

Noteworthy

We have exciting news! The WBF is relaunching Noteworthy to help you stay connected with our clients, our volunteers, and our work. In this edition, hear from volunteer attorney, Brandy Bustamante, and learn about the WBF's plans to expand services.

Volunteer Spotlight



"It makes you feel good about being a lawyer" – **Brandy Bustamante, WBF Volunteer Attorney**

When Brandy Bustamante took her first case with the WBF she had little family law experience, but having worked in criminal law and volunteered at the court services center, Brandy understood that a common thread ran through the lives of so many women who came into contact with the court system—domestic violence. She saw many survivors of domestic violence doing their best to navigate custody, divorce, child support, and protection from abuse without the support of an attorney. This drove Brandy to take her first case with the WBF.

Brandy recalls, "Before I took my first case, I wasn't sure I could do it. Working with domestic violence—it's very emotional and difficult." But despite the challenges of domestic violence cases, Brandy has returned to the WBF repeatedly to represent women in need. Now on her third WBF case, Brandy explains, "The more you take cases the more you learn about domestic violence. Taking these cases reminds me of why I went to law school—to help people at a low point in their lives get back on their feet. I'm very proud that the WBF does this work. It makes you feel good

about being a lawyer.”

The WBF is incredibly grateful for all the volunteer attorneys like Brandy who provide representation and counsel to more than 400 low-income clients each year.

To learn more about being a volunteer or to register for the next training, please visit wbawbf.org/flpnovember2016 or contact Rachel Biscardi at rbiscardi@womensbar.org.

WBF News

WBF Launches 25th Anniversary Capacity Building Initiative

Since its founding in 1993, the WBF has become an integral part of the access to justice community in Massachusetts, providing free legal representation to more than 5,000 low-income clients. We have trained and supported more than 2,000 volunteer attorneys who have helped women and children gain safety from abuse, and guided elders in end-of-life planning. The WBF was also involved in setting up a legal clinic at The Women’s Lunch Place; has partnered with the Hampden County Bar Association and other legal services stakeholders in Western Massachusetts to provide on-site legal assistance in the Springfield Housing Court and has been conducting educational seminars for women in prison and those recently released from prison.

As we near our 25th anniversary in 2018, our services have never been more relevant. Our 25th Anniversary Capacity Building Initiative will help to fund our vital work in the coming years and meet the ever increasing demand for our services by:

- Expanding our ability to provide emergency representation to help survivors of domestic violence and their children gain immediate access to safety.
- Increasing our language translation services in order to open up services to more non-English speaking clients.
- Establishing a litigation fund to support litigation expenses for low-income clients who cannot afford court expenses such as subpoena fees, depositions, or expert witnesses.

To learn more, [visit our website](#).

The Women's Bar Foundation is dedicated to ensuring access to justice for low-income women. We create a community committed to providing free legal assistance to low-income women and their families.

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