

TOM CANNON, LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE INC.

Cannon on target with Legal Aid

When it comes to a comprehensive knowledge of the Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee, attorney Tom Cannon wrote the book – literally.

The organization's executive director spent the last four-plus years researching and writing a history of the century-old legal service provider.

"It's truly a labor of love," he said of the book which is set to be published later this year.

While the author examines Legal Aid's infancy in 1910 and subsequent formalization in 1916, Cannon also had plenty to write about in the last year.

He and other staff members spearheaded an initiative to provide homeowner relief through the Milwaukee Foreclosure Mediation program launched last summer.

"Each case is unique and

some people are between jobs and just need a break of 60 or 90 days," Cannon said. "We've been able to make mediation available in those cases and that's an essential first step to get mortgage lenders talking to homeowners to see if some resolution can be worked out."

With the recession still taking its toll, Cannon said the program has taken off and he expects Legal Aid lawyers working on the foreclosure crisis will be busy well into 2010.

In addition, Cannon said Legal Aid is about to debut a program which will provide free legal services to low-income families of kids being treated at Children's Hospital.

He said often a parent's job loss, pending eviction or other financial pressures facing a family, can have an adverse effect on a child's health.

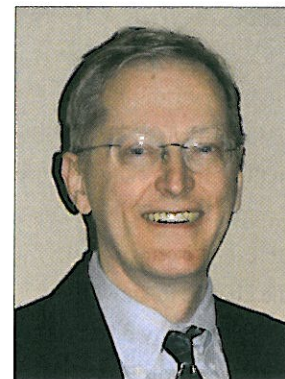
"People tend to think of those as grown-up problems," Cannon said. "But data shows when you provide legal service to a family with sick children, their health often improves dramatically."

When Cannon was lured out of retirement to serve a second time as Legal Aid's executive director, he expected and welcomed the challenge.

And after almost 15 years with the organization, Cannon has left his mark on more than a few clients.

But when asked to describe his place in the history of Legal Aid, true to form, Cannon notes that he is just one in a long line of people who contributed to the mission of the organization.

"One thing I see when looking over the long history is how many people



Education:

University of Wisconsin Law School J.D., 1971

Employment:

Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee Inc. (1977-81, 2005-present)

Affiliations:

President, Wisconsin Coalition Against the Death Penalty; Past president, Hunger Task Force; Past president, Irish Genealogical Society; Life member, Third Marine Division Association

came together at crucial periods to save Legal Aid and keep it going," he said.

— Jack Zemlicka