It is the daily; it is the small; it is the cumulative injuries of little people that we are here to protect...If we are able to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment:

Thou shalt not ration justice.

Learned Hand
Address at the 75th anniversary celebration of the Legal Aid Society of New York, Feb. 16, 1951
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WHY PRO BONO?

“The best part of law school for me personally.” Those are the words written by one student when asked to participate in an anonymous survey about pro bono experience at Marquette University Law School.

That student is not alone. Typically about one-half of the members of each class graduate as a member of the Pro Bono Society, meaning they have spent at least 50 hours using their legal skills in unpaid public service during law school. These students are inducted into the Pro Bono Society and wear a purple honor cord for service at graduation.

Some student work at the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinics, where students are paired with volunteer attorneys to provide brief legal advice and referral to those in need. Other students get involved with Marquette’s Legal Initiative for Nonprofit Corporations to provide Wisconsin nonprofits with access to free legal advice. Many students work at the Milwaukee Justice Center’s self-help desk where they provide procedural advice to self-represented litigants in the area of family law. Some work in partnership with Sojourner Family Peace Center and Quarles & Brady LLP to provide representation for domestic violence survivors seeking injunction orders. Others have found opportunity for involvement at the
American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin, Disability Rights Wisconsin, the Guardianship Clinic with Children’s Hospital, and on trips to the Kenosha Detention Center to interview detained immigrants for the National Immigrant Justice Center.

Why do so many students volunteer? Certainly, their reasons are as complex and unique as the students themselves, but there are common motivations:

- **Commitment to Marquette University’s Mission.** Marquette strives to develop men and women who will dedicate their lives to the service of others, actively entering into the struggle for a more just society. We expect all members of the Marquette community, whatever their faith tradition, to give concrete expression to their beliefs by giving of themselves in service to those in need. —*Marquette University’s Mission Statement*. This culture of service runs through all parts of the University and is part of what defines the Marquette Lawyer.

- **Recognition of the Need.** All *Pro Bono* participants recognize that the need for lawyers and law students to provide uncompensated legal services for those who can’t afford to retain a lawyer is dire. The term “*Pro Bono*” is shorthand for
“Pro Bono Publico” which means, “for the good of the public.” And, yes, as the American Bar Association has made clear by enacting Model Rule 6.1 which calls upon every licensed attorney to aspire to perform 50 or more hours of pro bono legal service every year, it is indeed for the good of the public that lawyers should pitch in to provide free representation to those for whom the courthouse doors would otherwise be closed.

- **It’s Fulfilling.** Ask any Marquette University Law School Pro Bono student participant and they will tell you that they felt their pro bono service made a difference to the person they served. And in surveys provided to clients accessing the legal services at the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, the overwhelming majority report being very satisfied with the service they received from the volunteer attorney and volunteer law student.

- **It’s Fun.** Believe it or not, sometimes you might need a break from law school courses. You’re furthering your career path just as much (or perhaps even more) by participating in a pro bono project as you are by learning your course materials.

- **Students Learn a Lot.** Marquette University Law School Pro Bono Program volunteers learn
about family law and bankruptcy processes. They learn about the process required for a young adult with a severe disability to get a legal guardian. They research legal issues and find resources for unrepresented clients. They work directly with clients, gaining valuable interview skills. They help write bi-laws for Wisconsin nonprofits. And most projects give students a chance to meet and work with attorneys. What better way to network than by showing your commitment to service?

- **Graduate With Honors.** Students who complete 50 or more hours of *pro bono* work are inducted into the Pro Bono Society each spring. They are recognized at graduation with a purple honor cord for service. Student who complete 120 or more hours receive special recognition.

**WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL’S PRO BONO PROGRAM?**

Everyone. Every student at Marquette University Law School regardless of her or his career objectives can—and is strongly encouraged to—participate in the *Pro Bono* program.
HOW DO I EARN PRO BONO DISTINCTION?

To qualify for the Pro Bono Society, to which students are inducted each spring, students must perform 50 or more hours of eligible pro bono service during their enrollment at the law school.

The requirements for eligible pro bono service are that it be:

- Work that is primarily legal in nature,
- Voluntary and not for credit or compensation,
- Supervised by a licensed attorney or law faculty, and
- For the benefit of persons or causes with barriers to equal access to justice, or a nonprofit organization whose mission is to serve such persons or causes.

The Office of Public Service operates numerous pro bono projects which are described in the Marquette University Law School Pro Bono Projects brochure. Students who wish to find an individualized placement that fits within the above guidelines should speak with Angela Schultz, Marquette University Law School’s director of pro bono legal services.
WHAT HOURS COUNT TOWARD THE PRO BONO SOCIETY?

Students will be given *pro bono* hours for participating in any of the pro bono projects outlined in the *Pro Bono Projects* brochure. Additionally:

- Any pro bono project that meets the criteria for *pro bono*. Students should have their project approved by the director of pro bono legal services before they begin.

- Substantive training directly relating to the *pro bono* project. All “Brown Bag CLEs” sponsored by MVLC count. Training hours should be appropriately limited as decided by the student and the pro bono director on a case-by-case basis.

- Hours in excess of for-credit supervised field placement where the placement satisfies the *pro bono* criteria listed above.

- Hours in excess of those for which a student is receiving summer funding at a public interest placement where the placement satisfies the *pro bono* criteria listed above.

- Note: Travel time does *not* count towards *pro bono* hours.
HOW DO I REPORT MY HOURS?

All students have access to a personal pro bono account. Instructions for accessing your account are available online. Paper timesheets are also available online. Find either version under the “Community” tab of the website at this link: https://law.marquette.edu/community/pro-bono-timesheet.

WHAT TRAINING IS REQUIRED?

Each pro bono project has its own training session. Most are held during the noon hour. Some are held on a Saturday or in the evening. Training gives students a primer on the particular legal issues in play, the ethical issues involved in pro bono, and describes the student’s role at each site. Look in the Law News (emailed weekly) for training dates and registration information.
HOW DO I SIGN UP TO DO PRO BONO WORK?

Make the Pro Bono Pledge! Make the commitment to yourself and your community to do 50 or more hours of pro bono work throughout your law school career. Pro Bono Pledge Cards are available in the Eisenberg Suite, Room 138. Return the pledge card to Angela Schultz in 138J. Attend the Pro Bono Opportunities Panel and Pizza Lunch at the beginning of each semester to hear about the latest opportunities and register for training.

IF I WANT TO CREATE A NEW OPPORTUNITY OR ASK ANY QUESTIONS, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

Contact the Pro Bono Director Angela Schultz at angela.schultz@marquette.edu or drop by the Eisenberg Suite (138).