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Woodland Legal Services offers free aid to those in debt

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Legal Services of Northern California's Yolo County office, with support from the Superior Court of California, and Yolo County officials, is opening a Consumer Assistance Project at the Court's Self-Help Center.

The center is located at 1100 Main St., and the project is funded by an Equal Access Fund-Partnership Grant from the State Bar of California.

The Consumer Assistance Project seeks to empower low income persons in financial crisis to work out solutions to their legal problems.

The idea for the project, the first of its kind in Yolo County, stems from the recent downturn in the economy, which has had a disproportionate effect on low income persons.

Medical care is a significant cost for low income families in Yolo County.

Rents also continue to rise throughout the County, leaving low income persons with significantly less income for other necessary expenses.

The unemployment rate in the County as of February of 2010 was 14.6 percent, 3 percent higher than the year before and higher than the average for the state.

Through free weekly private consultations scheduled by appointment, the Consumer Assistance Project informs low income consumers their legal rights, prepares them to represent themselves in Court, and provides them with options for resolving their legal problems before trial.

Support from the Superior Court includes the donation of space, equipment, and staff supervision.

"We are excited to have an opportunity to

collaborate with Legal Services of Northern California to provide much needed consumer advice to Yolo County's low-income consumers," said David Rosenberg, presiding judge of the Yolo County Superior Court.

To schedule an appointment or find out more about the Consumer Assistance Project, contact Legal Services of Northern California at 662-1065 or woodland-office@lsnc.net.