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October 20, 2020

# S.C. law students, state bar team up for pro bono virtual legal blitz

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There won't be any homemade cookies or snacks this time, but that won't dampen the enthusiasm of the law school students and veteran lawyers who will team up on Oct. 30 for the [Virtual Friday Blitz](#) that provides South Carolina residents with free legal help.

The Virtual Blitz, sponsored by the [University of South Carolina School of Law Pro Bono Program](#) and the [South Carolina Bar Association](#), is part of the American Bar Association's annual Pro Bono Week Celebration, Oct. 25-31. This year's theme is "Rising to Meet the Challenge: Pro Bono Responds to COVID-19."

The [National Celebration of Pro Bono](#) was launched in 2009 in response to the increasing need for pro bono services during harsh economic times. Every October, legal organizations across the country participate in events to draw attention to the need for pro bono participation and to say thanks to those who give their time year-round. The celebration has grown from 600 events in 2009 to 1,631 in 2019.

South Carolina's three-hour Virtual Friday Blitz began seven years ago and is usually an in-person event. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is being held virtually. "We did a couple of these this summer and about the only thing missing are the cookies and snacks that I made for the students and lawyers," said Pamela Robinson, director of the pro bono program at the South Carolina School of Law. "We've had great success with our program, which we started as a way of putting students together with lawyers."

According to Robinson, about 30 students and lawyers will be paired in teams of two to answer client questions posted on [SC.FreeLegalAnswers.org](#). "We try and pair up the students with lawyers according to their practice as best we can," Robinson said. Users generally post about 150 civil legal questions, which will be answered by the volunteer lawyers and law students. (No criminal law questions will be answered.)

Robinson said that over the years she's found that the veteran lawyers really enjoy working with the students. "There is a little law professor in every lawyer," Robinson said. "And they kind of like those teaching moments with the students."

The law students will also use their time with the veteran lawyers to draft model answers to frequently asked questions that can be accessed on the website.

Going virtual with the law clinics has been a bonus, Robinson said, and will continue even after the in-person clinics return. "Virtual has really been interesting and we have participation from all over the state whereas before it's been the immediate Columbia area [where the school is located]. I'll admit [virtual] is more cumbersome and it doesn't have that same feel as when we are together in a room, but it works."

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