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DC Bar Foundation Awards \$1.1 Million to Support Civil Legal Services in the District of Columbia

The DC Bar Foundation announced awards totaling \$1.1 million to support direct civil legal services for the poor and underserved in the District. These grants are in addition to the \$3.13 million the Foundation awarded in April 2009 with funding from the District government.

Funds available for grants were down sharply this year, largely due to the drop in interest rates that reduced IOLTA revenues by 60%. Contributions from law firms were also down slightly. The Bar Foundation released funds from its reserve in order to meet its goal of \$1.1 million in grant funding, a level that is 50% of the June 2008 grants.

The economic downturn has created an enormously challenging environment for non-profit civil legal services organizations, precisely at a time when the need for their services is increasing, said Stephen J. Pollak, President of the D.C. Bar Foundation. We are grateful for the continued support of our legal community, and the commitment of local financial institutions to securing a baseline of funding for legal services in our city. DC Bar Foundation Executive Director Katherine L. Garrett noted that, while IOLTA returns for the coming year are expected to be even lower, the Bar Foundation is intent on awarding grants in June 2010 also totaling at least \$1.1 million. We believe it is important to send a clear signal to the provider community that the Bar Foundation stands with them in these challenging economic times, and to the people in our city that depend on these organizations that they will be there for the long haul.

This year, the Foundation's grants funded 25 organizations that make legal representation available to the homeless, the disabled, and the elderly, as well as to children, victims of domestic violence, and many more of the less fortunate in our community. The grants fund legal services across the city, and help lawyers reach those most at risk to identify and provide critical legal services.

The Foundation awards IOLTA/privately funded grants annually, after a rigorous process requiring detailed applications, interviews, and site reviews. The Foundation supports its grantees throughout the year with a range of technical assistance and programming. A list of the grantees for Fiscal Year 2009 is attached and is available 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.

**DC Bar Foundation
FY2009 IOLTA/Private Grantees**

- Advocates for Justice and Education
- Archdiocesan Legal Network
- Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
- Ayuda
- Bread for the City Legal Clinic
- Break the Cycle - DC
- Capital Area Immigrants Rights Coalition
- Central American Resource Center
- Children's Law Center
- Columbus Community Legal Services
- Disability Rights Project . Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
- D.C. Employment Justice Center
- D.C. Law Students in Court Program
- D.C. Prisoners Project - Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
- DV LEAP
- Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project . Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
- Legal Aid Society of D.C.
- Legal Aid Society of D.C. . Appellate Litigation Project
- Legal Counsel for the Elderly
- Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project
- Neighborhood Legal Services Program
- Our Place, D.C.
- University of the District of Columbia School of Law - Housing Clinic
- University of the District of Columbia School of Law . Low Income Taxpayer Clinic
- University Legal Services
- Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
- Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless . Homeless Access to Employment Project
- Whitman-Walker Clinic Legal Services Program
- Women Empowered Against Violence