



**Vol. 125 - December 4, 2013**

Hello JUST News Readers,

This edition brings an update on the successful Ramsey County LawHelp site, the announcement of a federal citizenship grant for SMRLS, and an Immigration/SSI case note from LSNM.

Don't forget to send us your program announcements, news, case notes, press releases, event info, etc. You can send your submissions to [statesupport@mnlegalservices.org](mailto:statesupport@mnlegalservices.org).

## Legal Aid/Library Collaboration Offers Resources for Ramsey County Residents



*by Sara Galligan, Director, Ramsey County Law Library*

If you're looking for a place to refer people for background information and self-help resources, [RamseyCounty-LawHelp.org](http://RamseyCounty-LawHelp.org) is an easy-to-use website for Ramsey County residents that provides critical legal information and referrals on a range of civil legal matters. Visitors to the website can find help in a wide range of legal areas, including immigration, housing and family law (including divorce, custody and abuse). Other legal topics covered include elder law, taxes, consumer law, public benefits, discrimination and disability law.

Visitors can fill out court forms, create demand letters, review fact sheets, and find out about upcoming clinics at their local libraries. The site also creates quick access to the hundreds of resources at LawHelpMN.org, a source of legal materials for low-income Minnesotans, including resources in Spanish, Hmong, Somali and nine other languages.

"We are excited to offer Ramsey County LawHelp to our patrons. It provides amazing self-help legal resources that are local, current and comprehensive," said Susan Nemitz, Director of Ramsey County Library. "This website provides residents with the tools they need to understand and address what can be very complicated and frightening legal problems."

[RamseyCountyLawHelp.org](http://RamseyCountyLawHelp.org) was created with funding from the

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### LSC Awards Nearly \$3.4 Million in Technology Grants

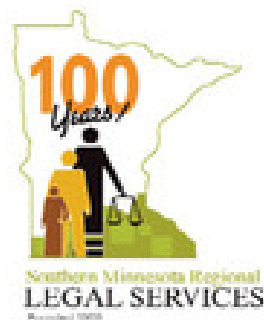
Last month, the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) released a list of 33 projects nationwide that will receive Technology Initiative Grants (TIG) funding in 2013.

The grants will support a variety of initiatives, including "legal triage" tools to guide self-represented individuals through complex legal procedures, online support for pro bono

Legal Services Corporation, and is a collaboration between legal aid programs, libraries, and Pro Bono Net. Legal aid partners include Central Minnesota Legal Services and Legal Services State Support, a project of the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition. Library partners include Ramsey County Library, Ramsey County Law Library and Saint Paul Public Library.

## SMRLS Awarded Federal Citizenship Grant

### Grant Partner Rochester Public Schools to Help with Citizenship Test Preparation



Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS) was recently awarded a federal citizenship grant from US Citizenship and Immigration Services to increase naturalization services in 11 counties in southeastern Minnesota. The grant started October 1st and runs for two years. SMRLS' grant partner, Rochester Public

Schools Adult and Family Literacy Program, will provide citizenship class instruction to prepare students for the citizenship test.

SMRLS will screen and file naturalization applications for at least 200 applicants during the grant period. SMRLS welcomes new staff attorney Rachel Kohler, housed in the SMRLS Rochester office, to handle the naturalization cases under this grant.

## SSI Benefits for Special Immigrant Visa (SQ) Holders



### A Case Note from Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota

Our client and her husband are Iraqi nationals. Her husband worked as an interpreter for the

U.S. Military in Iraq. In 2010, our client and her husband were allowed entry into the U.S. through Special Immigrant Visas (SQ). She applied for SSI in May of 2012 and was denied because she was not an "eligible alien." She did not appeal that denial. She contacted our office for help in submitting a new SSI application.

In researching SQ immigration status, it appeared her status should not bar her from SSI eligibility as SQs are treated as refugees for SSI purposes. The Fargo Social Security Field Office informed me she is not eligible for SSI according to the provisions of POMS SI 00502.109 that limits Special Immigrants to eight months of benefits. After our phone conversation, I tried to locate POMS SI 00502.109, but it was no longer in the

attorneys, and improved access to legal assistance for people in remote areas. Look for info about Minnesota's TIG projects in upcoming editions. Until then, click the image below to see technology initiatives in other states.



## State Support Tech Tips

### Recovering Unsaved Files

Click on the icon below to view this issue's recorded presentation.

As always, check with your IT department prior to software download.

Have tech ideas or questions? Submit them [here](#) for future tech tips.



POMS Table of Contents. However, I did locate Social Security Emergency Message (EM-10023), dated March 23, 2010, stating that POMS SI 00502.109 is obsolete and "would be updated in the coming weeks to reflect the new policy." EM-10023 stated that on December 19, 2009, the President signed the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2010, P.L. 111-118, making Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants eligible for SSI and other federal benefits to the same extent, and for the same period, as refugees. Prior to this law, they were limited to SSI benefits for up to eight months only.

I have requested the Fargo Social Security field office to process her new SSI application, to reopen her May 2012 application, and to inquire into when the POMS section would be updated so that claims representatives are not mistakenly denying claims. Contact: Sherry Gruenhagen at [sgruenhagen@LSNMLaw.org](mailto:sgruenhagen@LSNMLaw.org).

[Please Give to State Support](#)



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