

PBRC Block Party: Building Communities of Justice

Celebrating the *pro bono heroes* who make our work possible



Advocating for stable housing and the preservation of neighborhoods.

September 15th | 6PM | Baltimore Museum of Industry

Welcome to the PBRC Block Party: Building Communities of Justice Event!

Dear Friends:

After several years of lockdown and Zoom gatherings, we are all so excited to finally be able to get together in person to **celebrate PBRC's 30-plus years of service**, and we are especially grateful that you all could join us tonight.

The past few years have been challenging—both for our organization and the communities we serve. When the COVID pandemic first hit and the courts shut down, PBRC had to quickly adapt its operations to ensure that essential information was getting to potential clients in the absence of our traditional in-person, in-court clinics. Our team rose to the task and operated many of our clinics remotely. PBRC also instituted a hotline for the **Courtroom Advocacy Project** to provide tenant and consumer assistance by phone, which has been a huge success.

Since launching the hotline and offering direct legal help through our various immigration and home preservation projects, this past year we **directly served over 2,400 Marylanders in need of legal counsel** and representation and fielded over 2,000 additional calls. That number does not include the hundreds of other clients facing urgent legal matters handled by volunteers who we recruited, trained, mentored, and matched with our partner legal services organizations across the state.

Even during the turmoil of the last few years, PBRC has been growing both in its size and in the breadth of its projects, with a particular focus on housing justice. Thanks to the dedicated work of the staff and support of funders and donors, our team has grown to include 14 attorneys, 12 paralegals, and 6 non-legal staff. This growth enabled us to effect systemic changes in the courts and successfully advocate for improvements in the law, including the passage of the watershed **Access to Counsel in Evictions law.** Through new Access to Counsel funding, we recently expanded our representation of tenants to include **all rent court dockets in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.** State and private support allowed us to revitalize our foreclosure clinics and cover not only the Baltimore metropolitan region, but Prince George's and Montgomery Counties as well.

Person by person, family by family, block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood, we are building communities of equality, stability, safety, and justice.

Thank you for being here tonight to celebrate with us and to join us in building communities of justice. And thank you for your generous support of PBRC and being an integral part of its profound impact.





Who We Are:



The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC) enjoys the unique role of addressing inequality of access to the legal system by connecting attorney volunteers across the state to individuals, non-profit legal services providers, and economically disadvantaged communities for immediate free legal counsel and representation.



Hub for Pro Bono - As the designated pro bono arm of the MSBA, we act both as the central statewide clearinghouse and support center for pro bono legal services and offer direct legal service in targeted areas of need. Each year we recruit, educate, mentor, and match hundreds of volunteers with meaningful legal service opportunities. We engage not only attorneys but law students, paralegals, notaries, interpreters, legal services partners, faith-based groups, elected officials and other advocates who believe in expanding access to legal services. Civil legal services programs receive training, technical assistance, and coordination support from PBRC in addition to the volunteers we refer to them. Collaboration is key as we strive to stretch limited resources and build on our collective strengths as an access to justice community.

Thought Leader and Advocate - PBRC spearheads and advocates for statewide policies and practices to increase access to justice. We work closely with the courts and staff the Court of Appeals of Maryland's Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service. Team members offer counsel to state and local legislative bodies, local and specialty bar associations, and local pro bono committees for grassroots volunteer development in their own communities.





Direct Service Innovator - Our in-house pro bono model typically operates as short-term legal help through clinics to rapidly respond to emerging areas of unaddressed problems in our community. We essentially "meet the clients where they are" to ensure they do not fall through the cracks. With these innovative initiatives, we spark new partnerships and serve thousands of clients annually to secure housing, financial stability, and safety.

For more information, visit: www.ProBonoMD.org



Specific Areas of Focus



Home Preservation Project:

Services: A variety of services to protect people from losing their homes are employed.

Advance Planning: At-risk homeowners meet one-on-one with volunteer attorneys at neighborhood legal clinics to complete a will, advance medical directive, or financial power of attorney to preserve their homes for themselves and their families.

Mortgage Foreclosure and Tax Sale: Counseling services in-person or via telephone are offered for those facing mortgage foreclosure. Those with delinquent property taxes are also offered one-on-one advice and information services at community or remote clinics to avoid inclusion in the annual tax lien certificate auction. We also engage in advocacy efforts at the state and local levels to effect systemic changes that will improve homeownership outcomes among our target client population.

Hotel President President

Impact: The vast majority of our clients do not end up included in the tax sale auction. Advance planning enables all who attend to leave with the appropriate legal documentation to preserve their homes, have their health wishes adhered to, make important financial decisions about their limited wealth, and keep the family inheritance intact. This results in stabilizing families, preserving intergenerational wealth and keeping neighborhoods safe. Our advocacy efforts have resulted in executive actions and legislation that have kept homeowners out of tax sale and increased access to tools that will help keep their homes in their families.

Maryland Immigrant Legal Assistance Project:

Services: On-site legal services in immigration court and in immigrant communities for those facing removal proceedings. Children and families are assisted by volunteers and staff attorneys through triage, brief legal advice, and referrals to other legal services or offered direct representation in select asylum, human trafficking, work permit, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases. Remote services are also offered for those anywhere in the state.



Impact: 100% of the individuals or families in removal proceedings who want a consultation gets one for free. The goal is to prevent deportations and allow families to obtain legal status and remain together in safety. Those represented by PBRC are often children and others facing threats of gang violence and abuse in their home countries, and the legal services provided save lives while offering opportunities for parents to find employment to support their families.

Consumer Protection Project:

Services: On-site Day of Court legal services are offered at no cost to consumer defendants being sued for debt collection in Baltimore City and Prince George's County. Legal clinics are set up in the courthouse.

Impact: In 95% of the cases, clients represented by a PBRC volunteer or staff attorneys prevail. Debts are typically resolved or forgiven, and payment plans negotiated so individuals can save limited funds for essential needs like food, rent, medication and childcare.

Tenant Volunteer Lawyer for the Day Program:

Services: On-site Day of Court legal services are offered for tenants facing eviction actions in Baltimore City and Baltimore County Rent Court. Volunteer and staff attorneys represent tenants in failure to pay rent cases as well as in other eviction cases where tenants have been sued by their landlord (e.g. breach of lease, tenant holding over, etc.) and staff a daily hotline offering advice and referrals to tenants in need.

Impact: In 85% of the cases, tenants represented by a PBRC volunteer or staff attorney prevail. That means we keep people housed, connect them with rental assistance, prevent homelessness, enforce healthy and safe living conditions through escrow actions and saves hundreds of dollars for tenants.



Getting involved is important.

At M&T Bank, we know how important it is to support those organizations that make life better in our communities. That's why we offer our time and resources, and encourage others to do the same. Learn more at mtb.com/community.



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Program for the Evening

PBRC Block Party: Building Communities of Justice



Cocktail Hour + Dinner + Silent Auction

6:00 pm

Welcome to the PBRC Block Party: Building Communities of Justice

6:55 pm

Presented by Sima Fried, Board President of PBRC

Introduction to PBRC

Presented by Barry Simms, WBAL-TV 11 News I-Team Reporter

PBRC Academy Fellows 2021-2022 Cohort Graduation

Presented by PBRC Deputy Director Annie Speedie

2022 Maryland Pro Bono Service Award Recipients

Presented by Chief Judge Matthew Fader, PBRC Executive Director Sharon Goldsmith, and PBRC Vice Presenident Anika Jones

Ceremony for PBRC Justice Award Honorees

Presented by Chief Judge Matthew Fader and PBRC Executive Director Sharon Goldsmith

Closing Remarks

Dessert 7:45 pm

Host for the Evening and Featured Speaker:

Barry Simms, WBAL-TV 11 News I-Team Reporter

Emcee

Barry Simms currently serves as a general assignment reporter and a member of the WBAL-TV 11 News I-Team. Barry began his career as a weekend anchor and reporter at WREX-TV in Rockford, Illinois. He also worked at KTBS-TV in Shreveport, Louisiana and KXAS-TV in Dallas, Texas. Barry has been recognized for his reporting by the Chesapeake Associated Press Broadcaster's Association, the Maryland chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, the Louisiana State Bar Association, the Louisiana Associated Press and the Tri-State United Press International. Barry is also a past president of the Association of Black Media Workers, the Baltimore Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Marquette University in Milwaukee. In his free time, Barry enjoys spending time with his wife and three children.

Chief Judge Matthew Fader, Esq.

Featured Guest

Matthew Fader is currently the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland. Born in Towson, he attended the University of Virginia and then Yale Law School. Before joining the Court of Appeals, he was a member of the Court of Special Appeals, Maryland's intermediate appellate court, where he served as an associate judge beginning in 2017 and as Chief Judge beginning in 2018. He was a trial attorney with the United States Department of Justice's Civil Division, Commercial Litigation Branch beginning in 1999; an attorney in private practice with K&L Gates LLP beginning in 2002; and an assistant attorney general with the Office of the Attorney General of Maryland, Civil Litigation Division beginning in 2010. Prior to joining the bench Chief Judge Fader engaged in pro bono work and is a strong supporter of equal access to legal services. In May, Chief Judge Fader served as a speaker at

PBRC's Partners for Justice Conference.

Why We are Celebrating with Our Block Party

For over 30 years, PBRC has been connecting lawyers with purpose and ensuring that low-income Marylanders have equal access to justice.

Our impact has been impressive. Through our programs, thousands of Marylanders received free legal help to stop evictions, secure health and veterans' benefits, protect their savings, and preserve their homes and limited wealth. Last year PBRC's programs saved Marylander's thousands of dollars in legal service fees and saved the state even more in service costs. But our impact on the community is truly priceless.

Whether it's helping a client resolve a water bill or plan their estate to pass their family home to the next generation, it represents another building block in the community of justice we are constructing in Maryland. In the past few years, the barriers to justice we've faced through a series of interlocking crises have at times felt insurmountable. But each client helped, and each partner supported strikes at the wall of inequality that divides us and puts a freshly laid brick in the foundation of a community of justice—a community that will shelter us all.

But we cannot do it alone. The challenges we've faced through the past few years remind us how much we rely on each other to do this critical work. That's why tonight is dedicated to the Communities of Justice we are building with our volunteers, staff, and other supporters. We gather to honor just a few of the individuals, firms, and organizations whose commitment to pro bono service has been truly exemplary.

Thank you for joining us tonight. We welcome you to take this opportunity to celebrate and learn about PBRC and our partners, adding further building blocks onto our community of justice.

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Thank You to the Following Companies and Individuals for In-Kind Contributions:

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Elizabeth Grove
Jessica Gray
Melissa Libertini

Motylik Zofajova, Owner of Studio 1926
Patrick Tandy
Renée McDonald Hutchins
Robert Mitchell
Sharon E. Goldsmith
Sheila Callahan
True Chesapeake Oyster Co.

Thank You to Our Block Party Planning Committee Members:

Judith Coco Jannie Eisenberger Sharon E. Goldsmith Jessica Gray Elizabeth Grove Kristin Herber Nataly Karimi Bill Mojica Kiah Pierre Jennifer Rakes Patrick Tandy Liz Twigg

Speaking for justice.

At DLA Piper, we are living our long-standing commitment to meaningful and impactful pro bono projects that address the needs of our communities. We are honored to work with the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland to promote access to justice and legal care for all.

Congratulations to PBRC on its 2022 Block Party, celebrating over thirty years of Building Communities of Justice.



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Maryland Pro Bono Service Award Recipients

Each year, PBRC, as the pro bono arm of the Maryland State Bar Association, recognizes members of the legal community who have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to pro bono service for those in need through the Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards. All recipients share similar traits: professionalism, compassion, fearless advocacy, and zealous dedication to helping as many clients as possible.



Elizabeth Johnson, Esq.

A. Caplan Award

Elizabeth Johnson of Spence Brierley in Baltimore County has been volunteering with MVLS for 6 years and taken close to 50 cases, with more than 20 of them being estate administration cases. Liz has also helped mentor newer MVLS volunteers in estate cases. Of her closed cases, she has totaled 137 pro bono hours, valued at over \$47,000.

Rosalyn Otieno, Esq.

Judge Robert M. Bell Award

Rosalyn Otieno has represented 22 pro bono clients since May of 2016 in complex and contested divorce and custody cases through the Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program. Rosalyn has worked tirelessly to empower clients and advocate for their rights as parents and victims of domestic violence. Half of her pro bono clients have been Spanish-speaking, Not English proficient (NEP) speakers, whom she has assisted by engaging case managers and interpreters.





Russell R. "Ronnie" Reno, Jr., Esq.

Retired Pro Bono Volunteer Award

After over 50 years at Venable, Ronnie Reno joined the Public Justice Center as a volunteer staff attorney in 2010. In the past 12 years of full-time work at PJC, Ronnie has been an integral part of the center's mission to pursue systemic change. Working with the Human Right to Housing Project, his most vital role has been his zealous legal assistance to thousands of tenants facing eviction at the Baltimore City District Court office.

Neel Lalchandani, Esq.

Alex Fee Young Lawyer Award

Neel spearheaded efforts to convince the State of Maryland to compensate men who had been wrongfully convicted. As a result of his relentless and creative efforts, the state compensated exonerees for the first time in 15 years. By March 2020, 8 men who had spent a total of 227 years in prison for crimes they did not commit received a total of over \$17 million. In April 2021, the Maryland legislature amended the law regarding compensation of exonerees to make such compensation quicker and easier.





Magistrate Joanie Raymond

Judicial Service Award

While President of the Bar Association of Frederick County, Magistrate Raymond actively promoted pro bono services through the Pro Bono Committee and the BAFC membership. On a monthly basis, she "spotlighted" attorneys who engaged in pro bono work and raised the issue of pro bono service at all bar meetings. She actively encourages all attorneys to provide help to those who need it.

Deena Dugan, Esq. & William Meyer, Esq.

Distinguished Pro Bono Volunteer Award

Both attorneys joined the Maryland Immigrant Legal Assistance Project of the Pro Bono Resource Center at a time of heightened need for legal advice and triage with traumatized minors and families fleeing Central America. Since 2018 for Deena and 2019 for Bill, they consistently staff the legal courthouse clinics on a bi-monthly basis with Deena driving from Montgomery County to the Immigration Court. In one instance, Bill went far above his commitment by teenager who had been trafficked to secure a safe home.



Non-Legal or Organizational Involvement Award

A non-lawyer with the ability to represent clients with tax issues, Arlene first joined MVLS' Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) in 2017 and has since become one of their most prolific volunteers. Arlene stepped up to represent clients with tax controversy matters, including filing tax returns for individuals during the pandemic who otherwise would not have received their Economic Impact Payments. She also travels to the clients to reduce their burden when resolving these issues. Arlene is always one of the first to volunteer whenever help is needed.

Baldwin, Briscoe & Steinmetz, P.C

Law Firm Pro Bono Service Award

The firm has demonstrated their commitment to pro bono service many times over in their 33 years of accepting MVLS cases. This dedication to assisting low-income Marylanders with their legal issues has been particularly exemplary in one of the most needed areas for pro bono assistance—contested family law. Over these decades, Baldwin, Briscoe & Steinmetz, P.C. has taken at least 84 MVLS cases for full representation, and this commitment to assisting clients who would otherwise go unrepresented has only deepened through the years.



The Latino Racial Justice Circle

Herbert S. Garten Special Project Award

The volunteer led group takes on various projects to the support the Latino immigrant community in Baltimore, including raising funds to pay for immigration attorneys for low-income immigrants. LRJC partners with three immigration attorneys who take referrals at a low-bono rate.

Child Justice

Pro Bono Program Service Award

Child Justice provides pro bono legal services for non-offending protective parents in family law or protective order cases involving child custody and access. These cases have evidence of domestic violence, child abuse, coercive control or child neglect by the alleged abusive parent and often have gender, racial, and ethnic biases with severe mental health issues related to adverse childhood experiences or trauma.



Full Service Premier Law

PBRC Professional Skills Academy 2022 Cohort



PBRC's Professional Skills Academy is a one-year, cohort-based program of training, mentoring, and service for newer attorneys (Fellows) that:

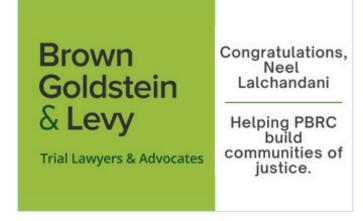
- Enhances the Fellows' lawyering skills;
- Develops the habit of thoughtfully choosing and carrying out pro bono service; and
- Introduces the Fellows to mentors and colleagues who can help them grow.

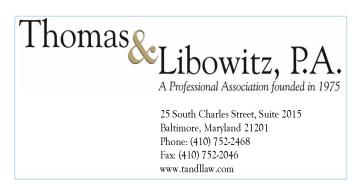
This year, PBRC welcomed the third class of the Professional Skills Academy. Fifteen Fellows, in many cases newer lawyers, were paired with experienced mentors and took part in a series of in-depth trainings. By the end of the experience, the Fellows had donated over 400 hours of pro bono service. With their skills, experience, and connections, PBRC is building a community of pro bono leaders for the future with broad community impact.

Professional Skills Academy Fellows:

Kimberly Boyd
Thaakirah Cason
Phillip Dehoux
David Dirks
Jasmine England-Caesar
Sam Freudenburg
Alana Glover
Amelia Grant

Natalie Jean
Michelle Johnson
Daniel Lim
Ariel Martin
Robert Mitchell
Debra Salim
Carla van Beek





Forward Together

Venable Proudly Supports the

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland

We are thrilled to support the PBRC Block Party and celebrate the pro bono advocates building communities of justice.

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PBRC Justice Award Recipients

Barry Bach, Esq., PBRC Volunteer Attorney

Since joining the bar in 1969, Barry has been dedicated to pro bono service. He credits PBRC for providing access to a host of worthy projects in areas he had little experience with prior to volunteering. Barry particularly enjoyed PBRC's training courses in areas such as rent court and consumer protection matters, which he had yet to experience. Armed with this newly acquired knowledge, Barry jumped into defending tenants in Rent Court in the District Court for Baltimore City and debtors in the Consumer Protection Project in the District Court for Prince Georges County and has been a consistent volunteer face in court.

"I have found my participation in these PBRC pro bono activities extremely interesting and rewarding. And I can spend just as much or as little time as I have available on the projects. I encourage all lawyers to become PBRC volunteers and to give as much time as they can to those members of our Maryland community in need of the legal assistance they cannot afford."



Cory Zajdel, Esq., PBRC Volunteer Attorney



Over the last decade, Cory has participated in dozens of PBRC's debt defense clinics and is a strong consumer advocate. He has represented more than 17 individuals on a pro bono basis and served as a mentor and trainer for other volunteers. His private practice, which focuses on consumer rights, has also directed substantial cy pres awards, or funds remaining from successful consumer class action settlements, to PBRC.

"Providing free legal services to individuals that cannot otherwise afford an attorney has been amongst the greatest rewards in my legal career. My clients in these cases were so thankful for the help that the representation sometimes ended with client tears and requests for hugs. I cannot think of a better way to give back to the profession that has given me so much. More attorneys should take advantage of the opportunities PBRC provides including guaranteed courtroom appearances, trainings, and support."

• David Dirks, Esq., PBRC Volunteer Attorney

As a Fellow in PBRC's Professional Skills Academy, David went above and beyond by volunteering at 19 clinics with CAP, HPP, and MILAP. He distinguished himself at rent court with the Tenant Volunteer Lawyer of the Day program, helping to prevent evictions and taking on a difficult extended representation rent escrow case.



"Charles Hamilton Houston once stated, "A lawyer's either a social engineer or a parasite on society."... A social engineer was a highly skilled, perceptive, sensitive lawyer who understood the Constitution of the United States and knew how to explore its uses in the solving of "problems of...local communities" and in "bettering conditions of the underprivileged citizens." As a black man in America, who happens to be a lawyer, this quote resonates with me as I have always led with my passion for social justice in my personal and professional lives. Through PBRC, I can use my skills, compassion, and understanding of local landlord-tenant, consumer debt, and estate planning law to serve those who are underprivileged or vulnerable in my community."

Gavi Franco, PBRC Volunteer Interpreter



Gavi Franco joined MILAP as a volunteer in the winter of 2020. Over the past two years she has served as a volunteer interpreter for immigration consults conducted during both remote and in-person clinics. In the summer of 2020, when it was made clear that immigrants were going to be left out of most COVID-19 relief funds, Gavi volunteered with MILAP to help inform people who had received PBRC services about resources which were available to immigrants, regardless of their immigration status. She has also made herself available to participate in other projects, such as working with MILAP to update the tools we use during our clinics and working with immigrant families to help them complete their applications for asylum. She has donated more than 80 hours of service to MILAP.

Manuelletta (Mani) Domonique Esq., PBRC Volunteer Attorney

Upon retiring from the Federal Government in Dec 2019, Manuelletta continued her public service by volunteering at the Home Preservation Project's estate planning clinics, serving low-income seniors in need of Wills, Financial Power of Attorney, and/or Medical Advanced Directives. This was an unusual step for the attorney who had never practiced in that area before joining the HPP team. She is now a regular fixture at the legal clinics and enjoys working with the seniors and PBRC staff.



"I am honored to volunteer with PBRC because I have personally witnessed our successes as well as our clients" expressions of sincere gratitude for the services provided by our clinics. I too am grateful to the PBRC HPP team for their support and camaraderie as a volunteer. Whether in- person or virtually, I am committed to continue volunteering to further PBRC's mission to ensure equal access to legal services."







DLA Piper has been a proud supporter of PBRC for many years. Known for its deep commitment to pro bono legal service, its pro bono efforts focus on three areas: the rights of children, access to justice and the rule of law, and assisting asylum seekers, PIPER refugees, and stateless people. The work is both global and local providing direct service to individuals and organizations that could not otherwise afford counsel, while helping to build a pro bono culture in the legal profession around the world.

The firm also supports active board participation by its members. Jordan Bailowitz, a Partner at the firm who serves as a coordinator of DLA Piper's pro bono program in Baltimore, has served on PBRC's board since 2018. Jordan has worked closely with PBRC's leadership as PBRC's Treasurer, chair of the Audit and Finance committee, and a member of the Executive Committee.

"PBRC is thoughtful about the areas where targeted assistance is most needed – for example housing stability – and they also create innovative programs that make it easy for lawyers to get involved in pro bono. One great example is the yearly tax sale prevention program where volunteers can view an online training and then spend a few hours assisting community members facing the loss of their home for minor unpaid bills. Many of our lawyers have participated in this project over the years and found it so fulfilling—with just a few hours of their time, they were able to make such a positive impact on their clients."



The Murthy Law Firm/MurthyNAYAK Foundation

Sheela Murthy, Vasant Nayak, and the entities have generously supported PBRC through pro bono service, financial donations, and in-kind counsel and services. The Murthy Law Firm has offered free leased premises in its Class A Office building at their world headquarters to PBRC to continue doing its work to support the community, valued at \$250,000 over four years. The savings to PBRC will enable them to use the funds to support their work and further their mission of serving those in need in Maryland.



"We support and believe in PBRC because we know Sharon Goldsmith and her team and their passion to help women, children and immigrants."

Santoni, Vocci, & Ortega, LLC, PBRC Partner





Santoni, Vocci & Ortega, LLC is a unique law firm dedicated to protecting those who have been harmed by the illegal acts of others. Their practice focuses on representing tenants and consumers on an individual and class basis. All three partners individually accept pro bono cases from PBRC--at least 51 tenant and consumer cases on record to date. They offer additional support by mentoring for the Professional Skills Academy, instructing other volunteer attorneys, staffing

PBRC's hotline, serving as the Attorney of the Day in courthouse legal clinics, and taking cases on appeal to force systemic changes in the law. The firm is known within the legal services community as the "go to" firm for protecting consumer rights.

"We are honored to work with PBRC and share its vision that all persons deserve justice. Sharon Goldsmith and PBRC's tireless and heroic work should be celebrated and supported, and we are happy to be a part of that!"



Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr, LLP

Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP ("Saul Ewing") has a long history of financially supporting PBRC and serving on the Board of PBRC including formerly in the position of Board Chair of PBRC. The firm shares PBRC's vision of building communities of justice through providing access to legal services for low-income communities. Saul Ewing lawyers dedicate many hours each year to providing free legal services to disadvantaged individuals and entities who simply cannot afford to advocate for their rights.

SAUL EWING ARNSTEIN

"We strive to have every attorney commit to providing pro bono service in whatever way works for them - clinic, MD Free Legal Answers, direct representation on short-term matters, impact litigation, etc. Most of our 45 Baltimore-based attorneys have an open pro bono matter or have billed to a pro bono matter this year. Our Senior Litigation paralegal and our firm librarian are also active participants in our pro bono efforts. Saul Ewing is proud of its longstanding commitment to pro bono including through its support of the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland."







Through its Foundation and lawyers, Venable has long supported the economic and social vitality of the firm's communities. Venable proudly partners with PBRC on almost all of its substantive legal projects. For its Tenant Volunteer Lawyer for the Day Program, volunteers provide day-of-court counsel to unrepresented tenants facing eviction in Baltimore City and Baltimore County which can mean the difference between eviction and continued housing. A team of approximately

15 Venable lawyers has committed to help staff two of PBRC's clinics in Baltimore City each month—a service that provides valuable in-court representation for clients and opportunities for lawyers. Venable lawyers also have participated in PBRC's Consumer Protection Project, and its Maryland Immigrant Legal Assistance Project, both of which yielded opportunities for longer-term representation, including defenses of collection actions for various clients and a Special Immigrant Juvenile case that took the initial steps toward citizenship for a client. Venable additionally contributes to PBRC through its Foundation, and individual lawyers have long served on PBRC's board of directors.

"By no means does [volunteering with PBRC] only benefit clients: Venable lawyers embrace these opportunities to help those in need, to take advantage of PBRC's top-notch training, and to satisfy the critical role of the legal profession in building, maintaining, and sustaining strong communities."



The Wells Fargo Foundation is committed to support programs and organizations whose chief purpose is to benefit low and moderate-income individuals and WELLS FARGO families and those that keep communities strong, diverse and vibrant. Their focus areas are Arts & Culture, Human Services, Education, Environment,

Community Development, and Affordable Housing with a recent boost of support for eviction prevention nationally.

PBRC was selected as one of a handful of programs nationwide to receive funding for a two-year grant to support its Baltimore City Eviction Defense Project. The funding provided housing stability for thousands of low-to-moderate income Baltimore City renters by supporting the capacity of PBRC's Tenant Volunteer Lawyer of the Day program, allowing the Courtroom Advocacy Project to institute a hotline and much needed legal services in the courthouse.

Judge Cathy H. Serrette 🏥 👫



Judge Serrette previously served as PBRC's President and a founding member of the Court of Appeals' Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service (on which she still serves), chaired the new pro bono committee of the Women's Bar Association and served as President of the Maryland chapter of the National Association of Women Judges. She is also a member of the Judicial Conference Truancy Committee and Chairs the Judicial Conference Family Law Committee. Judge Serrette continues to serve on the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, at one point chairing the committee on Accessibility and holding public hearings around the state. For years she has played an active role in serving on

the Maryland Partners for Justice Conference, co-chairing the Planning Committee and serving as faculty for numerous panels. Her widespread juvenile and human rights work as both an attorney and judge have made a profound impact in Maryland and internationally.

"PBRC's role in promoting access to justice in Maryland cannot be overstated. PBRC has recruited, trained, and mentored pro bono attorneys, coordinated efforts to ensure counsel for those in need, created service projects in areas of need, and has long played an integral role in joint efforts to ensure justice for all. I am deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Sharon Goldsmith and the PBRC's extraordinary staff for over two decades and look forward to continuing to work together in support of the human rights and dignity of all."

Judge Karen Murphy Jensen

In her more than 40 years as an attorney, and later as a judge, Judge Jensen has been devoted to pro bono legal service and access to justice issues, especially on the Eastern Shore of Maryland where she lives and practices. She was instrumental in creating MidShore Pro Bono which is now a thriving program with a multi-county presence. Her legal portfolio always included pro bono cases and she inspired others to follow suit. She also previously served as president of PBRC, sat on the Judicial Commission on Pro Bono, joined the Court of Appeals' Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service in 2002 became Chair of the Committee in 2012 serving in that role until 2022.

"Starting in the last decade of the last century, PBRC has played an essential role in expanding the limited legal services available to those unable to afford civil counsel, from hosting dialogues with the local bar to promote pro bono, to supporting the creation and continued operation of Mid Shore Pro Bono. My partnership with PBRC coincided with my membership on the Judiciary's Committee on Judicial Pro Bono where for the past twenty years we - the Judiciary and PBRC - have championed the need for more attorney involvement in pro bono, developing opportunities for attorneys to serve and support local communities in filling the gaps for civil legal representation. It has been a privilege to be associated with PBRC and its wonderfully committed staff and Executive Director, Sharon Goldsmith and be aligned with its mission."



Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh Access to Justice Leader





As Maryland's Attorney General, Mr. Frosh is dedicated to ensuring fairness, equality and justice for all. Fulfilling a pledge to serve as the people's lawyer, Mr. Frosh is focused on keeping communities safe, on limiting environmental damage by polluters, and on protecting Maryland consumers from fraud and predatory business practices. Under his leadership, Maryland became the first state in the nation to issue guidance prohibiting discriminatory profiling by law-enforcement. The Attorney General's guidance declares definitively that race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and religion cannot be factors in routine police activity. Mr. Frosh is focused on safeguarding vulnerable populations, including nursing home residents, people with disabilities, victims of lead-paint poisoning, low wage earners and members of minority groups who can be subjects of abuse. He is investigating and prosecuting wrongdoing at

all levels involving these and other groups. Mr. Frosh works to promote economic justice by challenging the marketing and debt-collection practices of banks, credit card companies, forprofit colleges and other businesses that prey on working-class families.

In partnership with the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, Mr. Frosh's office established the Access to Justice Task Force in 2021 to address the barriers to legal justice created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission includes a variety of different initiatives to keep Marylanders safe, housed, fed, and connected. Largely through his leadership, the Commission made Maryland the second state in the country to provide statewide access to counsel in eviction proceedings for income-eligible tenants.

A strong supporter of pro bono service, Attorney General Frosh also recently instituted an office policy allowing assistant attorneys general to take administrative leave to engage in pro bono legal work. As Attorney General, Mr. Frosh continues to be a fierce advocate of equal justice to the law in Maryland and an inspiration to others.







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We proudly support the **Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland** in its efforts to connect lawyers with purpose to people in need of equal access to justice.

Robin Leone

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