

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
2013-2014 COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Article VI §6, Bylaws of the State Bar of Michigan

No later than May 1 of each year, the chair of each committee and sub entity of the Bar, with the assistance of the staff liaison, shall report to the Executive Director on a form provided by the State Bar on the activities and accomplishments of the committee or sub entity.

Committee Name: Committee on Justice Initiatives

Jurisdiction:

Develop and recommend proposals for the effective delivery of high quality legal services in Michigan, equal and fair to all. This committee consists of several initiatives whose activities include:

- Analyzing and making recommendations for positions on proposed legislation, court rules, and other policies relevant to the committee’s jurisdiction.
- Developing policies and programs to benefit underserved populations; including juveniles and those with special needs.
- Encouraging and coordinating free or discounted civil legal services.
- Working to increase resources for civil legal aid programs.
- Examining collateral civil consequences of criminal convictions and issues of adequate representation in the criminal justice system.

Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Co-chair	Terri L. Stangl	320 S Washington 2 nd Fl Saginaw, MI 48607	989 755-3120	tstangl@ccj-mi.org
Co-chair	Erika L. Davis	645 Griswold Suite 1300 Detroit MI 48226	313 237-6295	Erika@butlerdavis.com
Staff Liaison	Janet K. Welch		517 346-6331	jwelch@mail.michbar.org
Staff Liaison	Candace A. Crowley	306 Townsend St., Lansing, MI 48933	517 346-6319	ccrowley@mail.michbar.org

Member/Advisor/Other	Member/Advisor/Other
Jennifer Z. Belveal	Member
Michael J. Blau	Member, RA Liaison
Lorray S. C. Brown	Member
Aaron V. Burrell	Member
Heather J. Garretson	Member
Robert F. Gillett	Member
Valerie R. Newman	Member
Linda K. Rexer	Member
Maya K. Watson	Member

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Committee Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Committee meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Description		
CJI Meeting	May 22, 2013	Teleconference
CJI Meeting	June 19, 2013	Teleconference
CJI Kickoff	October 21, 2013	State Bar of Michigan
CJI Meeting	December 9, 2013	Teleconference
CJI Meeting	February 3, 2014	Teleconference
CJI Meeting	April 7, 2014	Teleconference
JI Summit	April 28, 2014	State Bar of Michigan

Resources provided by the State Bar of Michigan to support committee work:

The State Bar provides the Committee on Justice Initiatives (CJI) with staff support and a budget to facilitate projects and meetings. Please also see reports for the Equal Access, Justice Policy, Pro Bono, and Criminal Issues initiatives at the end of this report.

Committee Activities:

May 22, 2013 Meeting

CJI learned about the topics presented at both the National Consortium for Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts and the Equal Justice Conference, and looked more closely at whether a CJI restructure is in order. It agreed to form a cross-initiative work group to draft an ATJ position on the proposed e-filing court rules, using the recently issued [Principles and Best Practices for Access-Friendly Court Electronic Filing](#) as a guide. It received reports on the Fourth Annual JI Summit, and the ABA Day activities.

Fourth Annual Justice Initiative Summit

Nearly 70 leaders representing Michigan courts, law firms, bar associations, and community justice organizations gathered at the State Bar of Michigan on Monday, April 29, 2013 for the fourth annual Justice Initiatives Summit. “Why Did I Do That? The Science behind Our Decisions” addressed unintentional bias in the justice system. A [Summary Report](#) was distributed to participants with a request that they share it with their constituent groups.

ABA Day

The State Bar delegation consisted of Bruce Courtade, Janet Welch, Reginald Turner, Judge Timothy Hicks and Peter Cunningham. They joined lawyers throughout the country for the annual ABA Day trip to Washington DC that occurred April 16-18.

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June 19, 2013 Meeting

The committee received an update on the progress of the e-filing workgroup, which expects to have its comments on ADM 2013-18 regarding proposed court rules and standards ready for CJI to review on July 12th. It postponed efforts to restructure CJI until the next bar year.

CJI Presentation to Young Lawyers Section

Val Newman, Mike Blau and Candace Crowley made a presentation on the history and work of JI to the Young Lawyers Section Summit on June 8 in Detroit. There was a good crowd of people and they received the information well. CJI will continue to look for more opportunities to get the JI message to new lawyers.

Justice Initiatives Annual Kickoff Meeting

The annual kickoff was held on October 21, 2013. Eight new people are part of the initiatives; an orientation session was presented to them by Rob Mathis before the formal proceedings began. Janet Welch, Peter Cunningham, and Nell Kuhnmuensch provided a snapshot of the political landscape for the upcoming year. The agenda included a review of the Keller impact on State Bar policy work, and the importance of strategic partnerships with other groups. It also highlighted the historic role that the JI community has played in developing State Bar policy, and set the stage for continued and strengthened involvement in policy work. Indigent defense and the Uniform Collateral Consequences Act were set forth as examples of the detailed and frequently lengthy process involved in developing successful policy positions.

The morning presentations on policy development led to lunchtime table discussions in which participants identified (1) at least one proactive priority policy issue for JI to address this year regardless of the political climate and (2) at least one program that should be organized by the initiatives. Those discussions revealed considerable interest in e-filing and the digital divide; fees, fines and costs passed on to defendants without representation by a lawyer and often resulting in incarceration for failure to pay fines; and expansion of the Elliot Larsen Civil Rights Act to include lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered people. Members are interested in programs that will inform the profession about the negative impact of the fees, fines and cost issue on our client community; the impact of technology changes on indigent and other vulnerable people; and expansion of the unintentional bias awareness programs.

The day concluded when the Committee on Justice Initiatives recorded all of the initiative meetings and then set its own schedule of meetings for the year.

December 9, 2013 Meeting

The committee reviewed the summary of policies and programs discussed at the October Kickoff meeting. Rob Mathis presented a written report was on the National Legal Aid and Defender conference. The members turned their attention to the April 28 Justice Initiatives Summit. There was interest in addressing fees, fines and costs; language access; or the work of the Race Equity Coalition child welfare disproportionate impact group. These ideas will be conveyed to the Summit Cabinet appointed in January.

February 3, 2014 Meeting

The committee received reports from the initiatives, the Summit Cabinet, and the ABA Day planners. It received information on SB 743 introduced to de-unify the State Bar. It also received and discussed information on committee membership and leadership.

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April 7, 2014 Meeting

CJI prepared to present the April 28, 2014 Fifth Annual Justice Initiatives Summit. This year's topic is "Language Access: Best Practices in Michigan Courts." Tom Rombach will host the meeting. Welcoming remarks will be provided by Chief Justice Robert Young and Justice McCormack. ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defense Chair Lisa Wood will deliver the plenary. Fifty five people are confirmed to attend at the time of this writing and participants include judges, court staff, SCAO staff, legal aid advocates, bar association leaders, community partners, interpreters, and others.

CJI supported the proposed amendments to MCR 1.111 regarding the appointment of interpreters and suggested an expansion of the coverage to include courthouse operations and courtroom proceedings.

The committee arranged for approval of attendance of leaders and staff at the Equal Justice Conference in Portland Oregon at the end of April, and at the National Consortium for Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts to occur in Wyoming in June.

The committee followed the development of materials, strategies, and delegation communications for the April 8-10 ABA Days in Washington DC

April 28, 2014 Justice Initiatives Fifth Annual Summit.

"Language Access: Best Practices in Michigan Courts." A [Summary of Events](#) is available online.

Future Goals and Activities:

CJI must reexamine its structure and work to respond to the changing landscape including the work of Judicial Crossroads, the State Planning Body, the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, and other developments. The timing of this will be discussed at future meetings.

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Committee Name: Criminal Issues Initiative

Jurisdiction:

Examines collateral civil consequences of criminal convictions and representational issues in the criminal justice system.

Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Co-chair	Heather J. Garretson	Thomas M. Cooley Law School; 111 Commerce Ave SW; Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4105	616.301.6800	garretsh@cooley.edu
Co-chair	Valerie R. Newman	State Appellate Defender Office; 645 Griswold St Ste 3300; Detroit, MI 48226-4215	313.256.9833	Valerie@sado.org
Staff Liaison	Peter Cunningham	State Bar of Michigan; 306 Townsend St.; Lansing, MI 48933-2012	517.346.6325	pcunningham@mail.michbar.org

Member/Advisor/Other	Member/Advisor/Other
Caridad Pastor Cardinale, Member	Hon. Mabel Johnson Mayfield, Member
Hon. Jeffrey J. Dufon, Member	Catherine M. O'Meara, Member
Pamela Chapman Enslin, Member	Hon. Angela Kay Sherigan, Member
Hon. Katherine L. Hansen, Member	Regina Ann Wright, Member
David C. Koelsch, Member	

Committee Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Committee meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Initiative Meeting	May 15, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	June 19, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	October 21, 2013	In Person
Initiative Meeting	November 5, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	December 3, 2013	In Person
Initiative Meeting	February 4, 2014	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	March 4, 2014	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	April 1, 2014	Teleconference

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Resources provided by the State Bar of Michigan in support of committee work:

The Initiative receives staff support from Peter Cunningham and Carrie Sharlow.

Committee Activities:

Juvenile Justice Task Force:

At the October 21, 2013 meeting, The Initiative discussed several ideas for projects and task force topics, including access to treatment outside of the court system and juvenile justice issues.

The Initiative formed a Juvenile Justice Task Force to focus on juvenile justice issues such as the school to prison pipeline, collateral consequences for juveniles, adjudication and expungement of juvenile crimes, and educating stakeholders of all of the above and more. The work of the Task Force is ongoing but it hopes to eventually produce something similar to the Eleven Principles for Public Defense which later led to the creation of the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission.

The Initiative produced a document titled “Collateral Consequences of Juvenile Adjudication in Michigan” to help Michigan citizens understand the juvenile justice system and the potential collateral consequences that juveniles may face as a result of conviction. The Initiative is currently looking for effective ways to distribute this information, including having it posted on the Michigan Legal Help website (michiganlegalthelp.org).

UCCCA:

The Initiative continued to work on the Uniform Collateral Consequences of Conviction Act (UCCCA) previously approved by the Representative Assembly. The Initiative drafted a Michigan-specific version of the UCCCA, and Initiative members and staff met with legislators, the governor’s office and other stakeholders on the legislation to build support. The Initiative hopes to have legislation introduced later this calendar year, and there is some interest among legislators and the governor’s office to that purpose.

Other Public Policy:

The Initiative discussed several pieces of legislation and offered the following recommendations to the Committee on Justice Initiatives:

- [HB 4083](#) (Lori) Law enforcement; other; Michigan crime stoppers act; create, and provide for criminal assessments to fund crime stopper activities. Creates new act.
Recommendation: Oppose.

- [HB 4694](#) (Cotter) Courts; circuit court; mental health court; create.
[HB 4695](#) (Haines) Courts; circuit court; mental health court; create.
[HB 4696](#) (Walsh) Courts; circuit court; mental health court; create.
[HB 4697](#) (O'Brien) Courts; circuit court; mental health court; create.
Recommendation: Support.

- [HB 5078](#)(Haveman) Criminal procedure, sentencing guidelines. Criminal procedure; sentencing guidelines; sentencing guidelines commission; reestablish. Amends 1927 PA 175 (MCL 760.1 - 777.69) by adding secs. 32 & 33 to ch. IX.
Recommendation: Support.

- [HB 5154](#) (Leonard) Criminal procedure; preliminary examination; certain rules and procedures for conducting a preliminary examination; revise. Amends secs. 4, 7, 11a, 11b & 13, ch. VI of 1927 PA 175 (MCL 766.4 et seq.).

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Recommendation: The committee voted to support the proposed substitute bill of HB 5154 as drafted by the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan and Criminal Law Section workgroup, which

- Requires discovery
 - Allows for no victim testimony, and
 - Video testimony taken at the preliminary examination is admissible at trial.
- [HB 5238](#) (Kowall) Criminal procedure; expunction; set-aside of certain criminal records for victims of human trafficking; provide for. Amends secs. 1, 2 & 4 of [1965 PA 213](#) (MCL [780.621](#) et seq.).

Recommendation: The Initiative voted to support HB 5238, while offering the suggestion that the categories of crimes expunged be broader, as in Senate Bill 0591.

Future Goals and Activities:

CII anticipates that next year it will continue to focus on the two main projects from this year: (a) juvenile justice; and (b) passage of the Uniform Collateral Consequences of Conviction Act. In addition CII will continue to comment on pending legislation of interest.

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Committee Name: Equal Access Initiative

Jurisdiction:

Developing policies and programs to benefit underserved populations, including juveniles and those with special needs.

Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Co-chair	Aaron Vaughn Burrell	Dickinson Wright PLLC 500 Woodward Ave Ste 4000 Detroit, MI 48226-5403	313.223.3118	aburrell@dickinsonwright.com
Co-chair	Maya K. Watson	Bodman PLC 1901 Saint Antoine St Fl 6, Ford Field Detroit, MI 48226-2310	313.393.7502	mwatson@bodmanlaw.com
Staff Liaison	Gregory Conyers	State Bar of Michigan; 306 Townsend St.; Lansing, MI 48933-2012	517.346.6358	gconyers@mail.michbar.org

Member/Advisor/Other	Member/Advisor/Other
Hon. William J. Caprathe	Hon. Patricia P. Fresard
Raymond J. Carey	Linda D. Johnson
Mark A. Cody	Nicholas M. Ohanesian
Syeda Farhana Davidson	Paul S. Teranes
Erika Lorraine Davis	Laurin' C. Roberts Thomas
Yasmin J. Elias	Michael T. Woodyard
J. Kay Felt	

Committee Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Committee meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Initiative Meeting	December 5, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	February 13, 2014	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	April 3, 2014	In Person

*workgroups meet in between meetings of the larger group.

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Resources provided by the State Bar of Michigan in support of committee work:

The Director of Diversity is staff to the Equal Access Initiative.

Committee Activities:

The EAI recently developed a program, “Right to Counsel: A Right to Counsel in Civil Matters” that provided participants with information about the work being done nationally on the topic and a view of the Michigan landscape regarding representation for those who need assistance. John Pollock from the Public Justice Center and currently coordinator of the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel and a nationally recognized leader on the topic provided information about several pilot projects around the country. Local stakeholders including Joan Glanton Howard, Chief Counsel, Civil Law Group Legal Aid and Defender Association; David Moss, Director of Clinical Education, Wayne State University Law School; and Angela Tripp, Co-Managing Attorney, Michigan Poverty Law Program and Project Manager, Michigan Legal Help Program described the Michigan scene. The program was well attended and sets the stage for further work in this important area.

EAI has several workgroups that engage in the following activities. The Disabilities workgroup is focused on issues effecting practitioners working with the disabled community and those that have disabilities. The group publishes an e newsletter quarterly that addresses particular issues useful to the nearly 750 subscribers it reaches.

The 2013 Annual meeting included a program titled “Problem Solving Courts: Lessons Learned & Implications for People with Mental Health Care Needs” that followed on the heels of the passing of legislation in support of expanding the availability of mental health courts. Two panels of experts from around the state discussed the implications of the legislation and the value of the problem solving courts that are already operating across Michigan. The program was attended by over 80 participants and is available as an audio recording on the Bar website.

The Jury curriculum project workgroup in conjunction with members of the Law Related Education Committee is revamping the materials that have been used over the last several years to introduce students to the importance of juries to the rule of law, the need for a diverse jury pool and civic responsibility.

Future Goals and Activities:

EAI is planning to continue work in the area of right to counsel in order to educate members about national efforts. The Disabilities Work group will continue to focus on mental health courts and school prison pipeline and quarterly e newsletters on topics of importance to practitioners. Once the revisions are complete the Jury Curriculum project will be offered to students across the state in partnership with educators and volunteer lawyers and judges. Additional programs regarding language access and issues related to access to courts for underrepresented groups are being considered.

Other Information: EAI continues to focus on providing newer lawyers with opportunities to develop in leadership positions within the initiative.

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Committee Name: Justice Policy Initiatives

Jurisdiction: Analyzes and recommends positions on proposed legislation, court rules, and other policies relevant to the Justice Initiatives.

Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Co-Chair	Lorray S.C. Brown	Michigan Poverty Law Program, 220 East Huron St, Suite 600A, Ann Arbor, MI 48104	(734) 998-6100	lorrayb@mplp.org
Co-Chair	Michael J. Blau	35145 Oakland St, Farmington, MI 48335-3344	(248) 943-6148	Mikeblau924@gmail.com
Staff Liaison	Peter Cunningham	State Bar of Michigan, 306 Townsend, 48933	(517) 346-6325	pcunningham@mail.michbar.org

Member/Advisor/Other	Member/Advisor/Other
Heather Renee Abraham, Member	Kenneth C. Penokie, Member
Kelly Lynn Bidelman, Member	Tonya Myers Phillips, Member
Desiree M. Ferguson, Member	Christine N. Seppala, Member
Jessica S. Fox, Member	Hon. Cynthia D. Stephens, Member
Hemant Madhusudan Keskar, Member	Thomas K. Thornburg, Member
Daniel M. Levy, Member	
Nancy L. Mullett, Member	Holli J. Wallace, Member (deceased)
Jill L. Nylander, Member	

Committee Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Committee meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Initiative Meeting	May 7, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	June 4, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	October 21, 2013	State Bar of Michigan offices
Initiative Meeting	December 13, 2013	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	March 14, 2014	Teleconference
Initiative Meeting	April 11, 2014	Teleconference

Resources provided by the State Bar of Michigan in support of committee work:

The committee receives staff support from Peter Cunningham and Carrie Sharlow.

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Committee Activities:

Over six meetings, the Initiative made the following recommendations on policy items:

1. [SB 0518](#) (Proos) Traffic control, traffic regulation; Courts, other. Traffic control; traffic regulation; use of vehicle boots for failure to satisfy certain court obligations; allow. Amends sec. 4803 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.4803).

Oppose.

2. [SB 0519](#) (Proos) Civil procedure, other; Courts, other; Crime victims, compensation; Criminal procedure, other; Family law, child support. Civil procedure; other; fines, costs, and other indebtedness to courts; require SCAO to establish a database, and require civil litigants to check database before paying or collecting on a judgment. Amends 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.101 - 600.9947) by adding sec. 1477.

Oppose.

3. [HB 5069](#) (Heise) Property; other; liability for damages if landlord enters premises; provide exception if occupant is squatting. Amends secs. 2918, 5711 & 5714 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.2918 et seq.).

Oppose.

The Initiative is also exploring proposing an amendment to MCR 7.109 regarding transcript fees in cases on appeal from the Department of Human Services when the appellant is an indigent.

More Initiative positions on public policy items are expected before the end of the State Bar Fiscal Year due to upcoming meetings in May and June.

Future Goals and Activities:

JPI would welcome more opportunities to participate in discussions about important policy positions with other bar entities.

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Committee Name: Pro Bono Initiative

Jurisdiction: To support and encourage lawyers' efforts to comply with the Voluntary Pro Bono Standard by performing pro bono legal services and by making donations to organizations providing free legal services to the poor.

Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Officer	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
Co-Chair	Jennifer Z. Belveal	660 Woodward Ave Ste 2290 Detroit, MI 48226	(313) 465-7382	jbelveal@honigman.com
Co-Chair	Robert F. Gillett	420 N 4 th Ave Ann Arbor, MI 48104	734-665-6181 ext. 24	rgillett@lsscm.org
Staff Liaison	Candace Crowley Robert Mathis	SBM	517-346-6319 517-346-6412	ccrowley@mail.michbar.org rmathis@mail.michbar.org
Commissioner Liaison	n/a			

Member	Member
C. Michael Bryce	Sandra D. Parker
Margaret (Peggy) Costello	Kimberly Paulson
Hon. Denise Page Hood	Linda K. Rexer
Joan Glanton Howard	Marcy L. Rosen
Kirsten A. Inquilla	Amy L. Sankaran
Ashley E. Lowe	Justin M. Sheehan
Todd M. Morgan	Cynthia M. Ward
Keith L. Morris	Robert L. Willis, Jr.
Heidi A. Naasko	

Committee Meeting Schedule:

Please attach any additional information needed regarding Committee meetings as an addendum.

Meeting Type	Date	Location
Teleconference	June 10, 2013	n/a
Teleconference	September 9, 2013	n/a
In-person/teleconference	October 21, 2013	State Bar of Michigan
Teleconference	December 12, 2013	n/a
Teleconference	March 13, 2014	n/a

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Resources provided by the State Bar of Michigan to support committee work:

The State Bar of Michigan provides the Pro Bono Initiative (PBI) with staff support and an initiative budget to facilitate projects and meetings.

Committee Activities:

The PBI has numerous committees and workgroups, including:

1. ABA Day (Governmental Relations)
2. Assessment of Pro Bono in Michigan Report and Implementation
3. ATJ Fund Eligible / PBI Approved Organization--Application Review
4. Circle of Excellence--Tiered COE Development / Voluntary Pro Bono Standard
5. Circle of Excellence--Yearly Application Review
6. Homelessness Workgroup
7. John W. Cummiskey Award
8. MI-LAPP Malpractice Insurance for Pro Bono Administration
9. MI-LAPP Tax Pro Bono Referral Panel Program Administration
10. MI-LAPP QDRO Pro Bono Panel Program Administration
11. Pro Bono Menu of Opportunities
12. Pro Bono Month
13. Pro Bono Reference Manual / Law Related Organizations Search Database
14. Spring Pro Bono Workshop
15. Veteran Resources Workgroup

The **John W. Cummiskey Award** was presented to attorney **Robert (Rob) Mossel** of Ford Motor Credit at the SBM awards dinner at the annual meeting in Lansing. The award includes a \$2,000 donation to an ATJ program to be made through the Access to Justice Fund. Rob asked the award be designated for Legal Aid and Defender Association.

Nominations for the **2014 John W. Cummiskey Award** will be reviewed and a nominee identified in May 2014.

MI Pro Bono Assessment Report - The Assessment Report has been publicized and is now widely known by Michigan's pro bono community and other key stakeholders. The report was also a fundamental part of the 2013 Pro Bono Workshop.

The primary emphasis of the assessment was on what legal aid providers can do differently to improve their work with pro bono, with a major focus on systems, coordination of resources, leadership and support, including institutional and structural support, that facilitate that result. It identified projects and strategies that have proven successful in Michigan and nationally in engaging private attorneys in meaningful work. Such information was analyzed to understand better the factors that either enhance or impede effective engagement of pro bono lawyers in responding to low-income communities' needs.

The report notes the very strong system of "intentional and conscious support for pro bono at the state level, at the core of which are the State Bar of Michigan and the Michigan State Bar Foundation." It notes that "The system's strength also derives from a culture of collaboration and coordination that infuses the relationship of these two central institutions, as well as their relationship with the leadership of the legal aid community."

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With the guidance and support of consultant John Tull, the group is proceeding with developing a self-assessment tool which will allow each program to look critically at its own delivery of pro bono services, one of the recommendations in the Assessment Report. Another recommendation of the report is the creation of new relationships and pro bono initiatives accomplished in part by increased outreach to non-affiliated legal and social service organizations. Staff member Rob Mathis will focus on this recommendation.

The Fifth October as Pro Bono Month Celebration occurred in 2013, which included over 50 events throughout Michigan during the Pro Bono Month 2013 season. The **Pro Bono Month website** included a list of upcoming pro bono month events, talking points, a sample speech, and many other resources. Looking forward to 2014, the workgroup wants to continue to increase the number of pro bono events; the promotion of the need for pro bono legal services for the poor; and the collaboration by law firms, attorneys, and LSPs on pro bono events. As part of the planning process for Pro Bono Month 2014, the workgroup is working with the Spring Pro Bono Workshop workgroup to incorporate a Pro Bono Month piece in the agenda, with the goal of getting people thinking about Pro Bono Month early, and to assist in the facilitation of more collaboration between law firms, attorneys, bar associations, and LSPs in sponsoring Pro Bono Month events.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signed a proclamation declaring October 2013 as Pro Bono Month.

The **Sixth Annual October as Pro Bono Month** is set for October 2014.

The State Bar's "**A Lawyer Helps**" website continued to highlight the good work of many Michigan attorneys. "A Lawyer Helps" focuses first on the legal profession's priority of pro bono—free legal help for the poor and financial donations to help nonprofit legal aid agencies. But "A Lawyer Helps" also honors lawyers who additionally volunteer time to other efforts that benefit their communities. Please visit <http://www.michbar.org/alawyerhelps> for information on how to submit stories for inclusion on the website.

2013 was another successful year for **MI-LAPP's QDRO Referral Program**. In 2013, the program closed 65 QDRO referral cases and 41 cases were referred to the QDRO program by Michigan legal services providers. The great success of the program in 2013 was due to the program's dedicated volunteer Drafters. In 2013, the program's volunteers included: **Joseph Cunningham, Robert (Bob) Treat, Nancy Keppelman, David and Jackie Roessler, Mary Ade, Warren Widmayer, Michael Friedman, Gregory Schermerhorn, Crescent Moran, and Mickey Bartlett**. Each QDRO case prepared by a Drafter, on average, requires four hours to complete. MI-LAPP continues to rely on the QDRO Administration Committee, spearheaded by Joseph Cunningham of Joseph W. Cunningham JD, CPA, PC and Bob Treat of QDRO Express LLC.

Expansion of the MI-LAPP Malpractice Insurance Program continued. Lawyers without malpractice insurance coverage can apply for coverage through the State Bar/MI-LAPP Malpractice Insurance Program. Also, lawyers that accept cases from ATJ & Non-ATJ programs without malpractice insurance can also be provided coverage. In 2013, many pro bono attorneys utilized the MI-LAPP malpractice insurance program; attorneys that otherwise could not have offered pro bono legal services due to their lack of malpractice insurance.

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The **Fifth Annual Spring Pro Bono Workshop**, “*The Power of Pro Bono*,” occurred on **May 15, 2013**. Over 55 people attended the workshop, including pro bono attorneys and representatives from various legal aid agencies. The special guest speaker was State Bar of Michigan President, Bruce Courtade (2012-2013). The evaluations from the workshop were all positive, with attendees reporting they would attend the 2014 workshop.

The **Sixth Annual Spring Pro Bono Workshop**, entitled, “*The Power of Pro Bono: For Your Program & For Michigan*,” is slated for May 14, 2014 at the State Bar. The workshop sessions are designed to encourage interactive discussions, with increased opportunities for attendees to network to discuss strategies for increasing pro bono legal services in Michigan.

The 2013 **Circle of Excellence** appeared in the June 2013 Michigan Bar Journal, and also included information on the 2014 COE’s two tiers of recognition. The Excellence Level will maintain the same criteria as the current COE. The Leadership Level will be determined on an aggregate firm basis using a 30-hour or \$500 standard. In the beginning of 2014, personalized letters were mailed to law firms that have previously appeared on the COE, and Michigan’s largest firms not previously appearing on the COE. The letters, which included a message from SBM President Brian Einhorn, advised firms of the 2014 COE applications. 2014 COE applications were due on April 4, 2014.

Tax Pro Bono Referral Panel Program. On Saturday, June 8, 2013, 29 attorneys participated in the initial program training. The in-person training was at Cooley’s Lansing Campus, with simultaneous broadcast to Cooley’s Ann Arbor, Auburn Hills, and Grand Rapids Campuses. Initially, the referral program initially accepted referrals from the Low Income Taxpayer Clinics at MSU, UM, and the Accounting Aid Society of Detroit. The referral match program is now accepting referrals from other LSPs.

Robert Mathis attended the **2013 ABA Equal Justice Conference** in St. Louis, MO. Erika Davis attended the Access to Justice Chair’s meeting.

Bob Gillett and Rob Mathis attended the **2013 NLADA Annual Conference** in Los Angeles.

The **Michigan Legal Help** website (michiganlegalhelp.org) was created to help people handle simple civil legal problems without a lawyer. The website features articles for people to learn about a specific area of the law and toolkits to help them prepare for self-representation in court. Some forms contained on the website are completed automatically once simple questions are answered. The Michigan Legal Help website does not provide legal advice, and it is not intended as a substitute for having a lawyer. PBI members are interested in MichiganLegalHelp.org because it has proven to be very helpful for people that cannot afford an attorney and cannot get assistance from a legal service provider or a pro bono attorney. Highlights of the website include almost 10,000 visits to the site each week and almost 1.7 million page views since its launch. In terms of pro bono service, law students are providing live assistance to clients needing help navigating the website and answers to questions not requiring legal advice. A Spanish version of the site will be launched soon.

The **Pro Bono Reference Manual** has been updated and is now on-line. Updates to the manual can now be done quickly as needed. A new addition to the manual is the searchable Michigan Law Related Organizations Search function, which allows the user to search by legal service area and county. The information in the search function is verified and updated frequently.

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The Pro Bono Council Program at the US District Court Eastern District of Michigan was formed in 2013 to help alleviate its pro se docket. The new Pro Bono Council Program now can place approximately 125 cases. The pro bono program also includes pro bono mediation panels.

The new **Veterans Resources Workgroup** was formed by the PBI to work with the increasing number of organizations being formed throughout Michigan to address the growing unmet legal needs of Michigan's veterans and service members. The workgroup recently created an electronic survey distributed to LSPs in Michigan to find out what legal services are being offered that are special or unique for veterans. Peggy Costello has also put together a comprehensive "Military and Veterans' Legal Services Guide" which will create a resource guide for veterans/advocates to find resources throughout Michigan. The workgroup has also been talking with the AG's office to provide the resource list on the AG website, and the information assessable through the legal services search function on the PBI/Pro Bono Manual site.

The PBI also formed a new **Homelessness Workgroup** which will research and determine what legal resources are available for Michigan's homeless, what barriers exist that prevent the homeless from accessing legal services, and suggest strategies for overcoming these barriers. The workgroup will also focus its attention on the coordination of efforts between pro bono lawyers and the existing legal services programs in each of the different areas of the state.

The **IMPACT Project** is operating with Vice President Biden's Office and the association of pro bono counsel (APBCo). The idea for IMPACT leverages the resources of law firms to systemically respond to the unmet legal needs of the community, with support and assistance from the legal aid community. In the Detroit community, there are two programs that are being discussed as potential IMPACT projects, which include a Micro-Business Initiative and a Domestic Violence Prevention Project. Both projects are still in the planning stages. The Micro-Business Initiative would focus on free legal advice in connection with starting and managing a small business or nonprofit, and dealing with legal and financial challenges facing a small business. The Domestic Violence Prevention Project would provide pro bono attorneys to represent DV survivors in PPO termination hearings and well as providing assistance with completing applications for PPOs. There is hope this Project will have a significant positive impact on Detroit.

SBM Staff is pleased to announce adding newly hired **PBI intern**, Benjamin Ensroth. Ben will provide support to the many workgroups, projects, and subcommittees of the PBI.

Future Goals and Activities:

Most project work described in this report occurs annually, and efforts will be directed to replicating and improving those projects. In the coming year, the PBI will continue efforts to improve the delivery of pro bono services to the poor throughout Michigan.