



PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES

Equal Access to Justice

PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES, INC. 2019-2020 VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT PLAN¹

“Lawyers have a license to practice law, a monopoly on certain services. But for that privilege and status, lawyers have an obligation to provide legal services to those without the wherewithal to pay, to respond to needs outside themselves, to help repair tears in their communities.” – U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

“Equal justice under law is not merely a caption on the facade of the Supreme Court building; it is perhaps the most inspiring ideal of our society. It is one of the ends for which our entire legal system exists . . . it is fundamental that justice should be the same, in substance and availability, without regard to economic status.” – U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr.

Introducing Prairie State Legal Services: Working to Close the Justice Gap in our Communities

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc. is a non-profit law firm that provides free civil legal aid to low-income persons and seniors who have important legal problems affecting their basic human needs. Prairie State serves 36 counties in northern and central Illinois, outside of Cook County, from 11 regional offices and several special projects. We represent survivors of domestic violence in orders of protection, divorce and other family cases; people with disabilities who are wrongfully denied benefits; tenants who are being unlawfully evicted from their homes; families who are facing utility shut-offs or mortgage foreclosures; seniors who are facing improper discharge from nursing homes or are victims of elder abuse; veterans who need help securing SNAP (Food Stamp) benefits to which they are entitled; and many others with urgent legal problems. Our assistance can make the difference between continuing physical abuse and safety for a family; between homelessness and a decent place to live; between the danger of transfer trauma for a disabled elderly adult and stability at home or in a nursing home; between access to basic medical care and progression of disease or exacerbation of symptoms; and between hunger and having enough to eat. More information about Prairie State can be found at www.pslegal.org.

Prairie State is the only provider of free civil legal aid in most of the 36 counties we serve. The need for legal assistance far outstrips the capacity of Prairie State’s paid staff of just over 150 attorneys, paralegals, intake specialists, *pro bono* coordinators, and support staff – many of whom are part-time employees – to provide advice and representation to eligible clients:

- Prairie State’s 36 county service area is home to over 435,000 persons with incomes below 100% of

¹ As a recipient of federal funds from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), Prairie State must follow federal regulations promulgated by LSC in the operation of its program and services. These regulations require grantees to prepare an annual Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) Plan (45 CFR Part 1614), to operate a PAI program, and to report to LSC annually regarding its PAI services. This document is Prairie State’s PAI Plan for the year 2019-2020.

the federal poverty level and hundreds of thousands more who have incomes below 200% of the poverty level. Between 2000 and 2016, the percent of the Chicago region's poor who were living in the suburbs rose from 34% to 50%. The poverty rate for the United States was 12.3% in 2017. There were 39.7 million people in poverty nationwide. The poverty rate is not significantly different from the pre-recession level of 12.5% in 2007. In 2017, 1.6 million Illinoisans were in poverty – a rate of 12.6%. Additionally, 2.0 million Illinoisans are near poor and economically insecure with incomes between 100% and 199% of the federal poverty threshold. (Census data; [March 2017 Report on Illinois Poverty](#), and [Illinois and Chicago Region: Poverty, Income, and Health Insurance Fact Sheet](#), Heartland Alliance)

- In 2017, the Legal Services Corporation, a not for profit corporation which distributes the Congressional allocation for legal aid programs, issued its [Justice Gap Report](#). That report concluded that “71% of low-income households experienced at least one civil legal problem in the year preceding the study. Many of these households have had to deal with several issues. Indeed, more than half (54%) faced at least two civil legal problems and about one in four (24%) has faced six or more in the past year alone. The civil legal problems these Americans face are most often related to basic needs like getting access to health care, staying in their homes, and securing safe living conditions for their families.”
- The Justice Gap Report found that over 70% of those low-income people who seek help from a civil legal aid program like Prairie State will not get all of the assistance they need. For example they might receive legal advice rather than representation. In large part, this is because the legal aid program has insufficient staff or other resources to handle the matter.
- In 2018, Prairie State opened over 15,000 cases for services ranging from individualized legal advice over the phone to representation in court. During that same period, however, there were more than 30,750 calls to our centralized intake service. We use a triage system to sort these calls; we were unable to talk to many callers who had important legal problems which did not fall into the most urgent categories. In 2018, because of lack of staff or volunteers to handle the cases, Prairie State closed 3332 cases with advice or other assistance short of full representation even though the matter was of significant importance to the client's basic needs.

The justice gap – the wide gulf between the critical legal needs of low-income members of our community and the ability of Prairie State to meet those needs – is the reason that *pro bono* work by hundreds of dedicated volunteers is so critical, and why it is essential for us to continue to build cost effective *pro bono* projects which address our clients' most critical needs. We need your help in these efforts.

Prairie State's Volunteer Programs

The work of volunteer attorneys, paralegals, law students, undergraduates, intake specialists, support staff, and others across the Prairie State service area provides a critical supplement to the work of Prairie State's paid staff. In addition to enabling Prairie State to help more of northern and central Illinois' most vulnerable residents and making immeasurable improvements in the lives of those clients and their families, volunteers make a larger contribution to the public good. A number of recent studies have uncovered alarmingly low rates of confidence in our justice system. Volunteers support the justice system and the public's faith in that system by increasing the ability of the public to access the courts and helping ensure the fair administration of justice.

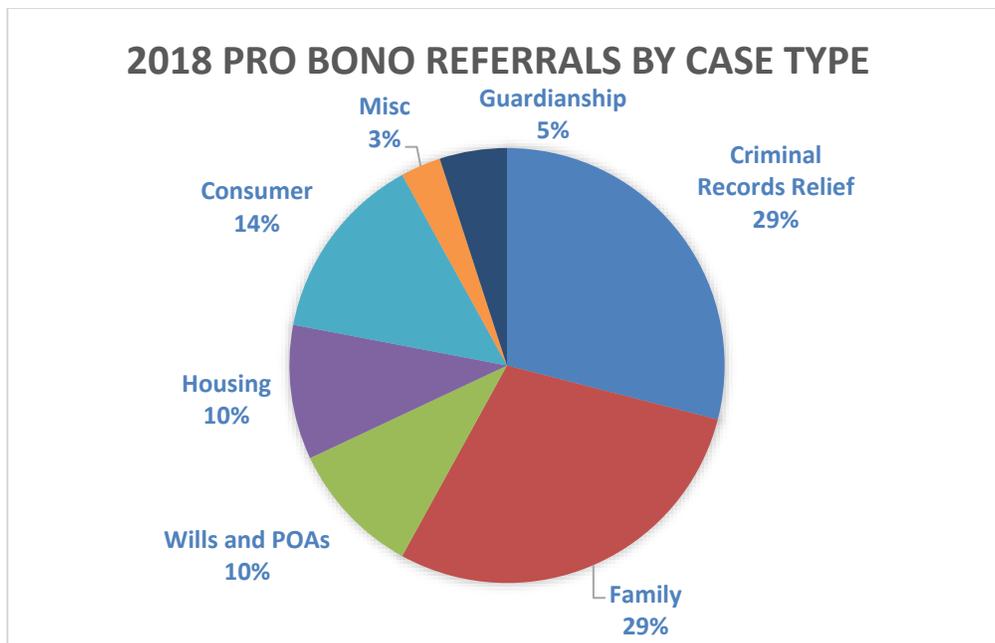
Prairie State administers 10 local *pro bono* projects from its 11 regional offices. These local projects operate with strong support from the local bar and courts, and focus primarily on referring individual cases to local

attorneys for extended representation, for example in court, in negotiations or before administrative agencies. Several of these local projects also include advice clinics or courthouse help desks. Prairie State also operates a program-wide *Pro Bono* Telephone Counseling/Intake Project. Additionally, dozens of volunteers work in our offices each year in a variety of capacities. All work performed through Prairie State's *pro bono* projects is covered by Prairie State's malpractice insurance.

Why help? "The feeling of giving something back to the community" Joliet volunteer

2018 Pro Bono Highlights

- In 2018, almost 300 volunteer attorneys in our local communities accepted 923 new *pro bono* case referrals from our local offices for advice or more extensive representation. Approximately 29% of these cases involved a family law matter and 29% involved criminal records relief.



- In 2018, volunteers reported securing court awards for family law clients referred to them by our local projects totaling over \$262,840 in annual child support or maintenance and \$100,034 in one-time property or other allocations. These awards will provide essential help to these clients to care for their families.
- In 2018, volunteers reported almost 4700 hours of service to clients referred by our local *pro bono* referral projects and our Social Security Reconsideration Project. Our law students and in-house volunteer lawyers reported another 2836 hours spent on client matters. This outstanding contribution of volunteer time demonstrates the strong commitment of our volunteers; in some cases these hours help us access grant funding because of the value of this time. We believe that some volunteers underreport their volunteer time, perhaps not realizing that this information is critical to us for our assessment of the effectiveness of our volunteer programs and that the data is considered by some funders of Prairie State.

“It is so rewarding to help with this work.” Peoria volunteer

- Seventeen attorney volunteers with our Telephone Counseling/Intake Project completed over 400 cases by providing individualized advice or other brief services to callers. They also spoke with many additional clients with the most critical cases, offered them initial advice, and referred their cases on to our local offices for more in-depth services. In addition, a volunteer intake specialist who is not an attorney contributed significant time in taking phone applications, allowing our lawyers to spend their time providing legal advice.
- Prairie State’s Telephone Counseling Service intake hotline began a new partnership with the legal department at McDonald’s Corporation in 2017 and continued this partnership throughout 2018. McDonald’s attorneys advise clients who need legal advice with landlord-tenant problems including evictions, habitability issues, and security deposits.
- In 2018, 14 attorneys volunteered in our offices as unpaid staff, handling cases, interviewing new clients, or assisting the attorneys with their work.
- In total, volunteer attorneys in the community, working through our special projects and working as unpaid staff in our offices completed more than 1120 cases in 2018.

“Prairie State provides excellent background on clients, making the work streamlined.” Kankakee Volunteer

- Over 20 undergraduate, paralegal, and law students interned with Prairie State in 2018. These students interviewed clients, drafted court pleadings, conducted legal research, reviewed files at administrative agencies, reviewed and summarized medical records in Social Security cases, and performed other activities in support of our work. Many law student interns become *pro bono* volunteers after they are admitted to practice; the current president of Prairie State’s Board of Directors began with us as a summer law student.
- In 2018, 19 retired, inactive, or out-of-state attorneys were licensed to perform *pro bono* services through Prairie State under [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 756\(k\)](#).
- Prairie State presented 19 live or web-based continuing legal education courses free of charge to volunteers and prospective volunteers in 2018, and continued our family law courses hosted on Illinois Legal Aid Online.
- Prairie State continued its partnership with the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois in Rockford, where five volunteer attorneys provided free legal advice and brief services to more than 95 clients in 2018 through a courthouse help desk.

“Thank you for believing in us!” Disabled client’s mother on volunteer’s winning favorable decision in disability termination case.

- Prairie State has continued its collaboration with the 17th Judicial Circuit Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts and the Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic/Northern Illinois University Law School to provide

services to victims of domestic violence. The OP Court Project was conceived by one of the judges, who saw a great unmet need for legal representation of petitioners in plenary orders of protection where the respondent has representation. Prairie State and the Court worked together to provide an initial training in 2017 and a second in-depth training in 2018. All told, 28 volunteer attorneys have received extensive training in client-centered services and are participating in the project. Prairie State is responsible for matching the clients with volunteer attorneys. Since the project's inception, Prairie State has referred 44 clients to volunteer attorneys through this effort.

Giving People a Second Chance

Expunging or sealing an arrest or conviction can be life-changing. Even very old criminal records can stand in the way of securing employment or finding decent housing. Lawyers who volunteer to handle records relief matters make an important difference for clients.

- Prairie State Legal Services Rockford office, in collaboration with State Senator Steve Stadelman and Cabrini Green Legal Aid, hosted a Second Chance Summit on June 16, 2018. Twenty-five volunteer attorneys assisted over 150 pro se petitioners in preparing documents to file to request for expungement or sealing in the 17th Circuit Court of Winnebago County. There were 10 additional volunteers who provided assistance in preparing fee waiver applications.

“Thank you! You really helped me when I needed help the most.” Waukegan *Pro Bono* Client

- In July, our Peoria office took part in the 2018 Second Chance Summit and Resource Fair in collaboration with Illinois State Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth, Cabrini Green Legal Aid in Chicago, and Caterpillar, Inc. Approximately 50 volunteer attorneys provided free legal services to over 200 clients address legal barriers to employment. The lawyers counseled clients on reviewing criminal history transcripts, prepared and filed petitions for expungement and sealing, and provided information on alternative forms of relief under Illinois law, such as health care waivers, certificates of good conduct, certificates of relief from disability, and clemency petitions. Prairie State recruited volunteer attorneys for the event and provided an MCLE event to help prepare them to advise clients. Prairie State obtained all the necessary documents required for the attorneys, including the Illinois State Police Report, and drafted the pro-se documents. Since the July summit, we have sponsored monthly expungement and sealing clinics in which we work with volunteer attorneys to serve as many as 20 clients at each clinic.
- Volunteer attorneys and physicians worked with staff in several of our offices on appeals of denials of SSI disability benefits from the Social Security Administration. Volunteers help us analyze the medical and other evidence, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the potential cases, and develop arguments to support the clients' claims for benefits. In some cases, volunteers took cases on themselves and advocated on clients' behalves before the Bureau of Disability Determination Services at the reconsideration stage of appeal.
- In our Rockford office, we partner with The ARC of Winnebago and Boone Counties, a social service agency which assists people with intellectual & developmental disabilities, in providing *pro bono* representation for parents and caregivers seeking guardianship of their disabled children who are turning 18 and still in need of a legal guardian. In 2018, 26 cases have been opened for assistance with adult guardianship. As a result, 13 clients were granted guardianship of a disabled adult in 2018, 7

received legal advice, and 6 cases were pending as of the end of the year. Nineteen volunteer attorneys participate in this project.

Providing Comfort to the Terminally Ill

Our Peoria office's client was a veteran who was battling cancer and had been told by doctors that he had only a short time left to live. It was very important to our client to make sure that his affairs were in order to ease the transition for his loved ones, and to be sure that his wife would be able to make decisions on his behalf and that she would be the beneficiary of his entire estate. A volunteer attorney not only took the case, but visited the client at home, enabling the client to execute a will. The client told us he could be at peace and focus his final days on spending time with his family.

- Prairie State continued its successful pro bono legal advice walk-in clinics in Bloomington in partnership with State Farm Bank and State Farm Corporate Law Department, the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee, the McLean County Bar Association, Central Illinois Paralegal Association, The Immigration Project, Mid Central Community Action, and the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI). We held two clinics in 2018; 34 volunteer attorneys and 19 volunteer paralegals provided legal help to 78 Prairie State clients.
- Our Bloomington office has established a second monthly clinic in cooperation with State Farm Corporate Law Department, to assist clients seeking criminal records relief. This clinic uses a creative approach in which volunteer interns and attorneys work in the office to prepare the cases; State Farm attorneys meet with clients at the clinics to review that paperwork; our staff assist clients in filing the paperwork and appear in court with them if necessary; and our office refers complex cases to the private criminal defense bar for representation in court.

Ensuring Stability for Families

“Researchers have demonstrated eviction to be a major source, and not just a by-product, of persistent urban poverty.” *The Reader*, Sept 14 2017. Eviction can lead to a chain reaction of adverse consequences for families, from the costs of moving to lost school days and change of schools for children.

Studies show that having an attorney in court can make a significant difference in terms of a tenant's chances of success in defending against an eviction in court. Our volunteers who advise tenants or represent them in court help clients maintain housing stability for themselves and their children.

- Prairie State worked closely with bar associations throughout our 36 county service area to place cases with local attorneys, recognize volunteers, encourage *pro bono* involvement, and develop new volunteer opportunities.
- Prairie State enjoyed ongoing relationships with the corporate legal departments of Abbott Laboratories, AbbVie, Caterpillar Inc., Deere & Company, McDonald's and State Farm, and has begun

"My husband suffers from cancer and dementia. The volunteer showed me compassion and kindness and took a lot of pressure off me, I needed that." Joliet client

work recently with Walgreens Legal Department.

- In 2018 we began a new initiative in partnership with Pro Bono Network to address the need among DuPage County residents for advanced directives, including powers of attorney. Clinics are held at our offices. Prairie State screens the cases and sets them for appointments with volunteer attorneys who are recruited and supported by PBN.

We thank our volunteers and our *pro bono* partners for making these accomplishments possible in 2018.

2019 – 2020 Volunteer Involvement Goals

With approximately 14,000 attorneys registered with the ARDC in the Prairie State service area and hundreds of thousands of low-income residents in need of legal aid, we continue to explore ways to increase participation in our *pro bono* program and to efficiently integrate volunteers into our service delivery model.

We shared our 2017-18 and 2018-19 PAI Plans with many members of the bar and the judiciary in our service area. Much of the feedback we received was in the nature of general support for and interest in our work. Substantive feedback included suggestions that we offer more bite-sized opportunities, that we increase referrals of wills and advanced directives, that we make use of technology and forms to increase *pro bono* services, that we expand use of law student interns, that we improve our outreach to younger attorneys, and that we seek the help of judges in recruitment. We will work to incorporate all of these suggestions. This Plan also is designed with input from our 2016 Legal Needs Study participants and our *pro bono* partners.

While each of our local *pro bono* projects has its own specific goals and plans, the following are our goals for our volunteer program as a whole.

1. Continue to prioritize referral of individual clients to volunteer attorneys for extended representation.

The single greatest need of our clients – and one of the most cost effective uses of the limited resources Prairie State is able to devote to *pro bono* involvement – is for experienced attorneys who will provide direct and extended representation in court and in negotiations. This is particularly true in the area of family law. While thorough advice and brief services enable many of our clients to represent themselves effectively, many more of our clients lack the ability to navigate the legal system successfully without an attorney. We need more volunteer attorneys who are able to commit to providing in-court representation to Prairie State clients. In many of our counties, we are able to match new attorneys with mentor volunteers to provide representation.

2. Increase referrals in the areas of family law, bankruptcy, wills/powers of attorney and expungement/sealing.

We have identified these as areas of significant client need which are particularly appropriate for volunteer involvement. These are cases which do not require a volunteer to “drop everything,” but in which the volunteer can make a very significant difference for a client. These extended representation cases are cost effective for our *pro bono* coordinators to refer. Expansion of our work in expungements and sealing may require us to offer MCLE events for potential volunteers; we offered events in 2018 in Peoria and Rockford, and will be presenting an additional training in Peoria in June 2019.

3. Recruit more retired and inactive attorneys to volunteer in our offices.

Retired attorneys who volunteer in our offices and function as unpaid staff are one of our most valuable *pro bono* assets. While most of these attorneys do not have prior poverty law experience, their years of practice allow them to learn new areas of law quickly and they bring a fresh perspective to the issues legal aid attorneys see day in and day out. Many retired attorneys have expertise which is different from that of our staff and can be invaluable in improving services to our clients. Because they no longer have an outside practice, many of these retired attorneys are able to devote time to contested or complex matters. Prairie State provides support, training, and supervision to these in-house volunteer attorneys. In our Ottawa office, a retired judge volunteers as our *pro bono* coordinator. This volunteer makes an outstanding contribution to his local community, utilizing his familiarity with both the law and the local bar to increase *pro bono* services to our clients.

We find that many attorneys are not aware that [Illinois Supreme Court Rule 756\(k\)](#) allows them to perform *pro bono* services through a sponsoring entity like Prairie State, even after they have changed their attorney registration status to inactive or retired. We will continue to publicize this option and to target retiring attorneys in our recruitment efforts. Retired attorneys are not the only potential source of in-house volunteer lawyers. Many attorneys do not have paid positions because of family situations or obligations, but wish to remain active and contribute their special knowledge to their communities. These potential volunteers bring a wealth of value to our clients and our work. We will continue to seek these volunteers, and to provide them with the support they need to represent our clients and find a meaningful volunteer opportunity with us.

4. Expand the use of limited scope *pro bono* representation to reach and assist more clients.

Illinois Supreme Court Rule 137(e) allows an attorney to assist a self-represented litigant in drafting or reviewing a pleading, motion, or other document without making a general or limited scope appearance. We see many potential clients who might be able to represent themselves successfully in court with this drafting assistance and detailed advice for proceeding in court, but we have not made a specific effort to match those potential clients with volunteers. In the coming year we will look for ways to expand referrals for this important assistance.

5. Develop and offer cost effective “bite-sized” *pro bono* opportunities, including integrating law student and paralegal student volunteers in our efforts in order to leverage the most benefit from volunteer attorney time.

The demand from busy attorneys for discrete, time-limited *pro bono* opportunities has grown enormously in recent years. Prairie State has responded to this demand by making more bite-sized *pro bono* opportunities available to volunteers. In 2010, only 37% of our *pro bono* cases were closed as advice or brief services; in 2018, 66% of our *pro bono* cases were closed as advice or brief services. Our Joliet and Bloomington advice clinics; our Rockford bankruptcy helpdesk; power of attorney clinics; self-represented litigant divorce clinics; our growing number of expungement clinics; and telephone counseling opportunities all provide discrete *pro bono* opportunities to volunteers.

However, while the need for civil legal aid services is almost limitless, it is challenging to create bite-sized *pro bono* opportunities that are meaningful to both volunteers and clients, and also cost effective for Prairie State. Many people who are unfamiliar with the operation of *pro bono* programs are surprised to learn that there is significant time involved in administering them properly. Attorneys volunteering their time expect that Prairie State will screen the cases for client financial eligibility and for at least apparent merit. The cases we refer through our *pro bono* projects remain Prairie State cases. This allows us to offer malpractice insurance to our

volunteers and to report the cases to our funders. It also means, however, that we must comply with certain reporting and oversight requirements of our funders and our malpractice carrier. We must follow up to be sure that the cases are completed and that we have case closing data such as the information reflected in this Volunteer Involvement Plan. All of this takes time.

The Prairie State staff time required to refer an advice or brief services *pro bono* case to a volunteer is almost identical to the staff time required to refer a complex litigated matter; Prairie State staff frequently spend two to two and half times more hours screening, referring and following up on an advice or brief services *pro bono* matter than the volunteer attorney spends on the same matter. In some cases, the disproportion is even greater. As we analyze our “bite-sized” *pro bono* opportunities, it is increasingly clear that not all such opportunities make sense.

In our Bloomington office we have pioneered a model in which volunteers work in the office with our staff to prepare cases for our monthly expungement and sealing clinics. This allows us to serve a fairly large number of clients at each clinic, and maximizes the impact of the State Farm law department attorneys who volunteer at the clinics. Preparing the cases for these clinics would be time- and cost-prohibitive for our staff without the contributions of these volunteers. We hope to replicate this model in other offices in the coming years.

Going forward, we will continue to assess our current bite-sized *pro bono* offerings to maximize their cost effectiveness and efficiency. We also will continue to refine our data collection and client data base to maximize efficient data entry and effective extraction of meaningful reports. Before committing resources to new discrete *pro bono* ventures, we will evaluate these projects with a close eye toward cost effectiveness.

6. Use technology to recruit, train and support volunteers.

We believe that in-person continuing legal education is an effective way to train new volunteers and to thank existing volunteers for their service. However, technology affords new opportunities to efficiently and timely train and support volunteers. In 2016 we created a substantial library of recorded training to allow for continuous onboarding of specialized *pro bono* project volunteers. We will continue to build that library in 2019.

Longer term goals include expanding the reach of our online recruitment of volunteers and continuing to develop forms which volunteers can use in their *pro bono* work for our clients.

Prairie State is a sponsoring entity under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 756(k); retired and inactive status attorneys can register with the Illinois ARDC to practice under our auspices, without returning to active status.

Prairie State also is an MCLE provider. We offer a variety of MCLE events and recorded training to support the work of our volunteers. All of our MCLE events are free of charge.

7. Recruit bilingual volunteer attorneys to represent limited English-proficient clients, and train English-speaking volunteer attorneys to use Prairie State’s interpreting and translation resources.

Many residents of our 36 counties have limited ability in English and are need of legal help for basic needs problems, but it has been a challenge to find volunteers to serve these clients. Just over five percent of the clients served by Prairie State staff in 2018 were limited English-proficient, but only 2.4 percent of *pro bono* cases involved limited English-proficient clients. Self-representation is a particular challenge for individuals

who are not proficient in English and thus finding volunteers who are willing to work with these clients is a priority. Prairie State has funds available for interpreting and translation services.

8. Involve more non-attorney volunteers.

We continue to explore and experiment with ways to involve non-attorney volunteers. Non-attorneys who are able to volunteer regularly in our Wheaton and Waukegan offices can help screen clients for eligibility for Prairie State's services, which enables our intake attorneys to spend more time giving legal advice to eligible clients and improves our ability to find appropriate cases to refer to our corporate partners.

Our law student internship program remains a critical piece of our non-attorney volunteer program. In 2019, almost every Prairie State office will host at least one law student intern and several will host two or more. Several of these students will have Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711 student practice licenses allowing them to provide advice as well as in-court representation to clients.

Our Peoria office has a vibrant paralegal internship program, and in McHenry a long-time paralegal volunteer has made a significant impact by supporting the work of our local volunteer coordinator. This coming year we will be seeking undergraduate interns and others who would be willing to make a part-time commitment for at least several months to work with our local office *pro bono* coordinators. We believe that this arrangement will be "win-win," as the interns become familiar with the legal system and our cost in staff time per case drops, allowing us to serve even more clients.

9. Develop opportunities in DuPage County

DuPage County is the most populous county in Prairie State's service area, and home to about 1/3 of the ARDC-registered attorneys in our 36 counties. DuPage Legal Aid, a program initially developed by the DuPage County Bar Association, coordinates *pro bono* family law services in the county as well as some other *pro bono* services. We have developed stronger communication with DuPage Legal Aid over the past two years, and are committed to continuing our efforts to work together to maximize services to DuPage County residents. DuPage County lawyers contact us on a regular basis asking what *pro bono* opportunities we can provide to them. Moving forward, we will be working to make the best use of those offers of assistance while not duplicating the excellent work of DuPage Legal Aid.

We need your input as we move forward!

Prairie State needs input to make our *pro bono* program as effective as possible. Our most successful *pro bono* efforts have grown out of conversations with our partners – the courts, bar associations, judges, law firms, social service agencies, state and federal governments, and individuals in our communities. Please share your ideas with us and join our efforts.

We actively invite bar leaders and other *pro bono* partners to offer input on this plan by contacting Prairie State's Executive Director or Director of Advocacy Training and Volunteer Services:

Michael O'Connor
Executive Director
303 North Main Street, #600
Rockford, IL 61101

Linda Rothnagel
Director of Advocacy Training and Volunteer
Services
5320 West Elm

(815) 965-2134
moconnor@pslegal.org

McHenry, IL 60050
(815) 900-3286
lrothnagel@pslegal.org

You may also contact the staff of our regional offices and special projects:

Bloomington – (309) 827-5021

(serving Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties)

- Managing Attorney Adrian Barr (abarr@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Kathy Boyle (kboyle@pslegal.org)

Joliet – (815) 727-5123

(serving Grundy and Will Counties)

- Managing Attorney Andrea DeTellis (adetellis@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Suzanne Helwich (shelwich@pslegal.org)

Kankakee – (815) 935-2750

(serving Iroquois and Kankakee Counties)

- Managing Attorney Ketura Baptiste (kbaptiste@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Karen Snyder (ksnyder@pslegal.org)

McHenry – (815) 344-9113

(serving McHenry County)

- Supervising Attorney Paul Zukowski (pzukowski@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Dori Michaels (dmichaels@pslegal.org)

Ottawa – (815) 434-5903

(serving Bureau, LaSalle, and Putnam Counties)

- Managing Attorney Don Dirks (ddirks@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Ret. Judge James Brusatte (jbrusatte@pslegal.org)

Peoria and Galesburg – (309) 674-9831

(serving Fulton, Henderson, Knox, Marshall, McDonough, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell and Warren Counties)

- Managing Attorney Denise Conklin (dconklin@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Myraida Melendez (mmelendez@pslegal.org)

Rockford – (815) 965-2902

(serving Boone, Carroll, Jo Daviess, Ogle, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties)

- Managing Attorney Kimberly Thielbar (kthielbar@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Wendy Crouch (wcrouch@pslegal.org)

Rock Island – (309) 794-1328

(serving Henry, Lee, Mercer, Rock Island, and Whiteside Counties)

- Managing Attorney Gretchen Farwell (gfarrowell@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Cherie Myers (cmyers@pslegal.org)

St. Charles – (630) 232-9415

(serving DeKalb, Kane, and Kendall Counties)

- Managing Attorney Kathryn McGowan Bettcher (kbettcher@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Mary Petruchius (mpetruchius@pslegal.org)

Waukegan – (847) 662-6925

(serving Lake County)

- Managing Attorney Samuel DiGrino (sdigrino@pslegal.org)
- *Pro Bono* Coordinator Susan Perlman (sperlman@pslegal.org)

Wheaton – (630) 690-2130

(serving DuPage County)

- Managing Attorney Marisa Wiesman (mwiesman@pslegal.org)

Low Income Tax Clinic – (630) 580-3315

(serving all 36 PRAIRIE STATE counties)

- Project Director, Molly Recar (mrecar@pslegal.org)

Legal Help for Homeowners Project – (224) 321-5640

(serving all 36 PRAIRIE STATE counties)

- Project Director Jesse Hodierne (jhodierne@pslegal.org)

Fair Housing Project – (815) 965-2902

(serving Winnebago, Boone, Lake, and McHenry Counties)

- Project Manager AJ Young (ajyoung@pslegal.org)

Telephone Counseling Pro Bono Project – (630) 690-2130

- Project Coordinator Cindy Matre (cmatre@pslegal.org)
- Telephone Counseling Service Managing Attorney Melissa Fuechtmann (mfuechtmann@pslegal.org)