



Multnomah Bar Foundation Fundraising Campaign

by J. Mackenzie Hogan
MBF President

One year ago this month, the MBF was supposed to be kicking off our annual fundraising campaign for the MBF's CourtCare program, but instead, due to the unprecedented pandemic, we asked that the legal community refrain from contributing to CourtCare and instead focus its charitable giving on other organizations that could help those in need in our community as we dealt with the reality of COVID-19. It was something that the MBF Board thought long and hard about, but because CourtCare was, and continues to be, closed, we felt that it was in the best interests of our larger community to suspend the campaign.

With CourtCare closed, the MBF looked to address other needs of the Portland legal community, and thanks to your generous support, we were able to successfully launch CourtSupport in the middle of a pandemic. The initial ask raised enough money to staff the information desk in our new courthouse with the CourtSupport Navigator. The support we received for this new program was amazing. The mission of the CourtSupport Navigator is to make the entire process of entering and navigating the courthouse and legal system a little less intimidating. The early results, and the superb work of Ingrid Hernandez Gonzalez, allowed the actual implementation of the program to occur without a hitch. You made that happen. Thank you. We strongly believe that the successful launch of CourtSupport would not have been possible without the groundwork laid by countless volunteers that came before and turned CourtCare into a sustainable, successful program.

Now, as we begin to come out of the pandemic and return to normal, the MBF has two successful programs to sustain, and has plans for the future. One of our potential projects is to expand the CourtCare program to the Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Facility as it has been identified as a location in dire need of CourtCare. We are also looking to expand CourtSupport to address funding gaps that impact the legal system and access to justice. One potential area for growth is identifying projects aimed at assisting self-represented litigants and supporting the new Legal Resource Center.

Some of you may know the struggles nonprofits face when fundraising. Not only do nonprofits have to ask individuals and organizations to give them money, the IRS has strict rules on how money that is

collected can be spent. This means that money raised through the CourtCare Campaign can only be spent on CourtCare operations, i.e. the day-to-day running of the facilities. It cannot be spent to build out a new location at Juvenile Detention, it cannot be spent on CourtSupport, and it cannot be spent on any other programs the MBF develops to address access to justice and civic education, including CourtConnect, our speaker presentation program on the justice system.

These restrictions have put the MBF Board in a bind. We do not want to constantly have to ask so much of our legal community. It would not be fair for us to run three or more campaigns each year to separately support CourtCare operations, CourtCare construction, and CourtSupport. While we are confident in the generosity of our legal community, we do not feel that it is fair to ask so much of you. To remedy this issue, the MBF Board has made the decision to consolidate all of our campaigns into one. By combining the campaigns, we can collect all the funds into our MBF general fund so that we can have the freedom to fully fund CourtCare operations and construction, CourtSupport, and CourtConnect.

The MBF Board understands how this change might upset some, especially those of you who have been ardent supporters of CourtCare since day one. Please do not worry, these programs are not going away. Furthermore, certain events such as WinterSmash will still be earmarked to benefit CourtCare. The MBF believes this change will streamline fundraising, allow maximum flexibility to address funding needs in the future, and will be an important avenue in assisting the MBF to fulfill its mission to promote civic education, increase the public's understanding of the rule of law, and improve the quality and administration of the legal system.

Please join me in launching the first annual Multnomah Bar Foundation Fundraising Campaign. The Campaign will be modeled on the successful CourtCare campaigns of the past and will run from May 3 to 21. This year's Campaign goal will be to raise \$110,000. We need your help to meet and exceed that goal. Donations are made to the MBF and are tax-deductible. Please help us reach our programming goals and donate to the MBF today.

On behalf of the MBF Board, thank you for your consideration and for supporting the MBF this year, last year, and into the future.

To make a tax-deductible, charitable contribution to the MBF, visit www.mbabar.org/mbf or contact Pamela Hubbs (pamela@mbabar.org, 503.854.5237).

Donations of \$150 or \$500 will receive special recognition, and trophies will be awarded to the firm that raises the most money and the firm that raises the most per capita.