

GET YOUR NAME ON THIS PAGE

As the new director of the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Program, I am in complete agreement with the following message that was written by our former Director, Jeanne Marie Leslie. It is my sincere hope that you will consider a gift to our Foundation so that we can continue to assist those suffering from addiction and/or mental illness.

Robert Thornhill, MS, LPC, MLAP

If you are one of the thousands of lawyers in Alabama who first turn to the discipline page to see who's been reprimanded, you have been challenged to get your name on *this* page and help be part of the solution.

I remember clearly knowing when I took the job, as director of the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Program (ALAP), that asking people for money was not my forte. It was something I could not imagine doing. Offering hope and the possibility of living life without alcohol and drugs or the burden of depression was my passion. That was something I trained for and knew was my calling.

As with any new endeavor along the way there have been obstacles. Many times I've sought direction and guidance from members of the Lawyers Helping Lawyers Committee and the Office of General Counsel. I've relied on directors from Assistance Programs in other states for advice on policies and on procedures and received assistance from the Alabama Medical Association Physician's Program. However, the major obstacle ALAP has had in helping lawyers suffering from addiction or depression has clearly been a financial one.

On too many occasions lawyers in Alabama have been denied access to appropriate treatment solely because they lacked the financial means to pay for it. People change; lawyers do recover and return as valuable members of their families, communities and the legal profession. Asking for money to assist these lawyers during their greatest time of need has become my new fervor. You see, no one is immune to the disease of addiction or the debilitating effects of depression. Those people can easily be some one you know and care about. For more information on how you can help call. (334) 834-7576.

-Jeanne Marie Leslie RN, M.Ed

The Alabama Lawyer Assistance Foundation was incorporated in 2001. It is a nonprofit corporation [501(c)(3)] under the management of an elected Board of Directors. The purpose of the foundation is to provide financial assistance to Alabama Lawyers suffering with addictions to alcohol/drugs and other mental illnesses, and who lack the resources to pay for appropriate help. This is not a give-away, but an opportunity to help these lawyers help themselves. A revolving loan fund gives lawyers in need the opportunity to get treatment. Loans from the fund are paid directly to the treatment care providers. Repayment is expected once the lawyer is back on his or her feet, so money will be available to aid the next lawyer in need.

Fund raising kicked off on May 1, 2002. Our goal is to raise \$500,000. Response has been overwhelming. We would like to graciously thank all contributors so far and will be recognizing all contributions in upcoming issues. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped make this happen and to the law firm of Burr&Forman for being a pace setter!