



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

**March 6, 2008**

### **AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT IMMIGRANTS FROM “NOTARIO FRAUD”**

The American Bar Association Commission on Immigration has launched a *Campaign to Protect Immigrants from “Notario Fraud”* to address the growing prevalence of this troubling practice in recent years. Through the Campaign, the Commission engages in efforts to warn immigrant communities about the dangers of unscrupulous notarios, and to help them avoid victimization. With generous support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Commission is expanding its Campaign to help legal service providers build capacity to serve immigrants who have been victimized by notarios.

More and more notarios are exploiting the trust of immigrants who are new to this country. Unfamiliar with our language and legal system, immigrants may be misled to believe that a “notario” is a lawyer. The consequences are often lost opportunities to pursue immigration relief because of the damage that an ill-intended notario has caused to one’s case. Most victims do not have the resources to seek help, which in turn, has allowed fraudulent notarios to continue their practices with no accountability.

The Commission is offering mini-grants to non-profit immigration service providers around the country, to enable them to train pro bono attorneys to bring unauthorized practice of law or related claims, and/or to reopen immigration cases on behalf of victims. State specific training curricula will be developed and provided to each site by the ABA for use in the trainings. The mini-grant is intended to cover overhead costs for the trainings, including staff time, and will be approximately \$1500 depending on how many sites are selected.

**To apply for the mini-grant, please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge, in no more than 2 pages:**

1. How would you rate the prevalence of “notario fraud” within your community? Does it appear to be increasing? How are you generally made aware of the problem?
2. How strong is the demand for legal services by victims in the community served by your site? What level of pro bono or low-cost assistance is currently available to assist them in holding notarios accountable and/or reopening their immigration cases?
3. Are you aware of any laws in your state that may be used to bring claims against notarios?
4. Has your organization previously trained pro bono attorneys to assist victims of notario fraud? What is your site’s current and/or prior experience with recruiting, training, and mentoring pro bono attorneys and coordinating case referrals (in any type of case)?
5. Each site is required to train approximately 30 pro bono attorneys, during either one or multiple trainings. Is there a sufficient pool of pro bono attorneys to train within your community? How many attorneys do you anticipate being able to recruit for trainings, and how many cases do you anticipate that you may place during the one-year period following the training(s)? How will you recruit volunteers?

The Commission will give priority to sites that establish a compelling need within their community for legal services to assist victims, and that also have a sufficient pool of pro bono attorney to train.

**Please submit your application and any questions to Erin Finsten at [e\\_finsten@hotmail.com](mailto:e_finsten@hotmail.com). Applications are due by Friday, March 28 and awards will be made by Friday, April 11.**