



WBAF
FOUNDATION

2018 - 2019

ANNUAL
REPORT

*Serving the legal
and related needs of
women and girls in the DC
metropolitan community*



Message from the President



This year, the WBA Foundation furthered its mission of leveraging the generosity of lawyers and friends to support nonprofits that serve the legal and related needs of women and girls in the DC Metropolitan community.

The Foundation continues to operate in compliance with its 2018 Strategic Plan in striving to become even more impactful and expanding our capacity to serve our charitable mission. We are excited about our path forward and grateful that you have supported us on our journey.

We kicked off our programming year in October, with our **16th Annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction**. The Wine Tasting is not only one of our signature events, but also our primary fundraiser for the Founders Fellowship. The fellowship rotates annually among the six DC-based law schools and provides a stipend to a law student to work at a local nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the Foundation's mission.

The 2019 Founders Fellow was **Alix Bruce**, a law student at American University Washington College of Law. Alix had a rewarding experience during their internship with Amara Legal Center, where they worked on matters to support sex trafficking victims.

During the 2018-2019 program year, the Foundation continued the expansion of its grants program, awarding \$70,000 in grants to eleven organizations. Together, these organizations provide an array of legal and related services to many of the most vulnerable members of our community, including children, working parents, and elderly individuals. Our grantees provide representation, counsel, and assistance to victims of domestic violence; seniors who benefit from DC Schedule H Tax Credit pro bono clinics; immigrants needing legal education and other services; sex-trafficking victims; and pregnant women and parents who need to assert their workplace rights.

We are extremely proud to be able to support this work, and proudly salute our 2019 grantees: **African Communities Together, Amara Legal Center, Bread for the City, DC KinCare Alliance, DC Volunteer Lawyers Project, First Shift Justice Project, The Human Trafficking Legal Center, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, The Network for Victim Recovery, and Tahirih Justice Center**. We encourage you to read more about these organizations, and the invaluable work they do in our community, on pages 5-8 of this report.

The Foundation recognized these organizations and their commitment to improving the lives and furthering the rights of women and girls at our **Tenth Annual Grants Award Ceremony**, held in March. Our audience interacted with grantee representatives and heard about the impactful work that each organization is doing in the community. Our keynote speaker for the evening, **The Honorable Theodore D. Chuang**, United States District Court for the District of Maryland, eloquently spoke about the importance of the work of legal services providers, and how that service impacts court cases.



We encourage each of you to join our efforts to improve the lives of women and girls in DC. Please consider the Women’s Bar Association Foundation as your vehicle to achieve your philanthropic goals in the greater Washington, DC region. The Foundation shares and reflects your values and interests in addressing the unique legal needs of underserved women and girls in our community. We thank you for your support throughout the 2018-2019 Foundation year and look forward to your continued support.

Bridget

2018-2019 President

“The Women’s Bar Association is critical to us! They were one of our very first funders. They get the work that we are doing—trying to keep working mothers in their jobs and make balancing work and family manageable.”

Laura Brown, Executive Director, First Shift Justice Project

“African Communities Together was founded to help African immigrants fight for civil rights. I enjoy seeing successful outcomes with helping immigrants from a culturally competent perspective.”

Hiwot Berihun, Legal Director, African Communities Together





WBAF Board of Directors, 2019 grantees, and Hon. Theodore D. Chuang

Grantmaking Program & Grantee Awards Ceremony

The WBA Foundation's grant process begins in the summer, with the release of a call for Letters of Inquiry (LOI). For the 2019 grant cycle, the Grants Committee received and reviewed 32 LOIs requesting a total of over \$282,000 in support.

Seventeen organizations were invited to submit a full grant application. Full proposals were reviewed and researched by the Grants Committee, which made a final recommendation to the full Board of Directors. The Board approved a total of \$70,000 in grants to 11 organizations (information about the projects funded can be found on pages 5-8). At the end of the grant year, grantees are required to submit a report of their activities conducted under the grant.

In March, the Foundation hosted its 10th Annual Grant Awards Ceremony. This event celebrates our grantees and brings together the Foundation's supporters and other members of the community to learn about the work of the year's grantees. U.S. District Judge **Theodore D. Chuang**, of the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, gave keynote remarks during the program.

The WBA Foundation is really important to DC KinCare Alliance. We're a small, newer organization and every bit of help really helps us to do our work everyday.

Marla Spindel, Founder, DC KinCare Alliance



Founders Fellowship

The WBA Foundation Founders Fellowship was established in 2006 and is awarded annually to one of the six law schools located in Washington, DC. The fellowship is used by the school to support a student who is pursuing a public interest summer internship to advance the legal interests of women and children. Proceeds from the Foundation’s Wine Tasting & Silent Auction event are used to fund the fellowship.

One of the most important things I learned from my work at Amara was how deeply trauma bonding can impact a person’s recovery from trauma.

The 2019 WBA Foundation Founders Fellowship, in the amount of \$7,500, was awarded to the American University Washington College of Law, which selected Alix Bruce as the 2019 recipient. Alix completed a summer internship at Amara Legal Center, an organization that defends the civil rights of people involved in commercial sex. In their personal essay about the experience, Alix described the opportunities afforded by the internship:

While it could be difficult ... it was also some of the most rewarding and impactful work I have ever had the chance to do.

The diversity in both the clientele and legal work gave me the chance to write victims’ advocacy memos on nonconsensual pornography, research and draft motions to close courtroom proceedings, research and analyze policy proposals in front of the DC Council, research and draft motions for civil protection orders, and attend multiple civil protection order hearings with clients. I also had the chance to attend sessions of HOPE Court, which is the diversion court in DC Superior’s Family Law court for minors who have been put into criminal proceedings for solicitation or prostitution offenses, among other offenses. Similarly, Amara provided me the opportunity to attend multiple coalition and committee meetings of legal aid providers across DC, to see how organizations can work together despite differing or even outright contradictory missions for the betterment of their respective clients.

Alix’s full essay is posted on our website.

“The support of WBAF allows us to continue to expand our abilities to serve domestic violence victims.”

June Lee, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of DC

2019 Grantees



AFRICAN COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (ACT) is a mutual aid, organizing, and civil rights organization for African immigrants. ACT was founded in 2012 by a first-generation Ethiopian immigrant organizer and social entrepreneur in response to the lack of African immigrant organizations in the immigrant rights field. ACT connects African immigrants to critical services, helps Africans develop as leaders, and organizes communities on the issues that matter. ACT launched its Washington, DC chapter in 2016, and its DC Immigration Legal Program in 2017. The goal of the program is to provide the District's underserved African immigrant communities, particularly low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Africans, with high quality and culturally appropriate Know Your Rights programs, immigration legal education, and direct immigration legal services. @AfricanUS



AMARA LEGAL CENTER provides free legal services to individuals whose rights have been violated while involved in commercial sex, whether involvement was by coercion, necessity, choice, or otherwise, in the DC metropolitan area. The WBAF grant supports Amara's Legal Representation Project, which provides full representation to 30 survivors of sex trafficking, with civil legal services, such as victim-witness advocacy, civil protection orders, and custody in DC Superior Court over the course of a year. @AmaraLegal



BREAD FOR THE CITY began as a volunteer-run free health clinic in 1974. Over the years, their programs grew to include the addition of a legal clinic, social services program, and, most recently, an advocacy program. Their mission is to provide vulnerable residents of Washington, DC, with comprehensive services, including food, clothing, medical care, and legal and social services, in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. The WBAF grant assists the operation of Bread for the City's Domestic Violence Community Legal Services Project, which serves low income minority women in their fight to obtain protection from domestic violence. This year, Bread for the City will provide advice and representation to over 190 DC residents, aiding them in obtaining Civil Protection Orders, income supports, child custody, and divorce proceedings in order to ensure their safety. @BreadfortheCity



DC KINCARE ALLIANCE's mission is to achieve a future where all DC children live in a safe and stable home without fear of abuse or neglect. They support kin caregivers (grandparents or other relatives) who have opened their homes to DC's most vulnerable and at-risk children whose parents are not able to care for them. DC KinCare Alliance oversees the KinCare Legal Defense Project, which represents DC kin in court proceedings to obtain the resources and services needed to raise the children in their care. The WBAF Grant supports the KinCare Legal Defense Project to assist at least 20 caregivers in DC Wards 7 and 8. [@DcKincare](#)



DC VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to address the critical shortage of legal assistance for low-income people in Washington, DC, especially in cases involving domestic violence. The WBAF grant supports the Domestic Violence Program, which provides pro bono legal assistance and social services to victims on a broad range of legal issues, including protection orders, divorce, custody, child support, and domestic violence-related immigration, housing, and criminal matters at DCVLP's new weekly Family Legal Clinics held at a community collaborative in Ward 8 and at Children's National Medical Center. [@DCVLP](#)



FIRST SHIFT JUSTICE PROJECT empowers low-income pregnant women and parents to safeguard the economic security and health of their families by asserting their workplace rights. By receiving advice and representation, working parents can assert their rights before they lose their positions or before their workplace stress becomes untenable. First Shift helps them to safely maintain their employment, their health, and their family commitments. The WBAF grant has allowed the organization to establish a pro bono volunteer program. This year's grant allows the organization to continue to develop the program and engage more attorneys in order to better serve their clients [@1stShiftJustice](#)

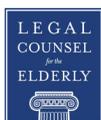


THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGAL CENTER provides pro bono legal services for trafficking survivors seeking justice. The WBAF Grant bolsters the Human Trafficking Legal Center’s efforts to train pro bono attorneys, conduct intake on pro bono matters, refer cases to pro bono counsel, provide direct services to survivors, and advocate with federal authorities for survivors trafficked by diplomats. This grant will also allow the Human Trafficking Legal Center to incorporate survivors into training programs as leaders. The Human Trafficking Legal Center provides direct services to female trafficking survivors in the DC region, and to advocate for policy change at the federal level to protect those trafficked by diplomats. Additionally, the Human Trafficking Legal Center conducts outreach to encourage more trafficking survivors to come forward to seize their day in court. [@HTLegalCenter](#)



LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

For more than 80 years, Legal Aid’s mission has been to make justice real – in individual and systematic ways – for persons living in poverty in the District of Columbia. The WBAF grant will support the Domestic Violence Underserved Communities Representation Project, which will provide extended representation, advice, counsel, and assistance to clients. In addition, outreach sessions will be coordinated, allowing the Legal Aid Society of DC to serve more than 500 DC residents. [@LegalAidDC](#)



LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE ELDERLY aims to improve the quality of life for elderly District residents, and its primary goal is to serve and empower thousands of low-income seniors each year in those areas of law involving “basic human needs”: income, housing, long-term care, personal autonomy, and consumer protection. The WBAF grant supports the Schedule H Program, an innovative project assisting older low-income neighbors (nearly three fourths of whom are women of color) obtain hundreds of dollars in benefits from DC’s Schedule H Tax Credit via pro bono clinics at area law firms. For individuals who do not owe income taxes (which is most of LCE’s clients, as they typically have only a modest Social Security income), DC writes them a check for the Schedule H credit. This means low-income clients could receive up to \$1,000 via cash payments for the previous tax year. LCE clients use these funds to avoid eviction, pay their property taxes, purchase food and medicine, pay off debts, and more. [@LCEinDC](#)



THE NETWORK FOR VICTIM RECOVERY empowers victims of crime to achieve survivor-defined justice through a collaborative continuum of advocacy, case management, and legal services. Since its founding in 2012, NVRDC has served over 3,222 crime victims in the District, providing holistic case management and legal services for DC crime victims needing assistance regarding CPO representation, crime victims' rights enforcement, and Title IX/Clery representation for DC campus crime victims. In six and a half years, NVRDC's reputation in the legal community has grown; pro bono attorneys have donated thousands of hours and over \$7,000,000 in in-kind support. By strengthening DC's safety net for crime victims, NVRDC assists in rebuilding families, communities, and the nation's capital. The WBAF grant supports NVRDC's Systemic Advocacy Legal Services and Pro Bono Coordination and helps build these partnerships to combat the barriers survivors face in accessing justice, and ultimately creates positive, long-lasting impact on the trajectory of survivors' lives. @NVRDC.org



TAHIRIH JUSTICE CENTER provides services for immigrant women and girl survivors of violence, including gender-based asylum, protection for survivors, victims of trafficking, and other crimes. The WBAF grant allows Tahirih to provide holistic legal and social services to immigrant women and girls in the wake of extreme violence — domestic violence and sexual assault, female genital mutilation, trafficking, honor crimes, and forced marriage. Clients are based in DC and receive health services from one of Tahirih's existing medical-legal partners, such as La Clínica del Pueblo. Legal services will be in the areas of family law: protective orders, divorce, custody, and visitation. Case management will address safety planning, goal setting, and referrals to shelters, counseling, food, urgent medical care, and other resources to rebuild their lives. @tahirihjustice

"I've had clients walk in my office on the first day when we meet and they can't look at me and they can't look at the other lawyers. They are so unbelievably traumatized. ... Fast forward through the case. You watch them as they emerge through the other side. They are confident; they own their lives."

Martina E. Vandenberg, Founder & President, The Human Trafficking Legal Center



Wine Tasting & Silent Auction

WBA Foundation hosted its 16th Annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction in October 2018. The theme for the evening was “Local Vines: The Wine Next Door,” and featured wines from Virginia vineyards, along with complementary cheese and chocolate pairings.

The Wine Tasting & Silent Auction event is the WBA Foundation’s largest individual fundraising event. This year, the Wine Tasting netted over \$15,300. The funds were earmarked to fund the Foundation’s Founders Fellowship and support other grant programs.

We greatly appreciate the support of our event host, Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox P.L.L.C. The firm has hosted the event since 2014.

Annual Dinner

Each year, the WBA Foundation joins with our sister organization, the Women’s Bar Association of the District of Columbia to host one of the largest gatherings in the DC legal community, our Annual Dinner. The evening’s program began with keynote remarks by CNN’s Pentagon Correspondent **Barbara Starr**, who spoke about the impact of journalists, the military, and those in the legal profession on freedom and equality. The 2019 Woman Lawyer of the Year Award was presented to **Laurie Robinson Haden**, Senior Vice President and Assistant General Counsel at CBS Corporation and the Founder and CEO of Corporate Counsel Women of Color. During her remarks, she shared how her mother mentored her to advocate for herself in the workplace and the genesis of Corporate Counsel Women of Color, which began as a like-minded group of women striving for equal opportunities and equity.

The Annual Dinner provides an opportunity for the Presidents of the Women’s Bar Association and the WBA Foundation to present overviews of each organization’s respective years. A highlight is the premiere of the Foundation’s grantee video, which features personal commentaries from grantees about the impact the Foundation’s support has on their ability to provide their clients with vital legal support services. The video can be viewed on the Foundation’s website, wbacfoundation.org.



Do More 24

Do More 24 is a 24-hour online fundraiser produced by the United Way of the National Capital Area. WBA Foundation was one of more than 800 participating nonprofits. For the second year in a row, the Do More 24 campaign coincided with the Annual Dinner. In addition to using email and social media to drive donations to the Foundation, announcements were made during the event and progress was shared throughout the evening. The campaign raised a record-breaking \$11,600 for the Foundation.

“The majority of our clients, at least 70%, are women. It’s wonderful that WBAF provides support so we can serve our clientele.”

Rhonda Cunningham Holmes, Executive Director, Legal Counsel for the Elderly

Thank You To Our Donors

It is through the support of committed donors that the WBA Foundation can carry on its important work. The WBA Foundation extends its gratitude to the following donors for their generosity. (Note: this list represents direct donations from those listed; it does not reflect contributions made via event sponsorship.)

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2018 Wine Tasting and Silent Auction Sponsors & Contributors

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