

The MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL ADVISORS COMMITTEE presents:

**BETTER OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Friday, November 14, 2008
Western New England College School of Law, Springfield

8:00 **REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST**

8:30 **WELCOME**

8:45 **A FRAGILE ALLIANCE: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LEGAL APPROACHES TO AT RISK CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND FAMILIES**

This full-morning session with a mid-morning break will cover the basic principles and tenants surrounding the intersection of behavioral sciences and the law as it affects at risk youth and families. Dr. Halikias will discuss both what makes a mental health professional effective in the adjudicative arena and what can help a legal professional to work effectively with mental health professionals. Participants will learn the benefits and conflicts inherent in the legal-mental health relationship, and how to more successfully negotiate the tensions. Attorney Katz will present a case to illustrate and analyze strategies to successfully integrate psychological expertise into a legal case.

William Halikias, Psy.D., Clinical & Forensic Psychologist, Brattleboro, Vermont

Joan Katz, J.D., Solo Practitioner, Franklin and Hampshire Counties

12:30 **LUNCH (AVAILABLE ON YOUR OWN AT THE CAFETERIA)**

1:30 **THE NEW CHILD WELFARE LAW**

This presentation will address many aspects of the new child welfare law as well as its impact on the child welfare system. Judge Garinger will discuss her new role as The Child Advocate and Attorneys Karp and Rome will analyze the law, its new amendments and implementation in addition to changes to internal Department of Children and Families (DCF) processes as a result of the law.

Hon. Gail Garinger, The Child Advocate, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Amy M. Karp, J.D., Training Director, Children and Family Law Program, Committee for Public Counsel Services

Andrew Rome, J.D., Regional Counsel, Western Regional Office, Department of Children and Families

3:30 **VIEWS FROM THE BENCH ON ROGERS**

This panel of judges from the Western Massachusetts area will discuss recent developments and differences in the practice of *Rogers* cases. Discussion will center around necessary evidence, the role of the fact-finder in making fully informed decisions in a stipulation, the judge's independent duty to make inquiries into proposed treatment plans and when in fact to do so.

Moderator: Lisa van Gordon d'Errico, J.D., Solo Practitioner, Northampton

Hon. Judith A. Locke, Circuit Justice, Hampden Juvenile Court

Hon. David G. Sacks, Associate Justice, Hampden Probate and Family Court