

Veterans Initiatives for Metro Bars

Vickie Schatz, Executive Director, Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association

Kay Sim, Executive Director, Houston Bar Association

Terry O. Tottenham, Past President, State Bar of Texas





Legal Connection: Military Matters

*A program of the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation
in partnership with the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association*

Vickie Mauck, KCMBA & KCMBF Executive Director

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KCMBA

Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association



KCMBA is a 501(c)(6), founded in 1884, that serves 5,000 voluntary members in a nine county service area in both MO and KS.

KCMBF is a 501(c)(3), founded in 1979, that works as the charitable arm of KCMBA. KCMBF has one full time employee.

Legal Connection is an umbrella that houses KCMBF's charitable work, with the full support of KCMBA and its established communication channels, audience and resources.





Military Matters was founded in late 2015 and provides pro bono legal assistance to veterans and active duty military that don't qualify for aid from any other agency.

It is an original program developed in conjunction with area agencies serving veterans and the military to fill gaps in service and focusing on lawyers' top skills: representing clients and solving problems.



Military Matters collaborates with community agencies to identify those in need and has established a referral network to provide the legal assistance requested.

Military Matters has established MOUs with five community partners:

- Kansas City VA
- United Way of Greater Kansas City
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri
- Kansas Legal Services
- Veterans Community Project





MOUs include agreement by partner to:

- Refer only qualified individuals who do not meet the requirements of Legal Aid of Western Missouri or Kansas Legal Services
- Interview the individual, determine the key facts , complete an Intake Form and forward to KCMBF
- Maintain and provide quarterly to KCMBF referral data

KCMBF reserves the right to decline any referral and will not accept requests with court deadlines less than 21 days from date intake form is submitted.



How the referral service works:

- KCMBF recruits volunteer attorneys that are members of KCMBA to provide pro bono assistance. To date more than 150 attorneys have volunteered.
- When a community partner makes a referral, KCMBF staff matches person in need with a volunteer in the area of need and tracks the case status.
- Referrals can be low bono or pro bono.



What is the referral process?

- All requests for a lawyer referral are made through the community partners.
- Referral requests are received by KCMBF staff and are matched to a KCMBA volunteer attorney.

Since the program began accepting referrals in Q2 2016, more than 400 veterans have been assisted.



Referral information includes:

- Screening for status (Veteran - DD214 or Active Duty - Military ID)
- Annual Income
- Residence/Home of Record
- Description of Legal Need
- Jurisdiction
- Urgency
- Signature and Release of Veteran/Military Member



Other Activities

- Annual Symposium
- Free CLE
- Internship Program
- Community Outreach
 - Heart of America Stand Down
 - Kansas City, Missouri Veterans Job Fair
 - VFW Fairs
 - Chamber of Commerce events
- www.kclegalconnection.org
- Advocacy for Veterans' Courts



Staff requirements:

The Foundation Director oversees the day-to-day operation of the program, which in the early years have been about 70% of their time.

The Director works in conjunction with the Operating Committee, appointed by the KCMBF Board of Directors.

The committee implements and oversees the operations of the program and includes board members and independent, non-voting military advisors.



Risk Management

- Legal Malpractice Insurance for KCMBF as Referring Source
- Volunteer attorneys required to carry legal malpractice insurance
- Release by person seeking legal services



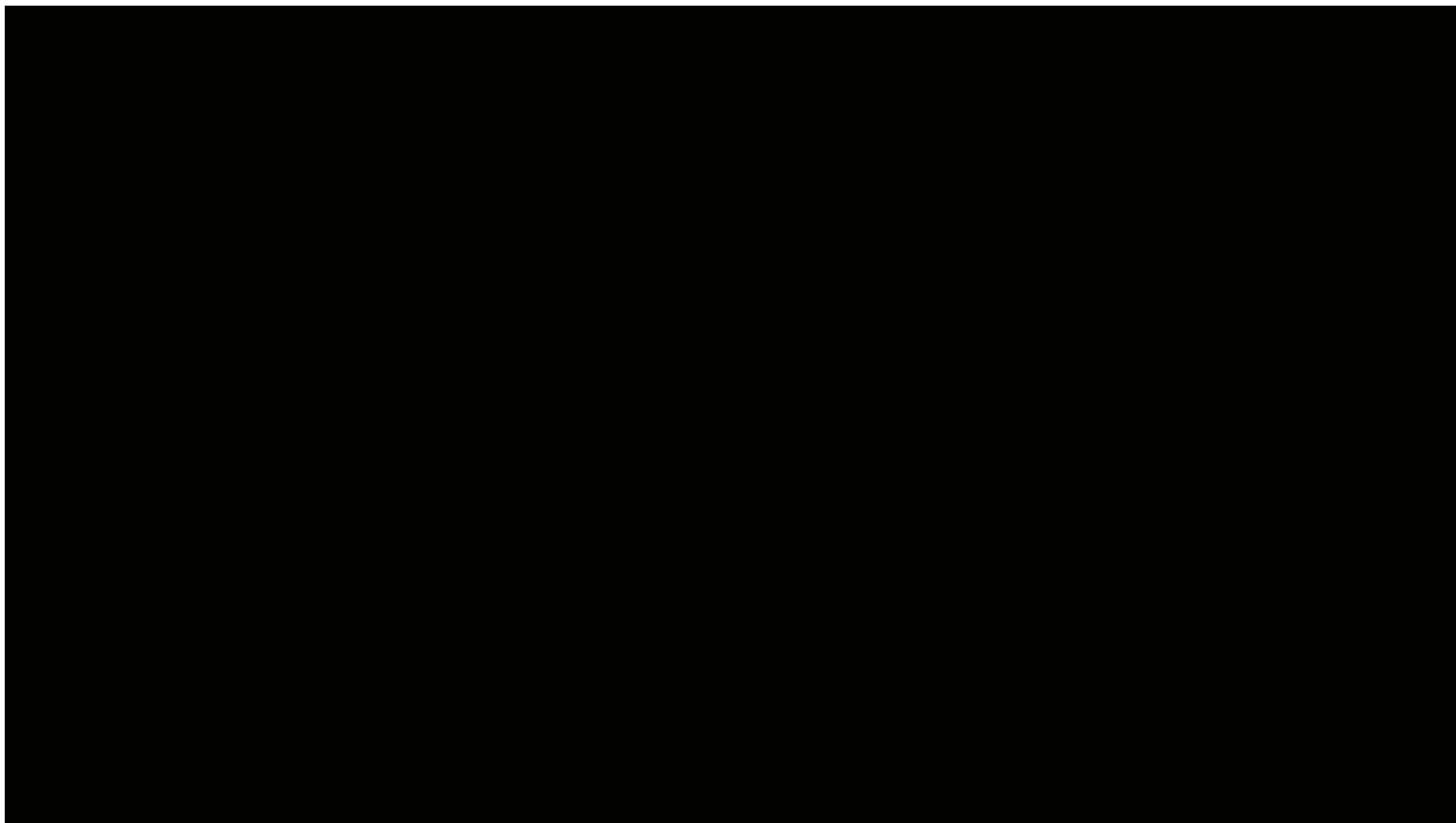
Future Plans

- Geographic Expansion
- Expanded internship program
- Program Kit for other bar associations to start similar programs
- Establish project specifically for community redevelopment and foreclosure prevention (BOA settlement funded)



Biggest Challenges

1. Recruiting a vibrant roster of attorneys in the highest areas of need: family law, criminal and landlord/tenant.
2. Finding roles for big firm/corporate attorneys.





Questions?

