



State Bar of Wisconsin

2022 ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN

Leaders in the Law. Advocates for Justice.®





Serving
the Court



Serving
the Public



Serving
Members



Other
Activities



Law
Foundation

Pulling Together. Pulling Ahead.

The State Bar exists to support its members in a dynamic and diverse society by delivering valued professional services, promoting access to justice and pursuing professional satisfaction.

Staff and volunteers continued working in tandem to address the legal profession’s challenges while finding new ways to serve members and Wisconsin’s communities during the ongoing pandemic.

The State Bar continued supporting legislative efforts to improve the administration of justice, helped the public access the legal system, connected Wisconsin residents with attorneys, and educated students and the public about the rule of law.

During the past year, the State Bar implemented technology improvements, including WisBar.org, for a better user experience and access. The State Bar also created a free legal advice program for small businesses affected by the pandemic and held major conferences and CLE programs. The organization helped facilitate a plan targeting lawyer well-being in Wisconsin, and continued its robust ethics guidance program.

Special note: Women held all officer positions to start the fiscal year, a first in the history of the State Bar of Wisconsin.

Priorities for FY 2022

- Supported diversity, equity, inclusion and access efforts.
- Implemented the recommendations of the Task Force on Greater Wisconsin Initiative.
- Completed the work of the Task Force on Wisconsin Lawyer Well-Being.
- Advocated for expungement and policing reforms.
- Supported broadband access throughout the state.
- Promoted fair budgets in all areas of the judicial system.
- Connected members and the public to resources and information that will help them through the challenges caused by the pandemic.

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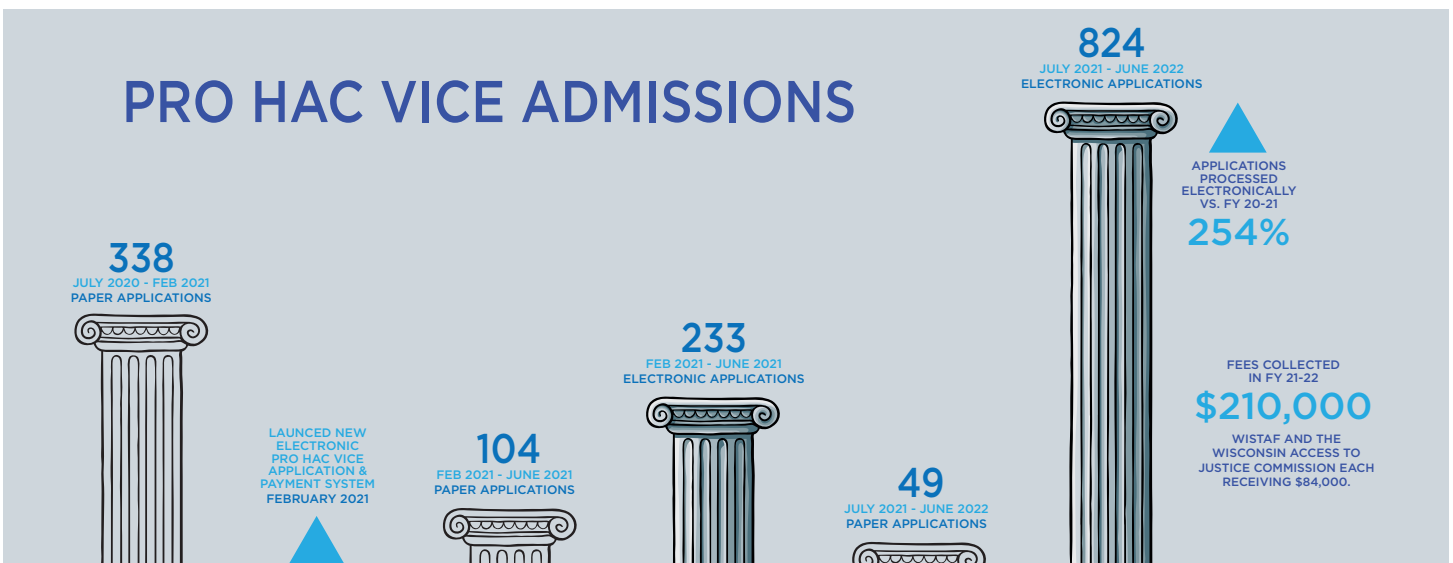
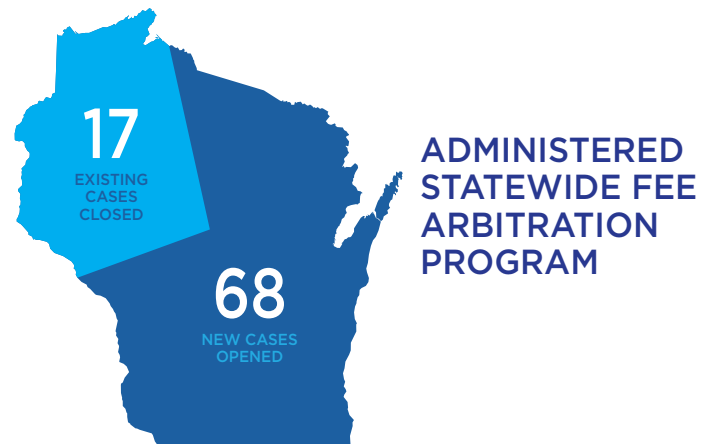


Serving the Court

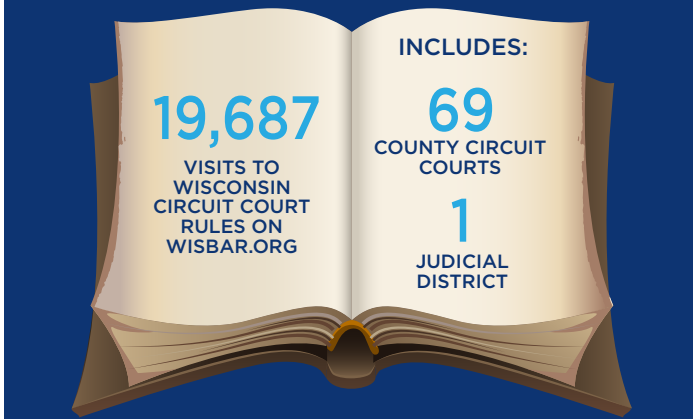
The State Bar continues to manage the administrative tasks for tracking and assisting the 25,500+ Wisconsin licensed attorneys. Customer service representatives and accounting staff manage the thousands of phone calls for assistance and updates to member records including the payment of court assessments and State Bar membership dues. This aids the Court, the Board of Bar Examiners, the Office of Lawyer Regulation, and the State Bar in assuring that no person whose license to practice law is suspended for nonpayment of assessments and dues or failure to comply with the trust account certification requirement will practice law during the period of the suspension.



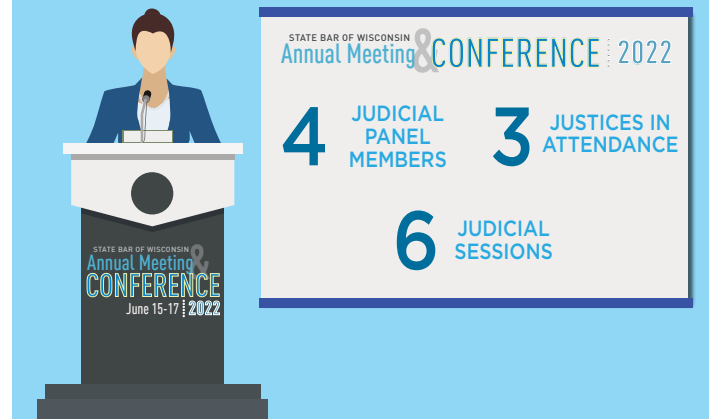
In addition, members of the public can turn to the State Bar when they have a financial dispute with their attorneys. The Fee Arbitration program continues to provide an informal and economic alternative to litigation for clients and lawyers who are unable to agree upon a fee charged for legal services. The Client Protection Program, created by the Supreme Court in 1981, paid more than \$130,000 to persons injured by dishonest conduct of their attorneys.



WISCONSIN COURT RULES



JUDICIAL EDUCATION SESSIONS

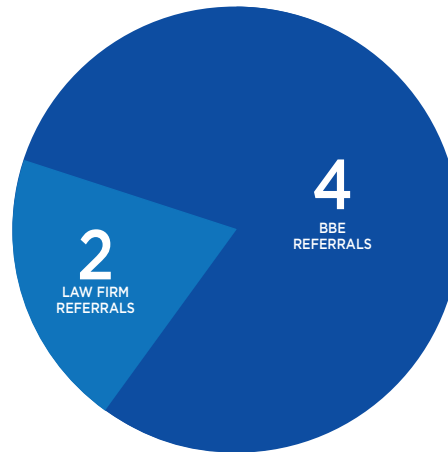


ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAWYER FUND FOR CLIENT PROTECTION

CREATED BY THE WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT IN 1981, THE CLIENT PROTECTION FUND IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT TO CLIENTS WHO HAVE INCURRED FINANCIAL LOSSES DUE TO THE DISHONEST CONDUCT OF THEIR ATTORNEYS. AS THE COURT HAS OUTLINED, STATE BAR MEMBERS ARE ASSESSED ANNUAL FEES TO FINANCE THE FUND.

\$130,331
PAID TO INJURED CLIENTS

9 CLAIMS PAID 23 NEW CLAIMS

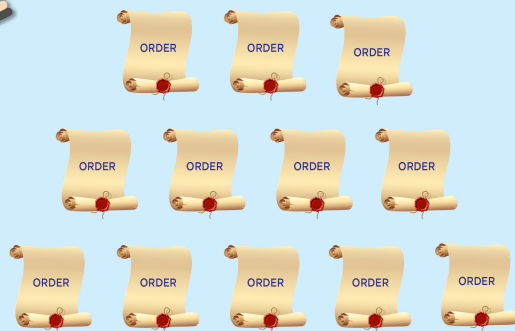


WISLAP MONITORING & CONDITIONAL ADMISSION PROGRAM

THE WISCONSIN LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WISLAP) WORKS WITH THE OFFICE OF LAWYER REGULATION AND THE BOARD OF BAR EXAMINERS (BBE) TO FACILITATE CONFIDENTIAL REFERRALS FOR MEMBERS WITH ADDICTIONS, MENTAL ILLNESS OR OTHER PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE PRACTICE OF LAW.

6
LAWYERS IN 2021-22 MONITORING PROGRAM

COMMUNICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE COURT



12 FINAL ORDERS



Of Special Note

- Judge Randy Koschnick, Director of State Courts, addressed the Board of Governors on the state of court operations.
- Chief Justice Annette Ziegler presided over the annual tradition of swearing in the incoming State Bar President, Margaret Hickey, at the Annual Meeting and Conference. The Chief Justice also spoke on court security issues in the wake of the passing of Juneau County Circuit Court Judge John Roemer. Justices Rebecca Bradley and Ann Walsh Bradley were also in attendance.



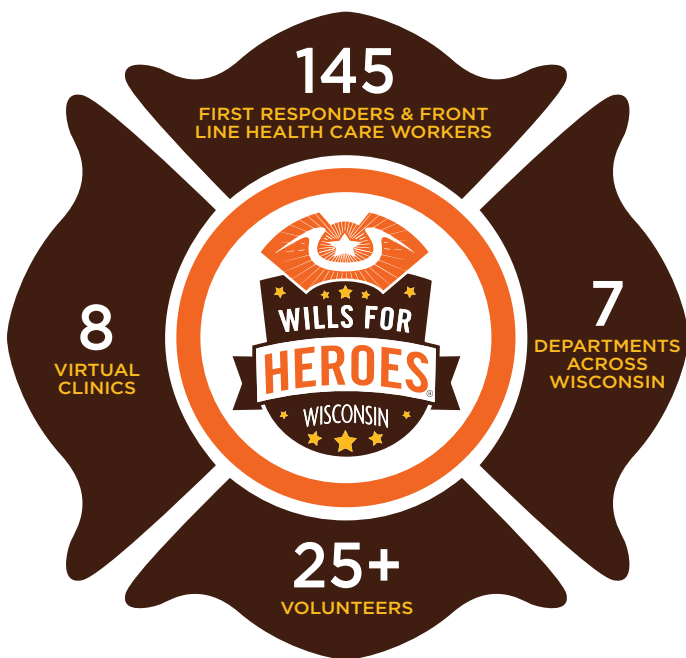
Serving the Public

The State Bar continues serving the public in meaningful ways, through pro bono work, lawyer referrals, and public education. A highlight this year: Future generations of Wisconsin residents will learn of Vel Phillips, a prominent attorney and civil rights activist, thanks in-part to a significant State Bar and Wisconsin Law Foundation joint pledge toward the siting of her statue on the State Capitol grounds.



Wills for Heroes: Virtual Clinics Open for Business

Through Wisconsin's Wills for Heroes program, volunteer lawyers prepare simple wills and other basic estate planning documents at no charge for eligible first responders.



Free Legal Answers Helps Resource-Challenged Consumers

Wisconsin Free Legal Answers, a project of the Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission in cooperation with the State Bar, is a web portal for volunteer lawyers to answer civil legal questions for consumers with limited means.



Small Businesses Receive Free Legal Help

The Business Law Section continued their collaboration with Marquette Legal Clinic to offer free legal help to struggling small businesses affected by the pandemic.

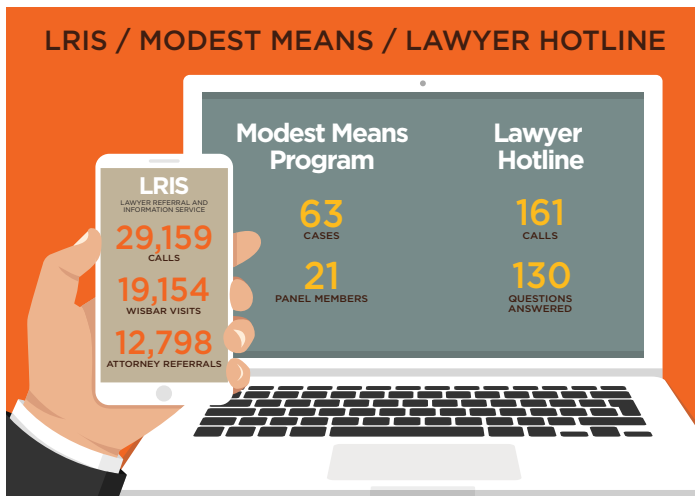


Pro Bono Marketplace

The State Bar offers a centralized Wisconsin pro bono portal for volunteers seeking pro bono opportunities and for providers wanting to communicate opportunities.

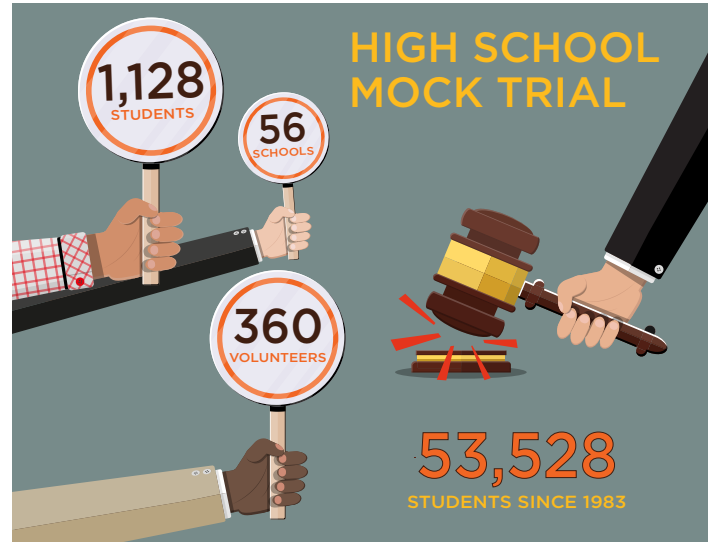


Accessing the Legal System



High School Mock Trial

The 2022 competition was held for the second consecutive year via Zoom format, with Brookfield Central High School winning State.



WisBar.org - the Public's Portal to Free Legal Information

WisBar.org helps the public navigate Wisconsin's legal system. The public can access basic legal information, find answers to frequently asked questions about common legal situations, discover services to help them find and hire a lawyer or solutions to resolve lawyer/client disputes.



Of Special Note

The State Bar's Lawyer Referral and Information Service partnered with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association to develop and distribute bi-monthly legal stories to educate the public on various aspects of the law, such as tenant rights and child placement issues. From April 1, 2022 to July 31 2022, 81 stories were published in 30 newspapers across the state. More than 50 stories appeared online.



Serving Members

The field of law is constantly changing. Running a law practice is highly complex. From ethical considerations and business efficiency to regulations, members face a myriad of complex decisions every day. The State Bar works to support members so they may confidently serve their clients in times of need.

PINNACLE Programs

The State Bar is the largest provider of continuing legal education in the state, providing four times as many CLE hours as the next provider. As members' learning expectations change, the State Bar is transitioning toward a more robust virtual learning model using technologies that allow a more tailored learning experience.



PINNACLE Books

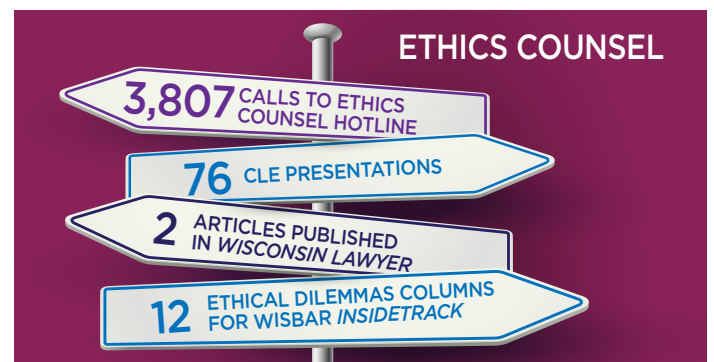
State Bar of Wisconsin PINNACLE® offers a comprehensive library of 80-plus practice treatises and substantive system books, and eight libraries in its Forms Bank. Access to PINNACLE's digital library means that lawyers can access information from any location.

PINNACLE Books released the much anticipated *Mental Health Law in Wisconsin: A Guide for Legal and Healthcare Providers*. Special thanks to Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Rebecca Grassl Bradley for her work on this project.



Ethics Counsel

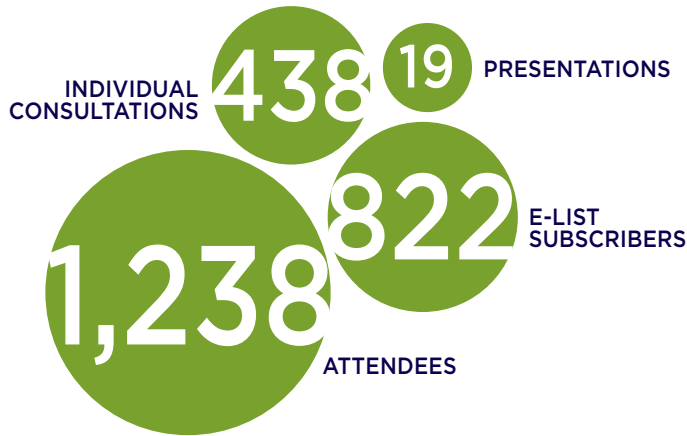
State Bar Ethics Counsel offers guidance for lawyers regarding Wisconsin's Rules of Professional Conduct for attorneys, partnering with the Office of Lawyer Regulation to ensure attorneys understand and follow the Supreme Court's rules for attorney conduct.



Practice411:
Helping Members Make
Solid Business Decisions

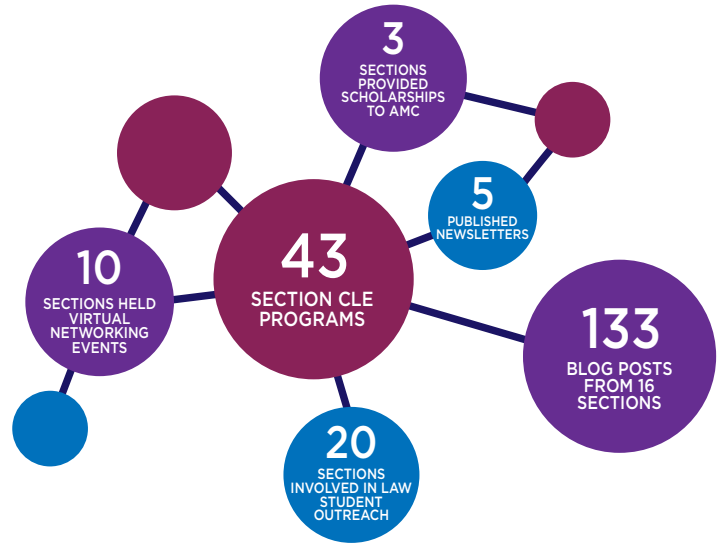


For many attorneys, practicing law is only part of their work. Practice411™, a robust practice management assistance program, assists these firms in improving practices and the delivery of legal services.



Sections and Divisions

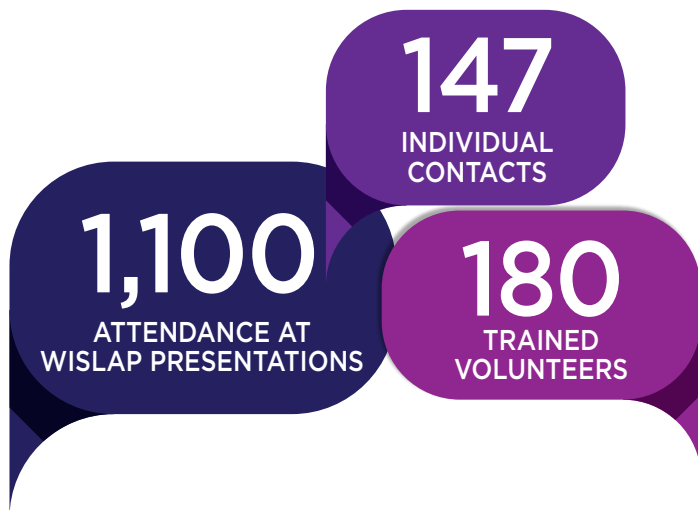
State Bar sections and divisions kept busy in 2021-2022, offering targeted information to members.



WisLAP



The Wisconsin Lawyers Assistance Program (WisLAP) offers confidential wellbeing support to lawyers, judges, law students and their families. Utilizing trained peer volunteers, structured wellbeing resources and individualized supportive services, WisLAP aims to promote attorney wellbeing by developing a culture within the Wisconsin legal community that destigmatizes mental illness and substance use disorders and fosters work-life balance.



Of Special Note

- Ethics Counsel worked with the State Public Defenders Office to jointly file Rules Petition 21-01, which was granted by the Wisconsin Supreme Court and took effect Jan. 1, 2022.
- WisLAP concluded work on the Wisconsin Lawyer Well-Being Task Force to create a statewide action plan to address the legal community's high rates of mental health and substance use disorders. The report was approved by the State Bar Board of Governors in June 2022.
- State Bar PINNACLE hosted our first-ever Forensic Justice Institute in January 2022.



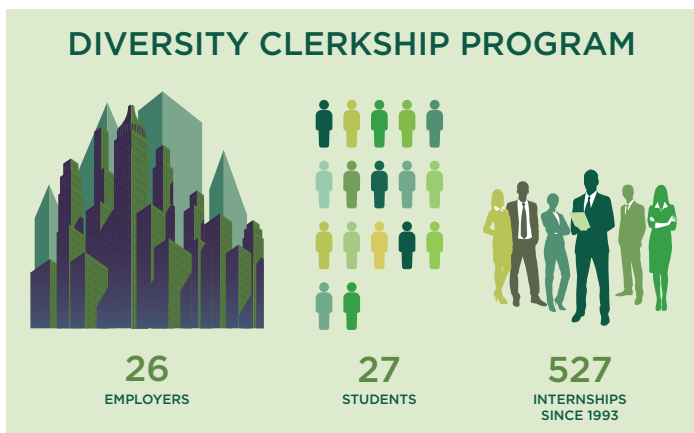
Other Activities of Note

Continuing Diversity & Inclusion in the Legal System

The State Bar continues its longstanding work toward bringing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility initiatives to Wisconsin’s legal community. Notably, partnerships with affinity groups at U.W. and Marquette law schools help to welcome students of color and LGBTQIA+ students into the legal profession by hosting events and awarding Annual Meeting & Conference scholarships to alumni of the Diversity Clerkship Program.

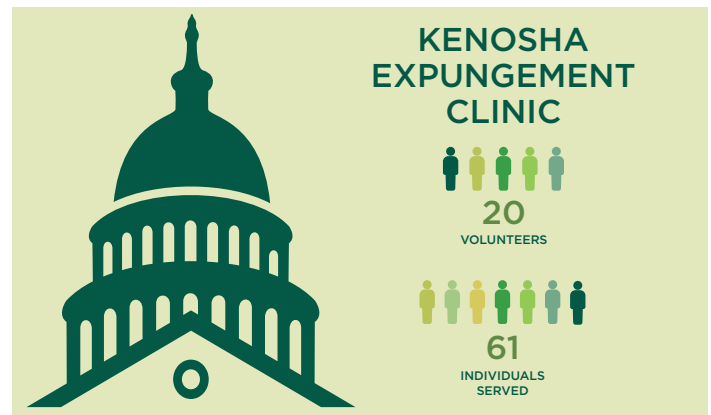
Diversity Clerkship Program: Building 500+ Careers

The State Bar’s Diversity Clerkship Program is a 10-week, paid summer employment opportunity where first-year Marquette University and U.W. law school students with diverse backgrounds are matched with a wide array of employers from private law firms, corporate legal departments and governmental agencies.



Kenosha Expungement Clinic

In September 2021, the State Bar, the Kenosha County Bar Association, Legal Action of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Association of African American Lawyers, and the Urban League of Racine & Kenosha, held a free expungement legal clinic for Kenosha area residents.



Awarding Legal Innovation

The practice of law is undergoing historic change. The State Bar recognizes those in the Wisconsin legal community who contribute to legal innovation. Examples of legal innovation in 2021 included:

- Forensic science in courtrooms;
- Prosecutorial reforms aimed at the opioid epidemic, domestic violence, healthcare and elder fraud, and retention of talented prosecutors;
- Bolstering efficiency and effectiveness in public defense;
- Client advocacy and the power of video;
- Legal app for people to find publicly available; information in state or county databases and helps them create and file paperwork related to their criminal or eviction records; and
- Targeting health disparities through the Office of Health Equity.

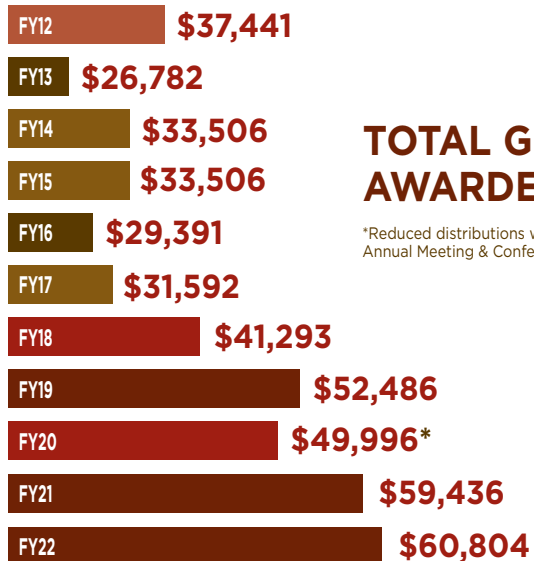
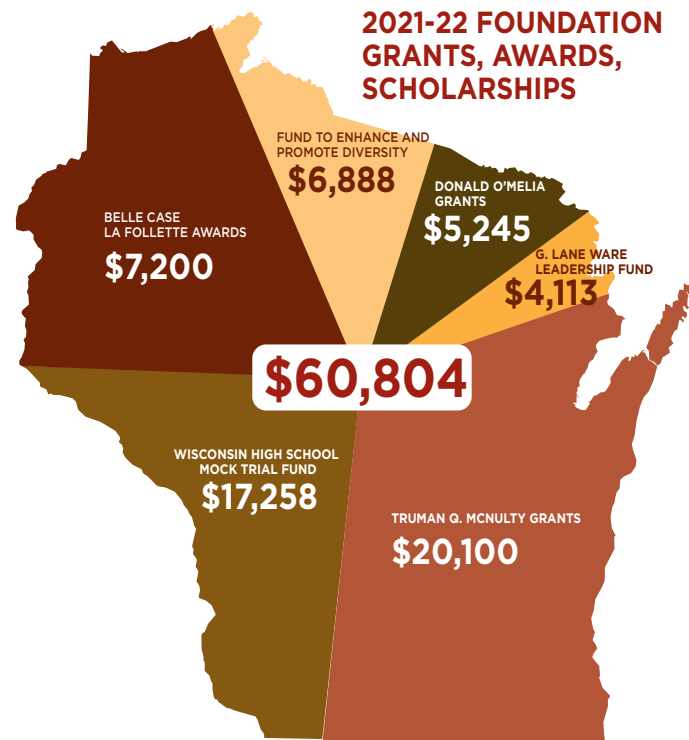




Wisconsin Law Foundation

The Wisconsin Law Foundation – Giving Back to Our Communities

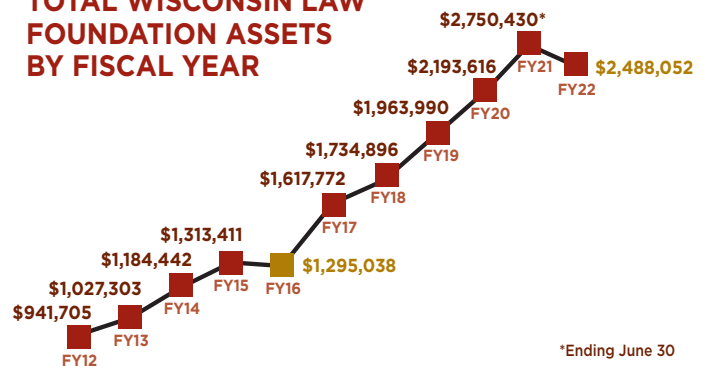
Since 1996, the Wisconsin Law Foundation – the charitable arm of the State Bar of Wisconsin – has distributed 278 grants, scholarships and awards totaling more than more \$7 million to support law-related education and public service programs throughout the state.



TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED

*Reduced distributions with cancellation of the Annual Meeting & Conference due to COVID-19

TOTAL WISCONSIN LAW FOUNDATION ASSETS BY FISCAL YEAR



*Ending June 30



Of Special Note

- Contributed \$5,000 toward the siting of the Vel Phillips statue on Capitol grounds in Madison
- Raised more than \$213,000 from generous contributors
- Double Your Impact campaign raised more than \$31,000
- 229 new contributors in FY22



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