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Access to Justice Conference Seeks to Address Poverty in Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., May 23, 2012 – The Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, Clinton School of Public Service, and UALR William H. Bowen School of Law are co-hosting a conference on May 29-30 2012.

With more Arkansans than ever before living in poverty, courts are seeing steady increases in the numbers of individuals who are unable to afford attorneys to help them navigate legal issues involving basic human needs. Representing Hope: New Paradigms for Access to Justice Conference seeks to take a multidisciplinary approach to address the intersection of these issues and reduce poverty in Arkansas. With this approach in mind, the conference will bring together members of the legal, medical, education, business, government, and nonprofit sectors to develop strategies for how the legal system can address issues that perpetuate poverty.

The conference will include speakers and work groups that will focus on such topics as education, health, housing and hunger, and retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens will offer the closing keynote address at the conclusion of the conference.

More information about the conference, including registration, agenda, and conference workgroups, is available at <http://www.arkansasjustice.org/online/justiceconference>.

The Arkansas Access to Justice Commission and its sister nonprofit organization, the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation, work to provide equal access to justice in civil cases to all Arkansans. The Commission's major projects include educating the public about poverty in Arkansas, recruiting pro bono attorneys, supporting courts and self-represented individuals, and soliciting contributions for legal aid. Learn more at www.arkansasjustice.org.

The UALR William H. Bowen School of Law provides a high quality legal education that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical concepts, not only to function as competent attorneys, public officials, and other professionals, but also to think critically about the efficacy of the law and legal institutions and to work for their improvement. Bowen is a community of scholars committed to professionalism, public service, and access to justice in the heart of Little Rock, Arkansas' capital city.

The Clinton School of Public Service is the first graduate program in the nation offering a Master of Public Service (MPS) degree. The program is designed to help students gain knowledge and experience to further their careers in the areas of nonprofit, governmental, volunteer or private sector service work. Applicants are drawn from a variety of disciplines that are relevant to public service. The Clinton School also partners with other UA institutions to offer the MPS degree concurrently with degrees in law, public health and business administration.

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