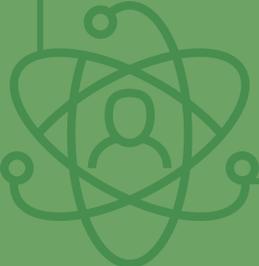


ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
BAR FOUNDATION



2021-2022  
**GRATITUDE  
REPORT**



# LETTER FROM THE ACBF PRESIDENT

This has been a very exciting year for the Foundation. We wrapped up our Endowment Campaign, meeting our goal and raising over \$1.5 million. The success of this campaign ensures that we can continue to make an impactful difference with all our programs well into the future.



With this successful campaign and the continuing commitment of our donors and volunteers, the Pro Bono Center continued to increase services to our low-income community members who need our skills the most. The Center, with two staff attorneys and a part-time law student connected over 1,200 individuals with legal help. It also continued to support over 40 pro bono programs and projects throughout Allegheny County. We also provided \$68,000 in grants to support legal aid providers and military and elderly programs.

The Foundation continues to support our profession. The Lawyers' Fund was able to provide \$25,000 in assistance to attorneys and their families in times of need. We also awarded \$60,000 in loans and scholarships to deserving law students. The Lawyers' Fund and Gismondi Second Year Law Student Summer Fellows Program enabled 15 second year law students to work for 8 weeks in Legal Aid Organizations. They not only bolstered these organizations' ability to serve their clients, but they also obtained invaluable learning skills, including client contact and court experience.

Finally, our Attorneys Against Hunger campaign continued its strong run, raising over \$112,000 for 18 organizations fighting hunger.

We are so proud of what we have been able to accomplish this past year. We extend a huge **THANK YOU** to all our donors and supporters! With your help, we continue to grow stronger each year and strengthen our community in so many ways!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keith E. Whitson'.

Keith E. Whitson, Esq.  
*ACBF President*

**\$60,000**

Awarded to Loans and Scholarships



**\$112,138**

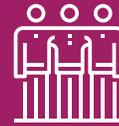
Raised for Attorneys Against Hunger



**12**

2L Lawyer Student Summer Fellows

9 Lawyers' Fund Students  
2 Gismondi Students  
1 Meehan Fellow



**18**



Students Receiving Loans or Scholarships

**\$65,000**

Awarded to Fellows Legal Aid Grants



**\$100,000**

Raised for Law Firm Leadership Circle



**32**



Pro Bono Center Programs and Projects

**\$3,500**

Awarded to Military and Elderly Grants



**1,480**

Parents

Represented by the Juvenile Court Project



**7**



Outstanding Volunteers Received Pro Bono Awards

**\$1.5 Million**

Raised for the Endowment Campaign



**\$25,000**

Distributed through the Lawyers' Fund Attorney Assistance



**1,428**

Pro Bono Clients Served



**688**

Pro Bono Volunteers



**\$195,284**

in Grant Funding for the Pro Bono Center



**13**

Pro Bono CLEs



# 1

## DO WHAT YOU CAN

Pro Bono Center  
Juvenile Court Project



## GIVE WHERE IT COUNTS

Attorneys Against Hunger  
Legal Aid Grants  
Fellows GIVE

# 2



# 3

## SUPPORT WHAT YOU CARE ABOUT

Law Firm Leadership Circle  
Law Student Summer Fellowships  
Scholarship Winners  
Financials  
Trustees and Staff



# DO WHAT YOU CAN

*Only the legal community* can help people with very low incomes who are facing dire legal problems. The Pro Bono Center serves as the nexus between the legal community and individuals in need who cannot possibly afford an attorney. Our programs provide the training, support, malpractice coverage, and more so that attorneys can represent clients with confidence. Last year, 13 CLE and other training programs were provided – free to volunteers – by the Pro Bono Center and partnering organizations.

The Pro Bono Center's member organizations and partners reported that over 600 volunteer attorneys, law students, and others provided services to nearly 3,000 clients in 2021. Staff attorneys at the Pro Bono Center connected with **1,428** individuals who sought help for a legal problem, providing them with advice, representation, or referral to another legal resource.

## CONNECTING VOLUNTEERS WITH COMMUNITIES IN NEED

In November 2021, the Pro Bono Center mobilized volunteer attorneys and law students to help individuals in need of legal services. In November, attorneys and Pitt Law students held the Derrick A. Bell Community Legal Clinic at the Hill District Community Engagement Center where they served 26 clients. About a dozen Pitt students were also trained to prepare applications through the Pittsburgh Pardons Project. Criminal records clearing clinics were also held throughout the year in collaboration with job training organizations including Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc.



# PRO BONO CENTER

Allegheny County Bar Foundation



# FINANCIAL SUPPORT AT A CRITICAL TIME HELPED PRO BONO CENTER CONTINUE ITS WORK

Thanks to financial support from the Pennsylvania IOLTA Board and local foundations, and generous donations from law firms, corporations, and individuals like you, the Pro Bono Center was able to continue its work to provide free legal services to the neediest in our communities at a time of great uncertainty for both us and our clients. A recent national study by the national Legal Services Corporation showed that the justice gap – between those who need legal help and those who receive it – is growing. Legal aid and pro bono programs are essential to ensuring equal access to justice for all, regardless of a person's ability to afford an attorney. **Thank you!**

## PRO BONO AWARDS AND VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

The ACBA/ACBF Public Service Committee presented the Pro Bono Achievement Awards at the Fall Foundation Reception to attorneys, judges, and organizations that demonstrated an outstanding commitment to serving those in need. The Pro Bono Center also celebrated National Volunteer Month with a happy hour in the Strip District.

### Pro Bono Awards

Hon. Christine Ward & Dianne Wainwright,  
Housing Court  
*Judicial Services Award*

Pittsburgh Reporting Service  
*Organization Award*

Cristian Minor  
*Special Service Award*

Susan Abramowich  
*Lorraine M. Bittner Public Interest Attorney Award*

Dingess, Foster, Luciana, Davidson & Chleboski LLP  
*Law Firm Award*

James Petraglia  
*Jane F. Hepting Individual Attorney Award*



SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA  
Pennsylvania Interest on  
Lawyer Trust Accounts Board



# JUVENILE COURT PROJECT

At the start of the 2021-2022 fiscal year the Juvenile Court Project (JCP) staff were working remotely and returned to in-office work in September 2021. Dependency and TPR hearings were conducted using advanced communication technology via Microsoft Teams until March 2022 when the courthouse resumed in-person hearings. During the fiscal year, the JCP represented 1,480 clients and participated in over 7,800 hearings concerning the clients' 2,978 court active children.

The JCP worked with a software development firm to modernize their Client Database which was completed in December 2021. One of the upgrades in the Client Database was the ability to track the number of referrals made to support staff in assistance to clients. From December 2021 through the end of the fiscal year over 1,000 referrals were made concerning attending meetings (Family Conferencing and Teaming, Inter-agency, and Education), attending court, assisting with housing, retrieving records (treatment and medical), retrieving court documents, and drafting motions. The JCP, also, began new initiatives to engage clients including bi-weekly "check in" calls and more formalized family finding at the time of intake.



# GIVE WHERE IT COUNTS



## SMITHFIELD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Smithfield Church is one of the five churches funded under the Downtown Ministerium and accounts Attorneys Against Hunger funding as helping it to remain operational during the pandemic. Even though the serving numbers may have dropped, the hunger program was a lifeline to many people. They were able to assist a mother of three who had lost her job and signed up for food assistance but had yet to receive it. They provided her (and her children) with food in the interim period until her supplemental benefits kicked in.

They began providing more grab-n-go food to assist the homeless. One homeless gentleman recently told them that they were the only pantry downtown offering food that he could eat living on the street without access to a kitchen.





## NORTH HILLS COMMUNITY OUTREACH

NHCO was able to serve 2,036 families either through the food pantry programs or through their emergency food program. Out of their 20 different programs and services, the food pantries served the most people by quite a margin. NHCO continues to offer a shopping model or its drive-thru distribution model which provides the best level of service with a minimum amount of contact with pre-packed boxes of dry goods, fresh produce, meat and dairy.



# FELLOWS LEGAL AID GRANTS

## NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES

NLS's Grant helped AC, a single mother of two teenage boys, who was facing garnishment of her bank account following a magisterial court judgement against her for alleged damages, repair costs, and back due rent for an apartment in Lawrence County. AC had moved out of the premises several months prior and she was in a desperate situation because without access to her bank account, she could not pay for her diabetes medication. She contacted NLS Attorney Eileen Yacknin who filed an emergency motion to remove an improper garnishment judgment so that AC could challenge the decision. The Court agreed with Attorney Yacknin and the judgment was lifted, allowing AC to obtain her critical medication and care for her two children. Attorney Yacknin then helped AC file a counterclaim against the landlord who had illegally changed the locks to the premises while AC was moving out which gave AC bargaining power that most tenants do not have. Not wanting to litigate the counterclaim, the landlord agreed to withdraw his complaint against her if AC withdrew her counterclaim. As a result, AC was able to move on with her life and better provide for her family.



NEIGHBORHOOD  
LEGAL SERVICES



# EDUCATION LAW CENTER

This Legal Aid Grant was awarded to meet an increased need to provide legal representation and consultation to Black girls, their families, and social service providers on injustices in public education rooted in racism, misogyny, and ableism.

ELC represented M.R., a multilingual refugee student from Malawi with limited formal education who needed academic supports and social and emotional services. She had received an inappropriate special education evaluation that was not in her preferred language and was deemed not eligible for special education services. ELC demanded that the school district conduct a new evaluation following best practices for multilingual students with limited formal education. After a new evaluation was conducted in accordance with policies recommended by ELC, M.R. was provided special education services to address her academic, social, and emotional needs.

EDUCATION  
LAW CENTER



# FELLOWS GIVE: A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PHILANTHROPY

After 20 years and over \$700,000 in grants distributed, the hallmark campaign of the ACBF has taken a new shape! In June of 2022 we began rolling out **Fellows GIVE**, the new program designed to connect past, current, and future Fellows of the Foundation with one another and the organizations that are making an impact in our community.

Fellows with an open or qualifying pledge will be able to vote on the recipients of the Legal Aid Grants made possible by their contributions – and rather than reviewing written proposals, Fellows will hear directly from applying organizations at a live pitch event. The most exciting part? For the first year of the program, **all Fellows are eligible to participate by casting their vote!**

We are proud to be a part of this new effort and so thankful for all the contributions made by current and past Fellows.

Gilda M. Arroyo and Jessica Crown  
Co-Chairs, *Fellows GIVE* Committee

## 2022 Grantees:



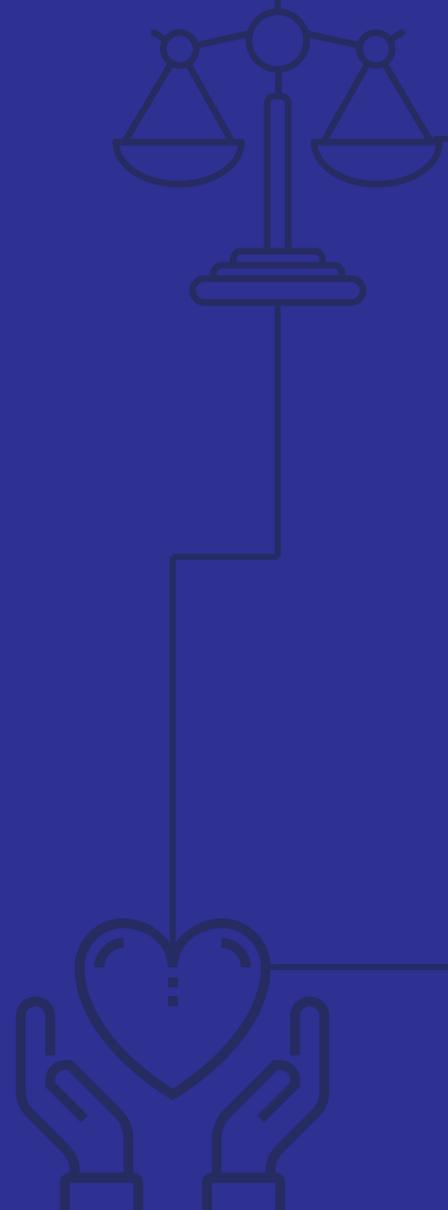
# SUPPORT WHAT YOU CARE ABOUT

## LAW FIRM LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

We continue to be grateful for our 2021-2024 Law Firm Leadership Circle members. These firms have taken a stand to help increase services to our community. They assist us to continue to grow in so many ways, from expanding pro bono services to increasing much needed hunger resources to the public and educational support through training and loans and scholarships to law students. The success of all the programs are largely based on this invaluable support!

Leadership Circle Law Firms joining forces with the Foundation for fiscal year July 2021-June 2024:

Babst Calland  
Bernstein-Burkley  
Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC  
Burns White LLC  
Campbell Durrant Beatty Palombo & Miller, PC  
Clark Hill PLC  
Dentons Cohen & Grigsby, PC  
Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, PC  
Duane Morris LLP  
Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellot, LLC  
Fox Rothschild LLP  
Frank, Gale, Bails, Murcko & Pocrass, PC  
Gismondi & Associates  
Goehring Rutter & Boehm  
Jones Day  
K&L Gates LLP  
Marshall, Dennehy, Warner, Coleman & Goggin, PC  
McCarthy McEnroe Rosinski & Joy  
Meyer Darragh Buckler Bebenek & Eck, PLLC  
Meyer Unkovic & Scott LLP  
Pollock Begg  
Raphael, Ramsden & Behers, PC  
Reed Smith LLP  
Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP  
Sherrard, German & Kelly, PC  
Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky  
Thomas, Thomas & Hafer LLP  
Troutman Pepper Hamilton LLP  
Tucker Arensberg, PC  
Vuono & Gray, LLC  
The Webb Law Firm, PC  
Zimmer Kunz, PLLC



# LAW STUDENT SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

In the Summer of 2022, twelve 2L law students were provided Fellowships to work at Legal Aid Organizations across Allegheny County. For the first time, the Meehan Citizenship Institute Fellow was created in memory of John A. Meehan, spouse of ACBA member Jackie Martinez, who was passionate about the issue of empowering new citizens through voting and the understanding of U.S. government, court, and electoral systems.



## LAWYERS' FUND SUMMER FELLOWS

Zoe Crawford, Pro Bono Center  
Erin Fitzpatrick, Allegheny County District Attorney  
Morgan Green, Disability Rights Network  
Ashley James, Christian Legal Aid  
Isaac Jeantete, Juvenile Court Project  
Erin Volz, Allegheny County District Attorney  
Hannah Brem, Women's Law Project  
Hattie Dougherty, Education Law Center  
Trevor Todd, Jewish Family & Community Services

## GISMONDI CERTIFIED LAW STUDENT SUMMER FELLOWS

Caitlin Cesa, Women's Center & Shelter  
Octavia Williams, Allegheny County Public Defender

## MEEHAN CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOW

Fred Porter, Jewish Family & Community Services

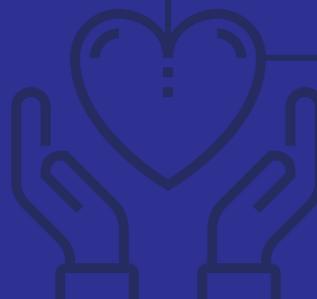
## JOHN P. GISMONDI LAW STUDENT SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

This summer, as a Gismondi Fellow, I interned at the Allegheny County Public Defender Office. As a certified intern, I represented clients in a similar capacity as a licensed attorney. I interviewed clients, examined evidence, drafted suppression motions, and conducted preliminary hearings in Municipal Court. Public defenders make untold sacrifices each and every day, and I am humbled by their service. The strength, love, hard work, and courage required of a public defender are admirable. Most people don't know about or talk about the battle for justice.

The criminal justice system is plagued by silent injustices that are aggressively enforcing themselves in what seems to be an endless cycle. We as people must break this cycle by being kind and compassionate to one another, regardless of our socioeconomic status, backgrounds, or origins. In the wake of the global pandemic outbreak, nature forced humanity to come together as a community; individuals showed acts of kindness that improved the lives of others, which improved society as a whole. In order to ensure fairness to all people, we must continue to maintain this energy. It was John P. Gismondi's generosity that made my internship possible; his commitment to funding unpaid public interest internships made it possible for me to get the summer experience of my life. In addition, the Pitt Law Professional Development Office and the Allegheny County Bar Association supported me in making my dream a reality.

Thank you forever for your kindness.

**Octavia Williams**





## LAWYERS' FUND LAW STUDENT SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The benefits realized from the help **Erin Fitzpatrick** gave us will last long after summer is over.

The experience proved beneficial to the District Attorney's Office in that Erin was able to significantly assist the members of the unit in obtaining discovery, organizing files, and doing research. I believe that the experience the internship provided to her was invaluable. She, as a certified intern, appeared in court under the supervision of an attorney and entered her appearance on the record. She handled motions, detention hearings, consent decrees, reviews, and even had the opportunity to try a case. We are hopeful that there may be an opportunity for her to return in some capacity in the future.

*Ann Steiner, Assistant District Attorney, Juvenile Division*



# SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



**Taylor Riedel**  
Hon. Carol Los  
Mansmann  
Scholarship Winner



**Zachary Zovko**  
James Smith  
Notre Dame  
Scholarship Winner



**Veronica Vivero-Condon**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



**Darren Campuzano**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



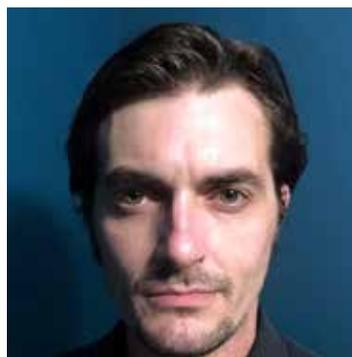
**Grace Mannix**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



**Jonah Markle**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



**Gwyneth Ortman**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



**Brendan Renne**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



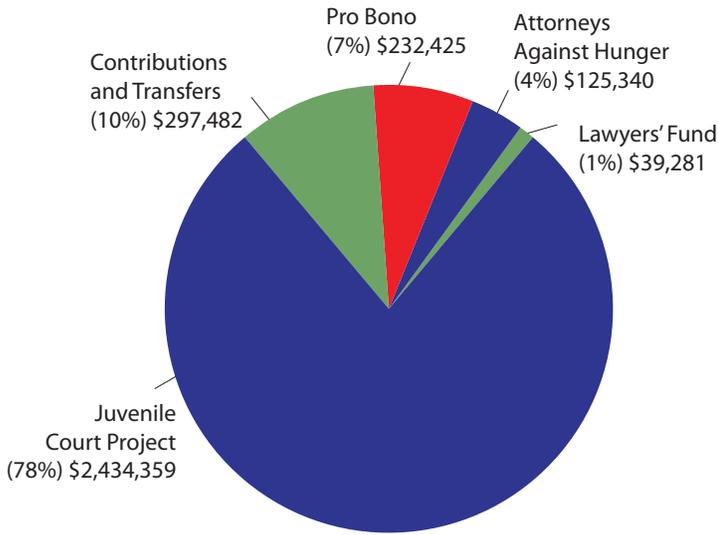
**Gabrielle Shaulis**  
F.C. Grote  
Fund  
Scholarship Winner



# 2021-2022 FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

Audited financials for July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.  
Please visit [www.ACBF.org](http://www.ACBF.org) to view a complete copy of the ACBF audited financial statement.

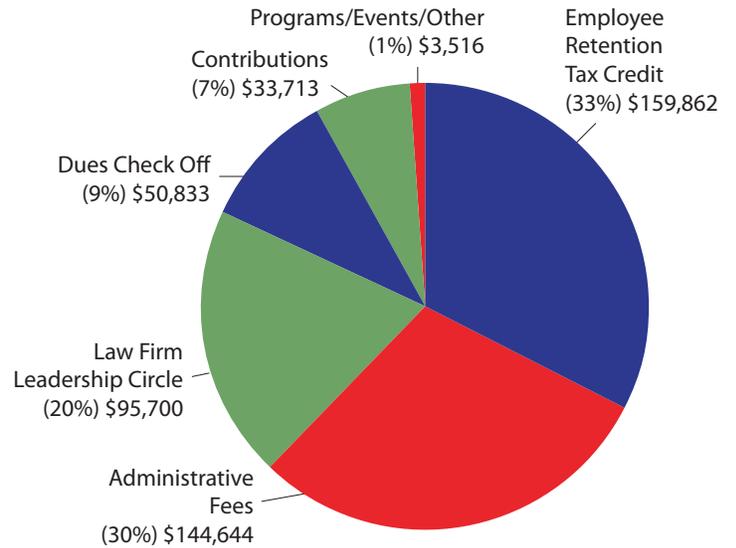
## RESTRICTED



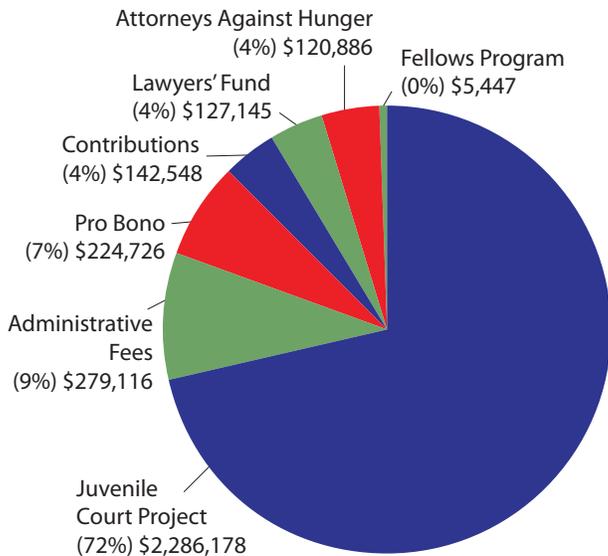
Total Revenue \$2,369,378

\*Chart excludes investment losses of \$759,509

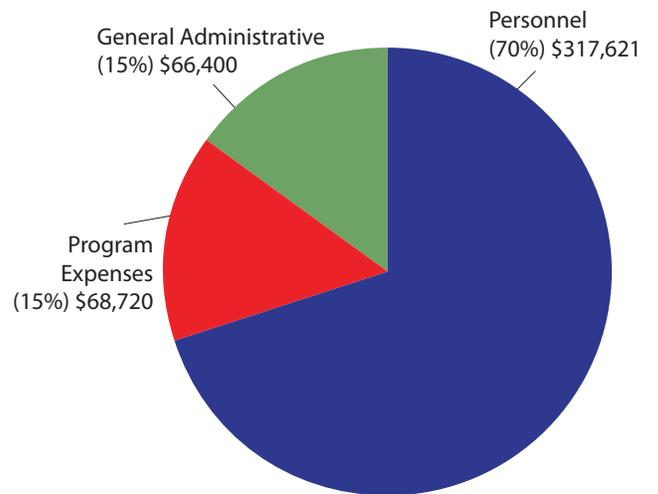
## UNRESTRICTED



Total Revenue \$488,268



Total Expenses \$3,186,046



Total Expenses \$452,741



## 2021-2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND FOUNDATION STAFF

Keith E. Whitson, **President**  
Daniel J. Sinclair, **Vice President**  
Jaclyn M. Belczyk, **Secretary**  
Ronald J. Brown, **Treasurer**  
Jennifer R. Andrade, **Immediate Past-President**



### **One Year**

Robert S. Bernstein  
Frederick N. Frank  
Sunu M. Pillai  
Daniel J. Sinclair  
Stanley M. Stein  
Keith E. Whitson

### **Two Year**

Jennifer R. Andrade  
Gilda M. Arroyo  
Jaclyn M. Belczyk  
Edward J. Donnelly, III, MD  
Andrew K. Fletcher  
Gary M. Lang  
Mary Lou McLaughlin  
Crystal McCormick Ware

### **Three Year**

Ronald J. Brown  
Lacee C. Ecker  
Thomas R. Moore  
Margaret W. Prescott  
Brian C. Vertz  
Hon. Christine Ann Ward

Aleksandra J. Kocelko, **Young Lawyers Division**

David A. Blaner, **Executive Director**  
Lorrie K. Albert, **Associate Executive Director**  
Ronald Slavonic, **Director of Finance**  
Barbara Griffin, **Pro Bono Center Director**  
Cathy Volponi, **Juvenile Court Project Director**  
Mallory Draisma, **Programs and Project Manager**  
Patricia Jones, **Divorce Law Project Staff Attorney**



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Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
[www.ACBF.org](http://www.ACBF.org)

*The Allegheny County Bar Foundation is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization and is classified by the IRS as a "public charity". A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*