



BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT OF DEBRA A. BOOKOUT

Debra Bookout is the Directing Attorney of Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's Guardianship Advocacy Project, a project which guarantees the right to counsel to any person facing guardianship in our community. The vision behind the project is to ensure that guardianship is not wrongly imposed and that the least restrictive alternative to guardianship is explored so as to maximize the independence and legal rights of those facing guardianship. Debra began her work with Legal Aid Center in 2013, representing individuals who were wrongly trapped in guardianship. She served on the *Commission to Study the Creation and Administration of Guardianships in Nevada's Courts* from July 2015 through September 2016 which was created to examine abuses in the State's guardianship process. Out of that study committee came the recommendation of a right to counsel. Debra then helped grow Legal Aid Center's Guardianship Advocacy Project to one which accepted a couple of cases to one now representing over 3,500 individuals, including minor children, while still providing vigorous advocacy. The model of representation she created was recently featured [here](#).

Prior to coming to Legal Aid Center, Debra worked at the Federal Public Defender's Office in Las Vegas representing indigent petitioners in federal habeas corpus proceedings. She appeared in both state and federal courts on various habeas matters and argued before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on numerous occasions. Before moving to Las Vegas, Debra was an Assistant Public Defender in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where she worked in the Appellate Division for six years, obtaining relief for many of her clients, and the Trial Division for five years, litigating over 45 jury trials.

Debra earned a Bachelor's degree from The University of Houston in 1986 and received her Juris Doctor from The University of Texas School of Law in 1992.