



# TRANSCRIPT

Fall 2019

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ROBERT WARE | PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES



It's hard to believe that Fall is already here. It feels like the year started just yesterday, and now in just a few short months, my time as OSBF President will come to an end - but what a time it has been.

This year, we granted more than \$300,000 to nonprofits across the state during the Spring Grants Cycle. One of those grants will provide legal education and information about the parole process to incarcerated survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Another will expand the Southeastern Ohio Legal Services' Youth Law Project, which provides advice, counsel, and representation to young adults. And those are only two of the many inspiring projects and organizations that will further the Foundation's mission as a result of the hard work of our Trustees, Fellows, supporters and staff.

Also this year, we inducted a phenomenal group of new Fellows who have been hard at work since they walked into Orientation this past May. They will be launching a brand-new initiative - the "Fellows Week of Service." During the first week of March, the 2019 Class (along with our other Fellows) will be spending time giving back to Ohio communities through education and outreach around the important issue of foster care and human trafficking. This class has got big plans in the works, and I urge you to get involved when they reach out to you. Their passion is contagious.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention this year's All Rise Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony. Wow - what an unforgettable evening it was. It's always worthwhile to set aside time to celebrate excellence in our profession, and I believe each of this year's awardees exemplify that ideal. I left the evening reenergized about what we as lawyers can do if we work together on behalf of our community and profession. Let's never forget that all ships rise together.

## BEING AN OSBF FELLOW— AN INSIDER'S LOOK

Why is being a Fellow of the Ohio State Bar Foundation different from other philanthropic opportunities? When I was first nominated to be a Fellow, this question was foremost in my mind, and it wasn't until I spent some time volunteering as a Fellow that I began to understand the true impact of the Fellows Program.

First, I learned that being a Fellow exposes you to new opportunities for volunteer engagement. After induction, I signed up for two volunteer opportunities outside of both my local community in Columbus and my experience as an attorney. I first joined other OSBF Fellows at Cleveland Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services, an OSBF grant recipient, where we assisted individuals with their applications for U.S. citizenship. Next, another OSBF Fellow and I volunteered in Cincinnati with Ohio Justice and Policy Center, also an OSBF grantee, helping dozens of people, many of whom waited hours in line, determine whether they were eligible to seal the records of their criminal convictions.

After my initial work with grantee organizations, Bev Graves, one of OSBF's amazing staff members, recruited me to teach students about their rights and responsibilities under Ohio law. Admittedly, I have felt far more comfortable discussing a complicated legal matter with a judge than I felt talking to middle and high school students about the dangers and legal implications of sexting. However, Bev made it painless by providing an OSBF-prepared program and by employing her skills as a former teacher to enliven the presentation and keep the students engaged.

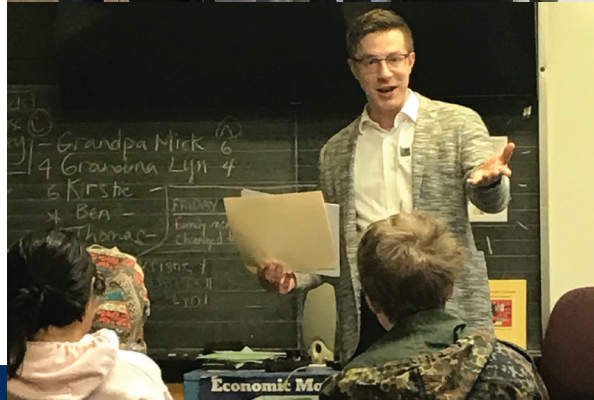
Second, being a Fellow provides you with an opportunity to contribute your talents and experience in creative ways. After a few classroom presentations using OSBF's materials, I felt inspired to design my own program focusing on civil rights and discrimination. The presentation was a huge hit with the students, who asked insightful questions and participated in a lively discussion about the law.

Third, being a Fellow connects you with a network of attorneys interested in giving back to their communities. In my roles as an OSBF Fellow and a board member of Equality Ohio, another OSBF grantee, I organized Equality Ohio Legal Clinic's first-ever record sealing clinic in Columbus. Over two days, Fellows from OSBF partnered with attorneys from Equality Ohio and law students to help members of the LGBTQ community by determining their eligibility for record sealing and assessing their other legal needs. Thanks to the amazing leadership of our Fellows, not only were we able to assist dozens of individuals on those two days, but the event was such a success that Equality Ohio has continued to offer additional clinics at locations around the state.

Finally, being a Fellow is professionally rewarding and personally moving. Working with an immigrant applying for citizenship in Cleveland, I was humbled by his dedication to becoming a citizen. A woman in Cincinnati seeking to seal her record shared with me that this was her first and only positive experience with the legal system. Following my presentation on civil rights, a student approached me with a legal issue, and I was able to refer them to the attorneys at the Equality Ohio Legal Clinic. After each of my volunteer experiences as a Fellow, I left knowing I made a difference.

As a result of my experiences, I can say that being a Fellow is about more than having an impressive mark on your resume or donating to a worthy cause. Being a Fellow enables those of us in the legal profession to magnify the charitable impact of our talents and expertise by partnering with a community of like-minded volunteers. And if you are like me, along the way you may even find a renewed passion for using the law to improve the lives of those around you.

*Joseph Wenger*  
2018 FELLOWS CLASS



# 2019

# Spring Grantees

# \$306,050

This past spring, the OSBF granted a total of \$306,050 to eleven unique projects across Ohio. Here's a snapshot of the spring grantees.

- **\$118,000 TO THE OHIO CENTER FOR LAW-RELATED EDUCATION**, headquartered in Columbus, for their statewide programs that provide high-quality civics and law-related content to students and teachers. The programs also support their student-led initiatives, including Ohio Mock Trial, We the People, and Moot Court. They also engage in professional development programs for teachers, including The Law and Citizenship Conference and Ohio Government in Action, an annual two-day workshop specifically designed to give teachers an insider's view of state government.
- **\$65,000 TO THE OHIO STATE LEGAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION** for the expansion of the Southeastern Ohio Legal Services' Youth Law Project. This program will continue to provide advice, counsel, and representation to young adults and expand training and advocacy for community providers and courts working with those transitioning out of foster care through the statewide Bridges program.
- **\$32,050 TO THE OHIO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NETWORK**, based in Columbus, for their Parole Education and Preparation Project, which will provide legal education about the parole process to incarcerated survivors of domestic and sexual violence, so that they may effectively advocate for themselves in hearings.
- **\$20,000 TO THE OHIO FEDERATION FOR HEALTH EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**, based in Columbus, to help educate grandparents and other relatives statewide on the custody type and status available to their families, as well as government services and private resources that are available.
- **\$17,000 TO THE AKRON MUNICIPAL COURT** for their Electronic Information Kiosk, which will provide low-income, pro se community members with legal information and resources. The addition of this kiosk will help the court monitor information related to self-represented litigants, improve access to justice for this group, and improve case flow and quality of information presented.
- **\$15,000 TO THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND** for their new project Access to Justice: Leveraging Technology to Lower Barriers to Justice. The goal of this project is to expand individuals' access to the services of Cleveland Legal Aid by adding technology and an online intake module to their case management system.
- **\$15,000 TO OHIO VOICE FOR THE OHIO FAIR COURTS SPEAKER'S BUREAU**. This bureau will be created with three goals in mind - to explain in everyday language how the Ohio court system works, to provide a forum for members of the legal and non-legal community to exchange views about common concerns about our justice system, and to motivate citizens to take action to strengthen the independence of our courts.
- **\$9,000 TO THE OHIO STATE LEGAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION** for advocacy skills training through the Ohio Poverty Law Center for 25 legal aid attorneys, representing each legal aid office in Ohio. The program will help them better understand the legislative process and increase their level of engagement in statewide policy.
- **\$8,600 TO THE CASA BOARD VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION** for their CASA Changemaker Academy for the Summit County CASA Program. This academy will provide three new live and three new online trainings for local CASA volunteers on developments in child advocacy practices, including issues surrounding immigration, domestic violence, and human trafficking. Grant support was also received from the American Bar Endowment for this project, which will allow the Summit County CASA Program to expand the number hours for each training.
- **\$4,100 TO THE BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER OF SUMMIT AND MEDINA COUNTIES** to produce a video that will provide key information regarding protection orders and the process of obtaining them, with an emphasis on using terminology that will be easy for the general public to understand.
- **\$2,300 TO THE WAYNE COUNTY PROBATE AND JUVENILE COURT** to support increased programming for their Help Desk by incorporating educational presentations and brochures. The Help Desk currently provides no-cost legal advice to low-income, unrepresented litigants, and potential litigants, by connecting them with local attorneys. These attorneys provide effective recommendations and guidance in the areas of probate and juvenile law.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OSBF'S GRANTMAKING EFFORTS, VISIT [OSBF.ORG](https://osbf.org).**



## 2019 ALL RISE ANNUAL DINNER AND AWARDS CEREMONY AWARDEES



### *Ritter Award*

**Richard F. Swope**

**Swope and Swope, Attorneys at Law, Reynoldsburg**

The Ritter Award is the highest honor awarded by the Foundation and is given to an attorney for a lifetime of service. Richard Swope has spent six decades representing clients, advocating for inmate rights by helping to provide better access to Ohio's legal system.



### *Ramey Award for Distinguished Community Service*

**Donald H. Messinger**

**Thompson Hine, LLP, Cleveland**

The Ramey Award for Distinguished Community Service is given to an Ohio attorney whose career has been exemplified by his or her dedication to public and community service, as well as integrity, honor, courtesy, and professionalism. Donald Messinger has undertaken significant volunteer leadership roles with multiple charitable organizations in Northeast Ohio, including the United Way of Greater Cleveland, Legal Aid, Gateway Economic Development Corporation, Circle Health Services, Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center, and Cleveland Pops Orchestra.



### *Outstanding Program or Organization Award*

**Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center**

**Powell, Cincinnati, and Cleveland**

The Outstanding Program or Organization Award highlights a program or organization that promotes improvement in the Ohio justice system. This year's recipient, the Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center, is a statewide nonprofit organization that ensures that state and federal crime victims are treated fairly during the criminal justice process.



### *Statewide Community Service Award for Attorneys 40 and Under*

**James K. Stanley**

**Meigs County Prosecuting Attorney, Pomeroy**

The Statewide Community Service Award for Attorneys 40 and Under is awarded to an attorney who gives time and talent to serve his or her community. James Stanley has passionately combatted the opioid epidemic and addiction crisis in Meigs County. He has taken proactive measures to prevent addiction and assist recovery before individuals enter the legal system.



### *Elam Award*

**Michele P. Sherrin**

**Law Office of Michele P. Sherrin, Medina**

The Elam Award recognizes a lawyer's exceptional pro bono legal work in the state of Ohio. This year's recipient, Michele Sherrin, has been a long-standing Community Legal Aid volunteer. While maintaining a busy legal practice, Michele has provided pro bono services for the past 10 years to clients with a variety of legal issues.

**IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DESERVES TO BE RECOGNIZED, COMPLETE A NOMINATION FORM AT [OSBF.ORG/AWARDS](https://osbf.org/awards). NOMINATIONS ARE ACCEPTED YEAR-ROUND.**



## 2020 FELLOWS NOMINATIONS

### DEADLINE FOR FELLOWS NOMINATIONS IS JANUARY 15!

Brand-new this year, the OSBF is moving the Fellows nomination deadline to January 15, giving you more time to nominate someone for the 2020 Fellows Class.

### WHAT IS AN OSBF FELLOW?

A Fellow is a member of the Ohio State Bar Foundation - an attorney who gives his or her time, talent, and treasure to advance the law and build a better justice system through community service efforts and monetary donations to the Foundation.

Fellows pledges go directly to fulfilling the OSBF mission with 100 percent of all donations going to support our grantmaking. That means that as a Fellow, you're consistently giving back to make sure organizations across the state have the funds to help their communities better understand and have access to our justice system.

### WHY SHOULD YOU BE INTERESTED?

The OSBF Fellows Program is a rewarding experience for attorneys looking to extend their reach and give back. It brings together people from across the state from different firms and walks of life to connect, volunteer, and bring the Foundation's mission to life.

### READY TO GET INVOLVED?

Fellows must be nominated, but self-nominations are more than welcome. All nominations will be reviewed by the OSBF Membership Committee. Final approval is required by the Board of Trustees.

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO NOMINATE SOMEONE TO BE A FELLOW  
OR IF YOU'D LIKE TO SELF-NOMINATE, VISIT [OSBF.ORG/FELLOWS](https://osbf.org/fellows)  
TO FILL OUT A NOMINATION FORM NOW.**

## HONOR. REMEMBER. CELEBRATE.

Honor the exceptional, celebrate an occasion, or recognize the significant people in your life with a charitable gift to OSBF. Tribute gifts are an easy way for you to support OSBF grantmaking initiatives and to ensure special colleagues, friends and family receive the statewide recognition they deserve. To make and dedicate a gift, visit [OSBF.org](https://osbf.org) and click "Donate Now" at the top.



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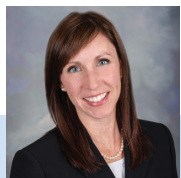
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*Gifts have been made between May 7, 2019 – October 15, 2019.*

## FALL RECIPIENTS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD FOR ATTORNEYS 40 & UNDER

This fall, we are honoring recipients of our 2019-2020 Community Service Award for Attorneys 40 and Under. These are attorneys who go above and beyond to give back in their communities. To them, volunteering is a hobby - not a requirement.

The OSBF will be traveling the state this fall to honor these recipients at OSBA's district meetings. We hope to see you there!



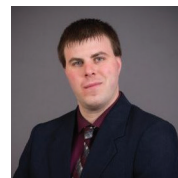
**DISTRICT 3**  
**ELISA HARMON**

Elisa Harmon graduated from Capital University and was commissioned into the United States Army as a Military Intelligence Officer. After receiving an educational delay to attend law school, she graduated from the University of Toledo College of Law and served in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps on Active Duty until 2010. Now, Elisa practices at Rupp, Wesche, Hagans, Bohmer, Newton & Harmon, LLP and serves as president of the Henry County Bar Association. She is also a board member of the Henry County CASA.



**DISTRICT 4**  
**MELISSA LaROCCO**

Melissa LaRocco serves as the Legal Aid of Western Ohio's (LAWO) Director of Private Attorney & Law Student Involvement where she creates opportunities for attorneys and law students to engage in public service. She has served as board president for Camp Fire Northwest Ohio and for Hope House for the Homeless. The Findlay and Hancock County community has recognized Melissa for her commitment to public service, awarding her two Outstanding Service Awards from the local Chamber of Commerce.



**DISTRICT 5**  
**MICHAEL BEAR**

Michael Bear currently serves as the City of Galion's Assistant to Law Director. In this role, he does legal research and writing, seeks out grant funding sources, and addresses legislative changes and municipal home rule issues. He serves as a board member for Community Counseling Services Inc. and Bucyrus First Church of the Nazarene.



**DISTRICT 6**  
**LAUREN EPPERLEY**

Lauren Epperley is a litigation attorney at Subashi, Wildermuth & Justice. She was first named an Ohio Rising Star Super Lawyer by Law & Politics magazine in 2014 and has been named a Rising Star each year since. Lauren is a frequent volunteer with the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project, accepting cases and providing clinics for the area's unemployed. She also regularly volunteers for the Dayton Public Schools' District-Wide Debate Tournament, which provides underprivileged youth an opportunity to present their oral advocacy skills.



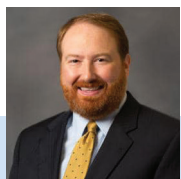
**DISTRICT 8**  
**JENNY EVANS**

Jenny Evans is the sole practitioner at J.M. Evans Law LLC, where they provide legal services for matters involving criminal law, family law, civil suits, mediation, as well as wills, trusts, and estates. She serves as treasurer for Gallipolis Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors, vice president for United Way of Gallia County's Board of Directors, and as secretary for the Ariel Theatre & Ohio Valley Symphony Board of Directors.



**DISTRICT 13**  
**JOSEPH SCHIAVONI**

Joseph Schiavoni is a partner in the law firm of Schiavoni, Schiavoni, Bush & Muldowney Co., L.P.A. In 2008, he was appointed to the Ohio Senate, where he represented the Mahoning Valley in Columbus for the last decade. Joe is a member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mahoning Valley, the Boardman Civic Association, the Italian American Education Foundation, Mahoning County Bar Association, and the Ohio Association for Justice.



**DISTRICT 18**  
**GRANT KEATING**

Grant Keating is a partner at Dworken & Bernstein, practicing in the firm's Business and Commercial Litigation department. He has been recognized as a Super Lawyer Rising Star eight times in the last ten years and has an AV Preeminent rating with Martindale Hubbell. Grant serves on the board of Kinnect, an organization that develops plans for placement of foster children into permanent homes on an expedited basis and is a mock trial advisor at Andrews Osborne Academy.

*Mark your calendars!*

**Giving Tuesday is happening on Tuesday, December 3 this year.**  
**Stay up to date with OSBF for ways to give on this special day of giving.**



**#GIVINGTUESDAY**

## 2019 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OSBF's Board of Trustees volunteer their time and talents to all aspects of the Foundation, including awarding grants, financial overview, membership, fundraising, and so much more. Thanks to their consistent support, hard work, and guidance, we continue moving our mission forward.

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OHIO STATE BAR  
**FOUNDATION**

### ON THE DOCKET

10.24	AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
10.25	GRANTS COMMITTEE MEETING
10.26	OHIO STATE TAILGATE WITH OSBF, OSBA, AND OBLIC
11.08	BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
11.23	OHIO STATE TAILGATE WITH OSBF, OSBA, AND OBLIC

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OSBF.org

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