

RAISING THE BAR 2023 CAMPAIGN WEBINAR



PRESENTED BY THE D.C. ACCESS TO JUSTICE
COMMISSION

DECEMBER 5, 2023

**What is Raising
the Bar and why
does it matter?**



Why participate?



A Firm Perspective



FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Portrait © Bert Photography

Developing a Culture of Philanthropy

By Charles R. Lowery Jr.

“

- If your law firm supports local nonprofits, thank them for what they do. The D.C. Access to Justice Commission recognizes firms that offer benchmark support to local legal services organizations through its Raising the Bar in D.C. Campaign. Is your firm in its Leadership Circle?

”



40 DC Firms Honored In Effort To Improve Access To Justice

By **Alison Knezevich** | June 1, 2023, 3:36 PM EDT ·  Listen to article

Forty law firms in Washington, D.C., have qualified for an annual campaign recognizing those that donate a certain percentage of their revenue to local legal services organizations, the D.C. Access to Justice Commission announced Thursday.

Altogether, the firms donated \$7.3 million in 2022 to organizations serving low-income residents, the most since the Raising the Bar campaign began more than a decade ago, the commission's executive director, Nancy Drane, told Law360 Pulse.

With poor residents facing increased legal needs in the COVID-19 pandemic's wake, commission leaders and civil legal services providers say the effort highlights the importance of private firms'

Law Firms Raising the Bar in D.C. Leadership Circle

The firms earned honors at three levels – platinum, gold and silver – for donating 0.11%, 0.09% or 0.075% of D.C. office revenue, respectively.

Platinum level donors

- Akin
- ArentFox Schiff

Media Coverage

COMMUNITY • CAREER • PROFESSION • PRACTICE MANAGEMENT • SERVICE

WASHINGTON LAWYER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BAR

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

FEATURE

In Fight for Civil Legal Aid, Advocates Use Strength in Numbers

'WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION'

While public funding for civil legal services is critical to increasing access to justice, private sector efforts are also essential. One example is the D.C. Access to Justice Commission's Raising the Bar in D.C. Campaign, which encourages local law firms of any size and even solo practitioners to support legal services in the District. This year, 40 firms were recognized for donating a record \$7.3 million to more than 40 local legal services organizations in 2022.

Social Media

We raised the bar in 2022 to support civil legal services in the District!



2022 LEADERSHIP CIRCLE



Learn more about the DC Access to Justice Commission's *Raising the Bar in DC* Campaign



We're proud to have raised the bar for supporting civil justice again this year

2022 LEADERSHIP CIRCLE



Learn more about the DC Access to Justice Commission's *Raising the Bar in DC* Campaign



Why Raising the Bar?



Qualifying Levels



Platinum (0.11%)



Gold (0.09%)



Silver (0.075%)

Sample Dollar Amounts to Qualify:

Benchmark Levels		D.C. Office Revenue			
		\$100,000	\$1,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$100,000,000
Platinum	0.110%	\$110	\$1,100	\$11,000	\$110,000
Gold	0.090%	\$90	\$900	\$9,000	\$90,000
Silver	0.075%	\$75	\$750	\$7,500	\$75,000

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE 2022

PLATINUM LEVEL DONORS



Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

ArentFox Schiff LLP

Arnold & Porter

Beveridge & Diamond PC

Brown & Peisch PLLC

DLA Piper LLP (US)

Feldesman Tucker Leifer Fidell LLP

Henrikson Law PLLC

Jones Day

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP

Katz Banks Kumin LLP

Kirkland & Ellis LLP

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Lippman, Semsker & Salb LLC

Lowenstein Sandler LLP

The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

McKinney Figini, LLC

Sidley Austin LLP

Steptoe & Johnson LLP

The Piorkowski Law Firm, PC

Venable LLP

Zuckerman Spaeder LLP

GOLD LEVEL DONORS



Buckley LLP
Crowell & Moring LLP
Klein Hornig LLP
Mayer Brown LLP
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
WilmerHale

SILVER LEVEL DONORS



Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Covington & Burling LLP
Cuneo Gilbert & LaDuca, LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (US) LLP
Epstein Becker & Green, PC
Latham & Watkins LLP
Miller & Chevalier Chartered

Unmet Legal Needs



Pre-pandemic...

D.C. Superior Court *Pro Se* Participation Rates 2017



97%

of plaintiffs in small estate matters in the Probate Division.



88%/95%

88% of petitioners and 95% of respondents in the Domestic Violence Division.



83%/93%

83% of plaintiffs and 93% of respondents in divorce/custody/miscellaneous cases in Family Court.



97%

of respondents in paternity and child support cases in Family Court.



88%

88% of designated respondents¹³ in the Landlord and Tenant Branch of the Civil Division, in contrast to the 95% of plaintiffs who were represented.



75%

75% of plaintiffs in Housing Conditions cases in the Civil Division.¹⁴

DELIVERING JUSTICE: ADDRESSING CIVIL LEGAL NEEDS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

And need has only grown...

2023 Eligible Recipient Organizations

Advocates for Justice and Education

Amara Legal Center

Asian Pacific American Legal Resource
Center

Ayuda

Bread for the City Legal Services

CAIR Coalition

CARECEN

Catholic Charities Immigration Legal
Services

Catholic Charities Legal Network

Children's Law Center

Christian Legal Aid of D.C.

D.C. Access to Justice Foundation*

D.C. Affordable Law Firm

D.C. Bar Foundation

D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center

D.C. KinCare Alliance

D.C. Volunteer Lawyers Project

First Shift Justice Project

Human Rights First – D.C. Asylum Legal
Representation Project

Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) – D.C.
Office

Legal Aid of the District of Columbia

Legal Counsel for the Elderly

Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project

Mil Mujeres Legal Services

Mother's Outreach Network

Neighborhood Legal Services Program

Network for Victim Recovery of D.C.
(NVRDC)

Open City Advocates

Quality Trust for Individuals with
Disabilities

Rising for Justice (formerly DC Law
Students in Court)

Safe Sister's Circle

School Justice Project

Second Look Project

Tahirih Justice Center

Tzedek D.C.

U.D.C. Law Summer Public Interest
Fellowship Program

University Legal Services, Disability Rights
DC

Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts
(WALA)

Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil
Rights and Urban Affairs

Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless

Whitman Walker Legal Services

Getting Recognized: Calculating And Reporting



SAMPLE FORM

Raising the Bar in D.C. - A Funding Campaign for Legal Services

Law Firm Reporting Form

Reporting Deadline is Typically January of the Following Calendar Year

Instructions

The D.C. Access to Justice Commission (“Commission”) is deeply grateful for your firm’s participation in the Raising the Bar in D.C. Campaign. For your firm to be formally recognized for its participation in **YEAR** the firm must submit the attached reporting form to Ernst & Young. This information will be kept confidential by Ernst & Young. Ernst & Young will only release the following information to the Commission:

- the recognition level (Platinum, Gold or Silver) for each participating firm;
- the aggregate amount of money donated by all participating firms to all eligible recipient organizations through this Campaign;
- the aggregate net change in the amount of money donated to all eligible recipient organizations through this Campaign.

Report:

- Qualifying Level
- Total Amount of Donations
- Organizations Donated to
- Total increase/Decrease in eligible giving since last campaign

Don't Report:

- Amount* of Donations to individual organizations
- Revenue

An Example



- A large firm's D.C. office revenue was \$520M in 2022; \$515M in 2021; and \$450M in 2020. **The average revenue across these three years is \$495M.**
- **How much would you have to give to the 40+ Raising the Bar eligible organizations to qualify?** Based on the above, the following total sum of charitable contributions needed to qualify at each level:
 - Platinum – 0.11% of \$495,000,000 = \$544,500
 - Gold – 0.09% of \$495,000,000 = \$445,500
 - Silver – 0.075% of \$495,000,000 = \$371,250
- **Do you qualify already?** Calculate your charitable contributions to the list of organizations thus far in calendar year 2023. If the sum of the firm's 2023 giving to these organizations is already \$400,000, the firm will qualify at the Silver level.
 - If the firm increased its charitable giving budget to the eligible organizations by \$45,500, it'd qualify at the Gold level;
 - If it increased by \$144,500, it'd qualify at the Platinum level.

Questions?



Thank you!

More information:

<https://dcaccesstojustice.org/raising-the-bar/>

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