

HELP NOW! MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide professional advocacy assistance to those in need, with a focus on finding solutions.

HELP NOW! VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to become an uplifting force for the client population we serve by establishing our organization as a trusted place to which those in need can first turn for solutions to their problems. Our broader vision is that our advocacy efforts on behalf of individuals in the community will become a tool creating institutional and social change within the community benefiting others beyond the client population we serve directly.

HELP NOW! VALUES STATEMENT

We at Help Now! embrace the spirit and dignity we view as the essence of every human being. Irrespective of our clients' position or stage in life and regardless of the nature of the problems that may beset them, we will always maintain this view and perception in serving them with the respect and courtesy they deserve.

Our view and perception of humanity also means that, when we are advocating on behalf of our clients, we will conduct that advocacy in a way that is always professional and respectful of those who may have differing views on a particular issue. We believe that having this regard for our fellow man can, in itself, be conducive to resolving issues on behalf of our clients in a manner that protects their interests but also achieves a fair and reasonable outcome.

Help Now! Advocacy Center
33 N. Central Avenue, Suite 211
Medford, Oregon 97501

News and Updates!

Bringing you stories of advocacy success, program developments, and volunteer opportunities

SPRING/SUMMER 2008



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Contact Us

Help Now! Advocacy Center
33 N. Central Avenue, Suite 211
Medford, Oregon 97501
541-732-1911
www.HelpNowAdvocacy.org

ADVOCACY SUCCESSSES!

Here are just a few examples of our recent accomplishments.

We continue to achieve our client's goal in over 90% of the matters we have handled to date!

❖ Persuaded a landlord to do a rent workout arrangement with, and not evict, an employed mother of two small children whose husband had abruptly left her and the children by moving out of the area with another woman.

❖ Negotiated a debt payoff arrangement with a significant discount off the principal balance where the debtor was already being garnished due his inability to make prior payments because of his son's death and his wife's serious illness.

❖ Persuaded a landlord to forgive past unpaid rent and lower future monthly rental payments so that a disabled woman with epilepsy who had lost her HUD rental subsidy could remain in her apartment.

❖ Negotiated workout arrangement with power company to avoid shutoff on a husband and wife with three young children where the wife had to undergo repeated surgeries following complications with the third child's birth and the husband had to miss work to care for the two older children during the wife's convalescence.

❖ Obtained psychotherapy services from a private practitioner at no charge for an acutely ill bipolar man without health insurance or Medicaid.

❖ Assisted a senior in obtaining health insurance from the state for her two grandchildren after they had unexpectedly came into her care due their young single mother's unexpected death from a stroke.

❖ Obtained oral surgery services from a private practitioner at a minimal fee for a formerly homeless teenager, now working in a program to help other homeless teenagers, after the tooth pain had gotten so severe that the teenager could not work or sleep.

❖ Assisted a homeless disabled woman without public benefits in finding rent-free housing so that she did not have to live on the streets or in a shelter, both of which would have worsened her medical condition.

❖ Persuaded local propane company to reverse its charges to a senior homeowner in connection with an unauthorized delivery of propane to his home.

❖ Negotiated workout arrangement with lender of a subprime mortgage to keep a female senior, who had recently lost her job, in her home.

TEO'S STORY

Teo (Teodoro—Ted in English) is a member of Jackson County's Latino community. A legal resident of the United States, Teo has been employed for over eight years by a local concrete company. Having saved his money over the years, Teo recently purchased his first home for himself and his family.



Not long after Teo and family had moved into the home, a salesman appeared at his front door asking to test the home's water quality. The test purported to show that the level of chlorine in the home's tap water was so high as to be unsafe for drinking or other human exposure in bathing, etc.

With our intervention, the company selling the water "system" to Teo quickly agreed to a full refund of the purchase price. Teo's previous efforts to achieve the same result had been ignored by the company. Teo also had contacted the Oregon Construction Contractor Board but, because of language difficulties, had gotten no assistance there, and that office was on the verge of closing out his file.

Because of our intervention, the CCB is, according to their representative, now "more than likely" to pursue criminal sanctions against the company selling the water "system."



(After having concluded Teo's case, we have learned about at least four other members of the Hispanic community who have been victimized by the same scam and presumably the same company. We are in the process of pursuing those leads and the company on a broader basis.)

To address this problem, the salesman sold Teo a \$5000 water "system" to remove chlorine from the tap water. In fact, the level of chlorine in the local tap water, according to local water experts, is very low—about one-tenth of the maximum allowable amount under federal standards.

Further, according to these experts, if the goal was to remove all chlorine from the household water, removing it could have been accomplished through the purchase of a charcoal water filter for under \$25.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT:

As the County Commissioner designated to oversee health and human services matters in Jackson County and also as a medical doctor in practice here, I have been in a position to assess the importance and effects of Help Now!'s work within the local community.

Prior to forming Help Now! in 2004, Larry Kahn, our executive director, approached me, among others, for possible Board service. At that time I foresaw a need for such an organization because there are large numbers of people in this County who lack resources, financial or otherwise, to overcome crises they may be facing, particularly if those crises are multi-faceted.

While there have always been other organizations that help in a specific area, such as providing emergency shelter, Help Now! is unique in that it is geared towards helping people solve what may be underlying problems.

So, while Help Now! will make a referral to the organization that actually provides emergency shelter, frequently Help Now! will work with the individual or family requiring emergency shelter to address the problem that gave rise to the need in the first place.

That problem, for instance, may be financial mismanagement, an issue with a landlord, untreated illness, or an employment issue. Because Help Now!'s advocates are trained in a problem-solving *process*,

they are positioned to be of assistance to the client in solving it regardless of nature of the underlying problem.

Another aspect of Help Now! that, to my knowledge, is unique among social service agencies is Help Now!'s creation of and connection to our network of community partners. This network of individuals and businesses is now statewide and stands ready to assist Help Now!'s clients at no charge or at a greatly reduced fee on a wide range of needs.

For instance, when we recently helped a homeless client obtain her first apartment in a long time, several of our community business partners assisted by providing her carpeting and furniture free of charge. Help Now!'s ability to mobilize people to help others charitably in very direct ways is something that is appreciated across the political spectrum in this day of diminishing government services.

BOARD MEMBER FOCUS—BILL MANSFIELD, ESQ.

A recent addition to Help Now!'s Board is Bill Mansfield. Bill is an attorney who has practiced law in the Medford area for nearly half a century, initially as city attorney and subsequently in private practice. Prior to practicing law in Medford, Bill served as an assistant attorney general for the state of Oregon and as a staff attorney for the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads.

In his private practice work, Bill maintained a general civil practice. Bill is licensed to practice law not only in Oregon but also before the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court.

In addition to his long professional career, Bill has demonstrated an equally long commitment to the local community. Over the past 45 years, he has served on the board of directors of Non-Profit Legal Services, on the

Although there is still plenty of room for growth of Help Now!'s services locally, the model that Help Now! has successfully established in this area and, to a lesser extent, within the state of Oregon over these past four years is one that can be replicated elsewhere in the country. For this to happen will require funding of a magnitude beyond that which the organization has seen to date.

If any of you receiving this newsletter are in a position to help in launching such an effort or know someone who would be, please let us know. The implications of this program's work and success go well beyond its still limited reach to date.

David R. Gilmour, M.D., Board president

board of directors of the Peter Britt Music Festival, on the Jackson County Mental Health Advisory Board, on the Jackson County Library Advisory Committee, on the board of directors of the Rogue Valley Transportation District (including as board chair), on the board of directors of Jackson/Josephine County Head Start (including as board chair), on the board of directors of Community Health Center, and on the board of directors of the Rogue Valley Symphony.

In addition to his work on non-profit boards, Bill was elected to the Medford City Council for three terms spanning the time period from 1985 to 1996.

Both Bill's college and law degrees are from the University of Oregon.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Become a Client Advocate...

Work assisting our clients is extremely fulfilling. In a world where everyone seems to have an "angle" or be out to get something from others, doing the reverse and simply giving to others can be incredibly rewarding and renewing. And that's apart from the great appreciation

our clients, who mostly have nowhere else to turn, frequently express. All client advocates are provided appropriate training so that they can confidently assist our clients with whatever problems or issues they may be facing. Download an application online or call Help Now! to arrange an appointment and learn more about our advocacy work.