Mission

The Barbara McDowell Foundation aims to improve the economic well-being, social conditions, and civil liberties of disadvantaged persons and groups in the United States.

We fulfill our mission 1) by making grants to organizations that undertake systemic, social justice litigation and 2) by coordinating direct, pro-bono litigation through our High Impact Project.

The Need

Nonprofit organizations representing our country’s most vulnerable persons, defending their rights, and championing their causes very often lack the necessary funds to pursue even the most egregious cases.

In 2018, low-income Americans received inadequate or no legal help whatsoever for 86% of the civil legal problems they encountered because of a lack of resources (as reported by the Legal Services Corporation in The Justice Gap: Measuring the Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-income Americans).

This “justice gap” between legal needs and available services exacerbates our country’s systemic inequities and disadvantages especially our most at-risk populations.

Your gift to the McDowell Foundation helps fill this “justice gap,” making vital financial resources available to nonprofit organizations which undertake social justice litigation.

Your financial contribution benefits a diverse array of constituent populations and impacts a wide variety of social justice causes. Cases we have funded include efforts to:

- Stop discriminatory policing practices
- Ensure services to the disabled
- End racial discrimination in jury selection
- Provide adequate healthcare for female inmates
- Ensure fair access to public benefits
- Gain equal treatment for immigrants
- Improve conditions for children in detention
- Protect the voting rights of Native Americans

PEOPLE OF COLOR, WOMEN, IMMIGRANTS, THE ELDERLY, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE LIVE MORE FREQUENTLY IN POVERTY AND MORE OFTEN NEED LEGAL ASSISTANCE


Your Gift Matters

Each year, the Foundation receives many more grant requests than it can fulfill. With today’s legal, political and economic climate, a significant and growing need exists for grantmaking to support social justice litigation.

As one of the very few nationwide sources for social justice litigation grants, the Foundation is raising additional funds to allow it to donate more money to more grantees, creating even greater impact.

**GIVING LEVELS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President’s Circle</td>
<td>$20,000 and above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Benefactor</td>
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**HOW TO GIVE:** You can make your gift through a check, or via PayPal. For more information on giving please see the Foundation’s [Donor Information Guide](http://www.mcdowellfoundation.org/donate) at its website at www.mcdowellfoundation.org/donate.

Your gift to the McDowell Foundation demonstrates your commitment to furthering social justice.

**RECENT GRANTEES**

2020
- Fair Elections Center
- National Center for Law and Economic Justice
- National Veterans Legal Services Program
- National Women’s Law Center
- North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services

2019
- American Immigration Council
- Center for Gender and Refugee Studies
- National Center for Law and Economic Justice
- Prisoner’s Legal Services of Massachusetts
- National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild

2018
- Bazelton Center for Mental Health Law
- Children’s Advocacy Institute
- Children’s Rights
- Legal Services of Alabama
- Public Interest Law Center
- Sargent Shriver Center on Law and Poverty

**RECENT HIGH IMPACT CASES**

2019
- **Investigation of a School System’s Failure to Integrate Disabled Children into Normal Classrooms and Programs** – In partnership with Bazelton Center for Mental Health Law, Disability Rights New York, Disability Rights Advocates, and Drinker Biddle
- **Investigation of Landlords Violating Potential Tenants’ Housing Rights for Failure to Accept Section 8 Housing Vouchers from Persons of Color** – In partnership with The Public Interest Law Center and Drinker Biddle
- **Challenge to the Seizing Without Due Process By New York City of State Tax Refunds for Transit Violations** – In partnership with The National Center for Law and Economic Justice, New Economy Project, and Drinker Biddle

2018
- **Constitutional Challenge Regarding Termination of Parental Rights in Pennsylvania** – In partnership with Drinker Biddle

2017
- **Challenge to Segregation and Discrimination of Institutionalized Intellectually Disabled Persons** – In partnership with Disability Rights North Carolina and Drinker Biddle.