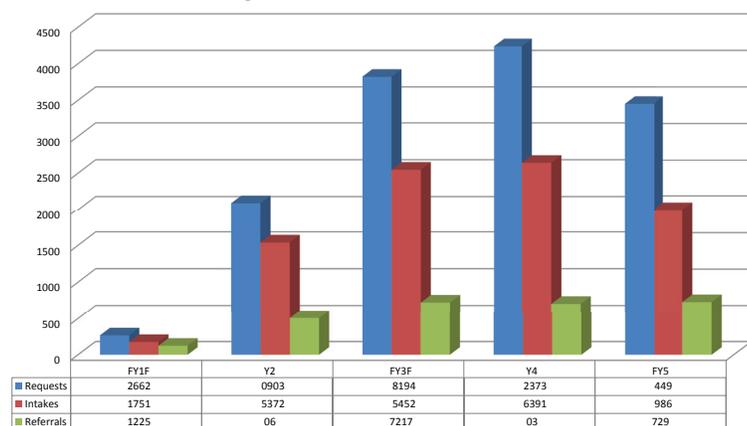


Celebrating 5 years of Affordable legal help.

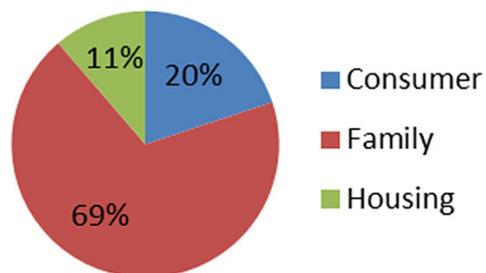
IN APRIL 2011, WSBA OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THE WSBA MODERATE MEANS PROGRAM (MMP) in partnership with Washington’s three law schools. April 2016 marks five years of intakes, referrals, and program growth. It also marks five years of helping to meet the legal needs of the Washington state moderate-income population, a population that cannot afford full-fee legal services but does not qualify for free legal aid.

THE WSBA MODERATE MEANS PROGRAM is a reduced-fee referral service designed to connect clients whose income falls within 200–400% of the Federal Poverty Level, with attorneys who offer legal assistance in family, housing, and consumer law matters.

Program Growth in First 5 Years



Referral by Legal Area



Total Number of Attorneys Signed Up in First 5 Years



THE BENEFITS OF THE WSBA MODERATE MEANS PROGRAM ARE NUMEROUS:

Law students gain hands-on experience with real clients; attorneys gain access to free training, mentorship and opportunities to make a difference; and moderate income clients have better access to affordable legal help.

CLIENTS

As a fast-food cashier and young mother-to-be, Suzie needed assistance with filing for bankruptcy. She carried a debt-load that consisted primarily of medical, credit card and student loan debt, and she needed legal assistance to file a Chapter 7 bankruptcy. An MMP attorney accepted her case and charged her a reduced fee with low monthly payments. The client wrote to her attorney:

"I just wanted to say thank you for all your help. We are doing well. [The baby] is a happy, healthy baby, and such a joy. We are taking all the necessary steps to get our lives back on track financially and that would not have been possible without your assistance. I truly appreciate everything you have done, and I hope all is going well for you."

A single mother applied to MMP for help to establish a parenting plan and child support order for her young child. The MMP attorney who accepted the case referral wrote this about her client:

"... she [client] retained me to assist her with her custody issue and parenting plan. I really enjoyed meeting [the client] and I believe I will be able to provide the legal services she needs. The Moderate Means Program provides such a valuable service to so many people! [The client] is a single mother and voiced her sincere appreciation of the reduced fee structure the program is able to offer. Thank you so much for your kind referral of this dynamic, intelligent young woman. I am extremely pleased to be part of the MMP."



WSBA Moderate Means Program

is a partnership with the law schools of Gonzaga University, Seattle University, and the University of Washington and is made possible by charitable gifts to the Washington State Bar Foundation. Donations provide funding for student training and mentorship, program outreach, and staffing. Please support the continued growth and success of the Moderate Means Program by making a tax-deductible gift at <http://www.wsba.org/foundation> or, by contacting foundation@wsba.org.

PARTICIPATING ATTORNEYS

Forrest Carlson, president of the Low Bono Section, was one of the first attorneys to sign up to be on the MMP panel five years ago. Since then he has accepted a number of referrals from the program in family law and debt collection. As a low bono attorney, being involved with the Moderate Means Program was a natural way of augmenting his practice. According to Forrest:

"The Moderate Means Program is a good opportunity for attorneys to get involved in different areas of the law and to gain experience. It's an easy way to get referrals and a good way to give back to the community. It's great that the MMP exists to help the folks in this gap. We should expand the MMP!"

Three recent graduates of Gonzaga Law, Amber Rush, Elijah Marchbanks, and Colin McHugh, opened a law practice together with offices in Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon. As strong supporters of Gonzaga and the Moderate Means Program, they eagerly accept family, housing, and consumer law cases from us. Since they joined the MMP attorney panel in early 2015, their firm has accepted 16 case referrals from Clark and adjacent counties. The firm recently expanded to include two additional attorneys, one of whom is a graduate of Gonzaga Law and was an excellent MMP student volunteer. These new attorneys have been invaluable to connect moderate income households in Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania counties with affordable legal help.

LAW STUDENTS

"So much of what MMP offers is exactly what public interest and nonprofit firms are looking for in attorneys, so I am proud of the work that I do in MMP and I understand the value of the experience. What we do translates into real skills that are necessary for working with clients."

