



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

SERVING THE LEGAL AND
RELATED NEEDS OF WOMEN
AND GIRLS IN THE DC
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY

Women's Bar Association
FOUNDATION
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



MISSION

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Women's Bar Association Foundation is the charitable sister organization of the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia (WBA), funding community organizations that help women and girls in the DC area meet their legal needs. These organizations provide direct legal services in areas such as employment rights and job security, housing, domestic violence, and trafficking.

When you give to the Foundation, you are helping women and girls successfully access the legal system – improving their employment and housing situations, reducing their stress, and allowing them to get on with their lives, helping to lift them and their families out of poverty and traumatic situations.

When you give to the Foundation, you can be assured that we do the work for you – selecting the grantees who meet the needs of women and girls in the DC Metro area, in line with the mission and purpose of the WBA.

The Foundation kicked off its official programming year in October, with its 18th Annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction; this signature event was presented virtually due to COVID-19 and was a huge success. The Wine Tasting is the Foundation's primary fundraiser for the Founders Fellowship, which rotates annually among the six DC-based law schools (American, Catholic, Georgetown, GW, Howard, and UDC) and provides a stipend for a law student to work at a local nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the Foundation's mission.

The 2021 Founders Fellowship was awarded to the **George Washington University School of Law**, which selected **Summer Menefee** as the recipient. With the support of the Fellowship, Ms. Menefee was a Summer Associate at AEQUITAS, The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women.

During the 2020-2021 program year, the Foundation continued the expansion of its grants program, awarding \$75,000 in grants to nine 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 D.C. Schedule H Tax Credit pro bono clinics; grandparents raising their grandchildren; and parents and pregnant women who need to assert their workplace rights. We are extremely proud to be able to support this work, and proudly salute our 2021 grantees: **Amara Legal Center, Ayuda, DC KinCare Alliance, DC Volunteer Lawyers Project, First Shift Justice Project, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, The Network for Victim Recovery, The Safe Sisters Circle, and The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless.** We encourage you to read more about these organizations, and the invaluable work they do in our community, at www.wbadcfoundation.org.

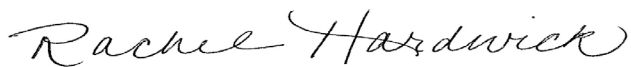
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The Foundation recognized these organizations, and their commitment to improving the lives and furthering the rights of women and girls, at our 12th Annual Grants Award Ceremony, held in March. Representatives from all of the grantees participated in the virtual ceremony to share information about their work. Many described ways in which COVID-19 has imposed additional burdens on their clients who already face enormous obstacles; they also discussed the challenges in providing service to their clients as a result of COVID. They highlighted a number of “success stories” and identified how they use the Foundation grant to assist their clients.

The ceremony also honored the lives and service of **Patricia Gurne** and **Monica Parham**, who passed away in 2020. Both women were past presidents of both the WBA and the Foundation, and both served as mentors and change agents for countless women in the DC area. Foundation past presidents **Marjorie O’Connell** and **Bridget Bailey Lipscomb** offered beautiful and heartfelt tributes for Pat and Monica, respectively. The Foundation designated two grants to honor Pat and Monica’s service. The 2021 grant to the DC Volunteer Lawyers Project was designated as the Patricia Gurne Memorial Grant and the 2021 grant to The Safe Sisters Circle was designated as the Monica Parham Memorial Grant.

Thank you for giving to the Foundation. You can make a one-time gift or a monthly donation – set it and forget it – knowing that your dollars go to work lifting women and girls as they access the legal system. You can give at wbaf.kindful.com. Please also consider including the Foundation in your estate planning. Visit wbadfoundation.org/planned-giving for more information about how to do that.

We thank you for your support throughout the 2020-2021 Foundation year and look forward to your continued support.



Rachel Hardwick

Making an Impact: The Safe Sisters Circle

The Safe Sisters Circle used grant funds to provide direct legal services to approximately 45 Black and Latinx women survivors of domestic violence, living primarily in DC’s Wards 7 and 8. They also partnered with other legal organizations to develop an educational webinar focusing on the prevention of gender-based violence in the time of COVID-19. The Safe Sisters Circle presented two preventative relationship workshops to Black girls in several DC Public Schools programs in Ward 8.

GRANTMAKING PROGRAM AND GRANTEES

The first step in the Foundation's grant cycle is a call for Letters of Inquiry (LOI). In 2020, 18 nonprofit organizations submitted LOIs for consideration. In total, the organizations requested \$178,452,596 in support. The Grants Committee reviewed the information provided and invited 17 of the organizations to submit a full grant application.

The Grants Committee reviewed the full proposals received and made a recommendation to the full Board of Directors, which approved a total of \$75,000 in grants to 9 organizations (information about the projects funded can be found on pages 4-5). The Foundation requires grantees to submit a final report of activities conducted under each grant. These reports are also reviewed by the Grants Committee.

The grants included two named grants: the **Patricia Gurne Memorial Grant** and the **Monica Parham Memorial Grant**. Ms. Gurne was a past president of both the WBA and the Foundation. The Patricia Gurne Memorial Grant was awarded to the DC Volunteer Lawyers Project in her honor. Ms. Parham was also a past president of both the WBA and the Foundation. The Monica Parham Memorial Grant was awarded to The Safe Sisters Circle.



In March, the Foundation hosted its 12th annual Grant Awards Ceremony virtually. The previous Grant Awards Ceremony, in 2020, was the last in-person event hosted by either the WBA or Foundation before the pandemic. While having to gather virtually was bittersweet, we were still able to use the platform to recognize the work of our grantees, many of whom had to quickly adapt their service models due to COVID. We also debuted our grantee video, which highlighted each grantee as their representatives talked about how their work inspires them to serve, even in the most difficult of times.

2021 GRANTEES



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. Amara's attorneys are trained in providing trauma-informed legal services and are devoted to providing comprehensive support, making sure that its clients know they are not navigating their cases alone. The Foundation grant supported survivors of sex trafficking with civil legal services, including civil protection orders, child custody, divorce, sealing and vacating criminal records, and victim-witness advocacy.



AYUDA advocates for low-income immigrants through direct legal, social, and language services, training, and outreach in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Ayuda is the only nonprofit organization in the DC metro area that offers a full range of integrated immigration and family law assistance, social services, and language access support for low-income immigrants from any country. The Foundation grant supported Ayuda's efforts in providing culturally-specific legal services for immigrant girls and women who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, as well as for abused, abandoned, and neglected children.



DC KINCARE ALLIANCE supports the legal, financial, and related service needs of relative caregivers, the majority of whom are women, who step up to raise children in their extended families in times of crisis when the children's parents are not able to care for them. DC KinCare Alliance is the only organization in DC focused solely on serving relative caregivers raising DC's at-risk children. The Foundation grant supported the Kincare Legal Defense Project, which provides free legal representation to relative caregivers in court and free legal advice in their communities.

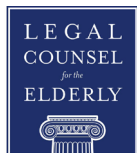


DC VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT addresses the critical shortage of legal assistance for low-income people in Washington, DC, especially in cases involving domestic violence. The Foundation grant supported HAVEN: Housing Advocacy for Victims, a new initiative within DCVLP's Domestic Violence Program. HAVEN will provide District victims of domestic and gender-based violence, the majority of whom are women, with legal assistance and advocacy on victim legal rights in housing, employment, and financial matters. HAVEN's goal is to help victims achieve safety, housing and employment stability, and economic self-sufficiency.

The 2021 grant to the DC Volunteer Lawyers Project has been designated as the Patricia Gurne Memorial Grant. Ms. Gurne, who passed away last year, was a past president of both the Women's Bar Association and the WBA Foundation. To honor her service, we presented this named grant in 2021.



FIRST SHIFT JUSTICE PROJECT empowers low-income parents and pregnant women to safeguard the economic security and health of their families by asserting their workplace rights. By receiving advice and representation, working parents are able to assert their rights before they lose their positions or before their workplace stress becomes untenable. First Shift helps them safely maintain their employment, their health, and their family commitments. The Foundation grant supported efforts to provide employment-related direct legal services to low-income women in the Washington Metro Area.



LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE ELDERLY champions the dignity and rights of vulnerable DC seniors age 60 and older by providing free legal help and social work services. The Foundation grant supported efforts to assist older low-income residents – the majority of whom are women – obtain hundreds of dollars in benefits from DC’s Schedule H Tax Credit via pro bono clinics at area law firms. Schedule H provides eligible District residents with a sizable tax credit to help mitigate the extremely high housing costs in DC. For individuals who do not owe income taxes (such as those with only a modest Social Security income), DC writes a check for the Schedule H credit. Low income clients can receive up to \$1,200 via cash payments, funds that they can use to avoid eviction, pay their property taxes, purchase food and medicine, pay off debts, and more.

THE NETWORK FOR VICTIM RECOVERY of DC 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 3,500 crime victims in the District, providing holistic case management and legal services for crime victims needing assistance regarding civil protection order representation, crime victims’ rights enforcement, and Title IX/Clery representation for campus crime victims. The Foundation grant helped fund translation costs for survivors with low English language proficiency and NVRDC’s Systemic Advocacy Legal Services and Pro Bono Program.



SAFE SISTERS CIRCLE provides free culturally-specific, trauma-informed, and legal holistic services to Black women survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse. Rooted in Safe Sisters Circle is the belief that there is value in having an organization established for Black women and where the majority of service providers and leadership within the organization are also Black women. The Foundation grant supported the East of the River Women’s Legal Services Project, which provides free legal services to Black women survivors of domestic and sexual violence living in Wards 7 and 8, specifically civil protection order hearings, family law cases, and victim advocacy cases. Safe Sisters Circle will also provide educational workshops and hold listening sessions for survivors and advocates living or working in Wards 7 and 8.



The 2021 grant to Safe Sisters Circle has been designated as the Monica Parham Memorial Grant. Ms. Parham, who passed away last year, was a past president of both the Women’s Bar Association and the WBA Foundation. To honor her service, we presented this named grant in 2021.

WASHINGTON LEGAL CLINIC FOR THE HOMELESS uses the law to make justice a reality for those who struggle with homelessness and poverty. Combining community lawyering and advocacy to achieve their clients’ goals, the organization’s staff and network of volunteer attorneys provide low barrier, comprehensive legal services at intake sites throughout DC, helping clients to access housing, shelter, and life-saving services. The Foundation grant supported the clinic’s representation of families participating in DC’s Rapid Rehousing Program, helping them to achieve long-term housing stability. More than 90% of these families have been headed by women.



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.

"I finished this summer with AEquitas feeling hopeful, not just about my own future career but about the future of gender-based violence work."

The 2021 WBA Foundation Founders Fellowship, in the amount of \$7,500, was awarded to the George Washington University School of Law, which selected **Summer Menefee** as the recipient. Summer was a summer associate at AEquitas, The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women. She had a long-term assignment to update and revamp AEquitas' resource on spousal privileges, which included updating the statutes of all 50 states and adding relevant case law to create an elaborate "At A Glance" chart to summarize the main legal issues. Summer also helped with specific research questions posed to AEquitas from prosecutors across the country.

In her personal essay about the experience, Summer described a research project about sex trafficking through social media:

"As this is an emerging topic, I was able to find limited but very helpful case law. This project was exciting to me as I find legal questions involving technology to be deeply fascinating. Technology is such a quickly changing phenomena that it requires the law to play catchup in an attempt to answer questions we wouldn't have considered a few years ago. AEquitas understands that social media questions are going to come up more in gender-based violence work and I appreciated getting to create a research memo on this issue that might be utilized in the future."

Summer's full essay is posted on our website.

"I feel incredibly grateful for this experience and the WBA Foundation fellowship that allowed me to take this internship. I believe this was just the beginning of my legal journey to improve the lives of women and girls throughout the country."

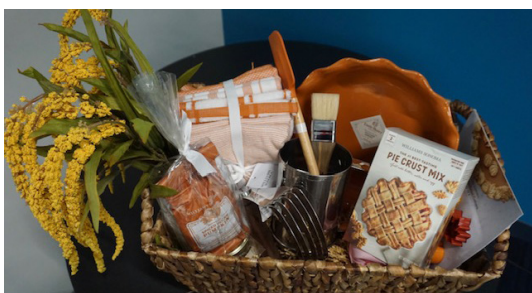
WINE TASTING & SILENT AUCTION



The WBA Foundation hosted its 18th annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction in October 2020. We made lemonade from lemons (much like making wine from grapes!), throwing ourselves into the challenge of transforming this fundraiser into a virtual one. The result was a unique and fun experience for our attendees and the event exceeded all expectations.

The theme for the evening was “Keep Calm and Sparkle On,” highlighting a variety of sparkling wines. Registrants in the DC metropolitan area received a tasting kit delivered directly to their door. The kit included a selection of wines, savory and sweet pairings, and information from our sponsors. Allison Marriott of Bon Vivant DC gave a brief lesson on tasting and discussed the wines. WBA Founder Marjorie O’Connell presented a toast in honor of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The corresponding silent auction was completely virtual as well. Our supporters were able to access the auction portal in advance of the event and the bidding closed at the end of the program. Auction items included unique gift baskets donated by Foundation Board members, original art, jewelry, self-care experiences, and an antique stitching horse.

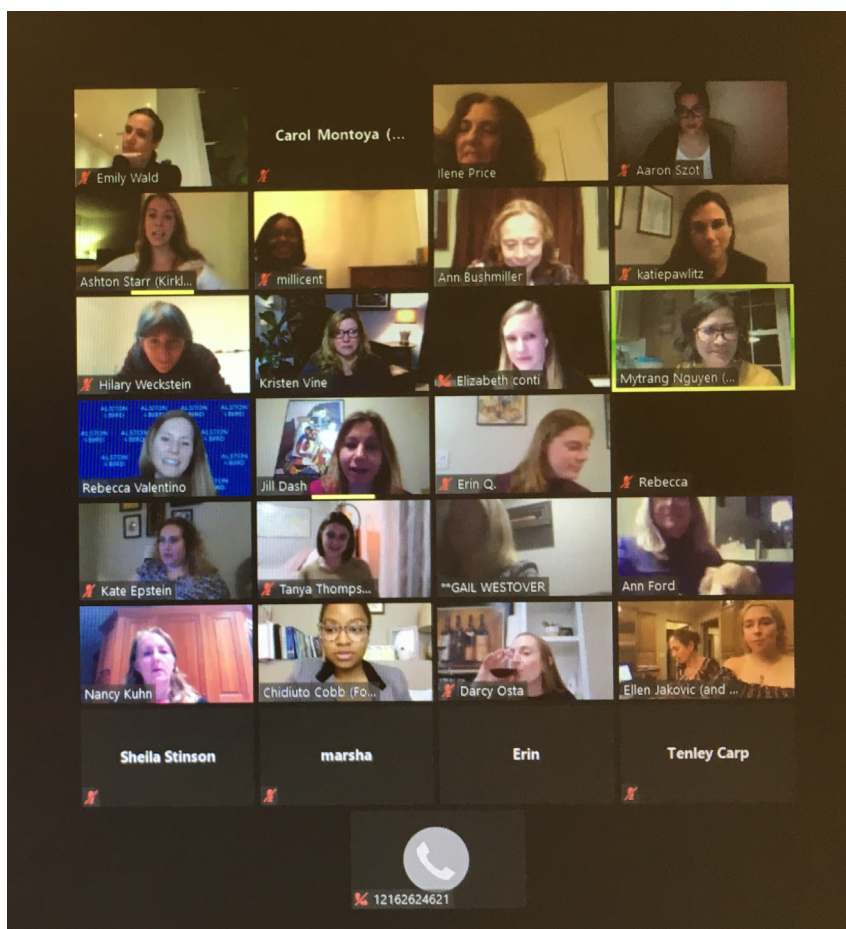


A highlight of the program was remarks from our 2020 Founders Fellowship recipient, **Chidiuto Cobb**. A student at Howard University School of Law, Chidiuto interned in the Domestic Violence and Special Victims Section (DVSVS) of the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia.

The evening concluded with breakout sessions hosted by our Reserve Level sponsors, FTI Consulting and Kirkland & Ellis.

Making an Impact: Amara Legal Center

The majority of Amara's clients are Black, cis-and trans-female, aged 18-29, experiencing homelessness, severe trauma, and live below the federal poverty guidelines. Amara also targets people, ages 12-24, at-risk of being trafficked. Vulnerable youth may be homeless, a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, a member of a racial or ethnic minority, developmentally or physically disabled, or undocumented. Amara used grant funds to support clients in DC in the form of victim-witness advocacy, civil protection orders, child custody, name changes, and criminal record sealing. The funding supported intakes and trainings at social service organizations and/or for targeted groups, like medical professionals and law enforcement in DC. Amara leverages their resources, volunteers, pro bono attorneys, and network of social service providers to empower a severely underserved and impoverished population, providing life-changing impact at minimal cost.



The Wine Tasting & Silent Auction event is the WBA Foundation's largest individual fundraising event. The net revenue for this event was almost \$47,000, with the proceeds going to support our Founders Fellowship and community grant programs.

Making an Impact: Ayuda

Ayuda's legal team used grant funds to pay the required filing fee (with no fee waiver available) to apply for a special form of relief called humanitarian parole for a client who was applying to reunify with her daughter. Their client's daughter was stuck in Haiti, in extreme danger, and the whole family was suffering due to their inability to be together and protect themselves from violence. The client's daughter finally entered the U.S. in late 2021 and the family is now together. Without financial assistance, many clients are unable to apply for immigration relief.

MONICA PARHAM MEMORIAL EVENT



Monica Parham was a past president of both the Women's Bar Association (2011-2012) and the WBA Foundation (2016-2018). After a private battle with cancer, she passed away in October 2020. The Association and Foundation joined together to host a virtual memorial service and celebration of her life in March 2021.

The program included a video Monica recorded for the Association's oral history as well as a photo montage. The event was attended by friends and colleagues from across the country, some of whom shared personal stories and tributes.

Making an Impact: Legal Counsel for the Elderly

In 2021, Legal Counsel for the Elderly organized nine virtual pro bono clinics, where 125 volunteers helped 157 low-income DC seniors apply for approximately \$177,024 in Schedule H benefits for which they were eligible. Low-income older adults are often unaware of their eligibility for these funds, and most clients find the tax application form daunting because it requires multiple calculations to ascertain the credit amount. They benefit greatly from advice and hands-on assistance from pro bono lawyers regarding how to calculate the credit, how to fill out the form, and what documents to provide. For individuals who do not owe any income taxes (which includes all of our Legal Counsel for the Elderly clients, as they typically have only a modest Social Security income), DC writes them a check for the tax credit. In the past, clients have used these funds to avoid eviction, pay their property taxes, purchase food and medicine, pay off debts, and more.

DO MORE 24



Do More 24 is a 24-hour online fundraiser powered by United Way of the National Capital Area. The Foundation promoted the fundraiser via email and social media, with the goal of expanding our donor base through viral efforts.

The May 2021 online fundraiser raised almost \$5,000 from 31 donors, an increase in both metrics over the prior year.

Making an Impact: The Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC)

NVRDC and its pro bono partners diligently advocated for Freya, a teen survivor of sexual abuse, as she has navigated the civil, criminal, financial, and mental health systems. Freya originally sought services beginning in the summer of 2020 after she reported her stepfather for sexually abusing her and threatening to harm her if she disclosed the abuse to anyone. Freya's attorney on NVRDC's dedicated youth services team was able to connect with the abuser's counsel to negotiate the terms of a Civil Protection Order (CPO) and later a CPO extension. The consent CPO provided Freya with both physical safety and peace of mind, while allowing her to avoid the re-traumatizing process of testifying in a hearing.

Freya's attorney also advocated for Freya's interests in the criminal case where she expressed that she wanted her abuser to be held accountable for his actions. The team brought the assigned detectives' attention to the criminal investigation, resulting in the arrest of the abuser and the prosecution pursuing the child sexual abuse charges.

DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT

This year's Donor Appreciation Event was also affected by the pandemic. Since we were unable to gather in-person with our donors, we decided to provide an entertaining event, and developed a trivia night. Donors joined via Zoom and were split into teams that provided answers in six rounds of trivia, including Women in History, Sports, Beantown (all about Boston), Women in the Arts, Before & After, and WBA Foundation-specific trivia. Attendees enjoyed the contest and got a little competitive with each other!

40TH ANNIVERSARY FIRESIDE CHAT

WBAF FIRESIDE CHAT February 24, 2021 | 6:00 pm

Women's Bar Association
FOUNDATION
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The Foundation turned 40 in April 2021. To commemorate the historic moment, we planned a community event to toast our past and future. **Paulette Chapman** (WBA president, 2003-2004) moderated a panel of Foundation past presidents, including Marjorie A. O'Connell (WBAF president, 1981-1983), Hon. Deb Israel (WBAF president, 1996-1998), Ellen Jakovic (WBAF president, 2006-2008), Nancy Long (WBAF president, 2014-2016, WBA president 1996-1997) and Bridget Bailey Lipscomb (WBAF president, 2018-2020, WBA president 2021-2022).

The panelists talked about the founding of the Foundation, the evolution of the Wine Tasting as the Foundation's primary fundraiser, as well as creating other events, like a 25th anniversary gala and Chefs Dine In fundraisers. They also discussed the establishment of the Founders Fellowship, the impact of the grant program over the years, and the relationship of the Association and Foundation.

The event also featured a mixology class break. Mixologist Alla Polyakova demonstrated how to make a "Spicy Harris" in honor of the new Vice President of the United State

Making an Impact: The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless

In 2021, The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless opened 29 new client matters in 2021 related to Rapid Rehousing (RRH), on a range of issues, including securing access to the program for families in shelter; helping participants deal with housing conditions; addressing case management problems, advising families about their rights under the program and the pandemic-related suspension of terminations, etc. No families were terminated from RRH in 2021 based on length of stay in the program. Having a lawyer can make the difference between remaining stable and cycling back into homelessness.

Making an Impact: DC Volunteer Lawyers Project (DCVLP)

DC Volunteer Lawyers Project's HAVEN program provides legal assistance and advocacy with victim legal rights to domestic violence victims. The program reaches individuals living in the most underserved wards of the District who would most likely not otherwise have access to these services. In 2021, DCVLP provided 145 victims with assistance and/or advocacy with legal rights in housing, employment, public benefits, and other matters related to the personal and financial stability of the family.

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, which are listed on pages 15-16).

\$7,500

Sterne Kessler Goldstein &
Fox PLLC

\$2,500

Crowell & Moring

\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Contributors on this list participated between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing. If we have made an error, please accept our apology. You may call us at 202 639 8880 so that we can correct our records.

Making an Impact: First Shift Justice Project

First Shift Justice Project saw an increase in direct legal services offered to clients seeking information about their rights to job-protected leave because of the availability of accompanying paid leave benefits. Consultations with clients about DC's paid leave benefits program exposed implementation problems with the program which were reported back to the Office of Paid Family Leave and the DC Council Committee on Labor and Workforce Development. Over the year, they were successful in persuading the DC Council to pass laws that 1) prohibit short term disability insurance companies from reducing benefits payments to new mothers who have access to paid family leave benefits; 2) eliminate the 7-day waiting period for benefits, allowing people who need less than a week of time off to access benefits; 3) allow claimants to file for leave benefits retroactively; 4) relax the continuous one year of employment eligibility requirement for DC FMLA leave; and 5) expand the number of quarters of wages that can be considered in the government's calculation of the wage benefit amount for paid family and medical leave.

2020 WINE TASTING AND SILENT AUCTION SPONSORS & CONTRIBUTORS

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Bridget Bailey Lipscomb

Making an Impact: DC KinCare Alliance

DC KinCare Alliance engages in Impact Litigation and advocacy to protect the rights of their clients. In 2021, they filed four federal lawsuits targeting DC's discriminatory practice of hidden foster care, and filed litigation against the DC Metropolitan Police Department for violating the DC Freedom of Information Act by failing to provide information related to why certain child physical and sexual abuse cases were not charged or prosecuted. DC KinCare Alliance successfully advocated for fully funding the DC Grandparent Caregiver Program and eliminating the two-year waiting list; the establishment and funding of an Independent Ombudsperson for DC Children; more transparency in public reporting of DC child fatalities, and significant reductions in burdensome eligibility requirements for the DC caregiver subsidies.

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