a full time staff person to work on this. Supervision of the person will be provided by Sandra Seidel, a senior administrative person at the court administrator's office. Overall supervision at the Court will be provided by the Hon. Amy Davenport, Chief Administrative Judge for the Vermont Courts.

Feasibility

This project builds on our earlier project and on work done by Capstone Practice, NPADO, Chicago-Kent Law School, and Idaho Legal Services. We have had thorough consultations with these organizations and with Marc Lauritsen of Capstone Practice, who has written several articles on electronic filing and document assembly. We have also discussed this with Judges and administrative staff who carried out a similar project in Idaho, and with other court staff in Western Missouri and Florida. We have reviewed this with technology specialists in the Vermont Courts. We are convinced that this project is affordable, feasible and practical.

Proposed Payment Schedule

TIG Requested Amount \$81166

| | Period Start Date | Period End Date | # of Milestones | Payment Requested |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Initial Payment | | | | 20000 |
| 2 June | 2008 | December 2008 | 4 | 20000 |
| 3 January | 2009 | April 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 4 April | 2009 | June 2009 | 3 | 15000 |
| 5 June | 2009 | October 2009 | 3 | 11166 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Proposed Payment Total | 81166 |
| Grant Requested | 81166 |
| Difference | 0 |

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Payment Schedule.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

Statement of Additional Funds

Please use this section to describe any additional funds your project will receive from other sources. If you do not anticipate any additional project funding, please also indicate that in this section.

We do not anticipate funds from other sources on this project.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov

SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT

109 STATE STREET

MONTPELIER, VERMONT

05602-0801

CHAMBERS OF
JOHN A. DOOLEY
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE

April 25, 2008

Hishime, Sachin
3155 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: **Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043**

Dear Ms. Barnett:

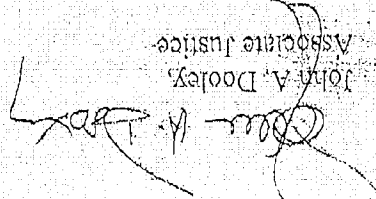
I am writing to support Legal Services Law Line of Vermont's application for funding to support a Court/Law Line project to develop Family Court templates using A2J Author software. This is a key part of our plan to help pro se litigants in Vermont as we move toward a stronger web presence, more focused assistance for court users, and electronic filing. This project will enable us to help more Vermonters who are representing themselves in our Family Courts.

Our most recent data shows that more than 70% of the litigants in Family Court are not represented by an attorney. We have taken many steps to make sure that Family Courts are open to everyone and that court staff provide the right help to those who need help. Similarly, Law Line of Vermont focuses attention on pro se litigants with the same goal in mind, to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

We are beginning the process of developing a new, comprehensive case management system for the Vermont courts. We anticipate that this will allow us to create efficiencies that ease the burden on judges and court staff. Ultimately this system will allow litigants to file pleadings electronically. As part of the electronic filing system, we want to take in information directly over the web from pro se court users and construct electronic forms for processing of their cases.

We have discussed this with many experts, including the Idaho Supreme Court, which has developed a similar project, but without electronic filing; staff at Chicago-Kent Law School, which developed the A2J Author software; and staff at the National Public Automated Documents Online (NPADO) system. After reviewing what is available we have decided that the A2J Author software offers the flexibility, ease of use, and clarity that we want along with the ability to provide extensive help on-line. We are convinced that it will greatly increase our ability to serve the needs of all Vermonters, including most directly those who cannot afford a lawyer.

John A. Dooley,
Associate Justice



Sincerely,

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

This document is a confidential communication. It is intended only for the individual or entity named in the header. If you have received this document in error, please do not disseminate, distribute, or copy this information. If you are not the named addressee, please notify the sender immediately by e-mail. We see the need to protect our confidential information. We go out to bid at the end of next month. We are committed to this project, and we have built it into the project. We appreciate your willingness to support this project.

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CHAMBERS OF
DENISE R. JOHNSON
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE
SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT

April 29, 2008

Helaine Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: **Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIC #08043**

Dear Ms. Barnett:

I am pleased to support Legal Services Law Line of Vermont's application for funding to support a Court/Law Line project to develop Family Court templates using A2J Author software. Our most recent data shows that more than 70% of the litigants in Family Court are not represented by an attorney. Although we have taken many steps to ensure that Family Courts are open to everyone and that court staff provide the right help to those who need it, we cannot provide pro se service centers in every Family Court venue. The only practical and efficient way to reach the many small venues spread across our rural state is to use technology to do it. Law Line of Vermont, which focuses attention on pro se litigants, has already been a leader in using technology to promote services to pro se litigants. By joining with Law Line in the A2J project, we hope to further both of our goals to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

I have been working on access to justice issues here at the Court since my appointment in 1990, and have been the Supreme Court's representative on the Access to Justice Coalition since its founding. The Access to Justice Coalition grew out of the work of another committee that I co-chaired that undertook a legal needs study. The Coalition has focused on the recommendations of that study to increase resources for legal services, increase services for pro se litigants, and increase pro bono services by lawyers. Thus, a key part of our mission is to strengthen support for pro se litigants. Our goal is to create an electronic pro se services center, but one that will be consonant with the Court's long-range goal of moving to electronic filing. The A2J project will allow the court to expand services toward the services center model, and yet take full advantage of the technology that we expect to have in the near future.

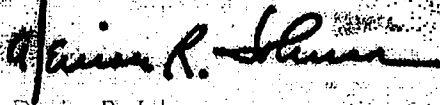
We see this grant as an opportunity to substantially advance our services to pro se litigants in Family Court. The Court is fully committed to this project. We accept our responsibility to

Page Two
April 29, 2008

sustain this work once the TIG project is completed. Given that Family Court presents our greatest pro se need, the development of Family Court templates is a good place to begin. We appreciate your willingness to support this.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Denise R. Johnson
Associate Justice

DRJ:ab

probono.net

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New York, NY 10001

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info@probono.net
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May 2, 2008

Helaine Barnett, Esq.
President, Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3522

Janice Munsterman
Executive Director, State Justice Institute
1650 King Street, Suite 600
Alexandria, VA 22314

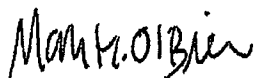
Dear Ms. Barnett and Ms. Munsterman:

Pro Bono Net strongly supports the Technology Initiative Grant application submitted by the Legal Services Law Line of Vermont (Law Line), which requests funding to develop additional online document assembly resources that will be integrated with the court's case management system. This project, if successful, will transform how self-represented litigants interact with the courts when filing forms.

The project that the Law Line, in collaboration with the Vermont Supreme Court, proposes is very innovative. To date, no other legal aid program has been asked to help develop content with A2J Author that will help self-represented litigants e-file. The lessons that the Law Line and the Vermont Supreme Court learn from this project will be invaluable to other states as they plan their e-filing initiatives.

Pro Bono Net is proud to partner with Law Line on this project and looks forward to working with them. I enthusiastically support this grant and strongly urge you to fund this important work.

Sincerely,



Mark O'Brien
Executive Director

Background Information on Law Line of Vermont
Available: <http://www.lawlinevt.org/>

WHAT IS LAW LINE?

Law Line is a non-profit legal services law firm, established in 1996, that provides free consultation, advice, and community education for low income Vermonters. We are supported by a grant from the Legal Services Corporation in Washington, D.C. We are available by telephone to any low income Vermonter with a civil legal problem. Law Line's cases are referred by Vermont Legal Aid who can be reached toll free from anywhere in Vermont by calling 1-800-889-2047.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND REFERRALS

In addition to counsel and advice, Law Line provides information, workshops, training, and referrals for low income Vermonters. Where possible, we try to connect a client with a full service attorney through the Vermont Volunteer Lawyers Project, the South Royalton Legal Clinic, Vermont Legal Aid, or Vermont Protection & Advocacy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Law Line believes that people are often best helped when given the support, assistance and information they need to help themselves. In other words, people can get power in their lives by learning how to handle some legal problems on their own.

Law Line attorneys and paralegals help people represent themselves by learning the facts, explaining the law, helping with paperwork, and discussing the best strategies for winning. We help people with many different legal problems including family matters, housing, health care, disability, employment, and consumer law.

One phone call is often not enough, so Law Line attorneys and paralegals are available for follow-up calls and help prepare court papers and other documents for clients to use.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Law Line believes that the legal system must be open to everyone whether or not they have lawyers. We are concerned about barriers to justice such as high court fees, inaccessibility, lack of good, clear information, "legalese," and any other problems people encounter when trying to exercise their right to be heard. Law Line works with clients to narrow the gap between the promise of justice and the difficult reality of achieving it.

The mission of Legal Services Law Line of Vermont is to provide legal services to as many of the low income people of Vermont as possible. Law Line will seek to empower clients by providing the tools they need to help themselves. Law Line will seek to eliminate barriers that prevent low income people from access to justice and restrict their right to be heard. Law Line will seek to increase the knowledge and understanding of low income Vermonters through a variety of education strategies. Law Line will seek to enforce the obligations of courts, governmental agencies, and adjudicatory bodies to provide information, rules, forms, and laws that are clear, understandable and accessible.

Additional information:

N.Lavery conversation with Law Line of Vermont director Executive Director Tim Garrett (2/19/2009)
Law Line of Vermont receives most of its funding as a grant from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a national funding source for legal services programs Law Line of Vermont also receives other small donations. LSC is funded via a direct appropriation from Congress. Law Line of Vermont was awarded these funds from LSC via a competitive grant process.

SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

LEE SUSKIN, ESQ.
Court Administrator
lee.suskin@state.vt.us

Mailing Address:
109 State Street
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Telephone: (802) 828-3278
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ROBERT YERGEAU
Director - Research & Info. Services
robert.yergeau@state.vt.us

www.vermontjudiciary.org

April 24, 2008

Deanne Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
333 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043

Dear Ms. Barnett:

I am writing to express our support for Legal Services Law Line of Vermont's application for funding to support a Court/Law Line project to develop Family Court templates using A2J Author software. This is an integral part of our vision to enable us to assist the growing number of Vermonters who are representing themselves in our Family Courts. We have taken many steps to make sure that Family Courts are open to everyone and that court staff provide the right assistance to those who need help. Likewise, Law Line of Vermont focuses attention on *pro se* litigants with the same goal in mind -- to ensure access to justice for all Vermonters.

We are beginning the process of developing a new, comprehensive case management system for the Vermont courts which will enable us to create efficiencies that will ultimately ease the burden on judges and court staff and which will allow litigants to file pleadings electronically. We have researched the A2J Author software with many experts and after reviewing what is available, we have decided that this software offers the flexibility, ease of use, and clarity that we want.

We are fully committed to this project, and we accept our responsibility to maintain this work once the TIG project is completed. We are convinced that this project will greatly increase our ability to serve the needs of all Vermonters, including those who cannot afford a lawyer. We perceive the development of Family Court templates as the beginning of our efforts. We appreciate your willingness to support this.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lee Suskin", written over a horizontal line.

VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

264 NORTH WINOOSKI AVE.
P.O. BOX 1367
BURLINGTON, VT 05402
802-863-2881 (VOICE AND TTY)
FAX 802-863-7152

Helaine Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Re: Legal Services Law Line of Vermont - TIG #08043

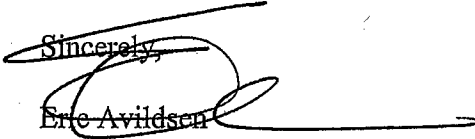
Dear Ms. Barnett:

I am writing to support the application from the Supreme Court of Vermont and Law Line of Vermont for funding to create pro se templates using the A2J Author software. This will increase our ability to help Vermonters who are representing themselves in Family Court.

The volume of inquiries we receive from low income litigants in Family Court is far too great for us to be able to provide direct service to everyone. This proposal will build on the work we have done to create HotDocs/A2J templates for tenants facing eviction. It will allow us to provide directed information to individuals and families who need help and can use the web. We know that many low income Vermonters have access to the web and that their numbers are constantly increasing. I have seen how A2J Author works and I believe it will significantly increase access to justice for low income people in Family Courts across Vermont.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

~~Sincerely,~~


Erte Avildsen
Executive Director

Technology Initiative Grant Online Application Form for 2008

[Log Out](#)

[[View List of TIG Selections](#)] [[View Selected TIG Checklist](#)]

Milestone Narratives

Milestone #1 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Create Advisory Committee and meet to discuss and plan project.

Milestone #2 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Negotiate and execute contract with Court.

Milestone #3 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Prioritize forms for development. Decide which forms to start with and set a schedule for form development.

Milestone #4 for 6/2008 to 12/2008

Train all staff on A2J Author, low literacy writing, and Hotdocs.

Milestone #1 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Develop forms for testing.

Milestone #2 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Review forms with advisory committee and incorporate suggestions into forms.

Milestone #3 for 1/2009 to 4/2009

Continue training and support of court staff.

Milestone #1 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Finalize first forms and put them on web for client testing.

Milestone #2 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Continue testing and reviewing forms with court staff.

Milestone #3 for 4/2009 to 6/2009

Meet with advisory group to review forms.

Milestone #1 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Publish all forms on web.

Milestone #2 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Final review and revisions of forms and training of court staff in their use.

Milestone #3 for 6/2009 to 10/2009

Complete evaluation.

Please remember to print a hard copy of your Milestone Narratives.

If you are having any problems, please contact: Techgrants@lsc.gov