



MJC Milwaukee
Justice Center

2019
ANNUAL REPORT



DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Dear Friends of the MJC,

The Milwaukee Justice Center enjoyed another successful year in 2019 with our continued emphasis on collaboration with our partner organizations, volunteers, and donors. I always enjoy this time to reflect upon the past year and on those whose involvement makes the MJC such a unique endeavor.

Some of the 2019 highlights include:

- The **MJC celebrated its 10th Anniversary**, honoring those whose vision and tenacity developed the MJC and opened it in 2009;
- With a **new Mobile Legal Clinic team**, that program experienced exponential growth and added specific services for those seeking expungements and pardons;
- The **MJC celebrated staff members** who left for new opportunities and welcomed a new, passionate group to comprise our professional team.
- The MJC **assisted 10,556 self-represented people**, trained almost 250 student volunteers, and welcomed the expertise of almost 200 attorney volunteers in one of the busiest years the MJC has experienced in its history.

The pages and success stories that follow would not be possible without each of you. Thank you for your important contributions and commitment not only over the past year, but the past decade. We cannot do what we do without each of you!

Mary L. Ferwerda

By the Numbers

10,556 People Served


- 7336 in family forms assistance
- 2330 in the MVLC at the MJC
- 725 in the Mobile Legal Clinic
- 175 in Parenting Conferences

450 Volunteers

- 197 Attorneys
- 157 Law Students
- 96 Undergraduate Interns & Community Members

13,143 hours of volunteer service for a value of **\$1.6 million** in free legal services provided to our Milwaukee Community.

Common Zip Codes Served:

53209 618	53223 247	53110 78		
53218 560	53214 229	53154 73		
53215 518	53224 219	53172 67		
53216 482	53221 199	53233 67		
53204 381	53222 170	53211 58		
53206 356	53219 168	53202 49		
53210 346	53205 153	53228 48		53217 39
53225 326	53207 110	53213 45		53051 19
53208 318	53220 109	53226 41		53129 16
53212 299	53227 84	53132 40		53203 16

About the People We Serve



Gender Identification:

- 42% Male
- 54% Female
- 0.1% Other
- 3.9% Did not identify

Racial Identity:

- 0.1% American Indian/ Native Pacific Islander
- 0.9% Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander
- 2% Asian
- 60% African American
- 18% Hispanic/Latino
- 12% White
- 7% Did not identify



of Adults in the Household:

- 66% 1
- 25% 2
- 6% 3
- 2% 4
- 1% 5 or more



of Minors in the Household:

- 49% 0
- 16% 1
- 17% 2
- 10% 3
- 5% 4
- 3% 5 or more



Average Monthly Household Income:

- 11% \$0
- 24% \$1-\$1000
- 33% \$1001-\$2000
- 19% \$2001-\$3000
- 8% \$3001-\$4000
- 5% Greater than \$4000



Public Benefits Received:

- 74% Foodshare
- 63% BadgerCare
- 22% SSI Benefits (for themselves and or their children)
- 2% Veterans' Benefits



Housing Status:

- 73% Rent
- 15% Housing Insecure
- 10% Own w/ Mortgage
- 2% Own w/o Mortgage

MJC Family Forms Assistance:

- 24% Divorce "Part 1"
- 17% Divorce "Part 2"
- 59% Post Judgment Family Matters



MVLC at MJC Legal Assistance:

- 50% Family & Safety
- 20% Money & Debt
- 15% Housing & Apartments
- 10% Probate
- 3% Traffic, Municipal, & Crime Related
- 3% Work & Employment
- 3% Health & Benefits
- 0.1% Immigration

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE MILWAUKEE JUSTICE CENTER: HONORING THE PAST, CELEBRATING THE PRESENT, AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE



On Thursday, October 17th the MJC staff, volunteers, donors and partner organizations gathered at the Milwaukee Bar Association's new office to celebrate a decade of services and invigorate the annual MJC Fundraising Campaign. Welcomed by Chief Judge Maxine A. White and hosted by MJC Executive Director Mary Ferwerda, the event honored those whose work resulted in the creation of the MJC, celebrated current volunteers, and kicked off the 2019 MJC Fundraising Campaign.

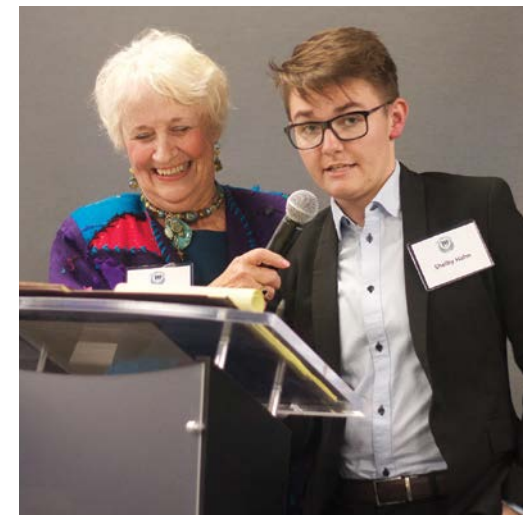
Inaugural "MJC Justice League" awards were presented to Hon. Michael J. Skwierawski, Clerk of Court John Barrett, Marquette Law School Dean and Professor of Law Joseph D. Kearney, former Milwaukee Bar Association Executive Director Jim Temmer, and former MJC Staff members Dawn Caldart, Amy Wochos, and Adie Olsen. Retired Judge Skwierawski shared his reflection on the MJC's development and importance in Milwaukee area civil legal aid. Current volunteers, Attorney Melita Biese and Marquette Law Student Shelby Hahn, shared their reflections on providing *pro bono* services at the MJC. Milwaukee Bar Association Executive Director Sarah Martis and MBA Foundation Member Andrew Jones encouraged contributions to the MJC Campaign. Attendees were surrounded by comments from current volunteers and previous clients discussing their experience at the MJC. The evening was a beautiful reflection of the collaborative work that allows the MJC to succeed.



MU Law Student & MJC Summer Fellow, Maggie Frawley



Hon. Maxine A. White, Chief Judge, District 1



MJC Volunteers, Attorney Melita Biese and MU Law Student Shelby Hahn



"Justice League" Honorees: L>R, top row: John Barrett, Jim Temmer, Dean Joseph D. Kearney; bottom row: Amy Wochos, Dawn Caldart, Hon. Michael J. Skwierawski, ret.



The early crowd enjoying the evening



MJC Staff: Mark Vannucci, Kyla Motz, Alexi Richmond, DMariGizsele Belmontes, Mary Ferwerda



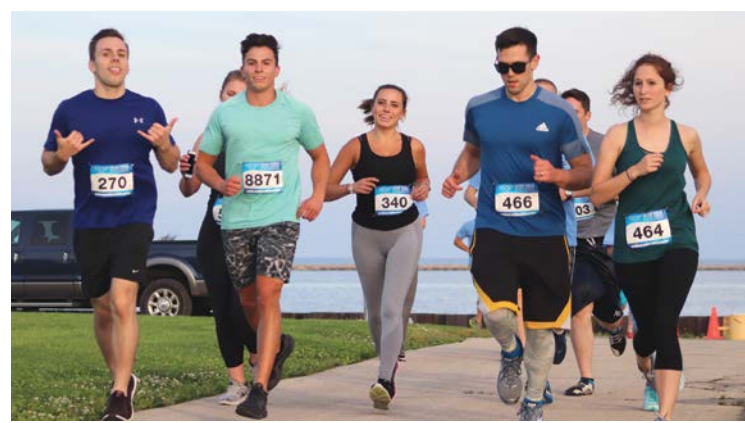
Hon. Michael J. Skwierawski, ret.



9th Annual MJC Run for Justice

Cold temperatures and some rain didn't stop the 9th Annual Run for Justice! A record number of registered runners made the event a huge success. Those who came to the lakefront enjoyed the music of the Mission River Band and emcee Hon. Michael Dwyer's remarks.

- 2019 JON ALLEN VOLUNTEER "PACE SETTER" AWARDS**
- Family Clinic Volunteer**
Attorney Dennis Milbrath
 - Mobile Legal Clinic Volunteer**
Attorney Jay Creagh
 - Student Volunteers**
Marquette Law student Xavier Prather
Marquette Senior student Katie Toohey
 - Administrative Assistant**
UW-Milwaukee Arts & Sciences Advisor
Gwyn Wallander



Milwaukee Justice Center Mobile Legal Clinic

The MJC Mobile Legal Clinic continues to expand into a record-breaking year! In 2019, the Mobile Legal Clinic added almost 30 clinic dates and nearly doubled the number of people served over the previous year. In the fall of 2019, the Mobile Legal Clinic added a specific Expungement/Pardon clinic hosted at Milwaukee Public Libraries, a service that continued at the MJC space throughout the winter months. The Mobile Legal Clinic also welcomed a new coordinator, Attorney Megan Morrissey, and a new Public Ally, Joenny Cuevas Lopez. You can read more about them and their successful year in their Mobile Legal Clinic Annual Report at www.mkemobilelegalclinic.com.



In 2019: 725 clients were served at 102 clinics at 20 host sites.

Parenting Conferences

Parenting Conferences offers a dispute resolution option to parents who want to discuss issues of child support, custody, and placement. Attorney facilitators assisted by students moderate a settlement conference with a goal to help the parties come to an agreement. In our partnership with Milwaukee County Child Support Services, Quarles & Bradly LLP, and Marquette Law School a total of 638 conferences have been scheduled since program inception in 2015.



Basic Data in 2019:

- 53% (54) resulted in full agreement
- 15% (15) only one party attended and a motion to modify was completed
- 33% (55) no call/no show by either party
- 23% (29) rescheduled, cancelled in advanced, or no agreement was reached or motion filed

Over 70% agreement rate when both parties attend the conference

Client Comments (from all services)

"They were very smart law students and attorneys. Excellent service!"

Michelle, assisted by Attorney Lauren and Marquette Law Student Andrew

"...I would like to say thank you, if the volunteers at the Justice Center would not have been there, I would have been lost and on my own to figure it out."

Trey, assisted by Attorney Mark and Marquette Law Student Tori



"They explained everything clearly and helped me greatly with an Eviction that was on my record but not mine! I couldn't have asked for better legal advice and assistance. They made my extreme worry go away!"

Pamela, assisted by Attorney Melita and Marquette Law Student Charlie

"Thank you very much for your help! I have a better understanding of possible next steps and feel greatly empowered by the information..."

Anonymous, assisted by Attorney Mont and Marquette Law Student Theo

"Wonderful service! Answered all my questions, walked me through the process, listened to my concerns...I would definitely recommend this service to others. Thank you!!"

Anonymous, assisted by Attorney Tom and Marquette University Law Student Alexis

"So happy with these services, I don't know what I would've done without this help."

Yesenia, assisted by Attorneys Marisa and Debbie



Volunteer Comments

"I learned that the Milwaukee area is in need and the MJC is truly a great resource for low income people needing legal information."

Emma H., Marquette University

"Pro bono is not a one-time experience, but something I can do in the future."

Annie L., Marquette University Law School

"MJC is where they find that confidence to represent themselves."

Melissa S., Marquette University

"It's really hard to be a pro se litigant, but there are resources available to them [the clients]. I like that the Milwaukee community has help for these situations."

Sherre C., Marquette University Law School

"The MJC has well-designed and efficient procedures and dedicated people whose effort strengthens the trust in the legal system."

Simona S., Attorney Volunteer

"I learned a lot of valuable information not just about law and the legal realm, but also about customer service and analytical skills"

Mark B., Marquette University

"I expected to enjoy the work, but not to the degree I currently do! It's very fulfilling work and I feel like I make a difference."

Joey K., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee



"I learned that I have so much more to learn, and that helping people during pro bono reignites my drive every week to study hard, because helping people is my passion"

Drew H., Marquette University Law School

"I reaffirmed my love for volunteering and connecting with the general public. Professionally, I learned that there are many avenues to attain happiness within the law community."

Josh H., Marquette University Law School

"I learned that I really enjoyed working one-on-one with people. Every day I interned, I felt like I personally helped someone."

Mara L., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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\$10,000+

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\$1000+

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\$500+

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DID YOU KNOW?

IT COSTS...

\$50 for copies for 3 clients
seeking help with divorce

\$100 to fill the Mobile Legal
Clinic with gas

\$150 to produce training materials
for intern training each semester

THE VALUE OF A...

3.5-4 hour shift for one
undergraduate intern is **\$200**

2 hour shift for one law
student volunteer is **\$250**

2 hour shift for one attorney
volunteer is **\$500**

You can donate online at: milwbar.org/Milwaukee_Justice_Center

VOLUNTEERS

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(through March)

Alexi Richmond, Legal Assistant
(March-present)

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(March-present)

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(through October)

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MILWAUKEE JUSTICE CENTER

901 N. 9th St.

Room G-9

Milwaukee County Courthouse

Milwaukee, WI 53233

www.milwaukeejusticecenter.org

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