

## Pro Bono Taskforce Committee Meeting Minutes

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Present: Hannibal Kemerer, Guy Flynn, Sharon Goldsmith, Sandy Smith, Karen Malinowski, Sarah Frush, Stuart Simms, Thiru Vignarajah, Marc Broady, Martin Himeles, Kelly Powers, Kush Arora, Melissa Martinez, Laura Jenifer, Dave Sidhu, Reena Shah, Carleen Dadeboe, Dagash Hall

Committee Co-Chair Guy Flynn called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. E.T.

- Committee members introduced themselves and each gave a brief overview of his/her involvement and history in the pro bono space.
- Committee Goals/Logistics/Expectations
  - The Committee Co-Chairs provided an overview of the Committee's goals and how the Committee can effectuate change to address the pressing COVID-19-era civil legal needs of Maryland's citizenry. Ideas included private practice/law firm support to assist with the severe need for pro bono and low bono legal aid and tapping into different pools of attorneys (including law students, retired attorneys and others) to provide legal services to COVID-19-impacted communities throughout Maryland.
  - Committee Co-Chair Flynn discussed the Committee's structure, including dividing into working subgroups to address specific areas of Committee focus. Mr. Flynn asked Committee members to provide ideas to the Committee Co-Chairs within one week so that the work groups can organize around consensus focus areas.
  - Committee Co-Chairs Flynn and Hannibal Kemerer presented two such potential initial focus area "ideas" – (1) integrating the Committee into the existing Maryland Legal Aid Equal Justice Council network as an engine to engage the private bar in the Committee's work; and (2) supporting an increase in the target pro bono hours requirement set by the Maryland Court of Appeals.
  - At the request of Committee Co-Chair Flynn, Committee member Martin Himeles provided an overview of the Equal Justice Council and its organizational structure.

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

- Q&A/Open Discussion

- Committee member Sandy Brown discussed the legal deficit she encounters on the Eastern Shore and the lack of funding she receives to aid her organization's pro bono efforts.
- Committee member Sarah Frush agreed with the statement that funding for low-bono/pro-bono work is virtually non-existent, and that funding for triage and intake would be very helpful.

- Racial Equity Impact Assessment

- Committee Co-Chair Kemerer discussed the racial disparity of COVID-19 and its disproportionate affect in Black and Latinx communities.

- Takeaways/Action Items

- The Committee Co-Chairs asked Committee members to each brainstorm a 'big' idea and 'small' idea as it relates to the focus of the Committee and to send those ideas to the Committee Co-Chairs by COB on Wednesday, July 14, 2020.

The Committee adjourned at 4:07 p.m. E.T.