

**THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BAR FOUNDATIONS (NCBF)/
LEXISNEXIS PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

Please answer each question in 250 words or less, using additional sheets as appropriate
DEADLINE: Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Nominee Foundation: Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation

Nominee's Address: 424 E. Wells Street

City: Milwaukee State: WI Zip: 53202

Phone: (414) 276-5934 Fax: (414) 274-6765

Executive Director or Senior Staff Person: James Temmer

Foundation Chair or President: Donald Christl

1. What is the name of the nominated program?
The Milwaukee Justice Center
2. Briefly describe the program.
The Milwaukee Justice Center (MJC) is a co-operative effort led by the Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation, the Milwaukee Bar Association, Milwaukee County and the Marquette University Law School. The MJC utilizes volunteers to address the unmet legal needs of Milwaukee County's low-income unrepresented litigants through court based programs and services.
3. What is your relationship to the organization? How are you aware of the program?
I am the Executive Director of the Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation and the Milwaukee Bar Association. I have been involved with the planning and implementation of the MJC since its inception.
4. To your knowledge, has this program received other awards or recognition?
 Yes No If yes, please explain:
5. Please explain how the nominated program meets the award criteria and why the foundation should be selected for this award (*In 250 words or less for each*)
 - How the program or initiative is consistent with NCBF's guiding principles

The MJC shares the core element of the NCBF's guiding principles: Lawyers coming together in ways only they can for the public good. In 2008, the Milwaukee Bar Association celebrated its 150th Anniversary. During the years leading up to our Sesquicentennial, many meetings were held with past MBA presidents, law firm leaders, judges and attorneys. Overwhelming sentiment was to celebrate this important event with an equally impressive public service project.

The MBA engaged the MBA Foundation and together they began planning and raising support for the MJC. Our goal was to make it easy for our members to volunteer. We wanted to increase the number of attorneys involved with volunteer legal service.

Lawyers needed to take the lead in program planning and delivery as only they could. The Foundation received financial support from the legal community and charitable foundations in the Milwaukee area. In the midst of the financial crisis on 2008, the MBA Foundation decided to keep moving forward and hire an employee to begin offering services at the MJC, even if the physical build-out had to wait. An administrative director was hired and the MBA began recruiting volunteer attorneys. The MBA partnered with Milwaukee County to provide space and support in the County Courthouse. Another key partner was the Marquette University Law School. The brief legal advice clinic operates at the MJC under the umbrella of a larger law school program. Law students serve alongside volunteer attorneys at the MJC.

- The program's impact on the justice system and/or the community

Statistics demonstrate Milwaukee's overwhelming need for civil legal services for the poorest members of our community: Milwaukee County has 16.9% of Wisconsin's population (2004) but 29.1% of the poverty population, 166,384 Milwaukee County residents live below the poverty line, 150,000 Milwaukee County residents receive food stamps. The State Bar of Wisconsin's recent Access to Justice survey determined that over **30,000** Milwaukee families in poor households face at least two serious legal problems each year and 80% of them do so without any legal help

The MJC utilizes volunteer lawyers, paralegals and law students in combination to staff several different levels of service. Self-help desk volunteers assist unrepresented litigants with filling out forms, and provide step by step instructions for filing in family law, small claims and foreclosure cases. Brief legal advice clinics offer a free, walk-in information and referral service staffed by volunteer attorneys working with and supervising law students. The clinic's goal is to provide unrepresented litigants with basic legal information and appropriate referrals on civil legal matters. The impact of the MJC on both the justice system and the larger community is breath-taking. The MJC began service in October 2009. During 2010, its first full year of operations, the MJC served **7,541 clients**. **304 volunteers** donated a total of **7,058 work hours**. The total value of volunteer service was **\$630,615**.

- How the program or initiative advances the foundation's mission

The mission of the MBA Foundation is to promote access to justice and an awareness of the role of law in society by supporting the pro bono, charitable, public service and educational activities of the Milwaukee Bar Association and its members. The MJC fulfills all of these goals. MBA members have contributed their talents and treasure to an effort aimed at providing access to justice and legal information to those most in need in our community. The Foundation was, and

is, uniquely situated to provide an avenue for the charitable activities of the MBA. Our goal was to make it easy and rewarding for our members to volunteer.

- How the program creates new partnership opportunities, or builds upon existing ones, with an affiliated bar association, the association members, and/or other community partners (e.g., law firms, the courts, other legal organizations, other foundations supporting or developing law-related programs)

The MJC is itself a partnership. Four key partners: The MBA, MBA Foundation, Milwaukee County and Marquette University Law School lead this program but other organizations have joined the partnership. Many local law firms donate their attorney's time. Area foundations have financially supported the MJC. We receive administrative support from students at several local colleges. For two years, the MJC has benefited from a partnership with AmeriCorps by the placement of an AmeriCorps volunteer. The MJC is a product of strong individual partners working towards a common goal. The program is led by the MBA and MBA Foundation, but could not succeed without vital contributions from all of these partners.

- An explanation of how the program or initiative can be replicated by other bar associations and foundations around the country

All bar associations and foundations share the same primary resource – the financial and *pro bono* legal assistance of their members. The MBA, like many local bar associations, has close connections with the judiciary and other key courthouse staff. Milwaukee is fortunate to have a law school and law students available to volunteer. A similar project could be replicated anywhere a bar association and its foundation share the underlying philosophy of the MJC: unrepresented litigants have a fundamental right to access the justice system even if they cannot afford an attorney or do not qualify for legal aid. The key elements that the MBA and Foundation provide are leadership and administrative and financial support.

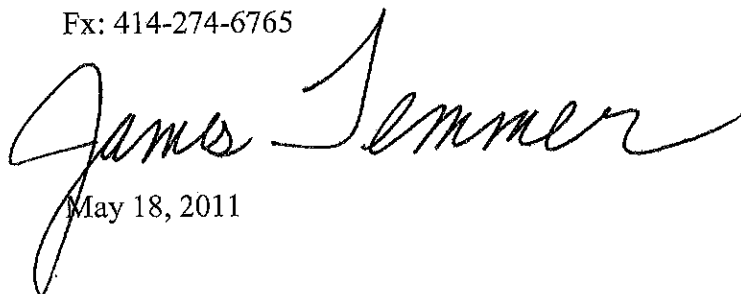
- Any other outstanding qualifications that would distinguish this program candidate from others

The MBA Foundation has no paid staff. The MBA's executive director serves in the same capacity for the MBA Foundation. During the economic down-turn of late 2008, the MBA Foundation made the bold decision to go forward with this project. They decided to forego the capital improvement portion of the project and focus on program delivery. The MBA Foundation raised enough money to pay for one new full-time position through the MBA. The Milwaukee Justice Center's Administrative Director began work on April 1, 2009. The main role of the Administrative Director, working with the MBA Executive Director, Board and staff, was to develop a volunteer base of lawyers to serve the MJC. The sole focus of this project has been to facilitate the *pro bono* efforts of attorneys. Our members, with the support of our association and foundation, have done what only lawyers are capable of doing, providing much needed legal services to indigent clients. This effort has improved the lives of everyone involved, both clients

and volunteer attorneys. Our community is a better place to live due to the efforts of the MBA Foundation.

NOMINATED BY:

James Temmer
Executive Director
Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation
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Milwaukee, WI 53202
Ph: 414-276-5934
Fx: 414-274-6765

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Temmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

May 18, 2011