

NM LAP Milestones



1987

- Jim Finnion, Tom Talbot and Chris Lucero raise concerns about alcohol-related issues in the legal community to Briggs Cheney.
- The four attorneys present their concerns to the members of the New Mexico Board of Bar Commissioners, receiving a favorable response.
- The New Mexico Board of Bar Commissioners invites Lawyer Assistance Programs from Florida, Texas and Washington State to address the issue.

1988

- Establishment of the New Mexico Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (NM LCL).
- Steve Anderson is engaged by NM LCL to implement a helpline and counseling services.
- Initiation of weekly attorney support group meetings by NM LCL.

1991

- Appointment of Ms. Jill Yeagley, Director of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, as a part-time manager for NM LCL.
- Commencement of educational engagements for bar members by the NM LCL.
- Per the amendment of Rule 16-803, the NM LCL now includes reporting obligations regarding impaired attorneys.

1994

- Introduction of a diversion program by NM LCL, modeled after the Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP), to address disciplinary issues related to substance use.
- Expansion of NM LCL focus to include law students.

2001

- The International Lawyers in Alcoholics Anonymous (ILAA) conference traditionally convenes directly after the annual assembly of the Commission on Lawyer Assistance Program (CoLAP). In 2001, the event was hosted in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Thanks to the collaborative endeavors spearheaded by Briggs Cheney, William Stratvert, and numerous committed members of the New Mexico Lawyers Concerned For Lawyers (NM LCL), meticulous preparations were made to facilitate a seamless assembly for the ILAA meeting in Albuquerque.

2005

- Supreme Court Justice Edward L. Chavez approaches Jill Yeagley about including judges into the program's focus.
- The NM LCL transitions the longstanding Monday evening support group meeting, which had been convened since the late 1980s in downtown church basements, to the premises of the UNM School of Law - an event of huge significance. Initially, there was apprehension regarding the visibility of the attendees in a public setting, particularly within the esteemed environment of the law school. However, the presence of Professor David Stout, a prominent figure on the law school faculty who was not anonymous, played a pivotal role in dispelling such concerns. Professor Stout actively encouraged law students to participate, and individuals like Rick Cravens were notable examples of students who availed themselves of this opportunity.

2007

- Supreme Court rules in using a portion of the NM Disciplinary Board's budget to further fund the program.
- "NM LCL" changes to the "New Mexico Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program (NM LJAP)."

2017

- Audit conducted by the American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) in New Mexico prompts the formation of a steering committee to facilitate program growth.
- Appointment of Pamela Moore as the Full-Time Program Manager. Position grows to Director within two months.
- The program rebrands and becomes the "New Mexico Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program (NM JLAP)."

2018

- NM JLAP contracts with The Solutions Group to offer a statewide Employee Assistance Program, free of charge to every NM legal professional.
- NM Supreme Court Justice Edward Chavez approached Pamela Moore about starting Judicial Roundtables for state judges at all levels.
- Justice Edward Chavez and Pamela Moore record a Mock Roundtable session and present it to the 2018 Judicial Conclave.
- NM JLAP becomes a program of 2 full-time SBNM individuals with the hiring of a Clinical Coordinator.

2019

- NM JLAP works with SBNM Executive Director and Board of Bar Commissioners to start the New Mexico Well-Being Committee. The first meeting with all stakeholders was in January 2020.
- NM JLAP starts offering a Mocktail Bar at legal events.
- NM Lawyer publication centers on wellbeing with the heavy lift of content coming from the NM JLAP.
- NM JLAP hires Tenessa Eakins as its new Clinical Coordinator. By 2023, Ms. Eakins transitions into the role of Case Manager for the NM JLAP.

2020

- The inception of the Judicial Wellness Program and its associated subcommittees stems from the NM Well-Being Committee's initiatives. This program spearheads an annual wellness campaign, generating monthly articles for judges and podcast episodes.
- The materials, featuring insights from esteemed local and national experts, are also disseminated under the banner of "Legal Well Being in Action," the podcast of the NM Well-Being Committee and the NM LAP that has garnered global listenership.
- Monday Night Attorney Support Group Meeting moves to weekly online meetings.

2022

- NM LAP Director, Pamela Moore, wins first Well-Being in Excellence award.
- Renaming of the program to the "New Mexico Lawyer Assistance Program (NM LAP)."
- Recruitment of Retired Judge Sandra Engel as the manager of NM Judicial Wellness Program.

2023

- NM LAP is a part of statewide Professional Programs Group Roadshow presentations.
- NM LAP meticulously documents its legacy through the NM LAP Legacy Project, an initiative aimed at preserving and presenting the comprehensive history of the program.



State Bar of New Mexico
Lawyer Assistance Program