MJC QUARTERLY
THE MILWAUKEE JUSTICE CENTER
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MJC Mobile Legal Clinic, St. Benedict the Moor, Partner to Provide Legal Help to the Homeless

Homeless individuals are often overlooked for their need to resolve civil legal issues. Public awareness often centers around the need for homeless to access mental health assistance, drug treatment, and housing help. While those concerns are certainly well-founded, civil legal help is also needed, and now help is arriving.

In recognizing this need, the Milwaukee Justice Center Mobile Legal Clinic has struck up a partnership with St. Benedict the Moor Parish, and their facility on 9th Street across from the Milwaukee County Criminal Justice Facility.

Starting this past autumn, and going through at least June of this year, the MJC Mobile Legal Clinic will visit St. Benedict on the second Tuesday of the month in the late afternoon, right around the time they offer their Community Meal.

"This is a great opportunity to assist people with the greatest of needs," MJC Legal Director Angela Cunningham said. "And the response to our clinics there so far have really borne that out."

We also need to make mention of the generous support of all the attorneys who are committing their time to this project. Attorneys from various practices have been donating their time graciously to helping the people of St. Ben's.

And if you or your firm would like to pitch in on this project, or any of the others for the Milwaukee Justice Center Mobile Legal Clinic, please visit our site at milwaukee.gov/MJC/MJCMobileLegalClinic.htm

OUR MISSION:

The Milwaukee Justice Center is a collaborative endeavor between Milwaukee County, the Milwaukee Bar Association, and Marquette University Law School. The MJC provides services to self-represented litigants with civil court matters. Self-represented individuals have a fundamental right to access the justice system even if they cannot afford an attorney, or do not qualify for legal aid.

Upcoming Events

MJC Clinic Closures
MVLC at the MJC Services CLOSED for Spring Break:
Friday, March 25, 2016
Brief Legal Advice Services resume Thursday, March 31

2016 Judges' Night
Tuesday, February 23, 2016
5:30pm
Grain Exchange Room at The Mackie Building

6th Annual MJC5k Run for Justice
Wednesday, June 22, 2016
7:00pm
Veteran's Park, Milwaukee
www.MilwaukeeJusticeCenter.org/MJC5K

MJC Celebrates an Unsung Hero: Milwaukee County Law Library's Lynne Gehrke

Though the Milwaukee Justice Center is built on a partnership between Milwaukee County, the Milwaukee Bar Association, and the Marquette University Law School, they're not the only partnerships that make the MJC possible.

However, one of the closest, and most important partnerships we have nurtured is with our close neighbor, the Milwaukee County Law Library, and librarian Lynne Gehrke.

Lynne has led the Milwaukee County Law Library since 2010, and has since taken it from helping 400 patrons per week to more than 1,200 now. Much like the MJC, the Milwaukee County Law Library also focuses on helping *pro se* litigants.

"We figure out where they are in their process, and help them get to the next step," Lynne said. "Whether its referring them to the Milwaukee Justice Center, or getting them a form, or taking them to where they need to be. Whatever that next step is."

These are some of the qualities that led the Wisconsin Law Journal to select Lynne Gehrke as one of their 2015 "Unsung Heroes" in their December issue.

"I was stunned! How in the world!" Lynne said when asked what she thought when the Wisconsin Law Journal approached her about being named an Unsung Hero for 2015. "Usually those accolades go to people in large firms because they get organized. I really didn't expect anyone to go out of their way and do what it takes to get someone like me nominated!"

Lynne started out her professional career as an early childhood special education teacher, and then decided to go to law school in order to better help children with special needs get the education they deserve. It was law school that led her to getting into library sciences.

"My favorite part of law is the research and the writing," Lynne said. "I consider legal research to be like treasure hunting. You want to be the one who found the exact case nobody else found."

When she took over the law library, they had a much bigger space, helping about 400 people, mostly attorneys, per week. Today, after a 3-year "temporary" move, they have a 2,500 square foot space, helping 1,200-1,400 people per week, 80-85% of which, Lynne estimates, are *pro se* individuals.

It's this dedication to serving those in need, and being such a great partner to us in the MJC, that makes Lynne one of *our* heroes. And we're more than happy to sing about her.

Tip of the Scale: Divorce Certificate Changes

Gone is the old, handwritten "Certificate of Divorce or Annulment." Long live the "Divorce/Annulment Worksheet!"

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services' Vital Statistics office has, for the first time in years, updated the form, and now it no longer requires pen-on-paper writing, or even the use of special, archival paper.

The new "Worksheet" can be filled out on your computer (or ours), printed on regular printer paper, and even submitted via the Wisconsin e-File system.

The old Certificates of Divorce or Annulment will still exist, however, the point of the new form is for Vital Stats to create them on-demand.

For all divorce/annulment cases starting in 2016, the new "Worksheet" must be filed instead. We have them online on the MJC website.

Volunteer Spotlight: Jon Allen

If you've volunteered at the Milwaukee Justice Center since August, chances are, you've run into Jon Allen. Jon is one of our most dedicated, and frequent, volunteers.

He's offered up an average of 16 hours of his time every week since he started volunteering in August, usually in the form of two full days and a half day per week.

He's a recent Milwaukee Area Technical College paralegal program graduate.

You've been around the MJC a lot since you started. What keeps you coming back?

I really enjoy the work and the service the clinic provides, and I really enjoy volunteering here. It's a great way to get legal experience while I'm searching for a job in the field.

What got you interested in the MJC in the first place?

It was my wife. She volunteers here at one of the Family Law Advice clinics, and she suggested it would be a good way to gain experience. She started out as a forms volunteer here before there even was a family law advice clinic, and now that's what she still does here.

What's been your most rewarding experience at the MJC?

Probably just helping out the people who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford an attorney, or know how to navigate the system. Filing all these motions and forms can be difficult.

You recently changed careers to be a paralegal. What did you do before?

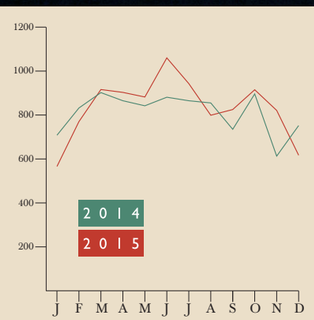
I worked in healthcare for twelve years. I started out as a cytotechnologist, analyzing patient specimens for cancer. Then the last two years I moved to more of an administrative support role. I needed a career change after twelve years in one industry. I felt I needed something different.

The legal field has always been an area that interested me, and I considered going to law school. However, I didn't feel I could invest the time and money in a law degree when the job market wasn't that great.

What else should we know about you?

I have a wide varienty of interests: photography, cooking, skiing, watching movies, sports, anything outdoors. I'll try anything once before I pass judgment!

Otherwise, I live in Waukesha with my wife, Susan, and my dog, Daisy.



Q4 2015 at a Glance...

Clients Seen

Q4 2015:	2,353
vs. 2014:	+0.7%
YTD:	+0.6%
vs. Hist. Avg:	+13.2%

The Milwaukee Justice Center had another positive quarter, helping, 2,343 individuals who needed legal help in October, November, and December of 2015.

Our strongest performance gain came in November, where we helped 821 people, a more than 33% gain from the previous year.

Overall, the MJC finished up 0.7% year-over-year for the fourth quarter, and 0.6% year-over-year for the full year's performance.

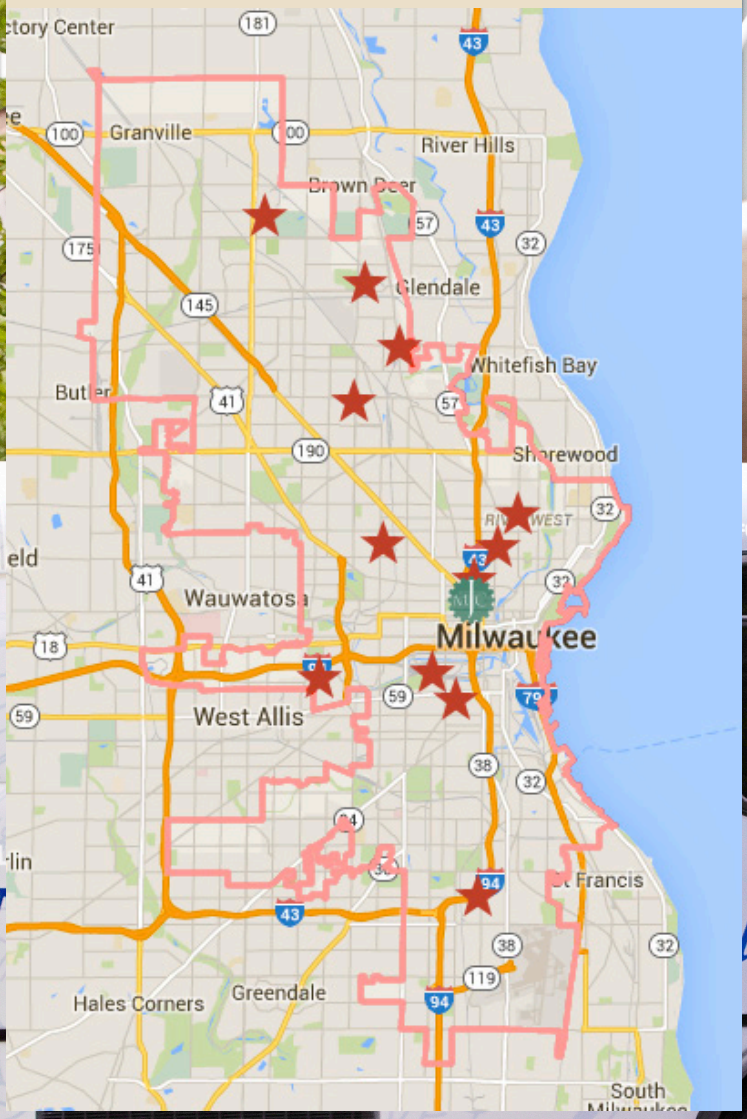
That put us at 10,090 total individuals helped by the MJC in calendar 2015. Thanks for your help!

Roundup of MJC Mobile Legal Clinic's 2015 Season

2015 DATA

CLINICS:	23
CLIENTS SEEN:	187
ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS:	33
ATTORNEY HOURS	145.5
STUDENT VOLUNTEERS:	35
STUDENT HOURS:	188.25
INTERNS:	9
INTERN HOURS:	30
VALUE OF SERVICE	**$57,450**

BUS STOPS



Family Law Forms Assistance:

Monday - Wednesday
8:30am - 12:00pm
1:00pm - 4:00pm

Thursday - Friday
8:30am - 12:00pm

Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic at the MJC Clinic Hours:

Thursday - Friday
Sign in at 1:30pm

Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic Family Law Advice Clinic Hours:

Monday - Wednesday
Sign in at 1:00pm

Milwaukee Justice Center
MJC Quarterly

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