



Polk County Bar Association

Volunteer Lawyers Project

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November 24, 2021

Dear Polk County Bar Association Members:

The Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project (“PCBA VLP”) is a charitable organization established by the Polk County Bar Association with the mission of providing legal services to low-income residents of Polk County. The PCBA VLP provides both independent client intake and intake in partnership with Iowa Legal Aid for cases that cannot be placed due to conflict or capacity. With your help, the PCBA VLP is one of the most successful volunteer lawyer programs in the country, with Polk County lawyers donating thousands of hours of their time each year to those in need.

To say the least, FY2020-2021 was an unusual year. The PCBA VLP closed 849 cases. Hours reported by volunteers was 2942.81. Of the 849 cases, 370 of those were Covid related matters(43%). Of the remaining cases, 290 were family law matters.

Our program is primarily funded by donations from lawyers like you and a grant from the interest on lawyer trust accounts (“IOLTA”). Without monetary donations by Polk County lawyers, the PCBA VLP could not continue to provide services to thousands of individuals within Polk County who need access to justice. Your donations are essential for the continued operation of this important program helping to ensure that all residents of our community have equal access to justice regardless of income.

In past your our Trivia Night was again a success—your donations brought in over \$7,000. We also enjoyed playing golf together at the annual Bench Bar golf outing at Waveland Golf Course, where your generosity and support raised more than \$35,000.

Despite your tremendous generosity, we continue to face funding challenges. This past year, due to lower IOLTA account volumes, the PCBA VLP’s IOLTA funding was cut by almost \$60,000. This resulted in a drastic reduction of funds available to programs providing assistance to low-income residents of Polk County. There are potentially 65,000 individuals residing in Polk County who are eligible for the assistance of the PCBA VLP. As a result of the funding cuts, staff has been reduced, resulting in fewer cases being accepted for placement.

We are again asking for your time, talent, and treasure. Please consider taking a case and making a donation. The PCBA VLP is a tax-exempt charitable organization which means your donation is tax deductible. You can designate the PCBA VLP as a recipient of your United Way donation or you can make a direct donation to:

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The PCBA VLP also now offers you the ability to make donations on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. This option is available on your Polk County Bar Association membership renewal form. I respectfully ask that you continue your commitment to access to civil justice by making your annual donation to the PCBA VLP today. Your gifts of time and treasure will make a profound impact in our community.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Kuehner

Michael C. Kuehner, President
Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project