



Help Now! Reaches Out to the Underserved Population

It's one thing to know that the system of helps in a region isn't able to assist certain people in need, but it's another to willingly develop and implement a strategy intended to take up slack in the social services system. And that's what Larry Kahn did when he invested himself in the Jackson County community and founded Help Now! Advocacy Center in 2004.

Through Help Now!, Executive Director Kahn and his group of 20 volunteers and 10 advocates provide professional services to the poor and underserved populations in southern Oregon. In doing so, the organization has created a safety net for Jackson County residents who lack financial, mental, physical, intellectual and educational resources.

"Our job is to solve problems,



help people in crisis and deal with disputes," Kahn explains. "We get people from point A to point B in a professional manner and in the

shortest amount of time."

Kahn spent many years as a litigation attorney, first with the federal government and then as a partner at one of Washington, D.C.'s premier law firms. During his career, he received recognition for successful, high-profile negotiations and for his work with Negotiated Solutions in Washington D.C. Among other media, Kahn's work has been recognized in the *Wall Street Journal*, *NBC Nightly News*, *The Today Show*, *Consumer Research*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times* and *Washington Lawyer*.

Kahn is an honors graduate of the University of Michigan Law School. As an undergraduate, Larry majored in honors economics at the University of Pennsylvania's prestigious Wharton School graduating

with high honors from that institution. He also holds a Master's degree in education with an emphasis on disadvantaged urban youth.

By taking on hard-to-handle cases, complex issues, and helping people quickly access the right agencies and programs, Help Now! has significantly relieved over-extended community, state and federal agency resources. By representing citizens in need at no cost, and acting as an umbrella organization over the regional infrastructure, Help Now! has saved the county a significant amount of money.



In 2006, Help Now! assisted hundreds of people solve non-legal disputes, manage problems, negotiate or facilitate agreements, and properly access social, human, governmental and pro-bono/reduced-fee business services. In its downtown location and at its current pace, Help Now! is expected to serve between 400 and 500 clients in 2007.

"Our organization has grown significantly with very little outreach on our part. There is obviously a great need for what we do," Kahn says. "To ensure that supply meets demand, and to move to the next level of service, we need more advocates, more volunteers and more donations. Our goal is to make sure that Help Now! doesn't become help later!" ■

For more information, visit www.helpnowadvocacy.org or call 541-732-1912.

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