

THE BALTIMORE Barrister

FALL 2025

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Scarlett Corso and Samuel Pulver perform at Senior Legal Service's Fundraiser Cabaret & Cabernet in 2024.



PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF BALTIMORE CITY

The McCammon Group

is pleased to welcome our newest Neutral



Hon. Christopher Panos (Ret.)

Retired Associate Judge, Circuit Court for Baltimore City

The Honorable Christopher Panos has joined The McCammon Group after eleven years of dedicated service as an Associate Judge on the 8th Judicial Circuit Court for Baltimore City. He previously served as an Associate Judge for the District Court of Baltimore City and as a Special Master for the Family Division of the Circuit Court for Baltimore. Prior to his tenure on the bench, Judge Panos enjoyed a successful career in civil litigation including family law, bodily injury, and commercial matters. He is a Life Fellow of the Maryland Bar Foundation and a Fellow of the Baltimore City Bar Foundation. Judge Panos' memberships include the International Association of LGBTQ+ Judges, Maryland State Bar Association, and Bar Association of Baltimore City. Judge Panos co-chaired the BABC Bench-Bar Committee and chaired the BABC Family Law Committee. Additional memberships have included the MSBA Standing Committee on Professionalism and the MSBA Family and Juvenile Law Section Council. Judge Panos now brings this exemplary record of excellence and experience to The McCammon Group to serve the mediation and arbitration needs of lawyers and litigants in Maryland and beyond.

For a complete list of our services and Neutrals throughout MD, DC, and VA, call (888) 343-0922 or visit www.McCammonGroup.com

THE
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The Baltimore Barrister

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Use Your Gifts

Evelyn Lombardo Cusson, Esq., President, Bar Association of Baltimore City¹



I lost my mother recently. As I reflect on her memory and how I miss her, I am bolstered in my bereavement by the values she instilled in me and by how fiercely she loved me. I am so fortunate. I am fortunate to have been born to parents who believed in me and who encouraged me to take my schoolwork seriously. I am fortunate that my parents encouraged me to go to law school and that I had the opportunities that I did.

A common refrain from my mom was, “use your gifts.” I anticipate her mantra was derived from Luke 12:48, “for of those to whom much is given much is expected.” I understood my mother to mean that we all have special gifts, and we must recognize and cultivate our gifts to improve ourselves and our communities. By using our gifts, we show appreciation and may also be in a position to help others.

As lawyers, we have many gifts. We can persuade. We can follow intricate rules. We can digest complex cases or treatises or documents. We may be good teachers or mentors. We may be at our best in the courtroom or quietly working away in our offices. Although our strengths are varied, all lawyers are uniquely situated to effect positive change in the community.

This month, in honor of my mother, I would like to ask you to consider how you might use your gifts for the betterment of the Bar Association of Baltimore City. In case you need inspiration, here are a few suggestions (which mom was also often quick to give):

- For extroverted litigators, consider attending a social event or networking session, and engage a colleague or two who may be less comfortable in that setting.
- If you have encountered something new in your practice or are grappling with a legal issue that others may also be dealing with, consider planning a CLE or panel discussion to enhance the competencies of our members.
- Perhaps you have become an expert on a topic or there is some trend in the law that fascinates you. Write an article for the *Barrister*, the bar association’s online news journal. Derek Van De Walle and Viola Woolums have increased the publication schedule of the *Barrister* to every other month and would be grateful for your contributions.
- For seasoned practitioners, consider taking a newer lawyer under your wing. The bar association and Young Lawyers’ Division have launched a formal mentoring program or simply strike up a friendship with another lawyer who might benefit from your wisdom of years.
- If you can donate your time, you might volunteer at the Holiday Party for Children Living in Shelters, or at Law Day for Seniors, or you might take a case with Senior Legal Services to assist an older adult prepare estate planning documents or avoid tax sale.
- If you have treasure to share, you might consider sponsoring an event or donating to Senior Legal Services or to the Baltimore Bar Foundation, which provides financial support for law-related programs in Baltimore City.

The Bar Association of Baltimore City offers many avenues for us as lawyers to use our gifts. Let’s endeavor to use our gifts, what makes us unique and what we have to share, for the improvement of our profession and the community.

¹The views expressed herein are my personal views and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.

Bar Association of Baltimore City's Exclusive Sustaining Members Pasta Making Class



Please join us on
Tuesday, October 28, 2025
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
 at **Schola**

**2744 Lighthouse Point East
 Baltimore, MD 21224**

**Kindly RSVP by October 20, 2025, by
 emailing Divya Yost Potdar at
dpotdar@divalaw.net**

**The event is free for Sustaining Members.
 A guest can be added for a nominal charge.
 Space is limited.**

Don't Let Your Practice Get in the Way of Your Profession

Derek Van De Walle, Esq., Chair, Young Lawyers' Division, Bar Association of Baltimore City



From the earliest days of our profession, lawyers have gathered together in associations. They were places to learn from one another, to shape public life, and to build the reputation of the bar itself. Bar association membership has long been regarded as a mark of professional standing. Yet, membership alone is not enough.

When it comes to bar associations, everyone likes the idea of belonging, but far fewer embrace the work of engagement.

It's like buying a book and leaving it unopened on the shelf – the knowledge and stories only reveal themselves once you engage with the pages. Likewise, the benefits of a bar association reveal themselves best when engaging with other members and taking an active role. Dues may make you a member, but only involvement makes you part of the bar.

The Bar Association of Baltimore City has been doing just that since 1880. It stands for generations as more than just a professional network. It is a place where lawyers shape the future of our profession and our city, make lifelong friends, and discover that Old Bay can be as effective a social mortar as any CLE.

But the BABC is hardly alone. There are practice-area bar associations, specialty bar associations, statewide and national groups, law clubs, and not to mention countless civic and community boards hungry for engaged professionals. Each one offers its own unique mix of opportunities – for service, for leadership, for advocacy, and, yes, even for fun.

What makes the BABC stand out is its commitment to young lawyers. Through its Young Lawyers' Division, or YLD, the BABC offers new attorneys a ready-made platform for service, leadership, and community. In addition to the many social functions where young lawyers can network, the YLD is deeply engaged in the life of the city, organizing pro bono clinics, mentoring programs, public education initiatives, and service projects that extend well beyond the walls of the courthouse into underserved Baltimore neighborhoods. For lawyers fresh out of law school, the YLD bridges the gap between graduation and practice, providing the tools and the relationships that sustain a career.

But membership itself is not the golden ticket. A line on your resume will not make introductions for you. Committees do not run themselves. And the mere possession of a la-

pel pin has yet to win anyone a case. What matters is involvement: showing up at the meeting, volunteering for the project, raising your hand when the chair asks for help. The lawyers who get the most out of these associations are those who give the most to them, and the return on investment is often greater than expected—new clients, new colleagues, new mentors, new friends.

Lawyers are, by nature, social creatures. We cannot exist in a vacuum. So, if you have joined a bar association (or are still debating it), remember: the first step is easy, but the real rewards belong to those who show up. For young lawyers especially, the secret of advancing is getting involved: our profession, our city, and our future will be shaped by those willing to take part.

The Bar Association of Baltimore City
cordially invites you to the

*30th Annual
Past Presidents Luncheon*

November 25, 2025

11:30 a.m. Reception, Cash Bar

12:00 p.m. Lunch

Lord Baltimore Hotel

20 West Baltimore Street

Baltimore, MD 21201

Presentation of the Presidential Awards

Presentation of the

Margaret Brent/Juanita Jackson Mitchell Award

Presentation of the Paul A. Dorf

Memorial ADR Award

Recognition of recently retired judges and newly appointed judges
in Baltimore City.



Members: \$70 Non-Members: \$80

www.baltimorebar.org/calendar/

A Night of Song and Service: 11th Annual Cabaret & Cabernet

Nicholas Pycha, Esq., Director, Senior Legal Services



performances from distinguished members and friends of the bar.

This event is not just a wonderful night out; it is the primary fundraiser that supports the vital work of Senior Legal Services. The funds raised allow us to continue providing critical legal assistance to low-income seniors throughout Baltimore City.

My favorite part of this event is the opportunity it gives us to formally recognize our hard-working and dedicated volunteers. I have the pleasure of witnessing their compassion and dedication to this legal field firsthand, and it is a privilege to celebrate their service with our Volunteer of the Year award. This year, we are proud to present the Volunteer of the Year award to William Sulima and Phyllis Strader from Constellation for their excellent roles in coordinating

This year, Senior Legal Services (SLS) and The Baltimore Bar Foundation (BBF) are thrilled to host Cabaret & Cabernet, their 11th annual fundraiser and volunteer recognition event on Tuesday, November 5th, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law's Westminster Hall. Please save the date to join us for an evening of networking, snacks, and memorable performances from distinguished members and friends of the bar.

our four annual estate planning clinics. Since 2013 through this invaluable partnership, SLS has provided essential legal assistance to over 750 senior clients, for whom our volunteers drafted over 1,100 estate planning documents. Their contribution is a testament to the profound impact that pro bono work has on our community.

We understand that many attorneys have demanding schedules and may not be able to attend but still wish to contribute. If you are unable to join us, you can elect to donate your ticket to a local senior. These generously donated tickets are distributed to residents of the many senior centers that our staff attorneys frequent to meet with clients. This is our way of further giving back to the communities that we serve.

Beyond attending or performing, there are many ways BABC members can support the mission of SLS. We encourage members to volunteer their time at our other main event, Law Day for Seniors, which is scheduled for April 25, 2026. We are always looking for attorneys to present on legal issues affecting seniors, as well as volunteers to assist with the event itself. Members can also contact Senior Legal Services at 410-396-1322 if they are interested in volunteering at one of our upcoming estate planning clinics. We hope you will join us in supporting Baltimore's seniors. We look forward to seeing you in November!

Jennifer Blades Returns to Direct Cabaret & Cabernet

Viola Woolums, Esq.



Jennifer was asked to direct the first Cabaret & Cabernet after her involvement with the Young Victorian Theater Company's production of Trial By Jury at a BBF fundraiser 10 years ago. She is back for her 8th year to the delight of the performers and audience alike.

What keeps you coming back to support the program year after year?

Senior Legal Services (SLS) provides a much needed service in Baltimore City, and I am honored to do my part to help raise funds for the organization. The only way a society can thrive is if all the members are cared for, and SLS is a small piece of that pie. Supporting SLS means that a senior in need will receive legal services that might not be accessible otherwise, and I believe that we are called to take care of our neighbors. What better way to support this cause than to enjoy some food, drink, and a performance! Plus, I love working with the cast - members of the legal profession who give their time and talent to putting on a show. I have such respect for each person that comes out for C&C. It is not easy to stand before an audience and sing, but we have so many wonderful performers in the cast, both new and returning. Also, Scarlett Corso would never forgive me if I did not come back each year!

How do you choose the theme and performers for the show?



Our theme this year is rather broad – Autumn. I may have decided on the theme because I am about to perform an autumnal themed jazz cabaret show and thought it would be a great idea for Cabaret & Cabernet. Because our cast is made of all kinds of singers, I try to keep the theme broad enough to give them plenty of options to find their solo numbers, which are either chosen by the singer with my approval, or at my suggestion. We also try to include 2-3 ensemble numbers, and it helps to have a theme that gives us plenty of room to find songs. We definitely have a core group of performers, and I am very grateful for them. New performers are usually asked to send me a recording, but sometimes I talk with them to get an idea of their background. If I get the sense that they have performed in the past, then I invite them to join us. Most of the singers who join the cast remain in the cast for at least 2-3 years, if not longer.

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How much preparation is needed to put on Cabaret & Cabernet?

On September 29, we will begin weekly Monday night rehearsals at the Church of the Nativity and Holy Comforter which has graciously donated their space to us. Rehearsals are from 7-9:30pm, and we run all the ensemble numbers as well as the solos. Dress rehearsal is the Monday prior to the performance at Westminster Hall. This is where we make sure that our blocking and movement is clear on the stage and stairs, and run the show with mics. Of course, before rehearsals begin, we are all picking songs, discussing songs, working on our own, and making sure that we can come into rehearsal ready to create a show. I think the first email to the cast went out in July this year, so it has been an ongoing conversation.

Can we look forward to a musical performance from you this year at the event?

Yes! And this year I will be singing a few songs. For a long time, I did not want to perform in the show for several reasons. Directing requires me to wear a bunch of hats, and I am usually not focused on singing. However, last year Paul Ballard asked me to sing a duet with him, and I was very honored by his request. So I joined the cast for the ensemble numbers as well. It was quite fun! This year, because some of our regular female singers are unable to participate, the cast is predominantly male, and I am lending my voice to give a boost to the women. No spoilers, but since our theme is Autumn, which includes Halloween, there may be a surprise set of songs that includes some Disney favorites. I may or may not be singing one of those in costume. And, we have a fabulous pianist with us this year, Justin Taylor. I am really excited for everyone to hear him play.

For me, the best part of Cabaret & Cabernet is the enthusiasm that the cast brings to the show and musical diversity that we present. From musical theatre to operetta, and indie pop to jazz, there

SENIOR LEGAL SERVICES
PRESENTS THE 11TH ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER AND VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

CABARET & CABERNET

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2025
6:00 - 7:00 PM



FEATURING MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF THE BAR

Westminster Hall | 519 W. Fayette St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

\$45.00 MEMBERS & GUESTS

6:00 - 6:45 PM Registration & Cocktail Hour
6:45 - 7:00 PM Awards Presentation
7:00 - 8:00 PM Cabaret

Sponsorship Levels

Encore \$1000
Producer \$500
Director \$250
Enthusiast \$100

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is something for everyone to enjoy, along with a great message of working together for a good cause. I hope to see lots of people at the Cabaret this year!

Senior Legal Services at 410-396-1322 if they are interested in volunteering at one of our upcoming estate planning clinics. We hope you will join us in supporting Baltimore's seniors. We look forward to seeing you in November!



BALTIMORE BAR FOUNDATION WINTER GRANT CYCLE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW

DUE DATE: November 28, 2025

The Baltimore Bar Foundation is a charitable organization, incorporated in 1970 to foster and maintain the honor and integrity of the profession of the law; to improve and to facilitate the administration of justice, to enhance and improve the image of lawyers, and to promote the study of the law and research therein and the diffusion of knowledge thereof.

In furtherance of those objectives, the Foundation provides financial support for non-profit programs and organizations that have a significant relation to the Baltimore City community and that may be expected to contribute to:

1. the improvement of the administration of justice
2. the provision of legal services through staff attorneys or unpaid volunteers to persons who find it difficult to obtain legal services through normal channels
3. the education of the general public, including primary and secondary school students, regarding law and the legal system
4. the improvement of the image of lawyers and of the legal profession through lawyer participation in community outreach programs and other good works

Although on occasion the Foundation will provide all of the funding necessary for the accomplishment of a given objective, in most cases only a portion of the projected budget will be underwritten, usually on the express condition that the balance of the funds be raised from other sources. Grants of "seed money" in this manner for a law-related project often provide help and confidence for foundations that wish to offer gifts for such projects but lack expertise in the legal field to make a judgement as to whether the project is worthy of support. Thus, the Foundation can act as a catalyst in bringing support from other donors to projects that require more funds than the Foundation can offer.

For applications go to the Baltimore Bar Foundation
at www.baltimorebar.org, or e-mail kfast@baltimorebar.org.

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BABC Orientation

July 15, 2025

All BABC Officers and Committee Chairs got together to plan the year led by President Evelyn Lombardo Cusson. Special thank you to Kerri Smith for offering up the Silverman Thompson office. Keep an eye out for some great events.



2024-2025 BABC IN REVIEW			
50 Newsletters	12 City Bar Reports—Double Spreads	75	4
	Live Events		
	58 BABC	9 BBT	
	12 YLD	3 SLS	
	31 Committees		
	26 CLES		
	13 Corporate Sponsors		
	18 Law Firm Sponsors		
	1551 LAWYER REFERRAL CALLS		
	5 FUNDRAISERS, 9 OUTREACH PROGRAMS		
	669 Cases		
	Senior Legal Services		
	STAFF : BABC 2 Full Time 2 Part Time	SLS 4 Full Time 1 Part Time	

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incident of 1992.**

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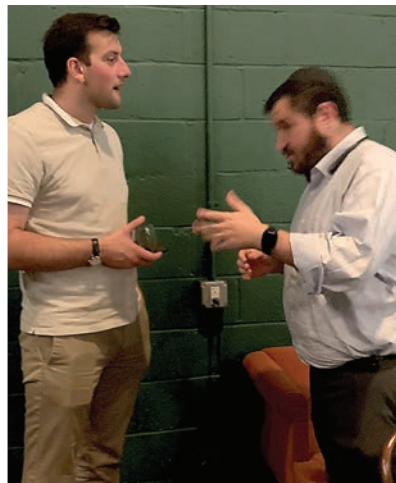
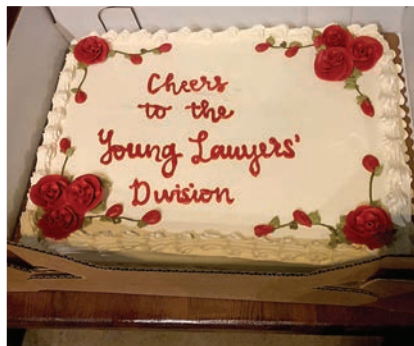
YLD Orientation

August 5, 2025

The Young Lawyers' Division had an orientation to plan for the year led by Chair, Derek Van De Walle.

Now is the time to sign up for a committee in your BABC portal. Great things are ahead this year.

We look forward to everyone getting involved.





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UBalt Law Student Fair

August 28, 2025

Steven Kappen, Stephen Craig, Derek Van De Walle (not pictured), and Zachary Babo (not pictured) represented the BABC at the University of Baltimore Fair on August 28.



UMB Law Student Fair

September 3, 2025

Derek Van De Walle, TJ Creevey, Valda Ricks, and Jacob Dorfman (not pictured) attended the University of Maryland Law School Fair.



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Welcome Back Joint Happy Hour

September 5, 2025

Members of the BIG TEN bar associations had a great time ringing in the new bar year at the Joint Bar Welcome Back Happy Hour on September 5th.

Thank you to all our co-hosts:

Alliance of Black Women Attorneys, Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Maryland, Federal Bar Association – Maryland Chapter, Maryland Association for Justice, Maryland Defense Counsel, Inc., Maryland Hispanic Bar Association, Monumental City Bar Association, MSBA Young Lawyers Section, and South Asian Bar Association of Washington DC.

Special shoutout to event sponsors:

Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company, Planet Depos, and Synergy Settlements.



YLD Mix and Mingle

September 16, 2025

It was great seeing new faces at the YLD Mix and Mingle.
From Judges to Law Students, members connected during this networking event.
Thanks to Veritext for their sponsorship. Hope to see you all at the next YLD Happy Hour!



BABC Memorial Service

September 17, 2025

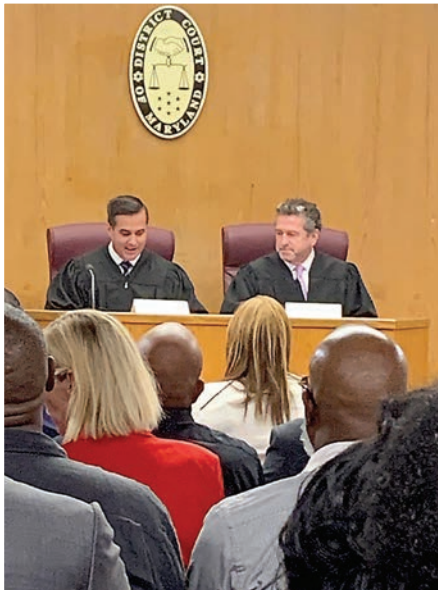
The BABC Memorial Service Committee honored those whom we lost in 2024. Thank you to the committee led by Judge Mark Scurti for all their hard work. This is one of the most heartfelt events put on by the BABC.



Investiture of Marnell Cooper

September 18, 2025

Valda Ricks represented the Bar Association of Baltimore City at the investiture of Marnell Alan Cooper in the District Court with the traditional presentation of a crystal gavel. We wish Judge Cooper much success in his new position.



THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF BALTIMORE CITY

Holiday Party

THE INN AT HENDERSON'S WHARF
1000 FELL STREET, BALTIMORE, MD 21231
(DISCOUNTED EVENT PARKING AVAILABLE)

DECEMBER
WEDNESDAY **3** 5:30 - 8:00 P.M.
2025

Featuring a silent auction to raise money for the YLD Holiday Party for Children Living in Shelters

Register:
www.baltimorebar.org/calendar/

YLD MEMBERS: \$70
BABC MEMBERS: \$80
NON-MEMBERS: \$90



Family Law CLE

September 22, 2025

The Family Law Committee got together to hear from the Judges and Magistrates in Family Court.

Thank you to all those who took time from their busy schedules
and a special thank you to Alice Pinderhughes and David Zerivitz for sponsoring lunch.



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THE BAR ASSOCIATION
OF BALTIMORE CITY



AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Seeking Nominations for the Presidential Awards

The Bar Association of Baltimore City's Annual Presidential Awards are presented to two individuals (one of whom shall be a member of the Young Lawyers' Division) who are members of the Bar Association of Baltimore City who have:

- 1) selflessly undertaken community, civic, and/or charitable service which brings honor to the profession, and/or
- 2) who have devoted time and energy to the Bar Association of Baltimore City through substantial work on BABC committees, or other exemplary service to the Association. The awards are presented at the Annual Past Presidents' Luncheon.

Seeking Nominations for the Margaret Brent/Juanita Jackson Mitchell Award

Building on the legacies of Margaret Brent and Juanita Jackson Mitchell, the Bar Association of Baltimore City has created the Brent-Mitchell Award to recognize women lawyers and judges who have surmounted substantial barriers to achieve professional excellence. The Award is presented to a nominee who:

- 1) Exemplifies the pioneer spirit of Margaret Brent and Juanita Jackson Mitchell
- 2) Has achieved a high degree of success in the field of law
- 3) Has paved the way for women in the law

Seeking Nominations for the Paul A. Dorf Award

This award is presented to a person in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area who has substantially contributed to the furtherance of the goals of alternative dispute resolution (mediation and arbitration).

FOR A LIST OF PAST WINNERS GO TO AWARDS AT WWW.BALTIMOREBAR.ORG

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE OCTOBER 24

FOR NOMINATION FORMS CONTACT: INFO@BALTIMOREBAR.ORG OR CLICK ON THE LINKS BELOW



Kerri Smith Takes the Helm as Baltimore Bar Foundation President



Kerri Smith, a partner at Silverman Thompson in the firm's real estate group, represents landlords, tenants, business owners, property management companies, and property owners in both commercial and residential matters. A longtime leader in the Bar Association of Baltimore City, including past service as Chair of the Young Lawyers' Division, she is now beginning her term as President of the Baltimore Bar Foundation.

How has your background or previous service prepared you for leading the Foundation?

The mission of the Foundation is to support non-profit programs and organizations in Baltimore City that are doing great work in advancing access to justice, extending education about the law and legal system, and improving the administration of justice and image of the legal profession. My background in legal leadership has prepared me to lead the Foundation on its mission. I've had the privilege of serving as Chair of the Young Lawyers' Division of the Bar Association of Baltimore City and Chair of the Young Lawyers Section of the Maryland State Bar Association. Both of those roles taught me how to mobilize people and manage programs. Through years of practicing law, I've also seen firsthand the needs of our local community and the gaps in access to justice. We're lucky that there are so many wonderful programs serving the needs of the community in Baltimore and that, as a Foundation, we can support those programs with grants. Over the years I've been lucky to build bridges and friendships with many of our colleagues who manage and volunteer at the organizations that facilitate these programs, so I'm glad to be able to use that network as an avenue for outreach about the work of the Foundation.

What advice would you give to lawyers who want to support public service but aren't sure where to start?

My advice is: start small and start where you are. Supporting public service doesn't have to mean a huge time commitment – it can begin with taking on a pro bono case, mentoring a law student or young lawyer, joining a local nonprofit board, or volunteering at one of the public service projects organized by the Bar Association of Baltimore City. Public service work also doesn't have to be limited to using your legal skills. Look for causes that resonate with you personally, and if you also find ways to use your legal skills to contribute, even better. But, most importantly, don't underestimate the impact of showing up consistently. There are so many great public service opportunities out there that just need willing volunteers. For example, the Bar Association of Baltimore City hosts events like the Holiday Party for Children Living in Shelters, National Adoption Day, and Senior Law Day, and volunteers are always needed to make those programs happen. Over time, contributing small acts of service can lead to deeper involvement. For example, I started volunteering at the National Adoption Day celebration in Baltimore City when I was a first-year associate even though I am not a family law practitioner and didn't know anything about adoption proceedings and have volunteered every year since. Ten years later, I co-chair the Committee that organizes the annual program in conjunction with the Circuit Court for Baltimore City and the Department of Social Services (and I also just took on my first pro bono family law case through MVLS!).



DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND

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September 9, 2025

On behalf of the District Court of Maryland and the District Court for Baltimore City, we are pleased to announce the opening of a new District Court courthouse in Baltimore City. This relocation of the Baltimore City District Court courthouse currently located at 501 East Fayette Street (known as the "Civil Building") and the Commissioner's Central Application Station located at 1 North Charles Street represents a significant enhancement to the City's judicial infrastructure.

As of 4:30 P.M. on Friday, October 10, 2025, the Baltimore City District Court Civil Building, located at 501 East Fayette Street will relocate to the new District courthouse located at 500 North Calvert Street. The new courthouse is scheduled to open on at 8:00 A.M. on Tuesday, October 14, 2025.

In addition, the Commissioner's Central Application Station, located at 1 North Charles Street, will remain open to the public through the morning of Sunday, October 12th. Beginning thereafter, all services will transition to the new location at 500 North Calvert Street.

You will soon see signage at both the East Fayette Street and North Charles Street locations to alert individuals that have business with the courts and commissioner's station of the upcoming location change. In addition to courthouse signage, the Court has also created a general information sheet and transportation guide which can be found by visiting mdcourts.gov/BaltimoreDCmove.

We can assure you the District Court of Maryland is committed to ensuring the highest level of service and the District Court has worked in close partnership with the Maryland Department of General Services to thoughtfully design a courthouse that is not only architecturally striking, but also prioritizes safety, accessibility, and functionality. This new facility reflects our shared commitment to delivering a modern, welcoming, and secure environment for all who enter.

If, for any reason, you need to get in touch with the Court regarding the relocation, please email the Court at BaltimoreDCmove@mdcourts.gov with any questions or concerns.

We appreciate your patience, assistance, and understanding throughout the transition period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John P. Morrissey".

John P. Morrissey
Chief Judge,
District Court of Maryland

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoffrey G. Hengerer".

Geoffrey G. Hengerer
Administrative Judge, District One
District Court of Maryland

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Derek Van De Walle, Esq., Historical Chair

A Landmark in Legal Reporting: Plowden's Commentaries (1761) Joins the Museum of Baltimore Legal History Collection

The Baltimore Courthouse & Law Museum Foundation, Inc. is proud to announce the acquisition of *Plowden's Commentaries*, a rare and influential legal volume published in 1761. This exceptional work was generously donated by Gary Duvall (Georgetown Law Center, J.D. 1974), a retired partner at Miles & Stockbridge, where he also served as Deputy General Counsel.

The Foundation extends its deepest gratitude to Mr. Duvall for this contribution. His gift ensures that visitors to the Museum of Baltimore Legal History will have the opportunity to encounter one of the foundational texts of the common law tradition and to engage directly with a tangible piece of legal history.

About Plowden's Commentaries

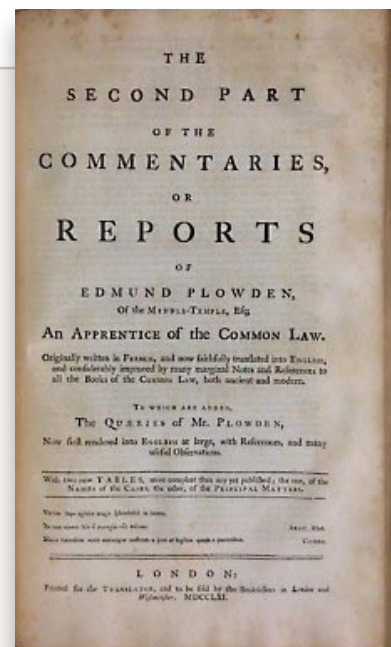
Sir Edmund Plowden (1518–1585) was a distinguished English lawyer and scholar of the Elizabethan era. His *Commentaries*, first published between 1571 and 1579, transformed the recording and study of legal cases and laid the groundwork for modern case reporting.

Before Plowden, legal precedent was preserved primarily in “year books,” which recorded the spoken words of judges in court. These year books rarely included a clear statement of the facts or a structured legal analysis. Instead, they often contained extra-judicial commentary, including the personal views of practitioners and reporters themselves. The earliest identifiable year book dates to 1268, and while they remained in circulation for nearly three centuries, their discontinuation in the 16th century created the need for more systematic and authoritative reporting.

Plowden's *Commentaries* met that need. They may be regarded as the first truly modern reports, offering not only a faithful record of judicial reasoning but also a detailed account of the facts of each case. Plowden also introduced the innovation of the headnote. The *Commentaries* were originally published in

Anglo-Norman, the language used in English courts. The 1761 edition of the *Commentaries* was translated into English, making the work accessible to a wider audience, including lawyers in colonial America such as George Wythe and John Adams. The copy now preserved at the Museum embodies this pivotal shift in legal scholarship, bridging the medieval tradition of the year books with the structured reports that define common law practice today.

Plowden's Commentaries is now on display at the Museum of Baltimore Legal History, located on the second floor of the Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse. The Museum is open to the public from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on weekdays, whenever volunteers are available.





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