



Access to Justice Fund
Michigan State Bar Foundation
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Access to Justice Campaign Launches New Initiative to Honor Financial Donors

The Access to Justice Campaign is proud to launch a new initiative to recognize Michigan attorneys who invest in access to justice through financial donations to the ATJ Fund. Beginning in 2019, the Access to Justice Campaign will publish three new annual statewide lists to recognize donors to the ATJ Fund, which supports civil legal aid services to low-income individuals and plays an essential role in increasing access to justice.

The Access to Justice Campaign will recognize law firms and corporate legal departments on a tiered basis, starting at \$1,000. Individuals and solo practitioners will also be recognized on a tiered list, starting at \$300. In addition, leadership firms that achieve a per-attorney average donation of at least \$300 will qualify to be recognized on a tiered list that will include levels of \$300, \$500, \$750 or \$1,000 per lawyer.

Michigan is currently ranked 44th in the country in per attorney giving to civil legal aid. Based on successful models from other states, the campaign has recently transitioned to a collaborative centralized fundraising effort to increase resources for fifteen civil legal aid programs. Financial donations make a meaningful difference in the ability of legal aid to help low income families in Michigan.

Also beginning in 2019, the State Bar of Michigan will launch the A Lawyer Helps Pro Bono Honor Roll to recognize Michigan attorneys who provide 30 or more hours of pro bono legal services in a calendar year. The Voluntary Pro Bono Standard, as adopted by the State Bar of Michigan Representative Assembly, encourages Michigan attorneys to provide 30 or more hours of pro bono legal services each year or contribute a minimum of \$300 (\$500 for those whose income allows) to support civil legal services to low-income individuals. Many attorneys and law firms exceed those standards and publishing tiered lists to recognize financial donations and contributions of pro bono services will provide additional recognition of the efforts of Michigan attorneys. The lists will replace the Circle of Excellence.

The Michigan State Bar Foundation and State Bar of Michigan will widely publicize recognition on all lists through web posts, in the Michigan Bar Journal and through other printed and electronic communications. Both programs will be featured on the A Lawyer Helps webpage. Find more information about the A Lawyer Helps program at michbar.org/alawyerhelps.

For more information about the Access to Justice Campaign please see atjfund.org, or contact ATJ Campaign Coordinator Laura Musachio at laura@msbf.org.

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About the Access to Justice Campaign

The Access to Justice Campaign seeks to ensure access and fairness for all in the justice system. The ATJ Campaign is a collaborative, centralized campaign, administered by the Michigan State Bar Foundation, in partnership with the State Bar of Michigan, to increase resources for 15 regional and

statewide civil legal aid programs in Michigan. For more information about the Michigan State Bar Foundation, visit msbf.org.