



**STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN**  
*Your Practice. Our Purpose.®*

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Board of Governors  
From: Larry J. Martin, Executive Director  
Date: Feb. 22, 2021  
Re: Executive Director Report

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I hope you and your families are safe and well. While some of us may be growing weary from the prolonged impact of the global pandemic, issues of racial equity, the divisiveness of our political climate, and other topics making today's headlines, the reality is that many of our families, colleagues, and neighbors are not doing so well. Some of us are struggling with the resulting mental health issues that come with this economic and social disruption.

Yet, I am an optimist. I am ever confident that 2021 brings new opportunities to address the legal profession's pain points and finds new ways to grow and serve our communities. Just take a look at this report, and you will see example after example of how we are working together on behalf of our members and our communities. It is an impressive summary of the hard work of our elected leaders, member volunteers and State Bar staff.

During this time, I am particularly proud of the **WisLAP** staff and trained volunteers. They are ready to help lawyers, judges, and law students in need – sometimes at a moment's notice – and their work goes well beyond mental health and substance abuse issues. They work to cultivate well-being within the legal profession. They offer guidance to parents with school-aged children, for those experiencing the loss of loved ones or the feelings of isolation, or for those dealing with financial stresses. On our behalf, they bring much-needed empathy, compassion, and kindness.

I'm also exceptionally proud of the latest developments in our pro bono work. Thanks to the new **Pro Bono Portal**, our members have an easy way to find pro opportunities that meet their interests. One of the newest opportunities is the **Small Business Assistance project**, launched by the Business Law Section and the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic earlier this month. The project helps struggling small businesses – many hit hard by the pandemic – with free non-litigation legal advice. Small businesses are the heart of our communities, and we now have a real opportunity to positively impact our local economies.

**Join Us for a Special Budget Briefing on March 2**

As we analyze the impact of Gov. Evers proposed budget, we see opportunity to address disparities in the justice system by advancing our policy priorities. The list of budget bill provisions supported by the State Bar include:

- an additional \$5 million in funding for civil legal services;
- expungement reform;
- returning 17-year-olds to juvenile jurisdiction;
- additional positions for assistant district attorneys and public defenders;
- funding the eight new circuit court positions approved last session;
- revisions to juvenile shackling;
- indexing the hourly rate paid for public defender appointments; and
- expanding broadband access in rural communities.

I hope we can count on your support in advancing these and other policy priorities. Our Government Relations Team can't do it alone, and they will be calling on you to actively participate in the advocacy of these issues.

The first step is to educate yourself. **All State Bar Board of Governors members are asked to join the GR Team for a special budget briefing on March 2, 12 p.m. Look for your invitation, sent on Feb. 18, to attend the briefing via Zoom.**

Rest assured, your organization remains strong, vibrant, and mission centered. In all likelihood we will continue to work remotely until early to midsummer. The decision to return to our physical office space and to in-person member meetings will be informed by the directives and recommendations from our national, state and local health officials.

I look forward to the day when we will again meet in person. Until then, thank you for your service to the State Bar, to the profession, and our justice system. As always – FORWARD!

## RECENT COLUMNS of Interest

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In case you missed my recent columns in the *Wisconsin Lawyer*<sup>TM</sup> magazine:

- **Your State Bar: Should Old Acquaintance Be Forgotten.** May the season be a time to recharge and reflect as we look to put the past in its proper place. (December)
- **Your State Bar: Now the Real Work Begins.** It was a grueling march to Election Day. But now you've voted and can turn your attention elsewhere. Right? Not so fast. (January)
- **Your State Bar: Words Do Matter.** The words and rhetoric people choose, particularly from those in positions of authority, indeed do matter. To think otherwise is naïve. (February)

## UPCOMING EVENTS to Keep on Your Radar

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- **Wisconsin High School Mock Trial (Virtual)**  
March 6-7 (Finals)
- **Board of Governors' Meetings**  
April 16, June 9, Sept. 23, and Dec. 3
- **State Bar Elections**  
March 1: **Nominations due for Board of Governors**  
April 23: Ballots due, results are in
- **2021 Annual Meeting & Conference (Virtual)**  
June 9: Cheryl Furstace Daniels swearing-in as 66<sup>th</sup> State Bar president, 5 p.m.  
June 10-11: Conference
- **Member Recognition Celebration**  
June 23
- **Joint Leadership Orientation (BOG, Section, Division, Committee Leaders)**  
Sept. 21: Expungement clinic (tentative), Kenosha  
Sept. 22: Orientation, Kenosha  
Sept. 23: Board of Governors' meeting, Kenosha

## **EDUCATE – Developing Skilled Legal Professionals**

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### ***Research Panel to Help Shape Delivery of Products and Services***

Given the realities of competition, information availability, and constant market changes, the Professional Development Team is looking to State Bar members for their ideas and opinions that will help improve or shape existing and new products and services, delivery models, and other emerging learning and resource needs.

In January, a panel of attorneys were recruited to participate in ongoing research that will last six months. Unlike a one-time survey, panel participants will answer two short polls a month of one to three questions with an estimated completion time of less than two minutes.

### ***PINNACLE Revises Resources, Gears Up for 2021 Programming***

Under the brand PINNACLE<sup>®</sup>, the State Bar produces Wisconsin-focused seminars and substantive practice resources, including webcast and on-demand seminars and a comprehensive library of 80-plus treatises, practice guides, system and code books, practice forms, and two document assembly programs.

The following resources were recently revised:

- [\*Wisconsin Rules of Evidence: A Courtroom Handbook\*](#)
- [\*Wisconsin Governmental Claims & Immunities Handbook\*](#)
- [\*Wisconsin Criminal Defense Manual\*](#)

PINNACLE's spring calendar offers 140 webcast and on-demand seminars to meet our members' CLE requirements and information needs. On-demand and webcast seminar formats continue to gain popularity with members, and we expect this trend to continue with the recent Supreme Court order allowing attorneys to obtain up to 30 CLE credits using these technologies through Jan. 31, 2022.

### ***Annual Meeting & Conference: Mark Your Calendar for June 10-11***

Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting and Conference (AMC), **June 10-11** – accessible virtually from the comfort of your office or home. Take advantage of this opportunity for the biggest educational and motivational event of the year.

This year's AMC features:

- 24 educational sessions in addition to programs focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion and lawyer health and well-being;
- More than 20 CLE credits between the event and post-event replays;
- The swearing-in and celebration of incoming President Cheryl Daniels on Wednesday, June 9, at 5 p.m.; and
- Greater attendance of judges from across the state.

This year's featured speakers include:

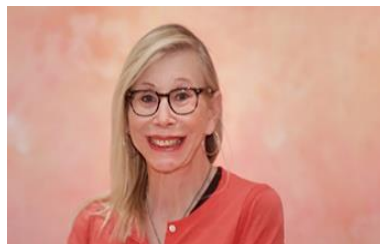
- **Prof. Michele DeStefano** (Opening Plenary): DeStefano is founder of Law Without Walls, an international think-tank of more than 1,000 lawyers, business professionals, entrepreneurs, and law/business students that create and hone new skillsets and mindsets and creates innovation around the intersection of law, business, and technology. Recognized as a legal innovator, she wrote *Legal Upheaval: A Guide to Creativity, Collaboration, and Innovation in Law*. DeStefano is professor of law at the University of Miami Law School.



- **Jarrett Adams** (Closing Plenary): Adams was wrongfully convicted at age 17 and sentenced to 28 years in a maximum security prison. After ten years in prison and multiple appeals, he was exonerated with the assistance of the Wisconsin Innocence Project. Following his release from prison, he graduated from Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Adams tells his remarkable story in his book, *Redeeming Justice*. He is a State Bar of Wisconsin member, practicing in criminal defense and civil rights in both state and federal court.



- **Ellie Krug** (Special Guest Speaker): In 2009, while an Iowa civil trial attorney with over 100 trials, Ellie Krug transitioned from male to female. Krug is the first Iowa lawyer to transition genders and one of the few attorneys nationally to try jury cases in separate genders. She wrote *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*, and she uses her experience to examine gender biases and the impact of labeling people.



AMC sponsorship opportunities are available. If interested, contact [Karen Richter](#).

### **Practice411: Supporting the Business of Law**

The State Bar's Law Office Management Assistance Program, **Practice411™**, assists lawyers in improving their efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of legal services and in implementing systems and controls to reduce risk and improve client relations. It offers resources to help lawyers manage the business aspects of their practices.

On Jan. 13, Practice411 hosted an all-new **Lawyer Marketing & Networking Expo**, featuring speakers and attendees from across the country. More than 100 people attended the virtual event to learn successful strategies for starting and growing a law firm. In the coming months, all members will have free access to this programming.

Practice411 facilitates information sharing among members through **monthly roundtable law practice management discussions**, via telephone and videoconference, on the third Monday and Tuesday of each month. Recent topics include setting law firm goals for 2021, using legal research platforms, and increasing law firm revenue.

The Practice411 manager wrote the following articles:

- *"What's Hot, What's Not: Wisconsin Practice Trends 2021" (Wisconsin Lawyer)*
- *"Marketing: Budget-friendly Marketing Methods to Attract New Clients" (Wisconsin Lawyer)*
- *"Increasing Client Revenue: DIY Marketing Tips for 2021" (InsideTrack)*
- *"Marketing: SEO 101: How to Drive Website Traffic" (Wisconsin Lawyer)*
- *"Holiday 2020: 20 Gifts that Keep on Giving" (Wisconsin Lawyer)*

The Practice411 manager also presented on the following topics:

- *"Concrete Answers to Common Trust Account Questions 2021" (PINNACLE)*
- *"Technology and Data Security" (U.W. Law School Practice Technologies course)*

To reach Practice411, contact [Christopher Shattuck](#) or call (800) 957-4670.

### **Providing Ethics Guidance**

The State Bar's **Ethics Program** provides guidance and help in resolving questions regarding Wisconsin's Rules of Professional Conduct for attorneys. Ethics counsel recently gave the following presentations:

- *"You Can't Fix What You Can't See: Implicit Bias and Cultural Competency" (Milwaukee Bar Association)*

- “Ethical Marketing: Don’t Leave It to Chance (Or a Mattress Salesman)” (PINNACLE)
- “Ethical Considerations for Attorney Wellness” (Government Lawyers Division)
- “The Conflicting Ethical, Legal, and Public Policy Obligations of the Government Attorney” (Wisconsin Department of Justice)
- “Fee Requirements under the Rules of Professional Conduct” (PINNACLE)
- “Representing Clients with Diminished Capacity” (PINNACLE)
- “The Model Rules on Advertising and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Marketing Practices” (Lawyer Marketing & Networking Expo)
- “Can We Overcome Implicit Bias Through Cultural Competency?” (Young Lawyers Division)
- “Concrete Answers to Common Trust Account Questions” (PINNACLE)
- “Ethical Issues in Sentencing” (PINNACLE)

Ethics counsel also wrote the following articles:

- [“Google Local Services Ads for Lawyers: Caveat Advocatum \(Lawyer Beware\)”](#) (*InsideTrack*)
- [“Ethical Dilemma: What to Do with Unclaimed Money in a Trust Account”](#) (*InsideTrack*)
- [“Ethical Dilemma: Can You Threaten Criminal Prosecution for Advantage in a Civil Case?”](#) (*InsideTrack*)
- [“Ethical Dilemma: Criminal Defense Conflicts and Municipal Clients”](#) (*InsideTrack*)

Questions? Contact Ethics Counsel [Aviva Kaiser](#) or [Tim Pierce](#), or call the Ethics Hotline at (800) 254-9154.

### ***WisLAP: Keeping Wisconsin Lawyers Healthy***

The **Wisconsin Lawyers Assistance Program (WisLAP)** provides free confidential assistance to lawyers, judges, law students, and their families coping with substance use disorders or dependence, mental health challenges, or other stressors that negatively impact the quality of life and the practice of law.

WisLAP provides educational programming for firms, local bars, and other legal entities and associations on the topics of substance use, mental health, and well-being. WisLAP staff recently presented to the following:

- Senior Lawyers Division
- Government Lawyers Division
- State Bar of Wisconsin PINNACLE®
- WisLAP attorney-monitors: Biannual training
- Wisconsin Department of Justice

- WILMIC
- von Briesen & Roper, s.c.
- Marquette University Law School 1Ls

WisLAP continues to focus efforts on outreach and education to give lawyers tools geared toward preventing illness and cultivating well-being with customized topics, including:

- Work-life integration and support for lawyers regarding conversations about pregnancy, nursing, post-partum, and other issues related to family needs
- Information on how chronic stress, problematic substance use, and untreated mental illness can become potentially disabling conditions that lead to impairment
- How to identify behaviors that can be indicators of attorney impairment and how to develop healthy behaviors that reduce the risk of impairment
- Managing pandemic-related stress
- How to access WisLAP support for help with bar application-related character and fitness concerns.

The **Wisconsin Lawyer Task Force on Well-being** is expected to issue its full report this spring. The task force was formed in 2020 and includes members of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and State Bar of Wisconsin leadership, judges, representatives from regulatory agencies, specialty bars, the law schools, solo, small, and large firm practitioners, corporate counsel, public defenders and prosecutors, and others with an interest in keeping lawyers healthy.

WisLAP continues to administer the peer assistance program, 24-hour hotline for lawyer assistance, and monitoring program at (800) 543-2625. Questions about WisLAP? Contact [Mary Spranger](#).

### ***Division, Section, and Committee Reports***

The **Professional Ethics Committee** issued Wisconsin Formal Ethics Opinion EF-21-02, on Jan. 29. The new opinion provides more guidance on the ethical obligations of providing legal services remotely. It discusses the basic responsibilities that a lawyer owes the client – competence, diligence, communication, and confidentiality – irrespective of the lawyer’s physical location.

Nearly 200 **Government Lawyers Division** members participated in a free CLE, “Ethical Considerations for Government Attorney Wellness,” presented on Dec. 9 by Aviva Kaiser, ethics counsel, and Mary Spranger, WisLAP manager. The GLD is offering \$3,320 in grant money to help members with no other financial means pay for CLE tuition and travel. If you know of a government lawyer in need, contact [Karen Beall](#).



The **Nonresident Lawyers Division** is partnering with the **Diversity & Inclusion Oversight Committee** and the **Civil Rights and Liberties Committee** to co-sponsor AMC Special Guest Speaker Ellie Krug. Krug will present two CLE programs, “Gray Area Thinking” and “Changed Genders, Changed Perspectives,” which focus on understanding the value of diversity and inclusion based on commonalities and interconnectedness, an awareness of gender biases in day-to-day interactions, strategies for addressing fear of the unknown, how to interact with diverse people in a more mindful and compassionate way, and tips for being an ally in your personal and professional life. The program is being underwritten by a generous grant from the **Wisconsin Law Foundation**.

In anticipation of the proposed emeritus status rule change now before the Wisconsin Supreme Court, the **Senior Lawyers Division** is developing programming to help senior lawyers obtain CLE credits specific to their needs. Two CLE programs have been presented, “Ethics of Transitions” and “Ethics of Transitions Part II 2020.” This programming is free to SLD members. It will also be made available in the new SLD Educational Library, but without CLE credit.

Future educational programs in development include:

- “Working from Home: How and What to Do”
- “Using Different Technologies for the Transitioning Lawyer”
- “Representing Your Local Community”
- “Insurance Protections when Transitioning”

In addition, five SLD members took advantage of scholarships to attend the Solo & Small Firm Conference last October. The division also will offer scholarships to the virtual Annual Meeting & Conference in June. These scholarships give members who might not attend an opportunity to experience these conferences.

The **Young Lawyers Division** is working with PINNACLE to provide one credit of free CLE programming to its members on various topics, including “The Legal Industry of Tomorrow Arrived in the Last Decade” and “Alcohol Regulation in Wisconsin.” More than 100 members attended these programs. Upcoming programs include “CBD Business Litigation: 5 Trends to Watch,” “Immigration in the Modern Era,” and “What’s Brewing: Emerging Legal Issues in Baseball.” Two more spring topics will be announced later.

Many small businesses in Wisconsin are struggling due to the pandemic and a tough economy. On Feb. 5, the **Business Law Section** launched a new **Small Business Assistance Program** to provide one hour of free legal services to small businesses statewide. This project, a partnership with Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, provides an opportunity for both students and attorneys to give back to their community.

Recognizing that wellness is an important topic for the legal profession, the **Children and the Law Section** offered its members a free CLE, “Wellness for Attorneys,” on Feb. 2. Emily Dudak, a board member and registered yoga instructor, spoke on the benefits and science of mindfulness, yoga, exercise, and positive psychology. More than 60 members attended the presentation.

The **Elder Law and Special Needs Section** continues its efforts to encourage young attorneys to enter this practice area. The section also participated in and endorsed PINNACLE’s CLE program, “Introduction to Elder Law,” slated to run in late February. The section is providing three scholarships to new attorneys to attend this presentation.

The **Health Law Section** and the **Children and the Law Section** held virtual networking events for members to connect and share their experiences coping with the challenges of the pandemic.

In an effort to prepare its members for new information blocking regulations that take effect April 5, the **Health Law Section** hosted a free, members-only CLE program in January, “Tackling the Information Blocking Rule: Understanding and Compliance.” Forty-seven members attended the presentation.

The **Appellate Practice Section** continues to offer its online [Appellate Help Desk](#) for people who are representing themselves in a Wisconsin civil appeal. Volunteer lawyers explain rules and provide legal information so that members of the public may pursue or defend their rights in a Wisconsin civil appeal. The Help Desk is staffed by volunteer lawyers every Tuesday and Thursday (except holidays).

The **Public Interest Law Section** approved three scholarships and the **Administrative and Local Government Section** approved two scholarships for their members to attend the 2021 Annual Meeting & Conference. These scholarships benefit section members who might not otherwise attend the event. It also promotes attendance from representatives of these sections.

The **Diversity & Inclusion Oversight Committee** continues its work with affinity bar organizations and student law groups at U.W. and Marquette University law schools. DIOC is also reviewing the demographic section of the annual dues statement to ensure it captures the broad range of identities among our members. This data will serve as a tool for weaving diversity and inclusion into our policies, programs, and operations and to help identify gaps and develop plans for improvement.

In an effort to encourage diverse students to enter the legal profession, the **Labor & Employment Law Section’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee** and the U.W. Law School’s Labor and Employment Law Society will educate Madison high school students about careers in labor and employment law.

The **Public Utilities Section**, in partnership with the Wisconsin Public Utilities Institute, is presenting its annual CLE program on March 3. The opening speaker is Robert Bilott, the main character in *Dark Waters*, a 2019 film about a successful lawsuit against DuPont for contaminating a town with unregulated chemicals. The event also includes a presentation on diversity in the utility industry, ethics, and other industry and legislative updates. To encourage law students to enter this field, the section is offering two scholarships to this program.

## **ADVOCATE – Advocating for Justice, Clients, the Legal System & the Profession**

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### ***Advocacy & Access to Justice: '21 Legislative Season Underway***

State Bar advocacy priorities remain focused on expungement, juvenile justice, student loan reform, and civil legal funding, among others. The Government Relations (GR) Team is urging governors and other members to contact lawmakers and express their support for SB 78, a proposed expungement reform bill. To learn more about emerging legislative proposals and how to take action on timely issues, visit the [State Bar Advocacy Network](#).

The GR Team also is scheduling Zoom meetings with new legislators and their staff, legislative leadership, and key committee chairs. During these meetings, GR Coordinators Cale Battles and Lynne Davis discuss the State Bar's legislative priorities and give background on its bifurcated lobbying process.

The GR Team also is hosting a special state budget briefing for Board of Governors' members on March 2, 12 p.m. Look for the invitation, sent on Feb. 18, to attend the briefing via Zoom.

If you are interested in meeting with your lawmaker to help advocate for State Bar-supported policies, contact Grassroots Outreach Coordinator [Devin Martin](#).

### ***Moving the Needle on Racial Justice, Diversity & Inclusion***

The Racial Justice Task Force, led by Past President Jill Kastner, is examining ways the State Bar can effectively use its resources to combat racial injustice and disparities, advance equal justice, and promote diversity and inclusion in the Wisconsin legal community. Below is an overview of its work since formed in last June:

- **Mandatory CLE on Diversity, Inclusion, and Bias:** The CLE Committee has proposed revising mandatory CLE rules to require the taking of two credits of Diversity, Inclusion, and Bias training as part of the 30 credits required for each reporting period.

- **Collaboration with Affinity Bar Groups, Law Schools, and Other Stakeholders:** The task force continues to: 1) meet with affinity bars and State Bar leadership to foster greater collaboration; 2) meet with the law schools to address the needs of diverse law students and increase the number of diverse law students coming to practice in Wisconsin; and 3) address ways to promote greater diversity of law school faculty and presenters as well as racial justice education and anti-racism training at the law schools.
- **Racial Justice for Low-income Wisconsinites:** The State Bar, WisTAF, Access to Justice Commission, pro bono providers, and others are meeting to discuss better coordination across the state on racial justice initiatives, with a focus on underserved communities and building race equity.
- **Work of BOG Committees:** All BOG committees (Strategic Planning, Policy, and Governance) are working on issues and initiatives to promote racial justice.
- **Leadership to Participate in DIOC Meetings:** In recognition of the important work of the Diversity & Inclusion Oversight Committee and State Bar leadership's commitment to the work of diversity, equity inclusion, and racial justice, the State Bar president will now serve as a member of DIOC.

The Racial Justice Task Force expects to conclude its yearlong work in June, and it is working on a full report of its actions and activities.

### ***Order Extended: Attorneys Can Earn 30 CLE Credits On-Demand through Jan. 31, 2022***

At the request of the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Supreme Court has **extended an order** that allows attorneys to obtain up to 30 continuing legal education (CLE) credits "on-demand" through Jan. 31, 2022. This extension provides more stay-at-home options for earning CLE amid the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

## **FACILITATE – Helping the Public Access the Legal System**

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### ***Pro Bono: Connecting the Legal Community with Opportunities***

The **State Bar Pro Bono Portal**, powered by Paladin, launched in late November. The website provides an easy way for volunteers to find and connect with pro bono opportunities. We now have 17 legal services agencies that have joined the website and 96 volunteer opportunities have been posted. Since late November, there have been 5,321 page views by 1,097 unique visitors and 41 volunteers have connected with 35 opportunities posted by nine of our participating legal services agencies.

Here are a few pro bono opportunities; learn more in the [Pro Bono Portal](#):

- Many small businesses in Wisconsin are struggling due to the pandemic and a tough economy. Starting Feb. 5, 2021, volunteer attorneys began meeting with clients each Friday for hourlong appointments, as part of the **Business Law Section's** new [Small Business Assistance project](#).

The project, implemented in collaboration with the **Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinics**, pairs volunteer attorneys and law students with small business owners who have non-litigation legal questions relating to their businesses. [Read more](#).

- [Wills for Heroes](#) is continuing to use a virtual free legal clinic model to complete basic estate plans for first responders. During the pandemic, volunteers have completed 117 estate plans. Since this program began in 2009, volunteers have completed over 5,088 estate plans for Wisconsin first responders and their spouses.
- **Wills for Healthcare Heroes**: With permission from the national Wills for Heroes Foundation, volunteers from Quarles & Brady LLP are expanding the Wills for Heroes project to serve health care support workers on the front lines of the pandemic with their basic estate planning needs. The volunteers, along with Marquette law students, recently completed training for their first virtual estate planning clinic in February at Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee.

### ***Access to Justice Commission: Expanding Help to the Unrepresented***

The Access to Justice Commission, created by the Wisconsin Supreme Court at the request of the State Bar, works to expand access to the civil justice system for unrepresented low-income Wisconsin residents. Here are a few of its projects:

- [Wisconsin Free Legal Answers](#), a free virtual legal advice clinic, experienced a significant rise in low-income Wisconsin residents seeking legal advice from volunteer lawyers. Here is a breakdown of the program's 2020 results:
  - 1,901 questions asked (90% increase over 2019)
  - 1,812 questions answered (91% increase)
  - 1,646 people helped (84% increase)
  - 163 coronavirus-related questions
  - 321 volunteers (54 volunteers answered at least one question)
  - 466 volunteer hours were recorded (average 15 minutes/question)

- **Wisconsin Law Help Website:** The commission continues working collaboratively with the State Bar’s **Legal Assistance Committee**, the State Law Library, and others on a project to develop an easy-to-use website for Wisconsin residents to connect with appropriate legal agencies and resources that fit their circumstances and legal issues. The first step is developing a tool that will provide appropriate referrals to legal aid agencies and pro bono programs. The project is inspired by similar legal help websites in [Illinois](#), [Ohio](#), [Michigan](#), [Minnesota](#), and many other states.
- **State Funding for Civil Legal Aid:** The [Access to Justice Commission](#), along with the newly formed Civil Legal Aid Alliance of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and the State Bar of Wisconsin, among others, are meeting with Gov. Evers’ staff and state legislators to request an increase in state funding for civil legal aid in Wisconsin.

In his budget address on Feb. 16, Gov. Evers proposed increasing funding for civil legal aid by \$5 million over the next biennium and authorizing a broad menu of legal services for indigent clients. Our collaborative efforts will now focus on convincing the Legislature to support increased funding.

***Pro Bono Honor Society: Certify Your Service by Feb. 28***

If you donated 50 or more hours of qualifying pro bono legal services to benefit low-income Wisconsin residents in 2020, you qualify as a member of the Wisconsin Pro Bono Honor Society. Self-certify your service by Feb. 28 to be listed in the honor roll. In addition, others who have knowledge of the attorney’s pro bono work – such as law firms, pro bono programs, legal aid organizations, and judges – may submit a certification for an attorney. [Learn more here.](#)

***LRIS: Connecting Employers to Clients***

The **Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS)** connects attorneys with clients who are carefully prescreened for legal issue, geographic location, and ability to pay.

From July 1, 2020, to Feb. 8, 2021, LRIS specialists answered 17,551 calls from the public. Approximately 1 in 4 callers are referred to an attorney. The remaining callers are assisted with information, referred to community or government agencies, or received basic legal advice through Lawyer Hotline volunteer attorneys.

Nearly 400 lawyers are on the LRIS panel, covering 40 practice areas. However, LRIS is especially in need of panel members who are fluent in Spanish due to an increase in Spanish-speaking referrals. To learn more, visit the [LRIS webpage](#).

## ***Increasing Awareness through the Media***

Through its statewide media outreach and response efforts, the State Bar provides information, corrects inaccurate reporting, connects the media with lawyers as experts on a variety of issues, and serves as a trusted resource to journalists while highlighting the critical role and expertise lawyers play in society. Here are some recent examples of media coverage:

### **Free Legal Advice for Small Business Assistance**

- [WKOW \(Madison\)](#)
- [WQOW \(Eau Claire\)](#)
- [WKBT \(La Crosse\)](#)
- [WXOW \(La Crosse\)](#)
- [WAOW \(Wausau\)](#)
- [WBAY \(Green Bay\)](#)
- [WJFW \(Rhineland\)](#) (timecode 4:14)
- [Sun Prairie Star](#)
- [Milton Courier](#)
- [Wisconsin Law Journal](#)
- [Lake Mills Leader](#)
- [NABE Bulletin](#)

### **Judicial Attacks**

- [Green Bay Press Gazette/USA Today Network](#): Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Patience Roggensack expresses concern over threats, comments aimed at members of her court”
- [Wisconsin Examiner](#): “Letter calls on State Bar to denounce threatening, anti-Semitic attacks on justices”
- [WISN \(Milwaukee\)](#): “State Bar: Supreme Court justice threats highlight ‘broader issues’”

### **Pro Bono. Legal Aid**

- [Wisconsin Examiner](#): “State Bar website aims to increase access to legal aid”
- [WORF FM](#): “New State Bar program connects attorneys with legal aid groups”
- [Urban Milwaukee](#): “State Bar increases access to legal aid”
- [ABA Journal](#): “5 ways to do more pro bono in 2021” (Jeff Brown interview)

### **Siting Vel Phillips Statue**

- [Madison365.com](#): “Proposal to create statue at state Capitol building honoring Vel Phillips moves forward” (Cheryl Daniels interview)

- WKOW (Madison): ‘It means so much more’: Those who knew Vel Phillips proud of efforts to build Capitol monument (Judge Carl Ashley interview)
- *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*: “‘We need beacons of hope’: Community groups gather \$125K for Vel Phillips statue in Madison and seeking more donations”
- Madison365.com: “Vel Phillips capitol statue moves closer to reality with \$100,000 boost on her birthday”
- CBS58 Milwaukee: “Effort to erect Vel Phillips statue at Wisconsin Capitol gets financial boost”
- THE CAP TIMES: “Effort to place Vel Phillips statue on Capitol Square raises \$125,000”
- *OnMilwaukee*: “Vel Phillips capitol statue initiative gets \$100K boost on her birthday”

### **Wisconsin High School Mock Trial**

- *Beaver Dam Daily Citizen*: “BDHS advances to state mock trial competition”
- *Northwoods General Star*: “Rhineland mock trial team wins regional title, prepares for state”
- *Post Messenger Recorder*: “New Glarus High School mock trial team participates in its 18<sup>th</sup> tournament”

### **State Bar Elections**

- *Wisconsin Law Journal*: “Hickey, Ohiku accept nominations in race for State Bar president-elect” (paywall)

### **Law School Debt**

- *ABA Bar Leader*: “‘A constant burden’: Law school debt affects well-being, life plans, access to justice” (Karen Bauer interview)

### **Statements, Media Releases**

- WISPOLITICS.COM: “State Bar of Wisconsin: Statement regarding threats to Wisconsin’s judiciary”
- Wheeler Report: “Statement regarding threats to Wisconsin’s judiciary”
- WISPOLITICS.COM: “State Bar of Wisconsin: Statement on passing of former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Shirley Abrahamson”
- Wheeler Report: “Milwaukee-based attorneys top slate of State Bar officer candidates”
- WISPOLITICS.COM: “State Bar of Wisconsin: Milwaukee-based attorneys top slate of State Bar officer candidates”
- WISPOLITICS.COM: State Bar of Wisconsin: Statement on Gov. Evers proposed 21-23 budget.



## **Miscellaneous**

- [WISC TV Madison](#): “A Beloit restaurant worker died in a COVID-19 outbreak. Throughout the pandemic, worker protections often left behind” (Colin Good interview)
- [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#): “Maple Bluff residents upset after new lakeside landowner removed longtime popular pier and sued couples who put it there”
- [Wisconsin Law Journal](#): “A BETTER 2021? Attorneys plan for, predict legal trends for this year” (Kathy Brost interview)
- [Fox6 Milwaukee](#): “Can Wisconsin employers mandate the COVID-19 vaccine?” (Sean Scullen interview)
- [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#): “‘I can’t wait another 7 months’: Thousands wait for appeals on denied unemployment claims” (Victor Forberger interview)

## **State Bar, Law Foundation Support Vel Phillips Statue on Capitol Square**

A statue of the Hon. Vel Phillips, one of Wisconsin’s most prominent and influential attorneys over the last 100 years, could be placed on the state Capitol grounds later this year.

The State Bar of Wisconsin and its charitable arm, the Wisconsin Law Foundation, strongly support the siting of a statue honoring Hon. Vel Phillips. Phillips was a pioneer in city and state government, for civil rights, and as a judge and lawyer.

At a Feb. 18 news conference at Milwaukee City Hall, Larry Martin announced a combined \$25,000 pledge by the State Bar and the Wisconsin Law Foundation to kick off a statewide fundraising effort, should the proposal move forward.



## **Wisconsin Law Foundation Hits Milestone, Grows its Reach**

The Wisconsin Law Foundation hit a new milestone at the end of December with total assets reaching \$2.527 million – an 18 percent increase from December 2019. Thanks to the support and contributions of literally thousands of members, the Foundation continues to grow and increase in impact and reach. The Foundation will award a record \$60,000 in grants to worthy programs and scholarships across our state this year.

## ***High School Mock Trial Continues Amid Pandemic, Teams Advance to State***

The pandemic won't stop high school students from competing in the Wisconsin High School Mock Trial Competition this year, thanks to a refresh of the program using Zoom.

The regional competition took place on Feb. 6 and 7 with 76 high school teams, 750 students, and 83 lawyers and judges serving as score keepers and presiding judges.

This year, only the first-place regional teams advance to the state final rounds on March 6 and 7, again over Zoom. Two teams will advance to the state finals on March 9. First-place teams include Madison West, Beaver Dam, Xavier, Whitefish Bay, Rhinelander, Waukesha South, Shorewood, Brookfield Central, River Falls, and Superior all advanced to the virtual state competition.

The Wisconsin High School Mock Trial is funded by the **Wisconsin Law Foundation**, the State Bar's charitable arm. Founded in 1983, the program helps students gain a deeper understanding of our legal system while developing leadership, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

*Photo: Cynthia Lu, a student attorney for the Brookfield Central High School mock trial team, questions a witness over Zoom during the regional tournament on Feb. 6.*



## **INNOVATE – Planning Together for the Future**

### ***Diversity Clerkship Program Gears Up for 2021, Adds Soft-skills Workshops***

Despite the pandemic, the **2021 Diversity Clerkship Program** continues to connect first-year law students of diverse backgrounds with legal employers for 10-week summer clerkships. This year, 25 employers, with two employers requesting two clerks, will interview clerks virtually. The number of employers is up from 13 in 2020 and 19 in 2019.

Through these clerkships, 27 soon-to-be lawyers will experience real-world lawyering, mentored by their employers. As a new feature to this year's program, virtual mini workshops will help prepare students for their clerkships, addressing such soft skills as professional attire. Student and employer matches will be finalized in early March.

### ***Growing New Leaders: Leadership Development Summit Set For April 10***

The Leadership Summit is a three-hour program that brings together State Bar leaders, past and present, and provides the next generation of leaders – new lawyers not yet involved in the bar and community and civic minded lawyers – the chance to explore State Bar involvement opportunities, identify their volunteer interests, and gain insight from experienced State Bar leaders.

Attendees at the April 10 event will hear from President Kathy Brost, President-elect Cheryl Daniels, president-elect candidates Odalo Ohiku and Margaret Hickey, and YLD President-elect Emile Ovbiagele. Participants in past summits have gone on to serve in leadership positions with the State Bar and with their local and specialty bars. Those who make a volunteer service commitment are eligible to receive an AMC scholarship made possible through the Wisconsin Law Foundation

### ***Leadership Academy Sponsors New Monthly Refresher Series for Alumni***

The State Bar is offering a monthly refresher series to the alumni of the G. Lane Ware Leadership Academy. The series is open to those who have completed the program over the past four years. The academy is a multisession training program to give lawyers the skills, strategies, and resources to be effective leaders in the profession and community.

Topics for January and February include “Virtual Networking Skills,” presented by Sarah Rohne; and “Improve Time Management Using Emotional Intelligence,” presented by Michael Moore.

The Leadership Academy is funded in part by a generous grant from the Wisconsin Law Foundation.

### ***Ready.Set.Practice Program Rolls with 25 New Mentees***

The Ready.Set.Practice Mentoring Program was busy matching 25 mentors with 25 mentees for this year’s program. The program matches a lawyer having six years or more of experience within the legal profession with new lawyers practicing for five years or fewer. This year, the **Public Interest Law Section** also is piloting a section mentorship program. The subcommittee is expanding the mentorship program diverse students to help create a more welcoming professional network when they graduate from law school. Questions? Contact [Karen Beall](#).

## ***WisBar Marketplace Upgrades Enhance User Experience***

**Marketplace**, the State Bar's online store for registering for CLE seminars and purchasing books and forms and practice management tools, continues to improve. Here are some notable changes:

- PayPal checkout updated for users with older browsers and Mac browsers;
- calendar view refined; and
- search function improved.

If you have any feedback about Marketplace, contact [State Bar Customer Service](#).

## ***Insurance Health Plan Experiences Growth***

During the most recent open-enrollment period, the number of members joining the State Bar's association health plan nearly doubled.

The **association health plan** provides coverage for members, staff, and their dependents. While the open enrollment period from Nov. 1 to Dec. 15 is the most popular time for new enrollments, remember that law firms can enroll in the coverage *at any point throughout the year when plans are up for renewal* – it is accessible any time outside of the open enrollment period.

For information, contact [Professional Insurance Programs](#) (PIP), (800) 637-4676.

## ***Dues Prepayment Plans: Meeting the Varying Needs of Our Members***

State Bar of Wisconsin members once again were given the option to pay their Supreme Court assessments and State Bar dues for next fiscal year over a six-month period, beginning in January 2021. This allows members – particularly those working in small-firm or government settings – a means to better manage their finances.

A total of 526 members took advantage of the program by the Jan. 8 deadline. This is an increase of 176 members over last year.

Those opting into the Dues Prepayment Plan agree to prepay their dues and assessments through a credit or debit card for five installments (January through May), with the lawyer making the final sixth payment through the State Bar's online dues processing system. When making this final payment, the member can join optional sections and divisions, apply the Keller dues reduction, donate to the Wisconsin Law Foundation and sign the trust account certificate online. There are no additional fees associated with paying in installments.

This plan is geared to members with active, inactive, and judicial statuses. Law firms participating in firm billing will continue to pay their dues and assessments through that process.

### ***Turbocharging Change: Who are Wisconsin's Legal Innovators?***

Help us identify our 2021 class of Wisconsin Legal Innovators, the movers and shakers that put new ideas to work to solve problems for their clients and communities. Who is embracing current challenges, looking for opportunities to do it better?

Through "That's a Fine Idea: Nominate a Wisconsin Legal Innovator" initiative, the **Communications Committee** annually solicits nominations from Wisconsin's legal community, looking for examples that will encourage Wisconsin lawyers to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to delivering legal services.

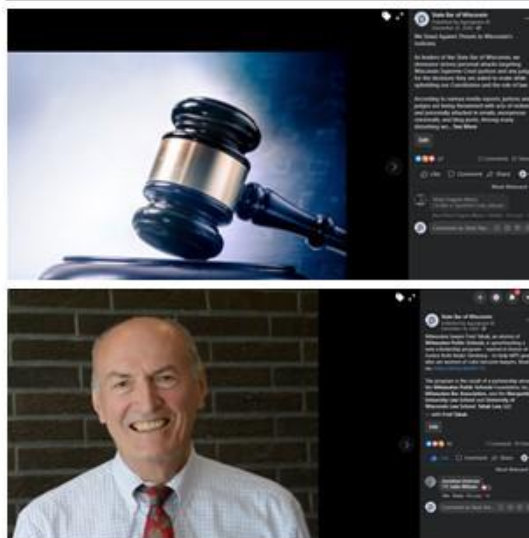
Know a Legal Innovator? How about you? Nominations are open until June 30. Learn more at [ThatsaFineIdea.com](http://ThatsaFineIdea.com).

# Social Media: A Look at Top Content

Increasingly, our members engage with the State Bar and each other through our social media channels. Join the conversation; connect with us on Facebook, Twitter (@statebarofwi), LinkedIn, and Instagram (@statebarofwi). Here are some recent metrics and examples that demonstrate how social media plays a role in advancing our mission.

## Facebook

Posts and metrics from Nov. 16, 2020 – Feb. 9, 2021





# Twitter

Posts and metrics from Nov. 16, 2020 – Feb. 9, 2021



**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI

New free service for small businesses: The State Bar's Business Law Section is launching an initiative to provide business law services to small businesses & business owners. Share with your community! [wisbar.org/forPublic/INee...](http://wisbar.org/forPublic/INee...)



**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI

"I remember the courageous Black lawyers who came before me and helped to break barriers and pave the way for future Black attorneys." [bit.ly/38nVpj1](https://bit.ly/38nVpj1)

➡ What attorneys made a lasting impression on you?

#wisconsinlawyers #wilawyer #wislaw #BlackHistoryMonth



**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI

Mary Spranger, Manager of the State Bar of Wisconsin's Lawyers Assistance Program, says her office has had recent conversations with attorneys who essentially worked themselves into having panic attacks because they made a mistake on a case.



It's Okay To Feel Stress and Anxiety, But Don't Ignore It and Hope It ...  
The past year has been a time of disruption and maybe even a little bit of chaos. Practicing law can bring stress and anxiety in "normal" ...  
[wislawnow.com](http://wislawnow.com)

1:00 PM - Feb 7, 2021 - AgoraPulse Manager

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI

Big News! Wisconsin Jury Instructions are now available via the State Law Library website: [wilawlibrary.gov/jury/](http://wilawlibrary.gov/jury/).

#wicourts #wisconsinlawyer #wilawyer #wislaw

2:34 PM - Jan 26, 2021 - Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

4 Retweets 13 Likes

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI - Jan 26

Replying to @StateBarofWI

In cooperation w/ @WisconsinLaw, Director of State Courts Hon. Randy Koschnick announced that the Office of Judicial Education, in partnership w/ State Law Library, is now providing free online access to updated criminal, civil & juvenile jury instructions [wicourts.gov/news/view.jsp?...](http://wicourts.gov/news/view.jsp?...)

2 Retweets 6 Likes

Add another Tweet

**Kevin J. Palmersheim** @KevinPalmersheim - Jan 26

Replying to @StateBarofWI

Saw this recently and am glad you sent a notice to all members. Pattern jury instructions are not just for trial. We teach new associates to use them as a starting point for research.

1 Like

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI

Low-income Wisconsinites facing civil legal challenges can receive free help thanks to a new #probono website, [probonowi.org](http://probonowi.org).

👏 Attorneys: Help a client in need. Sign up now!  
👏 Thanks to @JoinPaladin for helping us bring this service statewide!



State Bar launches pro bono website to connect lawyers with ...  
Low-income Wisconsinites facing civil legal challenges can receive free legal help from pro bono attorneys. A new website...  
[hngnews.com](http://hngnews.com)

11:47 AM - Nov 20, 2020 - AgoraPulse Manager

# LinkedIn

Posts and metrics from Nov. 16, 2020 – Feb. 9, 2021


Followers	Engagement	Impressions
3.8K	4.4K	98K
1.3%	25.2%	13.4%
<a href="#">See section</a>	<a href="#">See section</a>	<a href="#">See section</a>

**State Bar of Wisconsin**  
3,829 followers  
2w • Edited •

"We can throw people in jail or we can try to address what's causing this behavior and, to the extent possible, make sure it doesn't happen again."


Awais Khaleel, Esq. (He, Him, His) aspired to be a civil rights attorney to create a more just society. Today, he serves as an assistant district attorney in Dane County where he is, he believes, the only Muslim prosecutor in Wisconsin.



Awais Khaleel never really envisioned himself as a prosecutor  
wisconsinmuslimjournal.org • 3 min read  
218 • 28 comments

**State Bar of Wisconsin**  
3,829 followers  
1mo •

Flags across Wisconsin are being flown at half-staff today in honor of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson.



Flags to be flown at half-staff in honor of former Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson  
channel3000.com • 1 min read  
117 • 2 comments

**State Bar of Wisconsin**  
3,829 followers  
2mo • Edited •

Margaret Hickey and Odalo J Ohiku have accepted nominations to run for 2021 State Bar president-elect. Learn more about these and the other candidates. Our thanks to all for volunteering their time and talents to the profession!




Meet the Candidates for State Bar President-elect, Treasurer, and Judicial Council  
wisbar.org • 3 min read  
82 • 7 comments

**State Bar of Wisconsin**  
3,829 followers  
1mo •

Expanding the law student practice rule increases access to justice in Wisconsin while promoting greater diversity in the legal profession, according to a petition recently filed with the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

University of Wisconsin Law School Marquette University Law School WISCONSIN ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION INC Office of the State Public Defender Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee

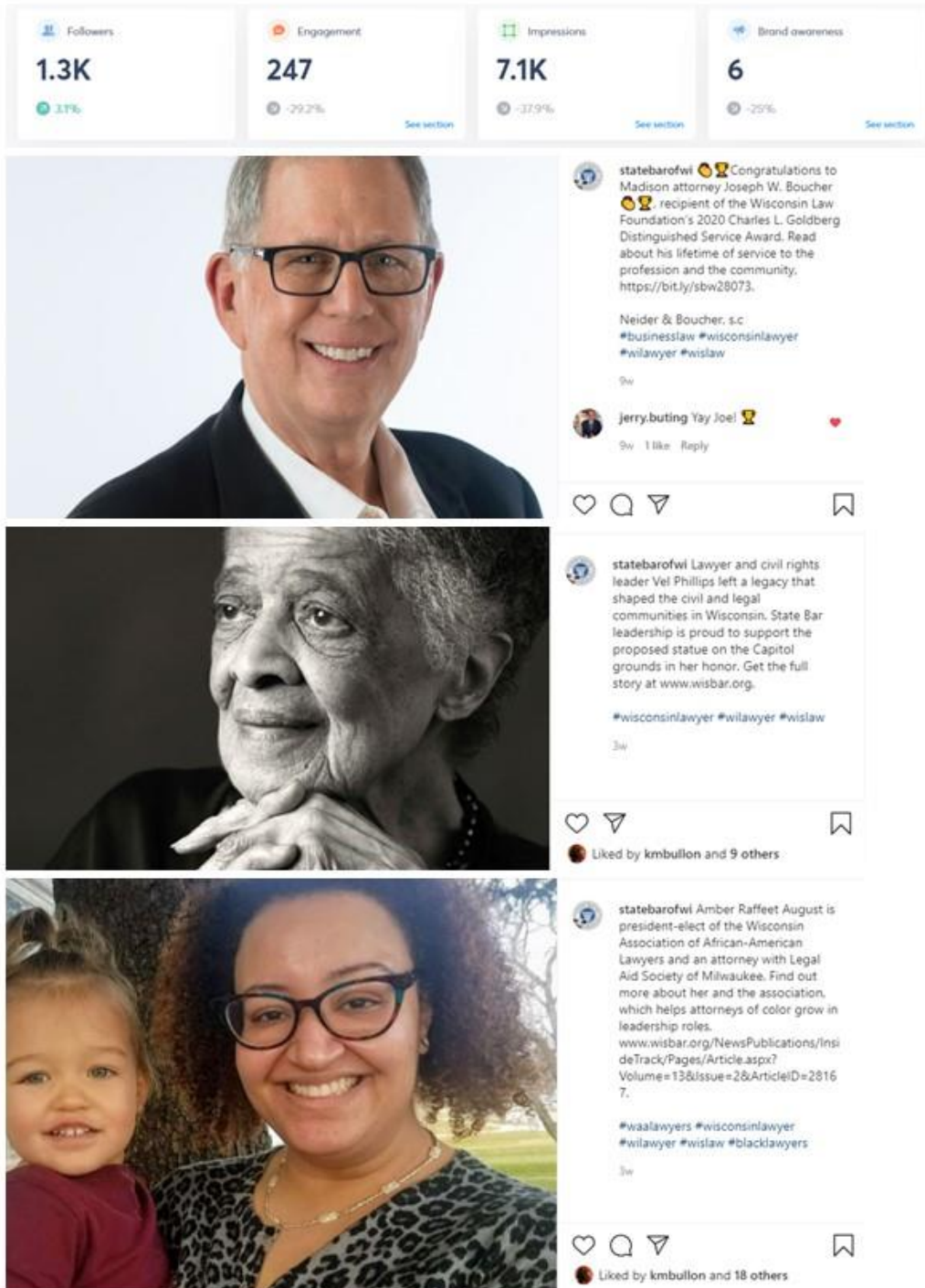


Law Students Get Earlier Court Experience under Proposed Rule Change  
wisbar.org • 7 min read  
18



# Instagram

Posts and metrics from Nov. 16, 2020 – Feb. 9, 2021




# Larry is on Twitter!

Larry Martin is actively engaging with members and thought-leaders on Twitter (@LarryJMartinED). Connect with him! A selection of his recent tweets are below.


**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED · Feb 9  
 And thanks to the hundreds of contributors to @StateBarofWI Wisconsin Law Foundation for providing the financial support that makes State Mock Trial possible!

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI · Feb 8  
 Thank you to all the volunteer coaches and judges! You make #mocktrialwi possible! [twitter.com/trial\\_la/statu...](https://twitter.com/trial_la/status...)




gif

**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED · Dec 20, 2020  
 Deeply saddened to learn of the passing of former WI SC Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson. A great jurist, an incredible legal mind and wonderful human being. She leaves a lasting legacy and many friends. @StateBarofWI @SBWRotundaRpt




**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED · Dec 13, 2020  
 Another great issue of Wisconsin Lawyer. This month with a terrific profile of a wonderful public servant & my State Senator since I moved to Madison to attend UW. A good friend & proud to count as member of @StateBarofWI  
 Thanks Fred for your dedication and service to WI!

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI · Dec 9, 2020  
 Getting to know America's longest serving state legislator, a look at the top court decisions of 2020, lawyer gift ideas for the holidays, and more.  
 Don't miss the latest Wisconsin Lawyer magazine. [wisbar.org/wl](https://wisbar.org/wl).



**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED  
 It is time for WI's Legislature to pass expungement reform.  
 @StateBarofWI @Practice411 @WAALawyers

**SBW Rotunda Report** @SBWRotundaRpt · Jan 29  
 There is broad, bipartisan support for common-sense reforms to Wisconsin's expungement system, but first lawmakers need to hear from attorneys like you. Go to [wisbar.org/GovRelations](https://wisbar.org/GovRelations) to send a message of support to your state elected leaders today.



210 views

**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED · Dec 6, 2020  
 It's time to act. State-wide broadband access now! @StateBarofWI  
 @SBWRotundaRpt @Practice411 @WAALawyers @mmlaw @WisconsinLaw

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI · Dec 4, 2020  
 The State Bar's Board of Governors today voted to support efforts to expand internet broadband access to ensure citizens in rural parts of the state have access to online legal tools, as well as access to attorneys who can help them. [wisbar.org/NewsPublicatio...](https://wisbar.org/NewsPublicatio...)

**Larry J. Martin** @LarryJMartinED · Jan 18  
 It is time for our state to properly honor the leadership and legacy of Hon. Vel Phillips. Join @StateBarofWI in supporting a statue in her honor on our State Capitol grounds.  
 @SBWRotundaRpt @Practice411 @WAALawyers @Practice411 @ULGM @LASMilwaukee @WisconsinLaw @mmlaw

**State Bar of WI** @StateBarofWI · Jan 18  
 Lawyer and civil rights leader Vel Phillips left a legacy that shaped the civil and legal communities in Wisconsin. We are proud to support the proposed statue on the Capitol grounds in her honor. [wisbar.org/NewsPublicatio...](https://wisbar.org/NewsPublicatio...)

