

Press Release



STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Appleton public defender honored for advancing justice for children and families across Wisconsin

MADISON, Wis. (May 6, 2026) — A Wisconsin public defender whose work has shaped how attorneys represent children and families statewide has been honored with a top State Bar award recognizing service, leadership, and impact in government law.

Alaina Fahley of Appleton is the recipient of the 2026 Grant F. Langley Service Award from the State Bar of Wisconsin's Government Lawyers Division.

Fahley has spent nearly 13 years with the Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office, "building a reputation as a fierce advocate for children, families, and others involved in the child welfare, youth, and criminal legal systems," her nominators said.

"As the SPD's Family Defense Practice Coordinator, she has strengthened representation statewide by training and mentoring attorneys, supporting difficult cases, and helping lawyers navigate evolving legal issues. She is a leader through her service on the State Bar Children and the Law Section, her published writing on systemic inequities, and her role as a national trainer," they said.

"Her impact reaches beyond individual cases to broader efforts aimed at improving justice for young people and families across Wisconsin, especially those facing systemic barriers. She is an exemplary public defender whose unwavering commitment to social justice and tireless advocacy for children and families has left an enduring mark on Wisconsin's legal landscape," those who nominated her said.

The Langley Service Award recognizes an attorney who serves government, the public, and fellow government lawyers while promoting public respect for government legal work.

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ABOUT THE STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN

The State Bar of Wisconsin is the integrated professional association, created by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, for attorneys who hold a Wisconsin law license. With more than 25,000 members, the State Bar aids the courts in improving the administration of justice, provides continuing legal education for its members to help them maintain their expertise, and assists Wisconsin lawyers in carrying out community service initiatives to educate the public about the legal system and the value of lawyers. For more information, visit wisbar.org.

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Alaina Fahley of Appleton is the recipient of the State Bar of Wisconsin's 2026 Grant F. Langley Service Award for her leadership and advocacy on behalf of children, families, and fellow public defenders across Wisconsin.