

Foundation

Michigan State Bar Foundation

News



Funding and Leadership for Justice Since 1947

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2006 ACCESS TO JUSTICE FUND GRANTS AWARDED

The Michigan State Bar Foundation has awarded the sixth round of grants totaling \$45,000 from the Access to Justice (ATJ) Fund. Since 2000, the Foundation has awarded over \$258,388 in ATJ Fund grants to 27 innovative projects that support civil legal aid for low-income persons in Michigan.

The Foundation's ATJ Fund receives donations from the ATJ Campaign, a fundraising effort established in 1997 as a partnership between the State Bar of Michigan, the Foundation and civil legal aid providers to increase resources for civil legal aid for the poor. The State Bar leads the ATJ Campaign which solicits both endowment and operations donations. The Foundation holds the ATJ Fund and receives, manages, and distributes the funds, including 2006 ATJ Fund project grants to:

- Support a law Fellow at the MSU College of Law Rental Housing Clinic to **provide low-income persons with education and legal assistance on housing issues** such as predatory loan scams, fraudulent leases or help accessing government home ownership programs for the poor;
- Support the configuration of **case management software to help legal aid programs track and manage pro bono cases** and provide other case management needs as recommended by the statewide Legal Services Computer Committee; and,
- Support the development and implementation of a **statewide legal assistance centers conference** as a forum for technical assistance and information-sharing for existing centers and to educate local bar associations and interested others about establishing a legal assistance center.

In 2006 to date, the Foundation also distributed an additional \$583,633 in ATJ Fund contributions earmarked by donors for operations for particular legal aid agencies. More than \$6 million in pledges and donations has been raised since the inception of the ATJ Campaign. Donations from lawyers and judges to the ATJ Fund are one method of satisfying the State Bar's voluntary pro bono standard.

For more information about ATJ Fund donations, visit www.atjfund.org or use the "Donate Now" button on the Foundation's website at www.msbf.org where you can also obtain information about the Foundation's various grants programs.

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