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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



J. Benjamin Stevens
AAML President

Dear Fellows:

As the heat of summer begins to give way to the crisp air of autumn, I hope this message finds you and your loved ones in good spirits. The changing of seasons brings with it a sense of renewal and fresh beginnings, much like the start of a new school year for many of our children and grandchildren.

As you are aware, registration is now open for our Annual Meeting. This year promises to

development, networking and camaraderie with your colleagues from across the nation. Our keynote speakers Amy Herman, Rachel Louise Snyder and Dean Leonard Baynes — and other speakers — will deliver thought-provoking presentations. Register early to secure your spot for this year's meeting.

I want to congratulate our sister organization, the AAML Foundation, for another successful Billable Hour Campaign. We are proud of the Foundation's tireless efforts to support initiatives related to children and families. If you have not yet made your donation to this year's Billable Hour Campaign, I hope that you will join me in doing so, as these donations can make a significant impact in the lives of those the Foundation serves.

In closing, I want to express my deep appreciation for the dedication and expertise each of you brings to our profession. Your commitment to excellence and justice in family law is what makes the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers a beacon in our field. I look forward to seeing you at one of my upcoming Chapter visits or at the Annual Meeting in Chicago.

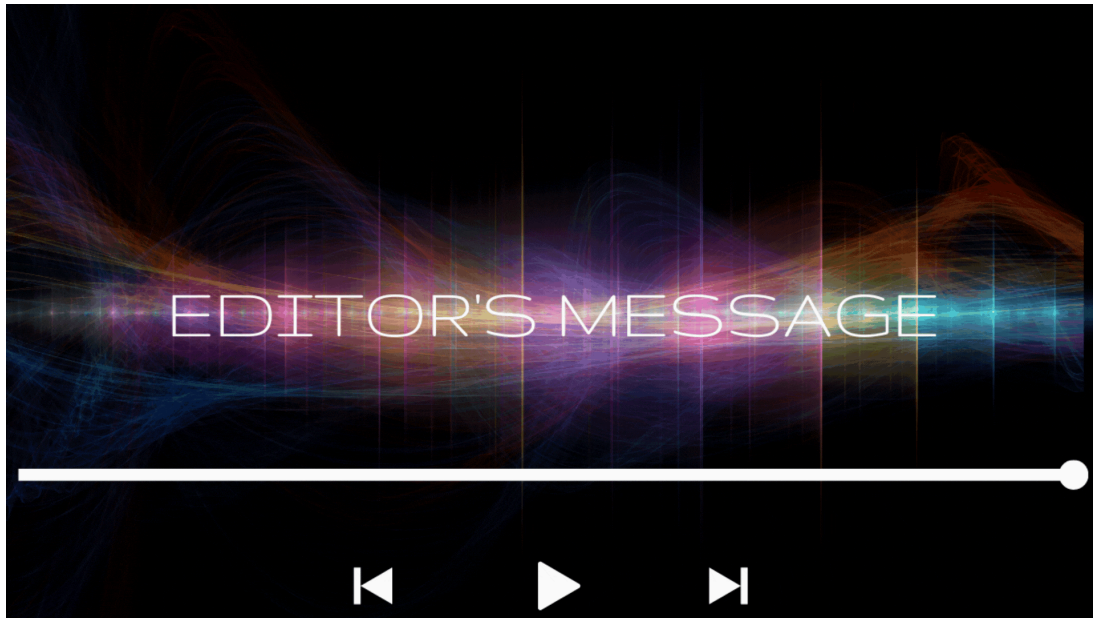
Warm regards,

Ben Stevens

AAML President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ben Stevens'.

be an invaluable
opportunity for
professional



[CLICK HERE](#) or above to play a message
from Newsletter Editor [Rod Firoozye](#)



THE EDITOR'S NOTE – September 2024

By [Rod Firoozye](#), AAML Newsletter Editor

Labor Day often marks the unofficial end of summer. For those of us with children returning to school, this time of year may bring the dual challenge of supporting their school activities while also maintaining our commitments to our clients. With that in mind, September is an ideal time to focus on support orders and enforcement.

This month, we are featuring an interview with former AAML Newsletter Editor, Natalia Wilson, conducted by our Fellow, Lisa Ann Sharpe, JD. We extend our gratitude to Wilson for sharing her expertise in this area and to Sharpe for her continued outstanding work.

I'd like to thank all the Fellows who contributed articles and for your ongoing support of the AAML Newsletter.

This Month's Videos and Webinars:

- Natalia Wilson Interview: The Price of Fame — Lessons from Celebrity Child Support in Divorce.
- Please view our [previous webinars](#).

This Month's Articles:

- Joseph W. Booth Article: Enforcement of International Support Orders Under UIFSA
- Jim Vedder Article: The Intersection of Spousal Maintenance/Alimony and Property Payments
- Mark E. Sullivan Article: Getting Family Support in the Military Case
- Lisa Ann Sharpe Interview with Natalia Wilson Transcript
- AAML Foundation Update



UPCOMING NATIONAL EVENTS/MEETINGS

[2024 AAML Annual Meeting](#)

November 6-9 | Chicago, IL

[2025 AAML Midyear Meeting](#)

March 11-14 | Guanacaste, Costa Rica

[Click to View More](#)



Discover What's In Store At the 2024 AAML Annual Meeting

Have you registered for the [2024 AAML Annual Meeting](#) taking place Nov. 6-9? A tradition dating back to AAML's conception in the 1960s, the AAML Annual Meeting is a place where family lawyers across the nation congregate to enjoy scholarly CLE and the best of Chicago's food, sights and social activities.

Interested in learning more about CLE offerings or getting to know this year's Annual Meeting speakers? Find these details and more [on the AAML website](#).

REGISTER TODAY



Save the Date: 2025 AAML Midyear Meeting in Costa Rica

Blend practice management with personal relaxation at the AAML Midyear Meeting, March 11-14, 2025!

This event takes place in a laid-back meeting environment and offers a balance of CLE sessions and leisure to recharge. Investing in yourself, your firm and your people will push the boundaries of expertise you provide to your clients. Save the date for an unforgettable event filled with learning, relaxation and family fun.

[VIEW THE SCHEDULE](#)



GUEST INTERVIEW: THE PRICE OF FAME — LESSONS FROM CELEBRITY CHILD SUPPORT IN DIVORCE

Lisa Ann Sharpe, JD, interview with Natalia Wilson



Enforcement of International Support Orders Under UIFSA

By [Joseph W. Booth](#),
Div., JD, AAML

The Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) plays a crucial role in the enforcement of international child support orders in the United States. This act allows foreign countries with similar support laws to be treated as "states" within the U.S. legal system, enabling the enforcement of foreign support orders as if they were domestic. Many attorneys are unfamiliar with the difference between a "premise of value" and a "standard of value."

Before 2008, enforcing foreign support orders was limited to specific agreements with the Secretary of State, individual states, or through comity. The U.S.

To address this, the U.S. signed the Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support in 2007. Unlike other treaties, this Convention required implementation through state law rather than federal law, due to the historical precedent of UIFSA's adoption by states.

UIFSA provides a mechanism for enforcing international support orders by treating foreign countries as "states" if their laws are similar to UIFSA. Once registered in a U.S. state, a foreign support order can be enforced as a domestic order. However, the non-registering party can contest the registration on limited grounds, such as lack of personal jurisdiction. Courts have generally ruled that actions like participating in genetic testing or seeking court relief can waive personal jurisdiction challenges. When modifying a

ensuring that new obligations do not conflict with the original order.

UIFSA was amended in 2008 to incorporate the Hague Convention. These amendments were carefully crafted to integrate the Convention's provisions into the existing statutory framework without altering UIFSA's core principles. The amendments expanded UIFSA to address foreign support orders, treating them similarly to orders issued by U.S. states. The process of registering and enforcing foreign support orders involves submitting translated documents and currency conversions, with UIFSA offering two pathways: one for orders under the Hague Convention and another for those not under the Convention.

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Constitution's requirement for personal jurisdiction over the obligor posed challenges, as many countries base jurisdiction on the obligee or the child.

foreign support order, U.S. courts must apply the issuing country's laws regarding the availability of relief and the duration of support obligations,



The Intersection of Spousal Maintenance / Alimony and Property Payments

By [Jim Vedder](#)

In last month's newsletter I addressed the potential for a "double dip" on the valuation of a business and the setting of spousal maintenance/alimony when a Court uses the same stream of income to value a business and determine a maintenance/alimony payor's ability to pay spousal maintenance/alimony. A similar issue is how to structure a settlement when the payor has a property payment obligation and maintenance/alimony payment obligation. This issue arises frequently because typically the payor has to pay both amounts from the same stream of income.

In a number of cases where there is a sizeable property payment owing from one spouse to the

One way to address the issue of the issue of such a large payment that is to be over time when there is also a spousal maintenance/alimony obligation is to have the payor pay interest on the property payment in lieu of spousal maintenance/alimony. This may allow the payor to deduct the interest payments while the recipient will be taxed on the interest payments. If the payor is able to deduct the interest payments, it may allow her/him to provide a larger interest rate to the recipient and thereby reduce or eliminate their need for spousal maintenance/alimony.

Another option to address this issue is to have a property payment made over a period of time, but in lieu of interest on the award, have the payor pay the recipient spousal maintenance/alimony. This approach is likely tax disadvantageous given that the spousal maintenance/alimony payments are not tax deductible to the payor. However, it does give the payor spouse some protection from having the same stream of income used

A third option would be to limit the amount of income that is considered in the spousal maintenance/alimony analysis if it was already used in the valuation of the business to avoid the double dip. The financial expert will need to be careful to make sure that the differing streams of income are clearly defined and addressed in the cash flow schedules to make sure that everyone understands why certain levels of income are only being considered for the spousal maintenance/alimony award.

This can be a tricky issue and one that will require practitioners to be creative. The above are only a few potential solutions. Creativity on this issue will serve the clients best.

[**Read More.**](#)

other the payor spouse is given the opportunity to make the payments over a period of time (usually a number of years and the larger the amount owing the longer the time period to pay it).

to have to pay two different obligations.



Getting Family Support in the Military Case

By Mark E. Sullivan

When an attorney is meeting for the first time with a client about a family support case and the opposing party is an active-duty service member, it's important to know what questions to ask. When the client is the custodial parent or the support payee, here are some of the appropriate questions, as well as a list of the documents to request.

Questions to Ask the Client

At the initial meeting regarding obtaining support from an active-duty service member (SM), use this list of questions (modified as necessary) as your guide:

1. Has there been a paternity determination? If so, give details (e.g., court-ordered paternity testing,

2. Do you have a settlement or an order determining child support? If so, what is the date of the document? How much support was set? What are the other terms?

3. If the parties were married, when did they separate? When, if applicable, did they divorce? Where was the divorce or dissolution granted?

4. What is the pay grade or rank of the other party?

5. What is his Social Security Number?

6. What is his branch of service (e.g., Coast Guard, Navy)?

7. What is his full name?

8. What is his location (e.g., Naval Station Newport, Rhode

9. What is his unit (e.g., 1st Corps Support Command, or 30th Fighter Wing)? The more detailed this information is, the better. For example, instead of 1st Corps Support Command, it would be preferable to identify the other party's unit as "Company C, 32d Transportation Battalion, 1st Corps Support Command."

10. What support have you received? Do you have a written history of support payments (i.e., dates of payment, amounts paid)?

11. What attempts have you made to obtain support? Do you have any

admission in court documents, verified pleading, etc.)

Island, or Pope Army Airfield, North Carolina)?

evidence of those attempts?

[Read More.](#)



The Price of Fame: Lessons from Celebrity Child Support in Divorce

A discussion with [Lisa Sharpe](#), JD, and [Natalia Wilson](#)

The following article is a transcript of this issue's [guest interview](#).

Lisa Sharpe is a Principal with the law firm of Lasher Holzapfel Sperry & Ebberson. She is a Family Law practitioner, and her practice is focused on high-net-worth clients with complex financial and family law issues. She is also a member of AAML, and the President of the Washington State Chapter.

Natalia Wilson is a Principal with Ain & Bank, P.C. She is a family law attorney in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia where she manages complex financial landscapes involving business valuations, asset divisions, wealth preservation. She is also a member of AAML, and the President of the

Lisa Sharpe: Natalia, hello! I'm Lisa Sharpe. I'm an Academy member from Seattle, and I really appreciate you joining me today to discuss child support issues. Natalia is an Academy member based in Washington, DC. and has agreed to discuss the celebrity divorce and child support issues. Natalia, thanks for joining me today. I really appreciate it.

Natalia Wilson: Thanks so much, Lisa. I'm really excited to dive into this topic with you.

Celebrity cases are always fascinating, not just because of the big names, but because of the unique legal challenges they can present.

Lisa Sharpe: Thank you, Natalia. Let's start with the basics. How do courts approach child support when one of the parents is a high-income earner like a celebrity?

Natalia Wilson: That's a great question. When it comes to high income earners, the courts face the challenge of balancing the child's needs with the parents' extraordinary wealth and income.

While standard formulas typically apply to when the court is considering child support, it often gets adjusted in these cases to reflect the lifestyle the child is accustomed to during the marriage, and so the goal is to ensure that the child benefits from the wealth, but without excess that could be seen as unreasonable.

Lisa Sharpe: Natalia, speaking of challenges, how does the public nature of celebrity cases affect the proceedings, especially regarding privacy?

Natalia Wilson: Look, public scrutiny is a huge factor. Celebrity cases attract a lot of media attention which can put a lot of pressure on both of the parties, privacy concerns - they could become paramount, particularly when children are involved. The court often has to strike what we consider "a delicate balance" between the public's right to know about what's going on, and the family's right to privacy.

[Read More.](#)



Your Donations at Work

By the AAML
Foundation

We are delighted to share the following Grantee Profiles with you so that you can read how your billable hour donation dollars to the AAML Foundation are helping our grant recipients. Together we can make a difference across the country!

M.A.R.C.H. Inc., Liberty, Missouri

M.A.R.C.H. Inc. (Mediation Achieving Results for Children) provides free mediation, legal services and supervised visitation services for eligible families in the state.

This organization started in 1997 by providing free mediation and other legal services to divorced or never married parents involved in child support enforcement proceedings. It successfully helps these parents reach mediated custody and support agreements and enjoys a 70% total and partial success rate. In late 2022, the State of Missouri expanded this organization's contractual services to include providing free supervised visitation services to parents in the court system, including in dependency cases.

The organization applied to the AAML Foundation for a grant to assist in creating a program

to train new visitation supervisors and provide available supervisors for court order visitation (The Supervised Visitation Program and Policy Development project). The training program will identify the responsibilities and role of the visitation supervisor, including an understanding of why supervised visitation may be necessary, what a supervisor should be looking for, and how and when to terminate a visit — the primary goal always being the safety of the child. There are currently no supervised visitation standards in Missouri. Hopefully, this program will assist in defining these standards.

[Read More.](#)



Local Chapter News

AAML Kansas Chapter: Collaborative Family Law (CFL) Training

Date: Sept. 12-13
Location: Drury Plaza Hotel Broadview (400 W.

legal and mediation credits, and assistance will be provided for CPA credits.

All Kansas Fellows are invited to attend. Registration is required.

[Learn More.](#)

entertaining, Hot Tips features the latest trends in family practice!

Registration closes Thursday, Sept. 19.

[Learn more.](#)

Douglas Ave. Wichita,
KS)

Enhance your practice by becoming a collaborative divorce professional through an in-person, engaging learning opportunity.

This training meets the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals (IACP) standards and equips you with the skills to either initiate or refresh your collaborative practice and collaborative family law journey.

This training is typically approved for continuing

AAML South Carolina
Chapter: 2024 Family
Law Hot Tips Seminar

Date: Sept. 20

Location: SC Bar
Conference Center
(1501 Park St.,
Columbia, SC)

Family Law Hot Tips features updates on key substantive, procedural and evidentiary issues for the domestic practice attorney, as well as practical insights from distinguished members of the family and appellate courts. Always fast-paced, always practical and always



**AAML Journal Editorial Board Meets with Missouri of Kansas
City Law School Students**



The editorial board of the AAML Journal met with the student editors and Senior Editor Professor Mary Kay Kisthardt at the University of Missouri Kansas City Law School on Aug. 24, 2024. Agenda items included reporting on the status of upcoming journal issues (ADR, legal history and access to justice/technology) along with brainstorming topics and potential speakers for future issues.

The [AAML Journal](#) is considered the foremost academic journal in the country dedicated exclusively to family law related topics.



Editor:
[Rod Firoozye](#)



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