

HAWAII BAR NEWS



VOL. No. 27—NO. 1

JANUARY 1990

Bankruptcy Attorney-Advisor Sought	23
Computers and the Practice of Law	24
Conference on Flag Burning	9
Disciplinary Counsel's Report	18
Family Court Bulletin	16
HICLE Seminars.....	9
Hawaii County Bar Association	16
Hawaii Lawyers Care.....	19
Hawaii Women Lawyers.....	20
Kirimitsu to Lead HSBA	7
Books by Hawaii Practitioners	18
of Anti-Drug Opening	16
Damage Damages.....	22
President's Report	3
Special Earthquake Notice	22
Status of Unified Bar	15
UH Law School News.....	21
YLD President's Report	3

Eliten Godbey Carson
Pacific Tower, Ste. 1300
1001 Bishop St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Honolulu, Hawaii
Permit No. 866

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Hawaii Women Lawyers

Since its founding less than a year and a half ago, the Domestic Violence Legal Hotline has firmly established itself as a unique, much-needed source of advice on legal matters and information on community resources for victims of domestic abuse. The Hotline is a joint project of Hawaii Women Lawyers and The Hawaii Women Lawyers Foundation. Housed at Hawaii Lawyers Care, the Hotline is staffed by approximately 40 men and women volunteers who serve, on a rotating basis, to answer crisis and informational phone inquiries four days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Saturdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. for the Korean-speaking community).

The Hotline was created from the recognition that abused women on Oahu had no single source to which they could turn for information that would enable them to seek legal protection, redress and counseling. It was also prompted by the alarming statistics on domestic violence in Hawaii: approximately 76% of all female homicide victims between September 1987 and the present were assailed by spouses or boyfriends; requests for restraining orders in Family Court numbered 866 between 1987 and 1988, up from 164 in 1980. Women lacking an understanding of the criminal justice system, their legal right to protection, their right to live untormented by physical and psychological abuse, and the rights of their children are effectively without any recourse in explosive situations that endanger their lives and the lives of their children.

Hotline volunteers are trained to answer calls from battered spouses, perpetrators of violence involved in criminal proceedings, social service providers, attorneys not versed in domestic abuse and private practitioners whose clients need information about legal action. Information typically provided to callers ranges from facts on the nature of domestic



abuse, to procedures on obtaining temporary restraining orders, to advice on child custody, divorce and property division matters. Callers whose immediate welfare is being threatened are also given a "safety plan" — a practical checklist of steps to take to leave an abusive situation — and referrals to safe shelters and other appropriate community resources.

Statistics on the Hotline from the last year verify the vital role it has played among the resources of this State for victims of domestic violence. During the first 6 months of operation, the Hotline received calls from 102 people. During the first three quarters of 1989, 187 calls were handled by Hotline volunteers. In 123 of 127 calls received during the first half of 1989, volunteers made referrals linking callers with agencies prepared to offer legal assistance, emergency support, counseling and housing. Volunteers also mailed out court forms and materials where appropriate, at no charge.

The Hotline's importance to Hawaii's battered women and the quality of the project were recently recognized by the ABA YLD, which awarded the Hotline its Award of Achievement in the Single Project/Service to the Public category in August, 1989. Members of the Award of Achievement judgment team reported being extremely impressed with all aspects of the Hot-

line, from the thoroughness of the volunteer training program to the degree of participation by HWL members. The team also commended the Hotline for its collaboration with other community organizations in the Hotline's implementation.

As the Hotline grows in visibility and community importance, its need for additional volunteers also expands. Persons interested in serving for two hours a month are strongly encouraged to call the Hotline at 531-3771. Please leave your name and number with the volunteer on duty, or on the recorder. No legal background on domestic matters is necessary (although obviously helpful); all volunteers will be trained. The Hotline is also seeking to increase its roster of family law attorneys willing to handle, for lower cost, cases referred by the Hotline that cannot be handled by Legal Aid. Again, all interested family practitioners are asked to call the Hotline to volunteer pro bono time to assist abuse victims in need of legal advice and/or representation.

HAWAII LAWYERS CARE

(Continued from page 19)

dignity and compassion."

As you can see from the above, we have been joined by an individual who is not only competent in the field of law, but who is also dedicated to assisting the less-fortunate members of our society. We feel very fortunate that David has joined our staff.

One of David's primary responsibilities with Hawaii Lawyers Care is referring eligible clients with meritorious cases to our volunteer attorneys. It is not the easiest of tasks. In the coming year, David will need your assistance as will Hawaii Lawyers Care. If you are not as yet registered with Hawaii Lawyers Care as a volunteer, please call and offer your assistance. We would appreciate it greatly.