Looking Ahead for A Year to Come

As the Foundation concludes another successful fiscal year, it once again provides an opportunity to reflect on all that we have been able to accomplish and look forward to the many plans and goals we have for the upcoming fiscal year.

We are extremely excited that the Foundation’s Indiana Kids Election (IKE) program will continue to grow and expand in the upcoming year. This program helps students understand the role and importance that voting plays in our representative democracy. As has been demonstrated by our critical work in the Indiana Civic Health Index reports, the rate of Hoosiers participating in one of the most fundamental aspects of our government, namely voting, is among the lowest in the nation.

With a new partnership developed with the Eli Lilly & Company Foundation and their significant support for our IKE program, the Foundation will be focusing on outreach directly to Hoosier youth to educate them about voting and the voting process and to provide opportunities for eligible students to register to vote. We are confident that by infusing this nonpartisan voter outreach directly through the schools, we will be able to begin the process of reversing our state’s low voter ranking. This process will be built through each successive graduating class from Indiana high schools as they join the ranks of registered voters.

Civil legal assistance is just as crucial in society as civic education. Indiana Legal Help has seen tremendous growth this year with a redesigned website, 150 updated kiosks with at least one in every county in Indiana, and a set of approved self-help court forms available to all Hoosiers.

The success of the Foundation’s President’s Circle marked a new milestone in the organization’s history. I want to welcome the newest member, Barnes & Thornburg LLP, to the Circle. Barnes & Thornburg’s long-standing partnership with the Foundation demonstrates the firm’s commitment to supporting strong communities as the bedrock of a just society. Through the firm’s extensive work in Indiana and beyond, Barnes & Thornburg demonstrates a profound commitment to civic education and civil legal assistance, striving to empower individuals and strengthen communities.

While the past year bore the fruit of the Foundation’s continued work and labor for civic education and civil legal assistance for all Hoosiers, I am thrilled about the upcoming year, which promises to be equally prosperous. We the People competitions take place in the fall, the Civil Legal Assistance Conference will be held in October, Mock Trial competitions are set to be held in early 2025, and lastly, we celebrate our 75th Anniversary for the Indiana Bar Foundation on October 3,
I want to emphasize that our achievements are made possible by the connections, partnerships, contributions, and volunteer efforts of all of you. As we enter the new year, our goal is to build on this strong foundation, continue fostering connections and partnerships with all of you, and remain the leading organization in civic education and civil legal assistance for all Hoosiers in Indiana.

On Friday, June 21, the Indiana Bar Foundation welcomed 150 civil legal assistance and civic education advocates and donors to celebrate civil excellence at the 2024 Annual Meeting & Awards Luncheon. President & CEO Chuck Dunlap opened the luncheon with a recap of the Foundation’s past year.

Some highlights were: The Indiana sixth-grade civic education resources have been downloaded 37,000 times, Indiana Legal Help has a monthly average of 40,000 Hoosiers on the website, all 150 Indiana Legal Help kiosks have been updated, and the 75th Anniversary of the Indiana Bar Foundation is near.

During the luncheon, current and past members of the Keystone Society were asked to stand. This served as a testament to the significant number of individuals who believe in the Foundation’s mission.

Three individuals were honored for their work in civic education and civil legal assistance. They are Marilyn Smith, Legend Award recipient, Hon. Geoffrey Slaughter, Champion of Civil Legal Assistance, and Mike Fassold, Champion of Civic Education.

This year, the Foundation debuted the President’s Circle, a group of esteemed members who provide support at the highest level, with a six-figure gift given as a one-time donation or pledged over a four-year term. During the luncheon, we welcomed its newest member, Barnes & Thornburg, and founding members Timothy J. Abeska and Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath.

As the Foundation strives to be the premier provider of civic education and civil legal assistance for all Hoosiers, we rely on your support through volunteering and donations. To make a difference and forge your legacy, our Director of Development, Kim Berry, would love to share coffee with you and have a conversation.

Contact Kim Berry
Indiana Legal Help Forms

Indiana Legal Help offers a valuable resource on its website: a collection of approved self-help court forms accessible to all Hoosiers either online or at a local Indiana Legal Help kiosk. Forms are available for several civil legal issues, including divorce, child custody, minor guardianship, expungement, driver’s license reinstatement, and small estate. Commonly used forms, like a continuance form and filing fee waiver form, are also available on the website. Specific instructions are provided for each form, including when to use the form, how to complete it, and when and where to file a completed form with the court. Forms can be printed and filled out by hand or filled out online before being printed.

Please share this resource with anyone who might benefit from it.

Access Forms

Session Proposals Being Accepted for the 2024 Civil Legal Assistance Conference

The Coalition for Court Access and Indiana Bar Foundation are excited to host the 2024 Civil Legal Assistance Conference in Indianapolis on Friday, October 18. For the past seven years, the conference has brought together partners in legal aid and pro bono to learn, share ideas, and build community through a day-long event featuring keynote speakers and engaging breakout sessions.

As we continue to build on the success of previous conferences, we are looking for session proposals in the following areas: Family, Workforce Development, Housing, Health & Benefits, Consumer, Practice & Profession, and Other.

If you are interested in proposing a session, please share a brief description of the session topic and names of presenters by Friday, July 12. As in past years, specific sessions will include CLE credit. Proposals can be sent to Abbie Bush and Jewel Patterson.

We the People Summer Institute Recap

Last week, the Foundation welcomed over 45 teachers from around the state to spend five days at Indiana University Bloomington learning about the We the People program. While here, teachers spent 26 hours learning how they can teach We the People, in addition to hearing content from scholars on elections, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Bill of Rights, and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
“I would 100% recommend this program to every 6-12 social studies teacher in the state. I would tell them it is the most valuable professional development they will have experienced.” – Crystal Tyler, Shoals Middle School

Apply Today for the United States Senate Youth Program

The Indiana Bar Foundation is accepting applications for the United States Senate Youth Program!

Two Hoosier students will be selected to represent the State of Indiana as Delegates during Washington Week 2025. They will experience national government in action and meet Senators, Justices, and leaders throughout government.

Meet The 2024 Summer Interns

We are thrilled to welcome our 2024 Summer Interns—Jasmine, Ava, and Kate—to the Indiana Bar Foundation team! Over the course of five weeks, these three will have the opportunity to observe legislative hearings, assist with events, and engage in various activities that advance the Foundation’s mission and vision.