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DC Bar Foundation Awards \$2.89 Million for Legal Services

The DC Bar Foundation has awarded \$2.89 million in grants to support civil legal services for the poor in the District of Columbia. The funds are from a landmark appropriation by the DC City Council to increase the number of lawyers handling housing issues for the poor and working in underserved communities. The Council also sought to afford greater access to justice for language minorities through a bank of legal interpreters shared among legal service providers.

The 15 awards include a \$500,000 grant to a program in which three local providers – Legal Aid Society, Bread for the City, and Neighborhood Legal Services – collaborate to provide attorneys on-site at Landlord-Tenant Court to assist litigants with immediate, critical needs for representation. DC Law Students in Court is also increasing its legal staff to support this program.

In addition, the Foundation awarded grants to bring more lawyers into neighborhoods where they are most needed. One grant will fund expansion of the Health Access Project of The Children's Law Center into Wards 7 and 8. This Project will house lawyers at medical clinics in Southeast DC, including a clinic equipped with a mobile van. Another grant will allow Women Empowered Against Violence to deploy lawyers to the District's new Victim Services Center in Ward 5. A grant to Ayuda, in partnership with the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center, will support lawyers for a new multi-lingual intake and referral system. Two separate grants will afford lawyers to mentally ill inmates and homebound elders, who are unable to seek the legal help they need. A technology grant to a site in Southeast DC will support the work of four separate legal services providers, and four other grants will fund 16 new lawyers at seven new offices in some of the District's neediest communities.

The Foundation is grateful to the efforts of the DC Access to Justice Commission in seeking this funding, and to the City Council for recognizing and responding to the dire need for legal services by the least fortunate among us.

A complete list of the new publicly funded grants is on the Foundation's website.

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The DC Bar Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 1977 to provide a vehicle for members of the bar to contribute to legal services providers. Since 1985, the Foundation has also administered the District of Columbia's IOLTA program.

**2007 Publicly Funded Grant Recipients
DC Bar Foundation**

Ayuda – Shared Legal Interpreter Bank
*(in collaboration with APALRC, La Clínica del Pueblo, Multicultural Community Services,
Washington College of Law)*

Ayuda – Legal Access for Immigrants Model Project (legal staff)
(in partnership with the Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center)

Bread for the City – Community Lawyering Initiative

Bread for the City – Southeast Site Technology Grant
*(supporting on-site staff and pro bono lawyers from Bread for the City, Legal Counsel for the
Elderly, DC Employment Justice Center, and the DC Bar Pro Bono Program's Advice and
Referral Clinic)*

Children's Law Center – Health Access Project Southeast Expansion

Court-Based Legal Services Project – awards to Bread for the City, Legal Aid
Society, Neighborhood Legal Services

DC Law Students in Court – Support for Court-Based Legal Services Project

Legal Aid Society of DC – Southeast Community Lawyering Project

Legal Counsel for the Elderly – Homebound Elders Project

Neighborhood Legal Services Program – Northeast/Southeast Expansion

University Legal Services – Project for Mentally Ill DC Inmates
(in collaboration with DC Prisoners Project of the Washington Lawyers Committee)

WEAVE – Ft. Totten Victim Services Center Expansion

Whitman Walker Legal Clinic – Southeast Legal Services Expansion