

The Minnesota Justice Foundation (MJF)

Annual Report 2024

The Minnesota Justice Foundation's mission: The Minnesota Justice Foundation creates opportunities for law students to engage in public interest and pro bono legal service and increases the capacity of legal organizations that serve the public interest.

We celebrated the 41st Anniversary of MJF this year!

Major Programs and Accomplishments:

1. Law School Public Service Program:

The Law School Public Service Program (LSPSP) arose out of a collaboration between the three law schools, the Minnesota State Bar Association and MJF. This is a unique example of a multi-law school collaboration for community engagement. Operating continuously since 1999, LSPSP encourages law students to perform at least 50 hours of law-related volunteer service during their law school careers. This is sometimes referred to as the "50 hour challenge" by law students, referencing Rule 6.1 of the Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct which states that lawyers have an ethical obligation to perform pro bono work and/or provide financial support to civil legal aid programs. Students who complete at least 50 hours of volunteer service during their time in law school receive recognition from their law school and MJF.

For the 2023-2024 school year, with 71% of law students reporting on 880 volunteer placements, law student volunteers assisted 5,700 clients over 15,400 hours.

2. Street Law:

Law student volunteers teach legal rights, responsibilities, and resources to middle school, high school, and adult students. Law students also introduce these students to the possibility of a career in law. Law students who participate in the Street Law program receive training on how to create a lesson plan that engages youth and adult learners in different areas of the law that may be interesting for their students. Law student volunteers work with the classroom teachers to find out what issues are most relevant to the students. Together they develop a syllabus for the term that addresses those issues using methods that will engage each student in the classroom.

During Spring 2024, we worked with classrooms at the following schools:

Brooklyn Center Secondary
Como Park Senior High
Cooper High School
Downtown School
Franklin Middle School
Harding High School
Journeys Secondary
Minnesota Internship Center
Northeast Middle School
Osseo Middle School
Roseville Area Middle School
South St. Paul High School
Transitions Plus
Washington Technology Magnet School

3. Summer Fellowship Program:

The Summer Fellowship Program is one method by which MJF seeks to close the justice gap experienced by many Minnesotans who need access to legal services to address their basic human needs. Matching law students with opportunities to work for the summer at public interest law agencies such as legal aid offices and legal nonprofits increases the capacity of those agencies to serve more clients. Many legal service programs in Minnesota have to turn away eligible clients each year due to program and staffing limits, or lack of case priority. With the support of law student fellows, attorneys at public interest agencies are able to focus their time on more complex cases and client matters while still providing quality services to an even higher volume of clients.

In 2024, MJF offered 14 summer fellowships at public interest law organizations around the state of Minnesota:

Anishinabe Legal Services
Central Minnesota Legal Services – Minneapolis
Children’s Law Center of Minnesota
CURE
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
Justice North
Leech Lake Tribal Court
Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid – Minneapolis; Housing Unit
Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid – St. Cloud and Willmar

Neighborhood Justice Center
Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services – Mankato
Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services – St. Paul; Legal Advocacy for
Older People
Tubman

Thank you to the organizational donors that supported the Summer Fellowship Program for Summer 2024:

The Third District Bar Association
The Fifth District Bar Association
The Sixth District Bar Association
The Seventh District Bar Association
The Ninth District Bar Association
The Thirteenth District Bar Association
The Eighteenth District Bar Association
The Civil Litigation Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association
The Family Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association
The Ramsey County Bar Foundation
The Minnesota State Bar Foundation
The Dorsey & Whitney Foundation
The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation - Wirtanen Family Fund
The Faegre Drinker Biddle and Reath Foundation
The Fredrikson & Byron Foundation
Nichols Kaster, PLLP
The Robins Kaplan LLP Foundation
Stinson LLP
Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

Geographic Location(s) & Population(s) Served

MJF works with public interest and public service law offices around the state of Minnesota to place students who work with low-income clients to increase access to justice for all Minnesotans.

MJF also works with students in Mitchell Hamline's blended learning program to help them get involved in public interest and public service legal work in Minnesota or where they reside.

Staff List as of August 31, 2024

Anna Beadle, Executive Director

Anna Berglund, Staff Attorney at Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Kendall Hames, Staff Attorney at University of Minnesota Law School
Rebecca Beerling, Staff Attorney at University of St. Thomas School of Law

Financials

Please find our reviewed financial statements and 990 at these links:

<https://mnjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2023-990.pdf>

<https://mnjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Financial-Statements-8-31-24-1.pdf>

A list of our board members for the year is included in the 990.

Call to Action

- Law students can get involved by creating an account on the MJF website at <https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/197/vol/login.asp>
- Lawyers working in public interest settings or on pro bono matters can request a law student volunteer on our website at <https://mnjustice.org/for-attorneys/volunteer-request-form-2/>
- Teachers interested in hosting Street Law can fill out a request on our website at <https://mnjustice.org/street-law/teachers-get-street-law-at-your-school/>
- Programs interested in hosting a summer fellow can find application information on our website at <https://mnjustice.org/for-attorneys/apply-to-host-mjf-summer-fellowship/>
- *Financial support from the community helps us make our programs possible, thank you.*

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<https://www.facebook.com/MNJusticeFoundation/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/minnesota-justice-foundation/>