JLAP COMMITTEE

Mike Moore, Chair • Barb Bramblett • Melanie Conway, M.D. • Hon. Melinda French • Hon. Ann Hudson
Prof. Cynthia Nance • William B. Putman • Rep. Dan Sullivan • Jonathan Warren

JLAP FOUNDATION

Vince Ward, Chair • Brandi Collins, Secretary • Neemah Esmaeilpour, Treasurer • Jack Browne
Ben Brenner • Blake Byrd • Frank Cox • Jerome Green • Paul Herrod • Hon. Annabelle Imber-Tuck
Colin Jorgensen • Skip Mooney, Jr. • Cristy Park • Susan Reasoner • Danyelle Walker • Lisa Walton
Amanda Nixon White

JLAP VOLUNTEERS

Melody Barnett • Tom Barron • Ben Brenner • Jack Browne • Victor Crowell • Angi Doss • J.D.Hays
Paul Herrod • Hon. Alice Lightle • Kenny Jones • Colin Jorgensen • Barbara Malm • Jeffrey Malm
Skip Mooney, Jr • Marshall Moore • Cynthia Nance • Kris Ramsfeld • Brock Showalter • Mary Thomas
Annabelle Imber-Tuck
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2017 was a banner year for JLAP. We received more new clients than in any previous year. We provided more therapy grants for judges, lawyers, and law students in areas outside of Central Arkansas than in the previous five years that our grants were available. Our Annual Advocates Dinner raised more money than ever before to fund those grants. We had more sponsors, more attendees, but just as much fun as in all eight years of the Dinner. We held more presentations in 2017 than in previous years, and more self-referred clients told us they heard of us through a presentation. We hired our first full-time administrative assistant, Jessica Johnson, who has moved us by leaps and bounds into a more connected, secure, and active social media and online world where we reach more of Arkansas’ legal community than ever before. We are continuing to organize all of our administrative programs providing improved and streamlined accountability. Our volunteers are more active than ever in speaking and in reaching out as mentors to new clients. Under Laura Laser’s guidance and care, the Bowen Student Wellness Society and the UA Law School’s Student JLAP organization have brought JLAP into the fold as a trusted wellness approach to students’ needs.

With all our success, we also have improvements to make: gaining the trust of judges on our confidentiality so they will feel safe to get help at JLAP; bringing increased diversity to our client base; expanding our work into wellness and prevention; and supporting and enlarging our amazing group of volunteers.

JLAP has been a large part of my life since 2006, and what a profound and extraordinary journey it has been. Along the way, I’ve found friends in this remarkable community who have shown me the true meaning of giving, integrity, and commitment through their actions, not just their words. I cherish this experience as one of the best seasons of my life. Now it is time for me to move on and turn this vital, precious program over to the next director. There are so many keepers of the flame involved in our program, and I will love watching as they continue to nurture its principals and help guide those suffering to those helping.

~ Sarah
Once again, The Arkansas Judges and Lawyers’ Assistance Program, founded in 1999, saw its busiest year ever, serving 144 lawyers, judges, and law students during 2017 to assist them combat and overcome alcohol and drug issues, depression, and other mental health issues. It has been my privilege and honor to have served on the Foundation Board from 2006 - 2013 and serve as the Chair of the Commission since 2014.

We also continue to be supported by the non-profit JLAP Foundation. The Foundation has contributed much enthusiasm, assistance, and resources which have made help more readily available in other parts of the state.

Our many volunteers are committed to assisting those in need of our services with dedication and assurance that Arkansas JLAP is there for them and their families. But our mission is also to protect clients from impaired lawyers and judges. Thanks to the support and commitment of the bar and bench in Arkansas, this facet of our mission is also being fulfilled.

We have continued to carry our message to other parts of the state and to reach new clientele. We had one of our meetings in Jonesboro and it was attended by over 30 local lawyers and judges. We plan on continuing this outreach effort in the coming months and years.

Our big news this year fills me with mixed emotions. Sarah Cearley, our Executive Director since 2008, is retiring effective May 18, 2018. Sarah has been so dedicated to our mission and has served with passion and compassion. She has been a valued and trusted colleague and friend.

We are also very excited to announce our new Executive Director, Andre’ Lewis. Andre has a distinguished career in substance abuse treatment, counseling and education. Andre’ has been Director and Assistant Professor of the Social Work Department at UA Monticello since 2014. He will be joining us May 21, and we look forward to working with him.

Michael S. Moore
MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION CHAIR

2017 - YEAR IN REVIEW

2017 was an exceptional year for the Arkansas JLAP Foundation (the “Foundation”). Our Foundation was successful in continuing its mission supporting the Arkansas Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program (“JLAP”), which provides mental health and substance abuse services to judges, lawyers, their family members, and law students located throughout Arkansas. Although JLAP is partially funded through lawyers’ license fees, it relies on public support in the form of charitable giving through our Foundation. During 2017, the Foundation rose to the occasion and held several fundraising events, including the Chris Thomas Memorial Walk and the Advocates Dinner.

Chris Thomas Memorial Walk

The 3rd Annual Chris Thomas Memorial Walk held on April 1, 2017 was an immense success due to an increased amount of donors and participants. The event was held at Little Rock’s trail systems next to the Arkansas River and the Big Dam Bridge. We give special thanks to Mike Dowling who walked 50 miles in memory of his life-long friend and JLAP advocate, Chris Thomas. Mike was joined by his wife, numerous family and friends of Chris Thomas, as well as many law students. Because of the generosity of all of those that came to walk, our Foundation raised over $12,000.00 which has been used to provide counseling for JLAP clients in all areas of Arkansas.

The JLAP Advocates Dinner

On November 7, 2017, the Foundation hosted the Advocates Dinner, which was its most successful fundraising dinner yet. Donors from across Arkansas contributed over $70,000 to help with JLAP’s outreach to rural areas of Arkansas and those who need financial assistance with counseling services. The dinner was held at the newly renovated Robinson Center in Little Rock overlooking the Arkansas River. Advocates honored at this year’s Dinner included Gail Harber, PhD, the first executive director of JLAP, as well as the inaugural JLAP Committee, whose distinguished members include Janet James Robb, Chair; Joe Martindale, MD; Gail Harber, PhD; Gary Burbank; Jim Smith; Judge Kathleen Bell; Phillip Barling, PhD; Judge David Laser; and posthumously, Chris Thomas. We extend an enormous thank you to all of our generous sponsors of the 2017 Advocates Dinner. The support of our sponsors, donors and volunteers is what makes it possible for JLAP to help those in the legal profession find a road to recovery and good mental health.
MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION CHAIR

Summary

The Foundation raised over $85,000.00 in 2017 as a result of our board's efforts, more than any past year. These funds provide lawyers, judges, their family members, and law students with unabated access to medical, therapeutic, and recovery support. With the continued support of our volunteers and donors, the Foundation stands ready to support JLAP throughout 2018 and years to come as JLAP continues to expand its reach to communities all across Arkansas.

Vince Ward
Chairman of the Foundation

2017 JLAP Advocates Dinner
The JLAP Committee is our governing board. There are nine members appointed by the Arkansas Supreme Court to serve six-year terms. They come to us from every part of our state and represent judges, lawyers, and lay people. The make-up is diverse as well in geography, gender, race, age, and type of practice. They are people who care about their colleagues, their profession, and their state. They believe in the mission of JLAP that informing Arkansas’ legal profession about mental health and substance abuse issues and helping those who have those issues to get better are vital to the protection of the larger community, their clients, and litigants. Our committee members are active participants in this mission in their governance of the program, their outreach activities to their fellows, and their personal involvement in JLAP events and undertakings.

In 2017, three new members joined us: Dan Sullivan from Paragould, Judge Melinda French from Dumas, and Jonathan Warren from Little Rock.

In September, the committee took its quarterly meeting “on the road” to Jonesboro. Mike Moore, the committee chair, and Bill Putman, a member who come down from Fayetteville, presented to the Craighead County Bar about substance abuse and depression in lawyers. It’s always a powerful message when our lawyers speak to other lawyers about these issues. That very act of speaking about things too often unspoken opens doors for those who need and want help.

The committee and the foundation board work hand in hand to find ways to reach suffering folks all around the state by working together on events and fundraising activities that provide the funds to allow eligible clients all over Arkansas enjoy free and confidential mental health help. They also collaborate in presentations made around the state to be sure that the word gets to every lawyer.
**THE STAFF**

Dr. Sarah Cearley is Executive Director for the Arkansas Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program (JLAP). Dr. Cearley joined JLAP in 2006 as Director of Client Services. She received her PhD in Social Work from the University of South Carolina and held faculty positions in the Schools of Social Work in Arkansas, Illinois, and South Carolina prior to joining JLAP staff. She is a Licensed Certified Social Worker.

Laura Laser, LCSW is Assistant Director of the Program. She received her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 1996. Laura joined the JLAP staff in October 2012 bringing a broad clinical experience to the program. She is responsible for the law student program, providing clinical and outreach services, and assisting with programming duties.

Jessica Johnson joined JLAP in 2017 as our Administrative Assistant. She hails from Detroit, Michigan and is making her home here in Little Rock with her dog Candace and her cat Gilly. Jessica is currently enrolled at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, working towards her Bachelor of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in Human Resource Management. Her passion for mental health awareness, substance abuse recovery and the overall wellness of others are the driving forces towards her future goals.
PEOPLE

The JLAP Foundation Board consists of legal professionals, family members, law students, and volunteers. These individuals are men and women who support the work of JLAP financially and through their time and effort are devoted to furthering JLAP’s mission.

MISSION

*The Arkansas JLAP Foundation’s Mission is to support and enhance the Arkansas JLAP mission through fundraising that assists the Program in reaching members of Arkansas’ legal profession in as many ways as possible. Outreach activities build public trust in the Program by raising awareness, creating social interactions to strengthen ties between Program volunteers and the public, and create connections within the legal community.*

HOW DONATIONS ARE USED

The Foundation raised $85,875 in 2017 as a result of the board’s efforts. In the same year, of these funds, $73,805, helped 28 lawyers, family members, and law students who either lived outside of Central Arkansas or were in severe financial distress with needed funding for JLAP related medical, therapeutic, and recovery support.

The donations also support outreach and fundraising projects such as The Advocates Dinner, The Chris Thomas Walk, and law schools’ wellness initiatives.
In 2017, JLAP experienced an 11% increase in participation due to new and returning clients. Lawyer participation grew by 24% compared to 2016.

JLAP has provided 28 clients this year with grants to help with their various needs including no-cost counseling for our rural clients.

Although since 2016, we have seen a rise in colleague referrals to JLAP, the majority of our clients are self-referred. Most clients that come to JLAP have learned about us through presentations and web searches.

Of the 144 clients to come to JLAP in 2017, 66% remain active.
JLAP has been successful in reaching out to aid more lawyers, judges, families, and law students in the state of Arkansas. While many of our clients are in central Arkansas we have seen more awareness and use of JLAP services from the northeast and southern regions of the state.

In 2016, we saw an increase in diversity with an 8% African American client base. JLAP has continued to reach out to minority communities and we hope to continue this upward referral trend.

With our steady growth we still see a wide range of clients, from 18 years old to 69 years young. Eighty-seven percent of the people we help range from their early twenties to late forties.

In 2014, 60% of our clients were male; 2016, client gender was 50/50 and in 2017, 59% of our clients are female.

In 2016, we saw an increase in diversity with an 8% African American client base. JLAP has continued to reach out to minority communities and we hope to continue this upward referral trend.

In 2016, client gender was 50/50 and in 2017, 59% of our clients are female.
Mental health, substance abuse and family issues are still prevalent issues for our clients.

Mental health concerns constitute 64% of client issues; this remains our most diversified category. Anxiety, stress, and depression are the most common problems regarding our clients’ mental health.

17% of our clients’ primary concern is substance abuse issues. Of those clients, 72% are affected by alcohol, 16% from opioid or prescription medication, and 12% suffer with cocaine addiction.

This even division resembles past years’ work with families.

17% of our clients’ primary concern is substance abuse issues. Of those clients, 72% are affected by alcohol, 16% from opioid or prescription medication, and 12% suffer with cocaine addiction.
In 2017, the JLAP Foundation had its most successful Advocates Dinner thus far, raising $73,340 dollars to help rural clients and those in severe financial need get mental health/addiction treatment.

We held this year’s Dinner at the Robinson Center overlooking the Arkansas River and the new Broadway Bridge that spans it. It was a beautiful night of socialization and support from this very special community. Our amazing sponsors donated a record $48,841.83. Once again, we held a silent auction with 45 donated items that brought us $8534.00. The remainder of our total came from ticket sales at $13,250.00. Some of our guests partook of the Murphy family Presquile wine that their foundation so generously donated. Our wonderful volunteers and dinner committee members (from our foundation board and JLAP committee) worked hard to make sure that the night went smoothly, and thanks to their dedication, it was one of our most successful events yet.

We presented the Justice Robert L. Brown Community Support Award to Gail Harber, PhD, the first executive director of the program to honor her Herculean task of guiding the move of JLAP from rules written in a per curiam order to a living force of lawyers helping lawyers. We also presented the JLAP Distinguished Service Award to the first JLAP Committee: Janet James Robb, Chair of Little Rock, Gail Harber of Phoenix, AZ, Joe Martindale, MD of Benton, Chris Thomas of Little Rock, Gary Burbank of El Dorado, Hon. David Laser of Jonesboro, Phillip Barling, PhD of Ft. Smith, Hon. Kathleen Bell of West Helena, and Jim Smith of Little Rock. Some of these first members were among the recovering lawyers that had worked so long and diligently to make the program a reality. Others were lawyers and lay members who were devoted to the idea of helping lawyers who had come upon bumps in their roads find a way to recovery and good mental health.

Each of our award winners is honored every time a new client calls or emails and begins the process of healing. They are honored by every client who got and remains sober from their addiction today because of help they found in JLAP. They are honored every time a client becomes a volunteer and gives back to his or her community. The JLAP committee and executive director are a “pay it forward” group, and the rewards are in the lives of so many judges, lawyers, their family members, and law students that have been touched.

Please click on our Donors page to see the host of generous sponsors for the 2017 Dinner. Everything that JLAP does is possible because of the support of our community network of sponsors, donors, and volunteers. The JLAP staff thanks and honors each and every one of you for your part in promoting mental health in the Arkansas legal community.
2017 LAW STUDENT ACTIVITIES

BOWEN SCHOOL OF LAW AT UALR

2016-17 SJLAP President: Piper Meeks, VP: Pamela Abrams, Secretary: Inez Clark, Treasurer: Matt Reid

SJLAP Valentine’s Party: Comedies, pizza, and chocolate fountain at the law school to promote community, laughter and relaxation.

ABA Law School Mental Health Day “Let’s Taco Bout It”: promoting JLAP and wellness. Foundation Board Members Justice Annabelle Imber-Tuck and Colin Jorgensen presented.

SJLAP won two SBA awards at Bowen School of Law: The Community Service Program Award and the Student Life Enhancement Award.

2017-18 SJLAP President: Salina Adolf, VP: Shelby Howlett, Treasurer: Wesley Manus, Secretary: Abby Brenneman and Advisor: Constance Gable.

Bowen SJLAP officers decided to change the SJLAP student organization’s name to the Student Wellness Society (SWS).

LEAP Orientation: Dean Grotiohn, LEAP program advisor, invited Laura Laser to talk to incoming LEAP students about JLAP. SWS officer and LEAP 2L participant Wesley Manus, also attended the meeting. He shared his 1L experience with the incoming LEAP students and promoted JLAP for incoming students experiencing stress, depression and/or addiction.

About LEAP: The Legal Education Advancement Project (LEAP) created by the former Dean Swartz at Bowen is designed to identify and admit individuals of historically underrepresented groups in law school and the legal profession who have the teamwork, leadership, drive, and academic skills necessary to complete law school and pass the bar examination. LEAP participants attend an immersive, six-week summer program at the UA Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law. Participants are assigned a faculty advisor, engage in collaborative exercises, and take a non-credit course that requires considerable in-class and out-of-class work. Classes and activities are required all day Monday through Friday. LEAP is a full-time commitment and working during the program is not recommended.

1L Orientation: SWS President, Salina Adolph and VP, Shelby Howlett joined a panel of other UALR representatives and promoted JLAP to incoming 1L’s. Laura Laser was present. We handed out JLAP brochures and stress balls.

SWS Presentation with a free BBQ lunch provided by the Office of Student Affairs: Salina and Shelby conducted the event and shared a psychological and a scientific evidenced based video on stress, depression, addiction and ways to reduce these patterns. She and Shelby introduced a panel of students, three 2Ls and one 3L, who told their personal stories of the stress of law school. There were 45-50 attendees. They introduced JLAP rep Laura Laser, and advised students to reach out to JLAP before any major problems arise.
Health Fair in association with the Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
JLAP participated by “tabling” at the event handing out fruit, chocolates, brochures and stress balls, talked to many students and promoted JLAP.

SWS put “Team Bowen” together to participate in the annual Out of the Darkness Community Walk: Suicide Prevention.

JLAP Advocates Dinner: SWS President Salina Adolf and VP Shelby Howlett attended.

Stress Less Fest in the Spring and Fall: This event promoted wellness and relaxation the week before final exams. It included dog petting, games, coloring, food (some donated by the faculty) and chair massages. JLAP and SWS “tabled.” JLAP sponsored vouchers for one of the food trucks. JLAP received a full reimbursement from Bowen for this expense.

UA SCHOOL OF LAW

2016-17 SJLAP Co-Presidents: Emily O’Neil, Hannah Rucker, Alex Nguyen

Spring: Mood Food Tabling Event: SJLAP and JLAP Offered coffee, tea, hot chocolate and snacks prior to final exams the next week, had a raffle to promote attention to JLAP.

Tabled two additional times offering stress balls, brochures, snacks and hot drinks.

2017-18 SJLAP President: Kelsey Furr, VP: Russell Dye, Secretary/Treasurer: Julia Stover

Golf Scramble: SBA President organized, proceeds donated to JLAP

1L Orientation: Sarah Cearley presented and was introduced by Kelsy Furr.

JLAP and SJLAP Tabled offering snacks, coffee/tea, brochures and stress balls.

Let’s Taco Bout It: Professor Angie Doss, faculty liaison. Panel presentation: Committee Member, Bill Putman, Volunteer, Brock Showalter and local attorney, Sarah Sparkman. They spoke on their personal experiences with depression and anxiety followed by Q&A over lunch. UA school of law provided lunch. They introduced Laura who was present.

JLAP Advocates Dinner: SJLAP President and VP attended

SJLAP and JLAP Fall 2017 Mood Food Tabling: cancelled