

## Welcome to Access to Justice Conference

### Access to Justice: Civil Law Meets Social Work in Cases of Elder Financial Abuse

Elder victims of financial abuse are under-served in terms of civil legal remedies. Attorneys often do not take these overwhelming and complex cases largely due to the lack of specialized training in this area. Social workers have little exposure to civil legal remedies and sometimes miss opportunities to make good referrals to civil attorneys. Our goal is to cross-educate members of these two professions to foster better and more frequent referrals from social workers to civil attorneys and empower civil attorneys with better information about how to collaborate with other professionals - particularly social workers for better case outcomes. Working together we can increase access to justice for victims of elder financial abuse.

#### Agenda

- 11:30-Noon** Registration and lunch selection
- Noon-12:30** Welcome: Opening Comments by Talitha Guinn; Keynote Introduction by Steve Riess
- 12:30-1:15** Keynote Address by Judge Joyce Cram
- 1:15-1:30** Break
- 1:30-3:30** Concurrent Breakout Sessions
- Session A
    - Law School for Social Workers – led by Steve Riess, Esq., and Jill Nielsen, MSW
      - When is a civil referral appropriate?
      - What makes a good civil legal case?
      - Case studies
      - Resources
  - Session B
    - Social Work for Civil Attorneys – led by: Prescott Cole, Esq., and Shawna Reeves, MSW
      - How can a social work perspective serve you and your clients and assist in making a better legal case?
      - When to recommend that your client contact social services?
      - Case study
      - Resources
- 3:30-3:45** Break
- 3:45-4:45** Panel Discussion – Local Civil Legal Resources
- 4:45-5:00** Q&A and wrap up/Thank You

#### Conference Information

October 30, 2013 Noon - 5pm

Institute on Aging  
Weinberg Auditorium  
3575 Geary Blvd.  
San Francisco, CA 94118

#### Continuing Education:

4.5 CE credits offered BRN, BBS, MCLE credits.

California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS): Course meets the qualifications for 4.5 hours of continuing education credit for MFTs and/or LCSWs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (Provider #: PCE 2079)

California Board of Registered Nursing (BRN): Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number CEP 13610 for 4.5 contact hours.

Institute on Aging is a State Bar of California approved MCLE provider.

Questions?

[education@ioaging.org](mailto:education@ioaging.org) or  
415.750.4172

#### Thank You:

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View Conference Materials On-line:

<http://www.ioaging.org/education-training-and-expert-speakers/access-to-justice-conference>

## Speaker Bios



Keynote Speaker - Hon. Joyce Cram, Contra Costa County Superior Court

Joyce Cram received her undergraduate degree at UC Santa Barbara and her JD at The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. Her practice was in civil litigation. After 16 years with her firm, she left to accompany her husband to Europe. She lived for 2 years in Frankfurt Germany, where she was a substitute high school teacher. Upon her return in 1994, she opened a private mediation practice, and in 1998 she was appointed to the bench. During her 13+ year tenure with the court, Judge Cram has handled virtually every assignment, including Misdemeanor and Felony Trials, Criminal Calendar, and Unlimited and Limited Jurisdiction Civil. She is currently handling a family law calendar and presides over Elder Court. Elder Court is a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary court that addresses all cases involving a senior citizen who

is the victim of physical, financial or emotional abuse. It was awarded the prestigious Ralph N. Kleps Award for innovation in the courts. The Elder Court model developed by Judge Cram and the Contra Costa County Superior Court is spreading throughout the state and nationwide. Judge Cram teaches other judges in such topics as Ethics and Fairness, Probate Conservatorships and Elder Abuse. She is a member of the American Inns of Court, and she teaches continuing legal education to lawyers. She loves gardening, cooking and hiking and is a volunteer at the Lindsay Wildlife Hospital.



Prescott Cole has been a staff attorney for California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR) for the past eighteen years. In his role as Senior Staff Attorney at CANHR, Mr. Cole counsels consumers and family members who have questions about elder law and long term care. He assists in the development and implementation of CANHR's various training programs and provides continuing education to law enforcement agencies, legal services programs, private bar attorneys, long term care ombudsman, and consumers. He received the 2003 Alumnus of the Year award from John F. Kennedy

University Law School, has testified before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging about financial elder abuse, and received the 2010 Elder Law Attorney of the Year Award from California Lawyer Magazine. In 2013, Governor Jerry Brown has appointed CANHR Senior Staff Attorney Prescott Cole to the California Professional Fiduciaries Advisory Committee. Prescott Cole has written several successful pieces of legislation and is a passionate advocate for senior consumer protections.



Shawna Reeves is an elder financial abuse expert and on-call social worker at SteppingStone Adult Day Healthcare in San Francisco. Previously, she was long term care advocate at California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform and director of financial education and advocacy at Council on Aging Silicon Valley. For the past eight years, Shawna has helped seniors fight back against financial predators. She has presented on predatory lending and investment scams throughout the country and engaged in legislative advocacy at the local, state and national levels. Shawna lead-authored an article on financial abuse prevention strategies that appeared in the Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect, co-authored "Examining Faulty Foundations in Today's Reverse Mortgages" with Consumers Union and California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, and

was featured in a Journal of Progressive Human Services article titled "Social Work in the Campaign Against Predatory Consumer Financing: An Interview with Shawna Reeves." Shawna's current interests include blocking financial predators from senior centers and working with traditional and alternative media to raise awareness of elder financial abuse. Shawna taught social welfare policy analysis at San Jose State University's Master of Social Work Program and currently advises social work students at Smith College. She received her bachelor's degree in political science from Santa Clara University and her master's degree in social work from Smith College. Shawna received the Service Recognition Award at the Legal Assistance for Seniors Annual Elder Abuse Conference in 2010.



Steven Riess is a San Francisco attorney whose practice is limited to representing elders in financial abuse matters, with a particular emphasis on abusive annuity sales. In 2007, he wrote Senate Bill 611, which extended the provisional remedy of attachment to victims of elder financial abuse. In 2008, he proposed and drafted Senate Bill 1140, a major revision of the financial abuse statutes, which expanded the reach of financial abuse so that its remedies are available to those exploited through undue influence or who lack capacity. He also wrote Senate Bill 1136, which revised the Consumers Legal Remedies Act to include exploitative sales of Medi-Cal pre-qualifications services. He was awarded the 2009 Sentinel Award for lifetime achievement by the Elder Financial Protection Network. He has taught at various law schools in California and in Germany and spent a year as a visiting

scholar at Boalt Hall. He is the author of several law textbooks, one of which has been published in Germany and a second as a bilingual text in the People's Republic of China.