

Foundation

Michigan State Bar Foundation

News



Funding and Leadership for Justice Since 1947

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MICHIGAN STATE BAR FOUNDATION AWARDS TWENTY PROJECT GRANTS

The Michigan State Bar Foundation awarded more than \$1.3 million for 20 project grants to nonprofit organizations for law-related charitable activities. The Foundation was established in 1947 by Michigan judges and lawyers to help meet the legal profession's public service responsibilities. It funds programs to advance law-related education, peaceful conflict resolution and the delivery of civil legal services to the poor. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than 800 grants totaling over \$100 million.

Recent project grants included over \$1,000,000 for the following three-year grants for statewide strategies to improve civil legal aid to the poor in Michigan:

Community Legal Resources - statewide expansion of transactional legal services for nonprofit organizations and other services and to leverage other grants to sustain the expanded services;

Farmworker Legal Services - coordination of and support for a state network of immigration law programs and capacity-building for local legal aid agencies to serve poor immigrants' general legal needs;

Legal Services of Southcentral Michigan - funds to leverage other private and public grants for a statewide foreclosure prevention project in partnership with five legal aid programs around the state;

Michigan Legal Services - tax and mortgage foreclosure prevention project in Southeast MI; and

Michigan Poverty Law Program - expansion of the statewide legal aid PIKA case management software to additional providers and support for the statewide legal aid website;

Over \$300,000 in other law-related charitable project grants awarded by the Foundation include:

Collaborative Practice Institute of Michigan & Family Mediation Council - Michigan – for a symposium to explore how to integrate mediation and collaborative practice methods of dispute resolution;

Community Legal Resources - funds for an upgraded server and other technology enhancements to support expanded program services;

Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association – toward costs of the Wayne County Pro Bono Summit;

Elder Law of Michigan – develop and maintain an elder law web resource for use by legal aid programs and pro bono attorneys serving low-income seniors;

Gryphon Place – continue and enhance the peer mediation program for students in Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties;

Legal Aid and Defender Association – matching funds for an Equal Justice Works Fellow to provide mortgage and tax foreclosure assistance to low-income homeowners;

Legal Aid of Western Michigan – develop materials for Reentry Wiki and provide training for those working to help ex-offenders solve civil legal needs that are barriers to successful reentry into society;

Legal Resource Center of Berrien County - start-up funding for beginning a new legal self-help program;

Michigan Association of Drug Court Professionals – scholarships for those with limited funds to attend the drug court’s annual conference and to help update the MADCP website;

Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency – funding for the Gideon Day educational forum hosted by the Public Defender Task Force and the Campaign for Justice on innovative public defense reforms;

Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project – retain a fundraising firm to conduct a feasibility study and design a capital campaign for a building purchase;

Michigan State University School of Labor & Industrial Relations – develop employment law materials to provide online and other training for disabled persons and those who work with them;

Prison Legal Services – toward costs of closing the agency, disposing of or transferring cases files and meeting final accounting and corporate dissolution requirements;

Student Advocacy Center of Michigan – funds for an attorney to begin a pilot project to assist with civil legal needs of youth involved in the juvenile justice system; and

Sugar Law Center – produce a self-help legal guide on appealing denied unemployment claims.

For more information on the Foundation, grant deadlines, criteria and applications, please visit the Foundation website at www.msbf.org.