



2024 Microsoft Pro Bono Report

Promoting justice for all

October 2024



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Introduction

Promoting justice for all

Letter from Hossein Nowbar and
Beth Henderson

2024 Pro Bono by the Numbers

Bringing People Together

Introduction



Letter from Hossein Nowbar and Beth Henderson

We are proud to share with you Microsoft’s fifth annual Pro Bono Report, a reflection of our continued commitment to advancing justice for all by leveraging the collective strength of our employees, partners, and cutting-edge technology.

The report highlights the inspiring ways our Pro Bono Program empowers Microsoft employees and community partners to address the critical unmet legal needs around the world, with a clear focus on making legal services more accessible to those who need them most.

At Microsoft, we believe the combined power of human effort and digital transformation can drive impactful solutions. This year’s report underscores that belief with initiatives that pair our employees’ time and talent with Microsoft’s innovative technology. Each highlighted project includes both a “Volunteer Engagement” and “Digital Transformation” section, illustrating how we are scaling our efforts to meet the access-to-justice crisis affecting 5 billion people worldwide.

One of the standout examples of this work is our DACA Copilot, which demonstrates the potential of responsible AI to optimize legal services. This tool can reduce the time required for volunteers to prepare Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) renewal applications by approximately 90%, allowing us to serve more applicants while reducing training time and increasing quality and consistency across our clinics. The DACA Copilot is a testament to what can be achieved when people from diverse backgrounds collaborate to create scalable, responsible AI-powered solutions that deliver meaningful change.

“At Microsoft, we believe the combined power of human effort and digital transformation can drive impactful solutions.”

While we are proud of the DACA Copilot and the other digital transformation solutions presented in this year’s report, we also celebrate the human connection that remains central to Microsoft’s pro bono efforts. Throughout this year’s report, you will see powerful images and stories of Microsoft employees coming together with their pro bono clients—underscoring the importance of coming together to make a difference. The profound impact these personal interactions have on both volunteers and clients cannot be overstated.

We are deeply grateful to the employees, partners, and clients who have supported and contributed to the Microsoft Pro Bono Program this year. As we look to the future, we remain dedicated to expanding the reach and impact of our program through responsible technological innovation and fostering the human relationships that drive real change.

Together, there is no limit to what we can achieve.




Hossein Nowbar
Chief Legal Officer and
Corporate Vice President,
Microsoft




Beth Henderson
Assistant General Counsel
and Senior Director of the
Microsoft Pro Bono Program

2024 Pro Bono by the Numbers


770

Hours volunteered with KIND 


280

Hours volunteered in support of the ABA Asylum Clinic 


90%

Anticipated reduction in time to complete renewals using the DACA Copilot 

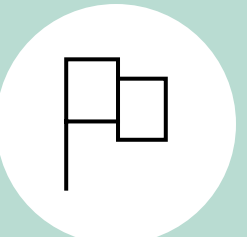
35%

Time saved preparing Special Immigrant Juvenile Status petitions by digital transformation solution 

462

Hours volunteered with Seattle Clemency Project 

380+

Hours volunteered in support of veterans-related pro bono matters 

Bringing People Together

The Microsoft Pro Bono Program advances its mission by bringing together volunteers, clients, and partners to promote justice for all.



Microsoft participates in the Making Justice Accessible Summit



Celebrating with a client after successfully obtaining permanent resident status on her behalf.



The first-ever Pro Bono Institute pre-conference on AI and pro bono.



A team of hackers from Washington, D.C. proudly secured third place at Microsoft's 2023 Global Annual Hackathon.



Microsoft volunteers dedicated a day to interacting with students at Cascade High School in Everett, Washington.



Microsoft Pro Bono members standing with their Virtual Records Clinic client at an event where she shared how the VRC has changed her life.



Seattle Clemency Project client enjoying a tour of the Microsoft Campus.

Immigration

Helping immigrants access their legal rights

DACA Clinics

Kids in Need of Defense

Legal Counsel for Youth and Children

American Bar Association Asylum Clinic

An Unwavering Commitment to Pro Bono:
Volunteer Spotlights





DACA Clinics

Expanding the reach of much-needed support for Dreamers

For the past 12 years, Microsoft has partnered with [Northwest Immigrant Rights Project \(NWIRP\)](#) to host monthly pro bono clinics to assist applicants for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. This year, Microsoft piloted an AI-powered Copilot to modernize and scale its delivery of legal services to DACA applicants who cannot afford an attorney.

Background

- The 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals executive order has enabled more than 835,000 people¹ who were brought to the U.S. as children and who are often called “Dreamers” to work and stay without the threat of deportation, but the program is in limbo as challenges to its legality work through the courts.
- Dreamers must apply to renew their status and employment authorization every two years.
- When the U.S. Supreme Court likely decides to hear the case in 2025 or 2026, legal experts expect hundreds of thousands of people to file a DACA renewal before the Court issues a decision.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

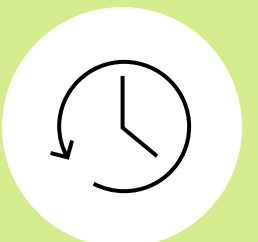
- ✓ Since 2012, NWIRP and Microsoft have held monthly clinics to support DACA recipients, as they apply to renew their protection through the executive order.
- ✓ Volunteers explain the renewal process, help applicants accurately fill out forms, and review applications to avoid mistakes that could disqualify or delay renewals.
- ✓ Microsoft is exploring ways to expand its current efforts to serve more Dreamers across the country.

Digital transformation

- ✓ Building upon an internal hackathon project, a cross-Microsoft coalition of employees and partners developed an AI-fueled solution to streamline current clinic operations and build an infrastructure that can support a potential time-sensitive surge of Dreamers needing help.
- ✓ The DACA Copilot simplifies the clinic process from volunteer engagement to application completion.
 - Using [Azure AI Document Intelligence](#), it extracts information from a client’s original application and clinic intake form. With Azure Open AI, the solution flags differences, such as a client’s change of address, for volunteers to resolve, then automates the production of a renewal document in less than 30 seconds.
 - The DACA Copilot supplies clinic administrators with an interface that uses AI to manage casework and legal team correspondence and intelligently assigns volunteers to cases.
- Luz, an AI Agent built with [Azure AI Studio](#), will enhance the volunteer experience through an AI prompt library. This resource will help answer questions, automate volunteer engagement and workflows, summarize case status, and empower volunteers, regardless of their legal background.

90%

Anticipated reduction in time to complete renewals using the DACA Copilot



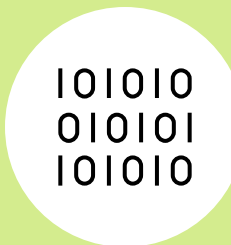


Luz, meaning light, symbolizes the aspirations and hope of the Dreamer community and their immigrant parents. The Luz logo was created with Microsoft Designer, utilizing the advanced capabilities of DALL-E 3 AI technology.

Microsoft piloted an AI-powered Copilot to modernize and scale its delivery of legal services to DACA applicants who cannot afford an attorney.

100+

27 volunteers participated in the DACA Hackathon project, dedicating more than 150 hours during Microsoft's Worldwide Global Hackathon. Nine volunteers are involved with the current DACA Copilot development project and have contributed more than 100 hours in support of the project so far.



438

43 Microsoft volunteers dedicated 438 hours to serve 89 clients during DACA Clinics.



A One Microsoft approach: Scaling support for DACA applicants with AI

In September 2023, an effort to streamline the preparation of DACA application forms took shape during Microsoft's Worldwide Global Hackathon and soon became an award-winning project at an internal science fair. Since then, stakeholders from Microsoft Pro Bono, AI for Good Lab, Technology for Fundamental Rights, the Windows and Devices Team, and other groups have evolved that original spark into an AI-powered solution called the DACA Copilot.

The DACA Copilot optimizes volunteers' effort and expertise while making it easier to expand the pool of volunteers who participate in DACA Clinics. It uses Microsoft AI features to streamline steps needed to fill out and review client renewal applications. The team bringing the project to life anticipates that the web application will increase the number of clients that clinics can serve—just in time to meet an expected surge of need from the Dreamer community.

As with all Microsoft products, projects, and services using AI technology, the DACA Copilot aligns to company Responsible AI standards and principles. The web application exists within a closed environment, so client data remains private, secure, and inaccessible to public models.

To advance the Responsible AI principles of inclusiveness and fairness, the tool was designed and reviewed by Dreamers and DACA Clinic volunteers. The Copilot also integrates human oversight mechanisms to ensure all AI output is reviewed by users. Further, members of Microsoft's Office of Responsible AI – Sensitive Uses Team have provided extensive review of the DACA Copilot throughout its development.

The DACA Copilot exemplifies the One Microsoft culture and strategy that seeks to break down barriers in pursuit of innovation, progress, and delivery on Microsoft's mission of empowering

“There's so much in the world that needs our help, and it feels overwhelming. I decided to focus my unique skills where I can contribute the most. This technology will enable anyone to be able to use it so we can scale up the clinics.”



Amae Kurre

DACA Clinic and DACA Copilot volunteer, Microsoft U.S. Immigration team Immigration Specialist, and UX/UI designer



A team of hackers from Washington, D.C. proudly secured third place for the 'AI for DACA' project at Microsoft's 2023 Global Annual Hackathon.

every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Leveraging project participants' expertise, lived experiences, and passion led to not only an intensive collaboration but also a creative solution to a pressing challenge. The team

is exploring how the DACA Copilot could be used by a wider network of stakeholders to help even more Dreamers file renewal applications—and live free of the threat of deportation.

Kids in Need of Defense

Providing unaccompanied children the chance to forge a new life

Around the world, violence, discrimination, and hardship are so extreme that children must seek out a better life on their own. Without the support of legal professionals, however, many unaccompanied children cannot access their legal rights, including the chance to seek lawful residence in a place that offers them safety.

Background

- Conflict, extreme poverty, and other global crises have led to a tenfold increase in the number of children who migrate alone.² Unaccompanied children are particularly vulnerable to abuses such as trafficking, violence, and exploitation.
- Since 2008, [Kids in Need of Defense \(KIND\)](#) and its extensive pro bono network have supported refugee and immigrant children in their home country, in transit, and where they arrive.
- KIND has expanded its model beyond the U.S. and now operates offices in Mexico, Central America, and Europe.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement—United States

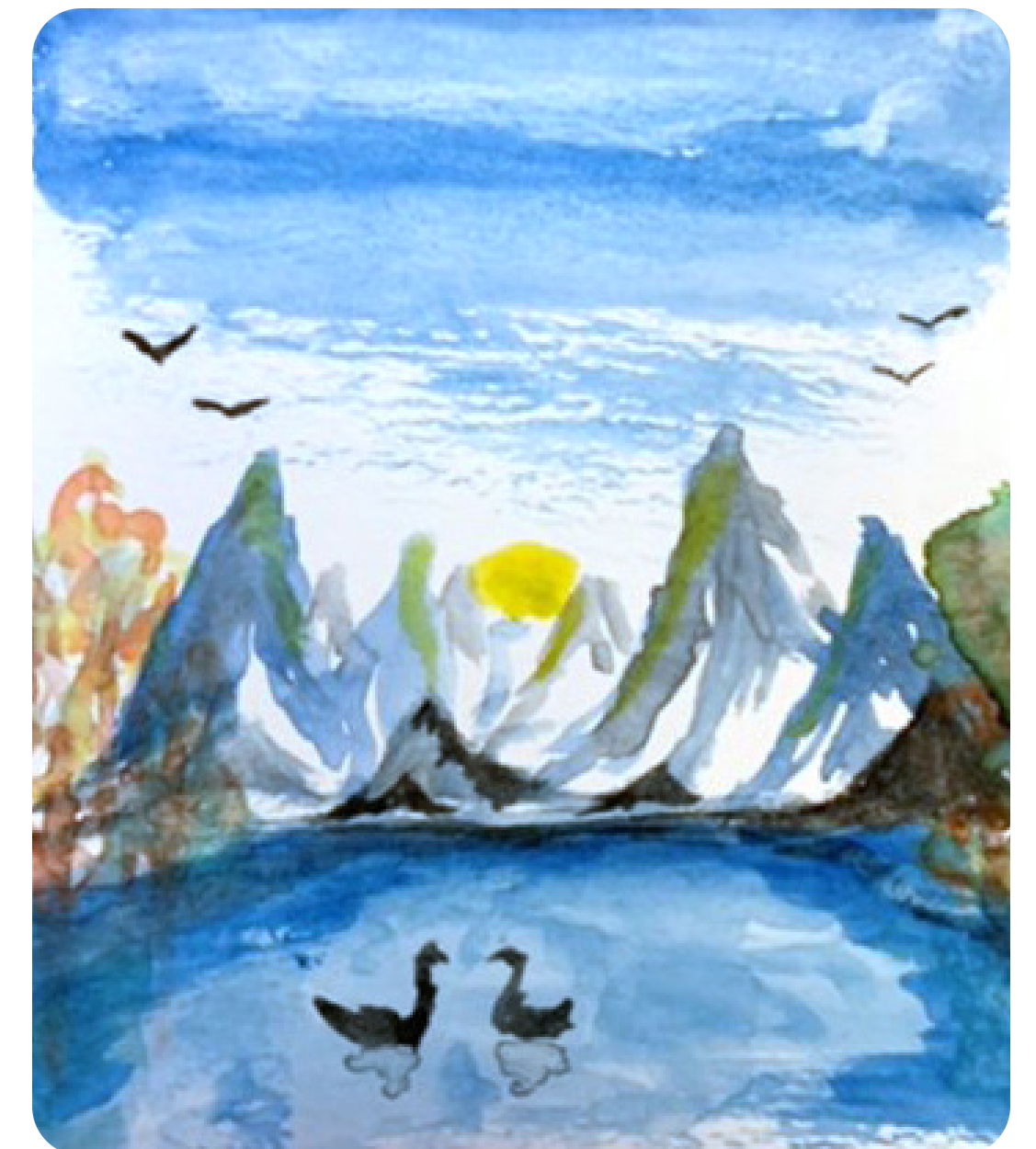
- ✓ Through KIND, Microsoft volunteers are providing child-centered legal services that allow minors to pursue lawful residency and citizenship, as well as reunification with their family. These efforts can have long-lasting and generational impacts.

“When you do pro bono work, you interact with people you’d never meet in your day-to-day life. It gives you a chance to step into someone else’s shoes and become more inclusive.”



Una O'Sullivan
Corporate Affairs Manager,
CELA EMEA

- ✓ This year, in partnership with KIND, Microsoft pro bono volunteers successfully obtained green cards for three young people.
 - After eight years of pro bono support from Microsoft Patent Attorney Gregg Wisdom, a young man who fled Somalia based on fear for his life now has U.S. permanent residency, giving him the stability to raise a family and pursue his dream of becoming an entrepreneur.³
- ✓ Volunteer teams provided free legal assistance to enable parents and legal guardians to bring two unaccompanied children to the U.S., reuniting separated families through the Central American Minors (CAM) Program.
- ✓ Microsoft professionals have volunteered as attorneys, case managers, and translators to help Afghan children impacted by the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in August 2022. This year, volunteers obtained asylum approvals for six young Afghan clients, enabling them to legally settle in the U.S. free from fear of persecution in their home country.



Artwork created by a recent KIND client from Afghanistan.

² Source: Kids In Need of Defense, [2022 Global Impact Report](#)

³ Source: Kids In Need of Defense, [From Refugee to Role Model: Abdirahman's Journey to Success](#)

Our Impact (cont.)

Volunteer engagement—Worldwide

- ✓ Microsoft colleagues in Europe research and write country condition reports to support legal arguments, file petitions for fee waivers in residency cases, and directly represent young clients.
- ✓ With KIND, members of the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) Microsoft legal team successfully:
 - Gained asylum in France for a boy in danger of deadly political retribution in Afghanistan.
 - Secured a favorable court order that enabled a young girl at risk of female genital mutilation to stay in the U.K. along with her family.
 - Obtained a waiver of an £11,000 fee for a young client in the U.K., removing an extreme financial burden for a family that has no income.

Digital transformation

- ✓ The Microsoft technology stack supports virtually every aspect of KIND's work. Microsoft subject matter experts are collaborating with KIND to brainstorm, design, test, and implement solutions to streamline processes, augment staff efforts, and enable even more effective programming.
 - Translation: When interpretation is needed, a volunteer with the requisite language skills leads the client interview while other volunteers follow along via closed captioning in English, provided by [Microsoft Teams](#) and powered by AI. This function enables volunteer teams to focus more time on the client's story and on forging stronger relationships. As Senior Software Engineer and KIND volunteer Xinsong Li says, "I'm really enthralled with how we can use technology to optimize being client-centered."
 - AI enablement: Microsoft employees are helping upskill KIND staff by sharing learnings and best practices for using [Copilot for Microsoft 365](#) and [Copilot Studio](#), with the goal of building out a Copilot to scale Microsoft-KIND pro bono efforts.

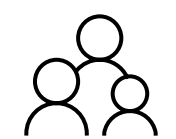
"Technology is a force multiplier. Artificial intelligence and other tools assist paralegals, attorneys, and others to do more value-adding work. That is the proven promise of automation with AI."



Madi Nassiri
CTO of KIND

770

88 Microsoft volunteers
dedicated 770 hours
helping 62 clients.



Legal Counsel for Youth and Children

Scaling impact to help young unaccompanied immigrants

Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC) helps vulnerable young people forge a path toward safety, stability, and success. This year, LCYC, Microsoft, and the law firm Davis Wright Tremaine (DWT) collaborated and leveraged Microsoft technology to provide no-cost legal aid to unaccompanied youth who are eligible to pursue legal residency in the U.S.

Background

- Before applying for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), an immigration classification that establishes a basis to seek lawful permanent resident status, young people must obtain juvenile court findings that establish a history of neglect, abuse, or abandonment before they age out of eligibility.
- LCYC acts as the attorney of record to help youth navigate this confusing realm of the immigration process, but LCYC has limited capacity and relies on the assistance of pro bono volunteers.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✔ This year, LCYC, DWT, and Microsoft launched a clinic to support youth seeking SIJS in Washington.
- ✔ During three-hour-long virtual clinics, volunteer teams use Microsoft Teams breakout rooms to interview clients, fill out forms, and write petitions that enable LCYC attorneys' ongoing work for these cases. Microsoft volunteers with language skills translate when needed.
- ✔ This SIJS Clinic expands on the successful LCYC-DWT-Microsoft initiative supporting transgender youth to legally change their name to match their gender identity.

Digital transformation

- ✔ Microsoft and LCYC built a tech solution that streamlines completion of the pleadings the state court requires. Based on Copilot in Microsoft Teams, Power Automate, and Microsoft Forms, the solution automatically and accurately fills in 363 fields across six pleadings in a mere 11 seconds.
- ✔ Microsoft Teams Copilot transcribes and translates audio in real time, generates notes, and outlines tasks discussed during calls.
- ✔ Microsoft Teams Copilot organizes information from real-time meeting summaries and post-meeting insights for easy integration into Microsoft Forms, which automates the production of required SIJS motions. Volunteers always review content generated by AI tools.
- ✔ As LCYC expands this pilot, they anticipate the technology will enable them and pro bono teams to reduce SIJS case backlogs, serve SIJS-eligible youth faster, and apply the solution to other no-cost legal aid.

“Even if you’re intimidated or think you don’t know enough, show up anyway. You have more than enough to listen, learn, do a great job, and make a difference.”



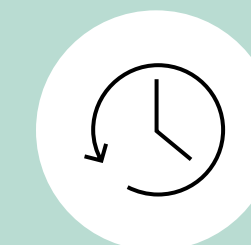
Meghan Romano
Principal Corporate Counsel,
Customer & Partner Solutions Americas



Volunteer teams use Microsoft Teams breakout rooms to interview clients, fill out forms, and write petitions that enable LCYC attorneys' ongoing work for these cases.

35%

Approximate reduction in time volunteers need to craft petitions by using this digital transformation solution.



American Bar Association Asylum Clinic

Shrinking the gap in asylum application support

To address the growing need for a scalable model to serve the legal needs of asylum seekers, the American Bar Association (ABA) [Commission on Immigration](#) and Microsoft launched a limited-scope Asylum Clinic. The pilot program trained pro bono volunteers and facilitated the preparation of asylum documents for asylum-seeking applicants.

Background

- The U.S. grants asylum to individuals who have been persecuted and who have a well-founded fear of future persecution based on a protected status, such as race, religion, nationality, social group, or political opinion.
- The number of asylum cases filed in the U.S. more than tripled in between 2021 and 2022, reaching a record high of more than 492,000 applications in 2022.⁴
- In general, people applying for asylum are not entitled to government-appointed legal assistance and often cannot afford private counsel. Unrepresented individuals are two to five times less likely to receive immigration relief than those with counsel.⁵

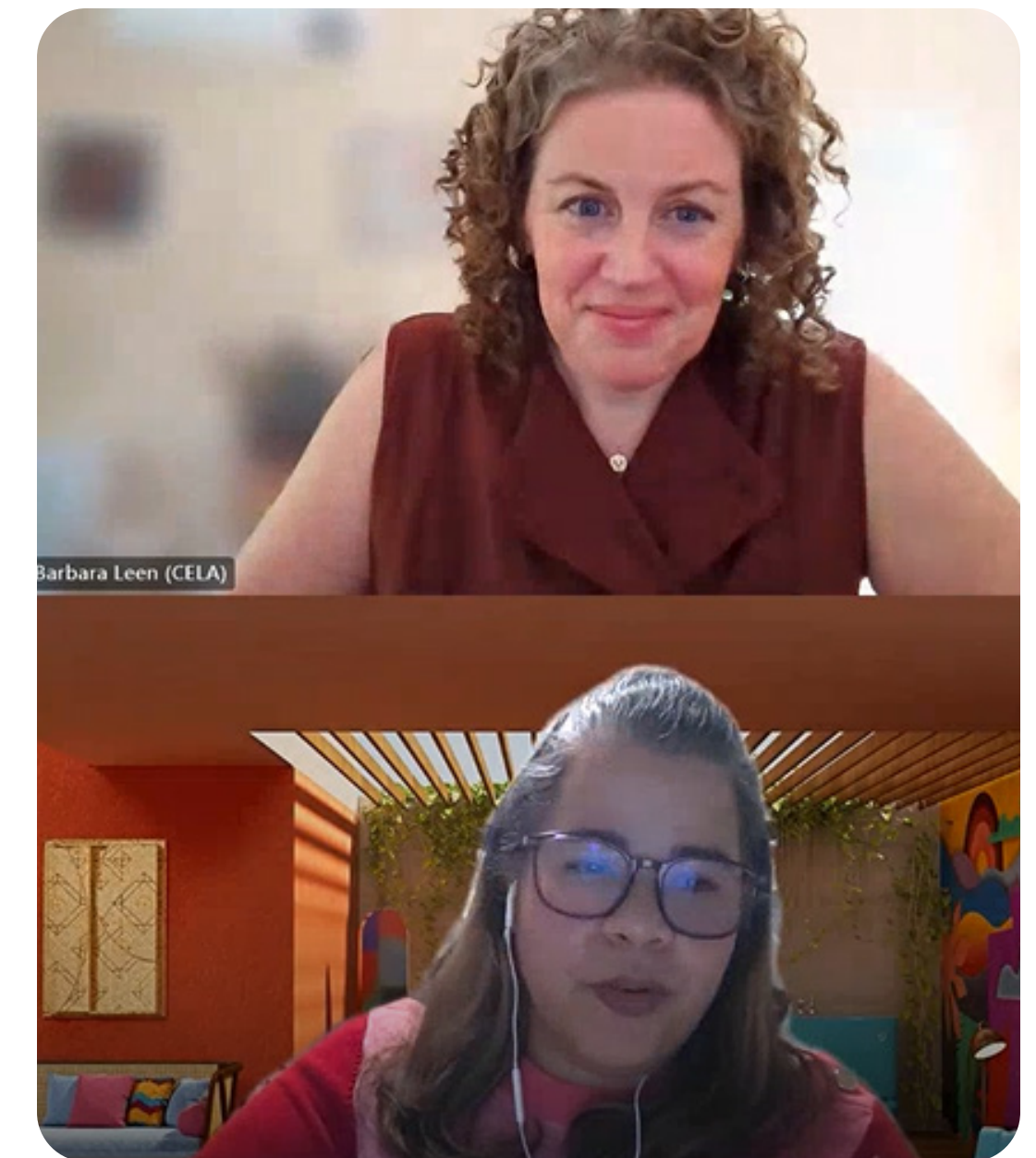
Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✓ After an initial screening and legal orientation by the ABA Commission on Immigration, asylum seekers are paired with pro bono volunteers to prepare their asylum applications for submission.
- ✓ The virtual Asylum Clinic enables volunteers to gather needed information and prepare unrepresented individuals' applications for submission over the course of four weeks.
- ✓ In virtual breakout rooms, pro bono volunteers, including a translator, listen to applicants' stories and gather evidence to support their claims.
- ✓ The time-bound clinic model expands the number of asylum seekers served by enabling volunteers to concentrate their efforts on a critical and time-sensitive step of the process—the initial application.

Digital transformation

- ✓ Microsoft volunteers have built and are beta testing an AI-powered solution, called Dolores Copilot, to support volunteers assisting with asylum applications.
- ✓ By using Copilot for SharePoint capabilities, the tool draws from vetted and up-to-date resources, including ABA training materials and documents from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, to generate immediate answers to volunteer questions regarding the application form or process. Dolores suggests follow-up information relevant to users' prompts.
- ✓ Upon deployment of Dolores, attorneys who specialize in immigration will review applications before they are filed, ensuring human oversight of AI-assisted documents.



Microsoft Senior Corporate Counsel, Barbara Leen, and Paralegal, Maria Barrios Fernandez, providing an overview of the Asylum Clinic to volunteers and clients.

⁴ Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics, [Refugee and Asylees: 2022](#)

⁵ Source: American Immigration Council, [Access to Counsel in Immigration Court](#)

“It’s not an easy thing to leave your family, friends, and everything you know behind and start from scratch in a new place.

As an immigrant, I bring that perspective to the table when I volunteer with my Spanish skills. Help is always needed, and you don’t need to be a lawyer—you can help someone with the language skills you already have.

It’s always worth it.”



Jenny Diaz
Trademark Paralegal

280

This year, 28 volunteers dedicated 280 hours to complete applications for eight asylum-seeking clients.



An Unwavering Commitment to Pro Bono: Volunteer Spotlights

Asylum enables client to live free of “horror and fear”

Hundreds of hours led up to a single moment in a Seattle courtroom. Microsoft Assistant General Counsel Cam Gatta, who prepared and presented the case with support of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP), and Microsoft Director of Global Brand Aleksey Fedorov, who translated from Russian to English, stood alongside their client, who was seeking asylum from a Central Asian country because of persecution based on their LGBTQ+ identity. When the judge held that the client would be granted asylum, the client broke down in relief. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security also did not appeal the judge’s ruling, which meant the client could legally stay in the U.S., put down roots in a supportive community, and heal.

“This case was high stakes, and the success meant our client won’t be deported back to a situation of horror and fear, where they don’t get to live their life,” Cam says. “I feel incredibly fortunate that I was in the right time in my life to take on this challenge and support our client.”

Cam and Aleksey volunteered hundreds of hours in the case’s accelerated nine-month timeline. The Microsoft Pro Bono team, NWIRP, and others supported Cam, who had no experience in immigration law but who worked tirelessly to ensure the best possible outcome for his client.

“It takes a village: We had a confluence of people who did fantastic pro bono work to make this success happen for our client,” Cam says. “It is hard work, but it is joyous, too. Pro bono work is the best way to practice your growth mindset. Anyone can play a role, everyone can help.”



Cam Gatta, Stephen Urena, and Aleksey Fedorov outside the courtroom after the Immigration Judge granted their client asylum.

An Unwavering Commitment to Pro Bono: Volunteer Spotlights

Pro bono volunteer achieves decade of impact

Cindy Randall, Deputy General Counsel, Litigation at Microsoft, says she has never felt more supported to help others through the law. “Pro bono work is integral to our culture and mission at Microsoft,” Cindy says. “Giving my legal skills back to the community in the form of pro bono is a concrete, meaningful way to have an enormous impact. Nothing compares to that.”

Cindy has worked with Microsoft colleagues on eight asylum and immigration cases, plus many clinics supported by the Microsoft Pro Bono Program, over the last 11 years. Recently she, Associate General Counsel of U.S. Immigration Jack Chen, and Litigation Paralegal Yana Rosenbloom worked with KIND to gain asylum for two children who fled Afghanistan during the U.S. military withdrawal in 2021 and who lived through the suicide bombing at the Kabul airport. The team interviewed the children, now aged 12 and 4, and developed legal arguments connecting analogous case law to the family’s circumstances. Cindy spent five months crafting the brief arguing that their support of the American presence in Afghanistan would put them at dire risk under the Taliban regime. The case culminated in an asylum interview, where the older child told her own story. “Hearing her express herself in a new language [English] and explain why she wanted to be in America, free of oppression as a girl and able to go to school, is one of the reasons

I keep doing this work,” Cindy says. “It was such a powerful experience to use my litigation skills to fundamentally change these kids’ lives.” The children were granted asylum in October 2023.


The attorney celebrated another win this year, too. Cindy reconnected with a client whom she and NWIRP had helped gain a U Visa in 2019, a status that provides temporary lawful status, employment authorization, and protection from removal proceedings for undocumented immigrants who have been victims of crime and who help law enforcement bring perpetrators to justice. The client, who is a domestic abuse survivor, received permanent resident status in May 2024 with the help of Cindy and Microsoft Compliance and Ethics Learning and Culture Lead Jesus Fernandez Perez—a happy ending to years of legal persistence. “My client really believes in America, and it means a lot to her to feel like she belongs here,” Cindy says.

While she oversees a heavy docket of litigation cases for Microsoft, she continues to make space for volunteering. “There’s so much joy in pro bono work. We have this opportunity to make a powerful, positive difference in people’s lives,” Cindy says. “As I’ve advanced in my career it’s harder to do it, but pro bono is still a high priority.”



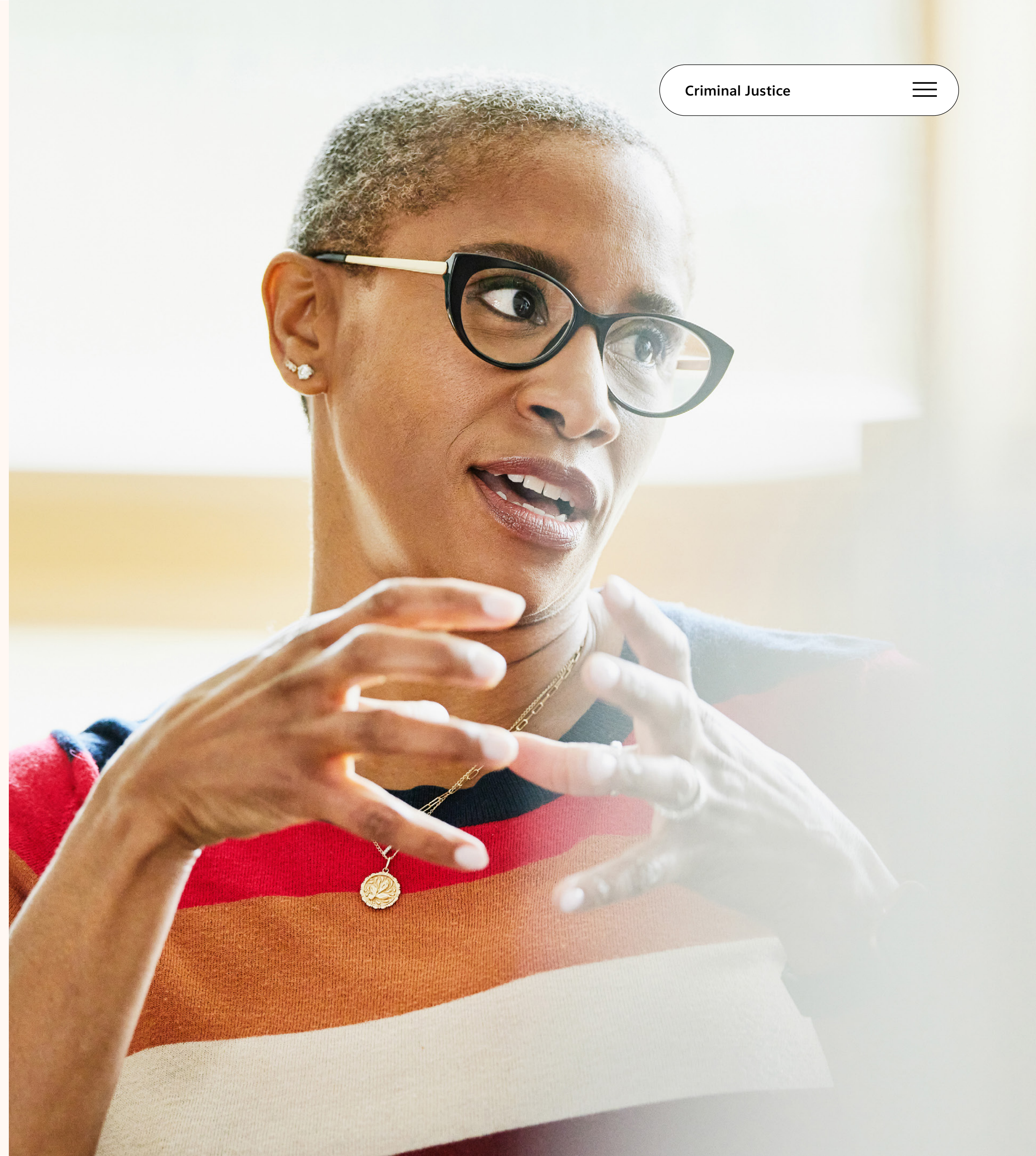
Microsoft Deputy General Counsel, Cindy Randall, and Learning and Culture Lead, Jesus Fernandez Perez, celebrating with their client after succeeding in obtaining permanent resident status on her behalf.

Criminal Justice

Advocating for justice-impacted people deserving of a second chance 

Virtual Records Clinic

Seattle Clemency Project



Virtual Records Clinic

Clearing the record for justice-impacted individuals

More than 1 million people in Washington state are eligible to vacate past convictions from their criminal records, which opens opportunities in education, housing, employment, and more. Only 5 percent of individuals with eligible convictions, however, have been able to successfully clear their records.

Background

- In Washington state, people who have met conditions tied to their sentences may apply to vacate certain convictions from their records.
- Petitioners do not have the right to court-appointed attorneys in the vacating process because it is considered a civil proceeding.
- A successful vacate removes convictions from a statewide database used as a form of background check, enabling individuals to overcome barriers to building a better life; however, the inability to afford representation can prevent them from successfully completing the often-complicated process.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✔ Microsoft, the [Post-Conviction Assistance Unit](#) of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Bar Association's [Records Project](#), [Civil Survival](#), and the [Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle](#) have partnered since 2020 to run the Virtual Records Clinic.
- ✔ Via Microsoft Teams, volunteers help determine individuals' eligibility, interview clients, collaborate on court pleadings, and prepare for possible court hearings.
- ✔ In addition to regularly scheduled clinics, a new self-service volunteering model supported by Microsoft technology enables individuals and teams to connect with clients and work on cases, on their own schedule.

Digital transformation

- ✔ With [Microsoft Loop](#), volunteers are provided an end-to-end roadmap of the vacating process, detailed training materials, templates and samples of pleadings, and other resources needed to prepare cases.
- ✔ Volunteer teams collaborate seamlessly using [Microsoft Teams](#), [Loop](#), [SharePoint](#), and [OneNote](#) to draft and file pleadings, helping justice-impacted individuals vacate eligible convictions from their records.

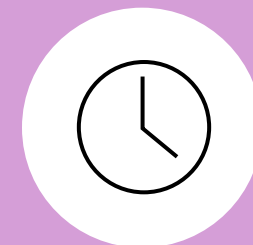


Microsoft Pro Bono members, Beth Henderson and Paolo Sy, along with the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle's Nick Jeffreys, standing next to Virtual Records Clinic client, Charmayne Buren and her mother, Yvonne Pascal at an event where Charmayne shared how the VRC has changed her life.



200

25 Microsoft volunteers dedicated more than 200 hours toward this project, helping 18 clients clear a total of 19 convictions.



“I’ve been in bad situations when I didn’t eat or had to borrow money for diapers, and I made mistakes in the past. I owned up to them and have since done everything I can—education, training, bettering myself—to move on. But I was getting denied for housing and jobs where I was qualified because of my record.

Then I got connected to a Microsoft volunteer with the Virtual Records Clinic. I was nervous, but he saw how hard I was working and told me, ‘I believe in you.’

After a lot of work from both of us, multiple convictions have been cleared. This experience has made me a believer that there are people out there who are willing to help.

Now I’m training for a new job and am looking for a new place to move with my kids. With my record being cleared up, I don’t have to worry. I just want opportunities—same as anyone else. I’m grateful to go to work every day and am grateful to be here.”

C.B.
Pro Bono Client

Seattle Clemency Project

Supporting rehabilitated justice-impacted individuals

Through the [Seattle Clemency Project](#), Microsoft volunteers help reformed individuals reduce their sentence and secure their release from prison. Volunteers also help clients without U.S. citizenship seek pardons for convictions that could impact their immigration status and lead to their removal from the country. These efforts mean that justice-impacted people who have rehabilitated themselves can rejoin or remain with family and contribute to their communities.

Background

- While incarcerated individuals do not have the option of parole in Washington state, they may apply for resentencing or clemency. This option can grant rehabilitated individuals an early release from incarceration.
- Washington state law also allows for the possibility of clearing past convictions that could make individuals eligible for deportation, enabling them to remain in the U.S.
- The clemency, resentencing, and pardons process is complicated, and many people who are impacted by the justice system cannot afford or access representation. This gap often puts the opportunities of a second chance out of reach for people who are eligible.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

Clemency and resentencing

- ✓ Volunteers support clients throughout the complex clemency petition process, which includes drafting a brief in support of the petition and gathering supporting evidence to show how clients have turned their lives around.
- ✓ If the Clemency and Pardons Board accepts a petition for further review, volunteers help clients prepare for a hearing before the board, which evaluates a petitioner's rehabilitation and readiness to reenter society.
- ✓ The resentencing process involves submitting a written request and supporting evidence to the prosecutor's office and asking that they support resentencing of the client under Washington's prosecutor-initiated resentencing law.

Conviction pardoning

- ✓ To help people facing deportation due to a criminal conviction that creates grounds for removal from the U.S., volunteers assist clients with applying for a pardon.
- ✓ Volunteers interview clients to understand the circumstances that led to their past activity and how they have changed, then help them file a petition and prepare for a hearing with the clemency board, which makes recommendations to the governor.
- ✓ If successful, a pardon clears the conviction and prevents it from being used as a basis to remove the person from the U.S. This legal remedy enables individuals who have served their sentences to remain contributing members of their community.

462

This year, Microsoft employees volunteered 462 pro bono hours with Seattle Clemency Project



Our Impact (cont.)

Digital transformation

- ✓ Virtual meetings via [Microsoft Teams](#) allow volunteers and clients to develop a deep relationship and build a persuasive case. This option enables ongoing communication when connecting in person would be difficult due to financial, transportation, childcare, or other considerations.
- ✓ Volunteers rely on [Microsoft Loop](#) to organize relevant documents, track progress on tasks, and collaborate. The tool enables volunteers to share responsibilities and collectively make a greater impact, faster.
- ✓ With client consent, volunteers use Microsoft Teams to record relevant conversations. They harness the power of Copilot to summarize and detail vital information from interviews to help build their case.



Microsoft Associate General Counsel, Shont Miller, and Paralegal, Yana Rosenbloom with their Seattle Clemency Project client, Anthony Wright, enjoying a tour of the Microsoft Campus.

Justice-impacted people who have rehabilitated themselves can rejoin or remain with family and contribute to their communities.

Pursuing a life of service, behind bars and beyond

When Anthony Wright spoke to his mother after he'd been sentenced to 138 years for a gang-related shooting, she had this advice: "Bloom where you're planted." He took that wisdom to heart and transformed not only himself but hundreds of others during his 23 years in the Washington state correctional system. With the help of the Seattle Clemency Project (SCP), Associate General Counsel Shont Miller, and Litigation Paralegal Yana Rosenbloom, he demonstrated his reform to the Washington Clemency and Pardons Board. In June 2024, Anthony was granted an early release from prison.

While incarcerated, Anthony realized he needed to change not only in words but in action, too. He earned his associate's degree through a program he helped shape, called University Beyond Bars, and designed and taught incarcerated individuals the math skills they would need for higher education or skilled trades. He shared his story, mentored others, and facilitated groups working to disrupt patterns of violence and gang involvement. In short, he spent thousands of hours tending to his personal growth, helping people avoid the mistakes he made, and steering others onto a productive and nonviolent path.

His dedication to healing and rehabilitation led him to connect with SCP, where his pro bono case was assigned to Shont and Yana. The three spent months reviewing Anthony's history, crime, and positive actions while in prison. During this process, Anthony was diagnosed with stage IV



Anthony Wright on the day the Washington Department of Corrections released him from custody

kidney cancer. The Microsoft volunteers urgently developed the case, gathered letters in support of Anthony, and wrote an impassioned brief in favor of his early release. When the clemency board unanimously voted to support his petition in March 2024, Anthony and his pro bono legal team exchanged hugs in relief and celebration.

"It was so emotionally rewarding to play a part in Anthony's release, and it's been wonderful to see pictures of how happy he and his family are to be together," Yana says. "I try to do as much pro bono work as I can because it goes both ways: I learn as much as I help someone else's life."

Shont agrees. "It was definitely the most impactful, meaningful thing I did all year," he says.

Since his release, Anthony has reconnected with Shont and Yana on Microsoft's Redmond campus, where he toured landmark buildings and gave a presentation on the impact volunteers have through SCP. He has also received ongoing support from SCP to adjust to life outside. He has spent time with his mother and family, reconnecting after many years apart. He says, "I'm reintegrated, not just reentered. Reintegration is when you come in the door, somebody's like, 'Hey, we missed you. We need you in this community.'"

Anthony hopes that he will be able to bring that message, as well as opportunities to change, to other justice-impacted individuals.

"I was scheduled to die in prison. This team of people worked tirelessly to get me in front of a board to display who I was," Anthony says. "If anyone is thinking about getting involved [in SCP], it will add such value to your life. It will definitely fill your heart."

"I try to do as much pro bono work as I can because it goes both ways: I learn as much as I help someone else's life."

Anthony Wright
Pro Bono Client

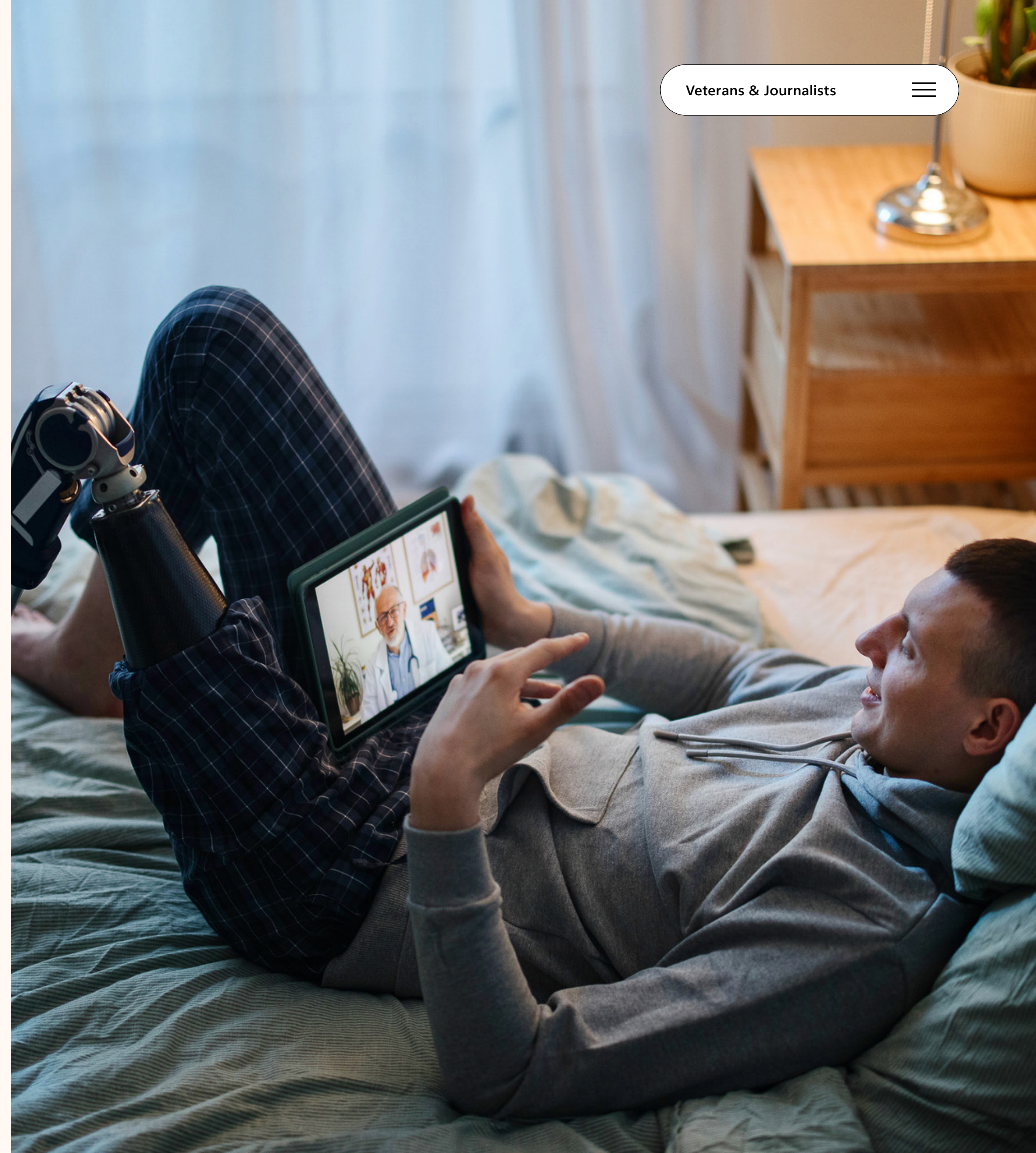
Veterans & Journalists

Helping people and organizations that uphold **democracy**

National Veterans Legal Services Program

ProJourn

Veterans & Journalists





National Veterans Legal Services Program

Gaining veterans benefits and recognition of their service

The [National Veterans Legal Services Program \(NVLSP\)](#) works to ensure that veterans and active-duty members of the military receive their benefits, including those related to disabilities resulting from their service. Microsoft pro bono volunteers enable the nonprofit to serve more clients, more quickly—and secure the support to which they are entitled under the law.

Background

- There are more than 16 million veterans living in the U.S., and benefits—from healthcare to income to education support—improve veterans' and their families' wellbeing.⁶
- Many veterans cannot access these benefits without help, which negatively impacts them in practical, financial, and psychological ways.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)

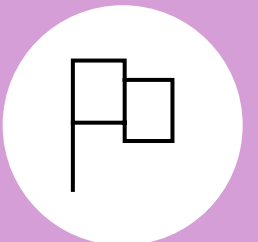
- ✓ Microsoft volunteers guide medically retired veterans through the complex bureaucratic process of applying for CRSC.
- ✓ Volunteers conduct interviews, review medical histories, and craft cases demonstrating that their clients' disabilities stem from serving in combat.
- ✓ A successful petition can result in life-changing compensation and back pay. The financial resources can ease the transition to civilian life and address the costs of injuries, including psychological harms such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Discharge Upgrade File Review

- ✓ Despite their valuable service, veterans with an "Other Than Honorable" (OTH) discharge cannot access benefits.
- ✓ Microsoft volunteers review extensive documents to help the client craft summaries that explain the circumstances, such as living through sexual assault or surviving a traumatic brain injury, that led to clients' OTH discharge.
- ✓ A successful discharge upgrade can reinstate access to benefits, including healthcare, restore their community standing, and boost self-esteem.

30

volunteers dedicated 386 hours to serve 27 clients.



⁶ Source: USAFacts, [Veterans](#)



Our Impact (cont.)

Digital transformation

- ✓ An AI-enabled automation project is helping volunteers efficiently review thousands of pages of military and medical paperwork, and then develop narratives needed for veterans' discharge upgrade applications.
- ✓ Thanks to the efforts of a Microsoft eDiscovery expert, attorney, program manager, and business manager, volunteers now use Microsoft's [Purview eDiscovery tool](#) to automate the search of client files saved in SharePoint in a fraction of the time it previously took. The tool records each keyword relevant to the upgrade petition, referencing its page number and the source document, in Excel for a centralized document so that NVLSP attorneys can reference important details in the case.
- ✓ A step-by-step guide on [Microsoft Loop](#) empowers volunteers to leverage Microsoft Purview for discharge upgrade matters, no matter their technical background.
- ✓ In addition, instead of writing a timeline and narrative from scratch, volunteer attorneys are leveraging the law-focused AI tool [Clearbrief](#) to create a first draft of these vital documents based on client records. They then refine the timeline and narrative, which NVLSP attorneys use to assess next steps in the discharge upgrade process.
- ✓ NVLSP and Microsoft anticipate that by streamlining time-intensive and repetitive steps, this technology enablement project will empower volunteers to help more discharge upgrade applicants, provide NVLSP attorneys with needed documents more quickly, and work through backlogs of veterans who need and deserve life-changing benefits.

“If you want to get involved in something where you see actual results, the NVLSP Combat-Related Special Compensation program is great: You can directly help and honor those who have been injured in combat protecting and serving our country.”



Tania Koles
Principal Corporate Counsel with
Federal CELA CGO Team



ProJourn

Promoting democracy and justice through independent journalism

Accurate reporting is vital to an informed citizenry and a healthy democracy. Free legal aid from Microsoft pro bono volunteers, who partner with First Amendment and media law experts, enables newsrooms and independent journalists to more confidently educate audiences, pursue truth, and reveal injustices.

Background

- While 85 percent of U.S. adults say local news is at least somewhat important to their community, many small to medium newsrooms and independent journalists do not have the financial means to access legal advice or aid.⁷
- In 2020, Microsoft and the law firm Davis Wright Tremaine (DWT) launched Protecting Journalists Pro Bono Program (ProJourn) as a pilot. Since then, ProJourn has grown into a nationwide effort with support from Microsoft, DWT, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and the Knight Foundation.
- ProJourn provides journalists and newsrooms with no-cost legal assistance, including pre-publication review, public records requests, and operations-related legal needs.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✔ Volunteers review sensitive stories before publication to help journalists reduce legal risk, craft more informative content, and feel more self-assured in pursuing investigative reporting.
- ✔ Volunteers also help reporters write, file, and follow up on records requests, increasing journalists' ability to acquire information the public has a right to access.
- ✔ First Amendment and media law experts mentor volunteers to refine their skills, oversee sensitive matters, and expand the pro bono network skilled in this area of the law.

Digital transformation

- ✔ ProJourn is dedicated to supporting journalists in underserved communities, including those whose audience does not speak English as a first language. The nonprofit is leveraging Microsoft's AI-powered translation tools to provide legal education, training, and services in Spanish.
- ✔ ProJourn uses the translation functions in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint to translate its extensive resources, including presentations and its newly launched website, into Spanish. Bilingual experts review content to ensure accuracy.
- ✔ The nonprofit's IT infrastructure is powered by the Microsoft stack. Microsoft subject matter experts have acted as thought partners to help ProJourn make the most of technology, from automating repetitive processes to brainstorming ways Copilot can scale their staff of three to serve more journalists across the U.S.

“It’s really important to us to ensure that Spanish-speaking journalists can access ProJourn’s website, legal resources, and pro bono assistance in their own language. I speak Spanish but am not fluent, especially in legal terminology, and I cannot tell you how much time it has saved me to rely on this tech. It has increased our productivity and our confidence in the final outcome of translated materials. It’s a game-changer.”



Flavie Fuentes
ProJourn Director

⁷ Source: Pew Research Center, *Americans' Changing Relationship With Local News*



Holding people in power accountable through the press

In July 2023, journalist Grace Madigan produced an investigation for independent public radio organization station KNKX that uncovered allegations of racial and sexual harassment and player endangerment by two youth league soccer coaches in Redmond, Washington. The piece, which went on to win the national Society for Professional Journalists' Sigma Chi Delta Award for Radio Investigative Reporting and other accolades, was supported by ProJourn. The volunteer team reviewed different versions

of the story before it went live, educated the news team about legal standards and expectations, and provided feedback on how to mitigate risk. After the story aired, the U.S. Center for SafeSport reopened investigations into both coaches, and U.S. Soccer confirmed their licenses had been suspended. "[The volunteer team's] support gave us the confidence to pursue this investigation and to put it on air and online," says Amy Jeffries, KNKX assistant news director who edited the story.

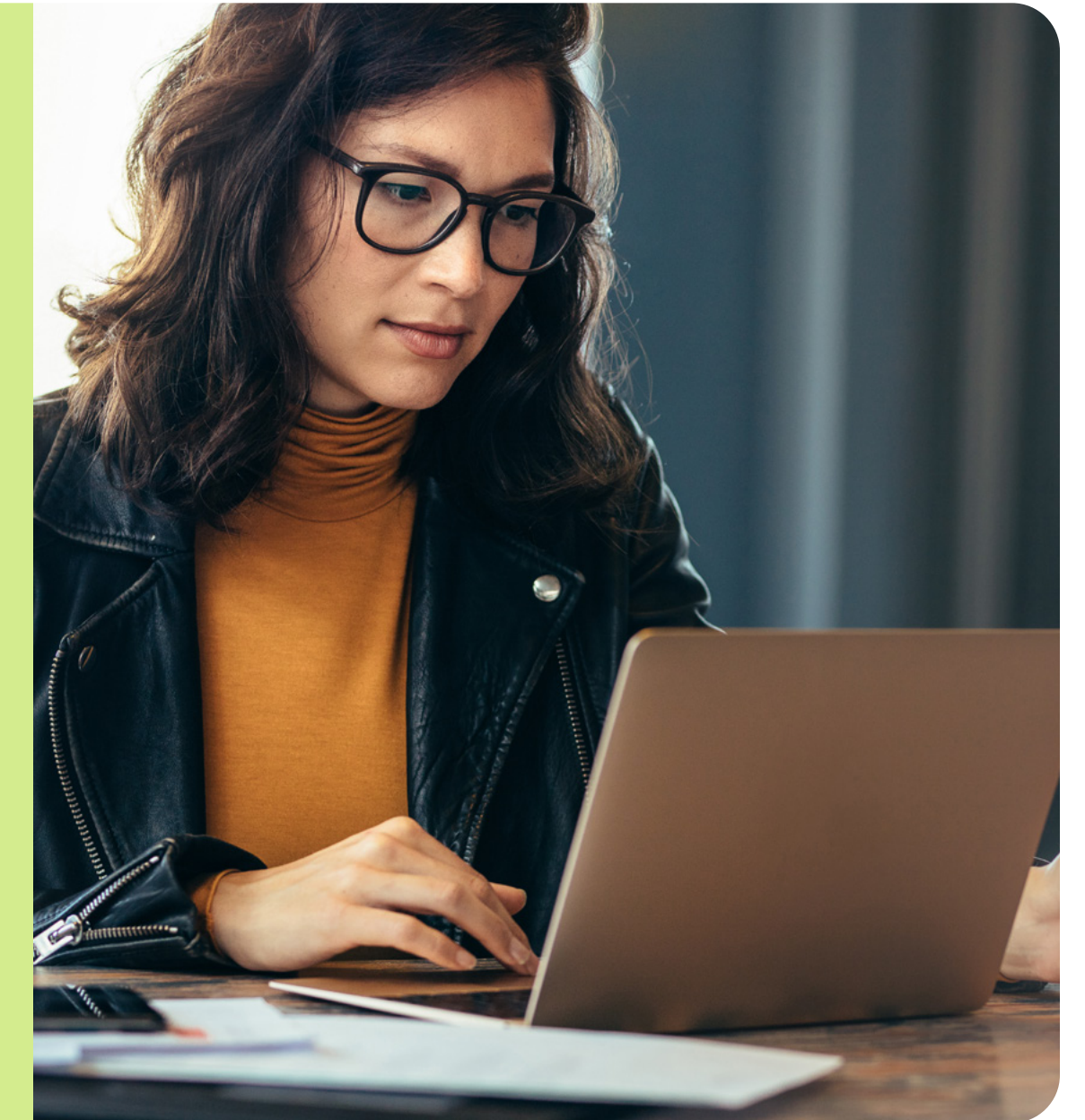
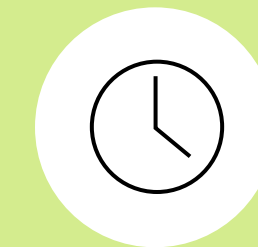
“ProJourn is a great way to use your legal skills to support the backbone of a fair, functioning democracy.”



Sima Sarrafan
ProJourn Co-founder and volunteer,
and Assistant General Counsel

200

This year, seven Microsoft professionals and attorneys volunteered more than 200 hours to support seven new matters and provide translation.



What's Next

Creating pathways for the next generation

Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline Program

Make What's Next

What's Next



Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline Program

Bringing legal education into the classroom

Without exposure to the legal industry, as well as connections with diverse legal professionals, young people from backgrounds underrepresented in the field might not pursue a legal career. *Street Law*, Microsoft, and Cascade High School in Everett, Washington work together through Street Law's Legal Diversity Pipeline Program to expand young people's understanding of the law and inspire interest in the field.

Background

- To best serve the diversity of individuals, communities, and organizations in the U.S., an equally diverse pool of legal professionals must be ready to support their needs.
- The legal field continues to struggle to diversify its ranks: although 40 percent of U.S. residents are people of color, only 14 percent of lawyers are.⁸
- Street Law's Legal Diversity Pipeline Program provides high school educators with curriculum and connects them with legal professionals to bring law to life in the classroom.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✓ Microsoft volunteers from a range of legal positions share their time, experience, and advice with Cascade students who take an Introduction to Law class.
- ✓ Under the guidance of volunteers, students participate in a mock trial to gain hands-on experience. This year, students worked on a hypothetical trial addressing deceptive advertising, which felt relatable to students familiar with questionable claims on social media and ads.
- ✓ Each semester, students conclude their course with a capstone event visiting the Microsoft Redmond campus, where they meet legal professionals, attend panel discussions, and tour locations such as the Digital Crimes Unit, Executive Briefing Center, and the Inclusive Tech Lab.

83

57 volunteers invested 83 hours to provide 46 students with legal education and networking opportunities.



“Volunteering with Street Law is an opportunity to shape the mind of a young person. Helping young people dream of what’s possible is needed in today’s world more than ever.”

Melissa Webster
Retired Cascade High School teacher

Microsoft receives Street Law Corporate Champion Award

Street Law granted its 2024 Corporate Champion Award to Microsoft in recognition of the company's commitment to expanding legal education opportunities for underrepresented youth. From pioneering a virtual format of the Legal Diversity Pipeline Program during the COVID-19 pandemic to the current program model, Microsoft continues to embrace Street Law's mission to advance civic and law-related education in pursuit of a more just and equitable society. Microsoft is one of Street Law's most active Legal Diversity Pipeline partners and continues to grow its involvement.



Beth Henderson accepting the Street Law Corporate Champion Award on behalf of Microsoft.

“I am deeply proud of the commitment and contribution that Microsoft makes to the Street Law program and legal education of students while also being grateful for the learning and enrichment I am able to take away from every student interaction.”



Amy Pannoni
Vice President and Deputy General Counsel,
Microsoft HR Legal Group



Microsoft volunteers dedicated a day to interacting with students at Cascade High School in Everett, Washington, aiming to spark their interest in the legal profession.

Make What's Next

Empowering the next generation of diverse inventors

Women and people of color are drastically underrepresented in the pool of people who have secured patents through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.⁹ This gap is a disservice to underrepresented people in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), and it deprives the country of the breakthroughs these individuals can contribute. Through Make What's Next, pro bono volunteers help women and other underrepresented people navigate the patent process, diversifying the community of inventors in the U.S.

Background

- Since 2016, Microsoft's Make What's Next program has provided patent support, education, and mentorship to diverse innovators to help them protect their ideas and fuel their advancements.
- In 2023, Microsoft cofounded [Advancing Diversity Across Patent Teams \(ADAPT\)](#) to expand the pool of patent law professionals available to help inventor teams.
- In addition to working with teams from the [Lemelson-MIT](#) invention competition, Make What's Next has partnered with the [Black Ambition Prize](#) competition to more deeply support Black and Hispanic inventor-entrepreneurs.

Our Impact

Volunteer engagement

- ✓ This year, Make What's Next nearly tripled the number of innovator teams it supported, compared to the previous year.
- ✓ Volunteers from Microsoft and partnering patent law firms teach inventors about the intellectual property system and file patent applications to protect teams' products.
- ✓ Examples of inventions supported by Make What's Next include:
 - A sensor system that can alert homeowners in cold regions when their roofs are at risk of collapse under the weight of heavy snowfall.
 - A wearable cooling device to keep wildland firefighters safer in dangerous conditions.
 - A method that enables individuals with mobility limitations to regularly change positions to avoid injuries such as bedsores.

250

In this Microsoft-led initiative, 12 volunteers dedicated approximately 250 hours to file five patent applications on behalf of five inventor teams, with three more patent applications in process.



“My cofounders, Stanton Ridley and Jordan Walls, and I are incredibly grateful to Microsoft's Make What's Next patent program for their invaluable support, which has been instrumental in helping Tendaji achieve patent-pending status. This milestone is a testament to the power of innovation and the importance of fostering diverse voices in the tech industry.”



Daryl "DJ" Riley Jr.
Founder & CEO, Tendaji,
and recipient of the
Black Ambition Prize

Community Engagement

Engaging with the Pro Bono and Access to Justice Ecosystem

Promoting the power of pro bono:
Action, reform, and justice

Microsoft technology empowers
justice organizations



Engaging with the Pro Bono and Access to Justice Ecosystem

Promoting the power of pro bono: Action, reform, and justice

Microsoft participated in the March 2024 [Making Justice Accessible Summit](#) at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, where Pro Bono Director Beth Henderson joined a [panel on addressing the civil justice gap](#) through public and private sector engagement. Beth and panelists from the Responsible Business Initiative for Justice, the Just Trust, Walmart, and Kaiser Permanente discussed a multistakeholder approach to advancing justice by encouraging pro bono efforts, promoting justice reforms, and increasing equity within private organizations.



Beth Henderson, Microsoft Pro Bono leader and Assistant General Counsel, joined General Manager Merisa Heu-Weller at the Making Justice Accessible Summit. Beth participated in a panel discussion, advocating for the engagement of a broader cross-section of employees beyond the law department.

Beth spoke about the importance of engaging a broad cross-section of employees from within and beyond the legal department.

- ✔ Virtually any employee, not only attorneys and legal professionals, can leverage their skills to increase access to justice.
- ✔ Volunteering increases employees' awareness of problems within the justice system, inspiring them to apply their influence, expertise, and unique perspectives for change.

Beth also highlighted the need for the private sector to champion reform.

- ✔ During the COVID-19 pandemic, when Microsoft held online clinics to support survivors of domestic violence gain protection orders and clients attended court hearings virtually, many clients faced fewer barriers because they did not have to miss work, find childcare, travel long distances, or overcome other obstacles.
- ✔ Microsoft and other groups successfully advocated for King County to retain the virtual hearing format in some instances, such as domestic violence protection order cases, to improve access to justice.



Microsoft technology empowers justice organizations

Given the justice crisis in the U.S., there simply are not enough pro bono attorneys to provide free or low-cost legal services to low-income individuals.¹⁰ Technology, and particularly AI, provides law firms, legal nonprofits, and others with an important tool to address the justice gap.

This year, Microsoft's Pro Bono Program provided insight on AI and actionable steps to attendees of the Pro Bono Institute's (PBI) [annual conference](#).

- ✓ Pro Bono Director Beth Henderson and Pro Bono Manager and Digital Strategist Adrián Palma served on the planning committee and helped lead a day-long pre-conference, called [AI and Pro Bono](#). It addressed how AI can be used to improve access to justice by scaling services for clients, gaining efficiencies in pro bono programs, and democratizing access to legal information. It also grappled with ethical questions, including how to protect clients' privacy, and how to transparently and responsibly leverage AI in the pro bono space.
- ✓ Adrián co-presented the conference session "What Do I Need to Know? AI & Pro Bono." It shared an overview of how AI can support pro bono programs and facilitated a discussion of the potential risks of AI. One attendee wrote about the session, "This is a phenomenal way to make pro bono admin[istration] more efficient. Revolutionizing!"

"[The] presentation to the Washington Council of Lawyers was spectacular: clear, practical, helpful, easily understandable for a non-tech audience, and beautifully illustrated. The initial skepticism of generative AI in the room was palpable... [It] did a lot to change people's minds."



Jim Sandman

Distinguished Lecturer and Senior Consultant to the Future of the Profession Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, and President Emeritus of the Legal Services Corporation

¹⁰ Source: Legal Services Corporation, [The Report | The Justice Gap Report \(lsc.gov\)](#)

“Access to justice is a fundamental global issue. With over 1 billion individuals using Microsoft products, there is immense potential to scale pro bono efforts through our tools, including Copilot and low-code/no-code Microsoft technology.”



Adrián Palma
Microsoft Global Pro Bono Manager
and Digital Strategist

Following this engagement, Adrián has spearheaded Microsoft’s Pro Bono Program engagement in the intersection of AI and access to justice. He has acted as a thought leader and partner, training justice organizations to use Microsoft Copilot for pro bono operations and management.

- ✔ High interest in AI-powered solutions, fueled by word of mouth and conference presentations, led to running Copilot workshops for global pro bono law firm teams, legal services organizations and nonprofits, and law schools.
- ✔ A dozen workshops and presentations reached hundreds of pro bono professionals and law students at venues including the New York Law School Conference, a panel presentation for the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (APBCo), the Washington Council of Lawyers Pro Bono Best Practices series, a panel on AI and social good at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Latino, a panel and workshop for the Mexican pro bono field, and an Equal Justice Works Fellows training.
- ✔ Training for law firms and nonprofits, many of which already use the Microsoft suite, is quickly empowering the pro bono ecosystem to streamline their work and reach more clients.



At the first-ever Pro Bono Institute pre-conference on AI and pro bono, Adrián Palma, Global Pro Bono Manager & Digital Strategist, presents on the power of Microsoft M365 Copilot for scaling access to justice efforts.



Building a responsible future—together



Learn more about the [Microsoft Pro Bono Program](#)



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