

## Film Showing *and* Speaker Availability

# PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

### Guardianship Reform – Access to Justice – Supported Decision-Making

**WHAT:** State guardianship and conservatorship systems are often abusive and intrusive.

**WHO:** More than 1.5 million Americans are under an order of guardianship or conservatorship. This includes seniors in cognitive decline, young and middle-aged adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and adults of all ages with mental disabilities due to accidents or illnesses.

**WHY:** Greater public awareness is needed in order to stimulate political action and legal reform. Tens of thousands of Americans who have petitions filed against them each year are being unfairly stripped of their civil rights and/or their financial assets. This film and this speaker will encourage more people to become involved in guardianship reform efforts in every state – seeking legislative reform, judicial education, federal oversight and intervention, and a growing demand for safe and legal alternatives to guardianship, such as supported decision making.

**HOW:** State guardianship and conservatorship systems are currently controlled by the judicial branch of government. Legislative oversight is lacking. The executive branch is absent. Although these proceedings adversely affect federal constitutional and statutory rights, including rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, federal intervention does not occur. This film illustrates and this speaker explains how advocates in each state can insist that state and federal officials reform these dysfunctional guardianship and conservatorship systems.

**WHEN:** Invite the speaker and show the 36-minute film at your event, whether it is a meeting of your staff or board of directors, an educational forum, a conference, a seminar, a college or university class, a training of attorneys or judges, or any other venue focusing on guardianship reform or supported decision-making. The event begins with a short introduction of the speaker and the topic, followed by a showing of the film, and ending with a question and answer session. The film and discussion can

occur in a one-hour time slot, although a longer period of 90 minutes or more would be optimal. The speaker will provide a handout specifically identifying steps that can be taken by you or your organization to improve guardianship proceedings in your state and how less restrictive alternatives may make guardianships unnecessary.

*Pursuit of Justice* is a documentary film tracking the advocacy of attorney Thomas F. Coleman, Dr. Nora J.

Baladerian, and a network of supporters promoting the rights of people with disabilities and seniors in state guardianship and conservatorship proceedings. Film locations include courthouses, legislative bodies, offices of the U.S. Department of Justice, and the halls of Congress. The film discusses and portrays people with cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, locked-in syndrome, and other conditions affecting cognitive and communication capabilities.

*Contact us to schedule Thomas F. Coleman as a speaker and a showing of the film at your event.*

**Spectrum Institute • (818) 230-5156**  
**[www.pursuitofjusticefilm.com](http://www.pursuitofjusticefilm.com)**

