

for members



A Child Needs Your Help

Recently, four children under the age of eight found themselves without a mother or father. Their mother had abandoned them and their father just wasn't in the picture anymore. Someone needed to help. That "someone" came in several forms. One

was a couple that was willing to take the children into their home. The other was a volunteer lawyer who, through the financial support of the Arizona Bar Foundation and the efforts of the Volunteer Lawyers Program, helped clear the many legal roadblocks to allow the couple to adopt these four children.

Unfortunately, people in those difficult situations may not be able to get similar help in the future because of a growing crisis—a crisis you can help solve. For every case like the one of the abandoned children, there are 10 others who do not get the free civil legal assistance they need, because funding to the Arizona Bar Foundation is drying up.

The Arizona Bar Foundation, the charitable arm of the State Bar, is a non-profit organization that protects families throughout the state by funding programs that provide free legal services. It also helps plant seeds for the future through a strong education program, which teaches Arizona children about our laws, Constitution, and conflict resolution.

Donations from Arizona lawyers and money from your IOLTA accounts fund these two services. Unfortunately, revenue from both sources meet only a fraction of the need.

Due to a dramatic reduction in bank account interest rates, funding from IOLTA has dropped in half. In 1990, IOLTA accounts returned \$2.2 million in interest to the Arizona Bar Foundation. This year that amount has dropped to \$1.2 million, while the population of people we need to serve continues to grow. We are working to convince bankers to raise the interest rates. In the meantime, we are calling on you to renew your commitment to the state's largest charitable organization representing the legal profession.

Remarkably, fewer than 15 percent of Arizona lawyers have ever made a contribution to the Foundation. I urge you to help change that today by making a tax deductible donation to help give children a better education and families a helping hand. If you donate \$1,000 you will help fund free legal representation for at least five Arizona families. Or your \$1,000 can pay for the books, supplies and teacher training necessary for one classroom full of children to learn how our laws and justice system give them the freedoms they often take for granted.

In this season of giving, I ask that you help improve the image of attorneys by giving in a way only lawyers can. Because if *you* won't fund free legal services, who will? If *you* won't support law-related education for our children, who will?

For more information about our programs or how you can make your tax-deductible contribution, call Mollie Trivers at the Arizona Bar Foundation, (602) 340-7349 or e-mail her at mollie.trivers@staff.azbar.org. If *you* won't contact her, who will?

— Stuart Forsyth, Executive Director



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