

Betsy Davis Stone
December 2019

Health Law Fellow Board Report

Networking. The last three months have been packed with local, regional, and national networking opportunities. I received a scholarship to attend Community Catalyst's convening in Atlanta, which began with a meeting of advocates from the Southeast. A few weeks later, I returned to Atlanta for the Southeastern Public Benefits Technical Advisory Committee, a more informal gathering of public benefits advocates who discuss shared problems and potential solutions in their states. Just this week, I attended the National Health Law Program's annual conference in D.C. on a scholarship where I had a chance to engage with legal aid attorneys, advocates from unrestricted programs like KEJC, and national partners including the attorneys who made the 1115 waiver litigation in Kentucky a reality. And of course, I've continued making connections at home. For example, a few weeks ago, the social worker at Southland Christian Church's free medical clinic asked me to meet with her and tour their facility. That connection has already yielded at least one health insurance enrollment referral.

Policy Advocacy. In the lead up to the oral arguments in the 1115 waiver case, the Lexington Herald Leader and the Courier Journal published an [Op-Ed](#) I wrote about the inherent policy flaws in the waiver proposal. The State Journal in Frankfort and several other local newspapers published the piece after the arguments. Meanwhile, we're busy reviewing pre-filed bills, attending legislative committee meetings, and strategizing for the next legislative session starting in January.

Litigation. On October 11, 2019, I was in the D.C. Circuit Court for the oral arguments in the 1115 waiver case. We're all incredibly happy that the promising comments made by the panel have led other states with similar waivers to pause work requirement implementation. Again, I'm still working hard to build a caseload at home. In the past month, I've represented a mom trying to reinstate Medicaid benefits for her nonverbal autistic five-year-old. We got her fair hearing continued after the Cabinet agreed to do a new application using the appropriate income and resource measures for a disabled child. The research and work from that case helped me advise a dad of a disabled child in a similar predicament, and they've led to productive conversations in the legal aid community about the need for better public benefits notices. We also received a favorable result in a Marketplace appeal case that Miranda referred to me several months ago. In the course of that case, we got two immigrant children enrolled in Medicaid and a mom back on a Marketplace plan with the subsidies she was entitled to.

Community Education. In the past quarter, KEJC and a private consumer attorney hosted an all-day Consumer Law Crash Course for legal aid attorneys. I taught a session about debt collection defense with a focus on Fair Debt Collection Practices Act counterclaims. Next week, I'll be teaching a bankruptcy training for legal aid attorneys with Nick Maraman from LAS, and we're

continuing to train legal aid attorneys and learn ourselves at our Health and Public Benefit Task Force meetings. I've recently been asked to talk about healthcare advocacy at a Global Health course for UK Medical School students.

Enrollment. We're in the last two weeks of open enrollment for the federal Marketplace and managed care for Medicaid patients. We continue to receive calls for enrollment assistance, and we'll be advocating for a return to the kynect enrollment platform with the new governor's administration.