

# NEWSLETTER



THE BOSTON BAR FOUNDATION

## SOCIETY OF FELLOWS

*Strength in Community, Power in Giving*

December 2025

[www.bostonbar.org](http://www.bostonbar.org)

*Dear Fellows,*

As a member of Boston Bar leadership, and as Chair of the Society of Fellows committee, I want to extend my deepest thanks for your ongoing commitment to the Boston Bar Foundation. In time of great uncertainty, your support as a Fellow enables the Foundation to expand access to justice through grants and pro bono work, train and mentor the next generation of lawyers, and support and empower the most vulnerable members of our community in Boston. Over the past year alone we have:

- Provided essential funding to legal services organizations that help families facing eviction, survivors of domestic violence, immigrants striving for safety and stability, and individuals struggling with economic insecurity
- Strengthened our commitment to the BBA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging internship program funding summer jobs serving the public interest with 12 students participating this past summer.
- Empowered the next generation of lawyers to understand the importance of public service through our support of the Public Interest Leadership Program, this year training 29 attorneys.
- Invested in innovative initiatives that respond to emerging threats to legal institutions and help maintain public trust in the justice system.

**None of this is possible without our volunteers and donors:** Your generosity sets the standard for philanthropic leadership in the legal profession and enables the Foundation to take on work that is bold and responsive.

As we look ahead, will you consider joining me in increasing your support at the highest giving level that is meaningful to you? Upgrading to the next Fellows level – \$15,000, \$25,000, \$50,000 and beyond – directly and immediately increases the Foundation's ability to meet rising needs and encourages others to make a commitment to our Bar Foundation, which steadfastly supports our community and the lawyers (and aspiring lawyers) of Boston. By increasing your support, you're not just giving—you're transforming lives and strengthening our legal community's impact.

Thank you for your generosity, and your belief in what the BBF makes possible. Together, we will continue to build a more just, accessible, and resilient profession and legal system for all.

With gratitude,



*Chair, Society of Fellows Committee,  
Boston Bar Foundation*

*President Emeritus,  
Boston Bar Association*



# Celebrating the Spirit of the Bar: *Honoring Our Legal Heroes*

On October 30, the BBA hosted its Spirit of the Bar event, recognizing legal heroes and celebrating the impact of lawyers in our community. The program featured four award presentations: the John G. Brooks Legal Services Award, the Thurgood Marshall Award, the Mary K. Ryan Achievements in Pro Bono Award, and the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to Chief Justice Margaret Marshall, former BBA President and member of the Society of Fellows. The Mary K. Ryan Award—named for the late Mary Ryan, former BBA President and member of the Society of Fellows—was presented to seven individuals who have gone above and beyond in their commitment to pro bono service, including Society of Fellows member Martha Koster.

***Congratulations to all of this year's honorees. We look forward to celebrating with you again next year!***





# VISITING BBF GRANTEES

## *Building Strength Inside and Out: A Visit to InnerCity Weightlifting*

On October 23, the BBF Grants Team visited InnerCity Weightlifting (ICW), one of our newest grantees and a remarkable model for what second chances can look like. Now in its 16th year, this Cambridge nonprofit uses fitness as a bridge to opportunity, helping formerly incarcerated individuals build economic stability and community connections.

The BBF is proud to support ICW through a legal services grant that strengthens its case management team as they help participants navigate housing, healthcare, and legal challenges. Last year, ICW served 200 people, many of whom were connected to pro bono attorneys from Boston's legal community—including professionals from Goodwin Procter and Ropes & Gray providing critical support.

Our visit coincided with ICW's annual Company Fit Challenge, where the energy and camaraderie in the gym reflected the organization's deeper mission: creating pathways to stability, dignity, and belonging.

Through this grant, the BBF ensures that participants returning home after incarceration receive the legal and personal support they need to rebuild their lives—one rep at a time.



## *Defending Immigrant Communities: A Visit to the MIRA Coalition*

On October 7, the BBF Grants Team visited the MIRA Coalition, a powerful voice for immigrants and refugees across Massachusetts and one of our long-standing grantee partners. During the visit, we toured their welcoming office and saw how BBF funding supports life-changing programs such as Know Your Rights trainings and DACA Renewal Assistance, made possible through a \$15,000 BBF grant.

In a time of mounting challenges to the rule of law and access to justice, MIRA's work is a powerful reminder of the impact our legal community can make. Thanks to your support, the BBF helps ensure that organizations like MIRA can continue to defend the rights and dignity of vulnerable communities.

The MIRA Coalition was honored at this year's Spirit of the Bar event—recognition well deserved.

*"DACA recipients didn't choose to be in this country—they were brought here as babies. Even without a path to citizenship, they are healthcare workers, teachers, and vital contributors to our society, and they must renew their status every two years to maintain work authorization."*

—Diane Joly, Director of Citizenship at MIRA

# STRENGTH IN SERVICE:

## *Pro Bono Month Engages 500+ Volunteers*

In celebration of Pro Bono Month, as declared by the Governor's Office for the month of October, the BBA collaborated with 7 BBF grantees and hosted 9 opportunities for members to grow their pro bono portfolios. Through these collaborations, the BBA offered members programs in a variety of issues like housing, immigration law, family law, health law, education law, supporting the arts, and supporting nonprofits. Pro Bono Month opportunities engaged more than 500 members eager to join the BBA and its legal services partners in the promotion of access to justice.



# A LIFELINE OF INFORMATION:

## *Know Your Rights Grantees Deliver Statewide Impact*

On March 5, 2025, the BBF awarded \$267,884 in Know Your Rights (KYR) grants to 31 organizations across Massachusetts dedicated to educating and protecting community members around their legal rights. These one-time, rapid-use grants were aimed at supporting resource development and translation services specifically to reach our most vulnerable populations. This funding arrived at a critical moment: federal immigration policies were in flux, non-profit budgets were shrinking, and fear of encounters with law enforcement was destabilizing entire communities.

In response, our KYR grants enabled our community partners to deliver impactful legal education and outreach through trainings, workshops, legal assistance, and digital communication campaigns.

This initiative brought much-needed clarity and comfort to immigrant communities at a time of heightened uncertainty. Our KYR grantees stepped up to meet the moment, serving as trusted sources of information and support during an extremely challenging period.

## 350+

trainings  
conducted  
across the  
greater  
Boston area

## 173

unique  
materials  
created

## 229,330

copies of KYR  
materials  
distributed

## 8,148

individuals  
received  
in-person or  
hands-on  
support

## 36

languages  
available  
through the  
services offered  
to ensure broad  
accessibility



# GRANTEE NEWS

## DE NOVO

CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND HEALING

De Novo is partnering with the Boston Bar Association to hold an Eviction Sealing Clinic on December 12, 2025. The clinic will offer one-on-one assistance from De Novo and pro bono legal advocates to tenants seeking to seal past eviction records under Massachusetts' new eviction record sealing law, which took effect in May 2025. The new law allows eligible tenants to seal certain eviction records, which are public records and appear in credit reports, giving individuals a fairer chance at securing stable housing. De Novo provides legal assistance to over 500 low-income people annually in Greater Boston to ensure their access to safe and affordable housing.



The BBF congratulates De Novo Housing Attorney Pinar Erturan on receiving the Excellence in

Advocacy Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs Boston Healthcare System!



"Yesenia" came to GBLS in need of help escaping an abusive marriage. Yesenia tried to protect herself and their young child, but was denied a restraining order and went into hiding to stay safe. When she came to GBLS, Yesenia's attorney zealously advocated for her in her dissolution and custody and support orders, documenting the pervasive and insidious nature of the abuser's coercive control. With GBLS' representation, Yesenia was granted sole physical custody and decision-making authority for their child, as well as child support and a significant lump-sum settlement. GBLS also helped Yesenia apply for immigration status free from her abuser. Today, Yesenia and her child are safe and stable and rebuilding their lives.

healthlawadvocates | HA  
Lawyers Fighting for Health Care Justice

Health Law Advocates' Immigrant Health Initiative is fighting against attacks on immigrants and their health care rights. We are a leading voice calling for continuation of health insurance coverage for 37,000 lawfully present low-income immigrants in Massachusetts after federal funding cuts. HLA has represented hundreds of Massachusetts immigrants this year, helping them access life-sustaining health care by challenging increasing barriers to coverage and oppressive federal policies threatening immigration enforcement in doctors' offices and trying to cut off immigrants' from health centers. HLA has also conducted dozens of trainings this year for over 1,000 immigrant service providers, empowering them to protect immigrants' rights.



The increasing food access crisis is exacerbating economic inequities, especially among elderly and disabled residents, so La Colaborativa has expanded its comprehensive nutrition initiatives across Chelsea and the Metro North region. Each week, we distribute fresh produce, hot meals, and medically tailored groceries to thousands of residents while ensuring that distribution sites remain safe and welcoming for all families in our communities. Integration of food security, youth development, public health, and community protection empowers La Colaborativa to uphold its longstanding mission of dignity and equity while demonstrating how local leadership and collaboration can sustain families through moments of profound challenge.



In 2025, the Volunteer Lawyers Project launched an initiative to enhance community access to

guardianship information and legal assistance. Through partnerships with schools, hospitals, and community organizations, VLP developed targeted workshops for families exploring guardianship and organized several legal clinics to address growing community needs. These efforts have significantly strengthened the Guardianship Program, resulting in six workshops held to date and additional sessions planned through year's end. VLP has also seen a notable increase in guardianship cases this year, reflecting the measurable impact of strategic collaboration and volunteer engagement.



Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Massachusetts Appleseed recently published "*Justice Disrupted: Improving Language Access at the Massachusetts Trial Courts*," which was co-led with the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute and other organizations who are a part of the Courts Language Access Working Group of the statewide Language Access Coalition. This report examined the state of language access in the Massachusetts Trial Courts, using a community-centered approach. By engaging impacted court users, attorneys, and advocates, findings were compiled to help inform changes at the Court to improve language access and consequently, the court user experience for everyone.



We are deeply grateful to the Boston Bar Foundation for supporting our Immigration Legal Services program. Thus far in 2025, our team of attorneys and legal support staff has served 2,040 immigrants and their families, including 881 individuals through pro se assistance and full legal representation. This work remains vital as immigration laws continue to shift under the current administration, creating fear and heightened urgency among clients. In December, we will highlight our partnerships at Solas through a panel featuring our Director of Legal Services and representatives from Rosie's Place, Dana-Farber, and Boston Medical Center.

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# *Investing in the Next Generation*

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOSTON BAR ASSOCIATION CAREER FAIR**

On November 14, 2025, the Boston Bar Association's Annual Career Fair brought together law students and legal-employers in a dynamic open-networking format. Held at the UMass Club in Boston, the event featured recruiting representatives from a wide range of firms and organizations and underscored the BBA's commitment to developing the next generation of lawyers and building a more inclusive legal profession.



Students made valuable connections, submitted resumes via the event's online platform and received a digital guide to participating firms. Meanwhile, employers met numerous motivated candidates from diverse backgrounds and enjoyed elevated visibility through event materials and digital listings.

**Funding from the Boston Bar Foundation provides critical support for this initiative, reflecting our broader commitment to supporting new lawyers and strengthening the future of the profession.**





## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING (DEIB) SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Applications are now live for the BBA's DEIB Summer Fellowship Program, which is made possible through support from the Boston Bar Foundation. 1L and 2L JD candidates at any of the BBA's partner law schools are eligible to apply. The program is designed to provide fellows with valuable, direct experience in public interest law while actively contributing to the creation of a more inclusive legal community. Fellows receive a \$7,000 stipend for 10 weeks of full-time work in the summer within a public interest office, a mentor from the BBA's DEIB Section, and invitations to professional development and networking events.

This year, we are happy to announce that the Massachusetts Appeals Court has joined as one of our host site partners. We plan to have a cohort of 12 fellows this year, and we are grateful to all our host sites and donors that make this program possible.



## BUILDING BOSTON'S NEXT GENERATION OF LEGAL LEADERS

Since 2003, the Public Interest Leadership Program (PILP) has brought together rising stars in Boston's legal community. Designed to build leadership capacity and deepen professional development, the program offers monthly sessions with business, civic, and philanthropic leaders; exclusive networking opportunities; and access to major BBA events, including the Annual Meeting, the Beacon Awards, and Law Day. This year's cohort includes 29 participants representing a wide range of practice areas (including environmental, family, health, civil rights, and commercial litigation) as well as criminal prosecution and defense.

The 2025–2026 program features six core modules exploring the legal services landscape, organizational leadership, public service careers, local government, and pathways to the judiciary, with new sector-specific programming added this year. Participants also attend monthly BBA steering committee meetings, and this cohort has been invited to submit "Legal Analysis" articles for consideration by the Boston Business Journal.

**Funding from the Boston Bar Foundation makes this program possible, reflecting our commitment to developing emerging leaders, strengthening the pipeline of public-minded attorneys, and investing in the future of the profession.**

Upon graduation, PILP alumni join a network of more than 250 accomplished lawyers who have gone on to serve as elected officials, lead nonprofits and practice groups, and shape Boston's legal and civic landscape.

# GIVING DAY

Honoring Our History. Strengthening Our **Future.**

OCT  
30  
2025

The inaugural BBF Giving Month concluded on October 30, the 290th birthday of BBA founder John Adams. Throughout the month, we shared daily stories highlighting the Foundation's impact and the vital role our supporters play in advancing access to justice across Greater Boston.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, including many members of the Society of Fellows, the campaign surpassed expectations and raised more than \$50,000 to strengthen the BBF's mission. We are deeply grateful for your leadership and continued commitment to this work.

**Missed Giving Day? Donate or upgrade your Fellows pledge anytime at [www.bostonbar.org/donate](http://www.bostonbar.org/donate)**

## Upcoming Events



### BEACON AWARDS

Honoring **Paige Scott Reed**

Join us for a high-energy evening celebrating the individuals and organizations driving progress in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging across Boston's legal community. This year, we are proud to shine a spotlight on Paige Scott Reed, Partner at Prince Lobel Tye LLP, whose distinguished career in both public service and private practice has transformed major community initiatives statewide. In a time of renewed challenges, the Beacon Awards honors courageous leadership and meaningful community impact. Paige's bold, barrier-breaking work exemplifies the spirit of this event—and inspires all who are committed to a more inclusive and equitable profession.

Learn more at [bostonbar.org](http://bostonbar.org) or contact [events@bostonbar.org](mailto:events@bostonbar.org) to reserve tickets or sponsorships.



Thursday,  
Feb. 26, 2026  
5:30 – 8:30PM  
**STUDIO B,  
BIG NIGHT  
LIVE**



THE BOSTON BAR FOUNDATION'S  
JOHN & ABIGAIL

*Adams Benefit*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026**  
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BOSTON

Join us for the premier philanthropic event supporting the Boston Bar Foundation. This elegant evening raises critical funds for the Foundation's work expanding access to justice, fostering civic engagement, championing opportunity for the next generation, and strengthening the legal profession.



At this year's Benefit, we are proud to honor Damon Hart, EVP, Chief Legal Officer & Secretary at Liberty Mutual Insurance, with the Richard A. Soden Public Service Award.

Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate leadership, impact, and generosity in Boston's legal community.

Learn more at [bostonbar.org](http://bostonbar.org) or contact [events@bostonbar.org](mailto:events@bostonbar.org) to reserve your tickets or sponsorships.