



2018 Annual Report

PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY

Public Law Library of King County

Letter from Executive Director Barbara Engstrom

A second year in to my tenure as Executive Director, the law library looks like a much different place then when I took this position. In terms of physical space, we renovated and repurposed several under-utilized work areas to create large new conference rooms, we redesigned the bookshelves to incorporate more private seating within the stacks, we transferred the archival collection of Washington legislative bills and Supreme Court briefs back into the main stacks from off-site storage and thoroughly weeded the collection. In terms of our virtual space, we overhauled and modernized our website with enhanced functionality for mobile device users, we upgraded our online catalog, and significantly expanded our Westlaw offerings. We also started a lunchtime CLE series and a paid research service.

With the front of the house was in order, 2018 was a time to take a hard look at the overall fiscal health and financial sustainability of the law library. With our filing fee income (the primary source of county law library funding under chapter RCW 27.24) staying fairly flat, a marked drop in renewals to our subscriber program, and rising publisher/vendor costs, both the short term and long term financial prospects of the law library were looking dire based on the financial sustainability analysis done in partnership with the office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget. Facing a daunting gap between income and expenses we had to make some difficult decisions including closing our in-house civil legal aid clinic and eliminating redundancy in staff positions. While still facing perennial funding issues stemming from our filing fee funding mechanism, which



is based on a century old statute, this hard look at our operations and resulting changes have put us in an improved fiscal position.

The law library's ability to do more with less would not be possible without staff committed to providing the highest level of service and access to legal information. As staffing levels contracted, two people in particular stepped up to fill the gaps. In recognition of this, Tamara Hayes was promoted to Technical Services Librarian and Sean Powers to Educational Technology Librarian. With our Reference Librarian Sarah Dunaway taking a job at Vanderbilt Law School, we brought Stephen Seely on board as our Outreach Services Associate.

This year also saw a significant change to our board of trustees. Jim Brewer, who served as designee of the County Council, stepped down after twenty six years of service to the law library. Jim's deep knowledge of procedural issues and of the institutional history of the library was an incredible asset for our board. He is missed by all.

2018 Board of Trustees

- ❑ The Honorable Susan Amini
- ❑ James L. Brewer, Esq. (Designee of County Council Chair Joe McDermott) through February 2018
- ❑ Michael Hoover, Esq. (Designee of County Council Chair Joe McDermott) beginning March 2018
- ❑ The Honorable Monica Benton, Vice President
- ❑ Miriam Gordon, Esq.
- ❑ Joseph Bringman, Esq., President

2018 Financial Report

Income

Filing Fees	\$768,305
Fee-Based Services	\$103,327
Other Income	\$317,259
Total	\$1,188,891

Expenditures - Seattle

Books & Periodicals	\$378,000
Operating	\$61,195
Payroll/Benefits	\$466,919
Capital	\$799
Total	\$906,913

Expenditures – MRJC

Books & Periodicals	\$55,831
Operating	\$19,625
Payroll/Benefits	\$152,901
Capital	\$0
Total	\$228,357

Public Law Library of King County

Seattle Courthouse
 516 3rd Avenue, Suite W621
 Seattle, WA 98104
 (206) 477-1305

Kent Regional Justice Center
 401 Fourth Avenue N., Room 1N
 Kent, WA 98032
 (206) 477-1316



2018: HIGHLIGHTS

King County Law Library Foundation:

The idea of starting a foundation to help support the law library was tossed around for decades. Finally, in 2018, the idea became a reality. With the generous pro bono support of attorneys from Perkins Coie, we were able to attain 501(c)(3) status and launch the foundation, the sole purpose of which is to support the mission and operations of the law library. The founding officers of the foundation are: **Mary Jo Newhouse, President; Maureen Quigley, Vice President; Oliver Enquist, Treasurer; and Dan Fiorito, Secretary.** The foundation hit the ground running with a successful fundraising campaign to help with start-up costs. The start-up campaign would not have been possible without the generous assistance of former law library trustees **Bob Alsdorf** and **Steve Ellis.**

Financial Sustainability: Closing LHC

As noted in the 2017 Annual Report, the law library engaged with the office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget to analyze our long term financial sustainability. After much study, stakeholder input, and a rather dire outlook for the future of the library's finances, three action items emerged from this process: 1) Pursue a foundation with 501(c)(3) status to generate new financial support the law library, 2) Pursue an increase in the filing fee allocation (the law library's statutory funding mechanism), 3) Close the law library's self-funded legal clinic (LHC) and pursue a cost-effective alternative to this service model. After much consideration, the law library administration and board of trustees came to the conclusion that it was financially unsustainable for the law library to continue running the LHC. The Legal Help Center ceased operation in February of 2018.

Self-Represented Workshop Series

In our feasibility analysis of the LHC we concluded that the services of the clinic were under-utilized primarily because of three factors, marketing, location, and hours. We didn't have sufficient marketing tools to reach our intended audience, the location in downtown Seattle was problematic because of security problems around the courthouse and lack of parking, and the hours weren't convenient for those with day jobs or child care duties. We also determined that the patrons accessing the LHC and other legal aid clinics were coming away confused because they were getting advice on an isolated aspect of their case without understanding the procedural framework in which court proceedings occur. With these issues in mind, the law library developed the Self-Represented Litigant Workshop in partnership with volunteer attorneys, the Seattle Public Library, and the King County Library System to teach patrons the basics of civil procedure in a time, place and manner convenient for them. SPL and KCLS take care of venue, registration, and marketing, and the volunteer attorneys develop and teach the workshops. The inaugural class, *Civil Law Suits Without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court*, was taught on March 15, 2018 in Kent to a waitlisted audience and in Seattle a month later to another waitlisted audience. The success of the initial workshops inspired us to expand the series. As an extension to the basic *Civil Law Suits Without Tears* class, we developed an advanced class, the *Nuts and Bolts of Motions*, and a password protected companion website with supplementary information and forms. Next, we partnered with Limited License Legal Technicians to present a four part family law litigation series. The law library also entered into a partnership with Seattle U. Law School to help develop related videos .

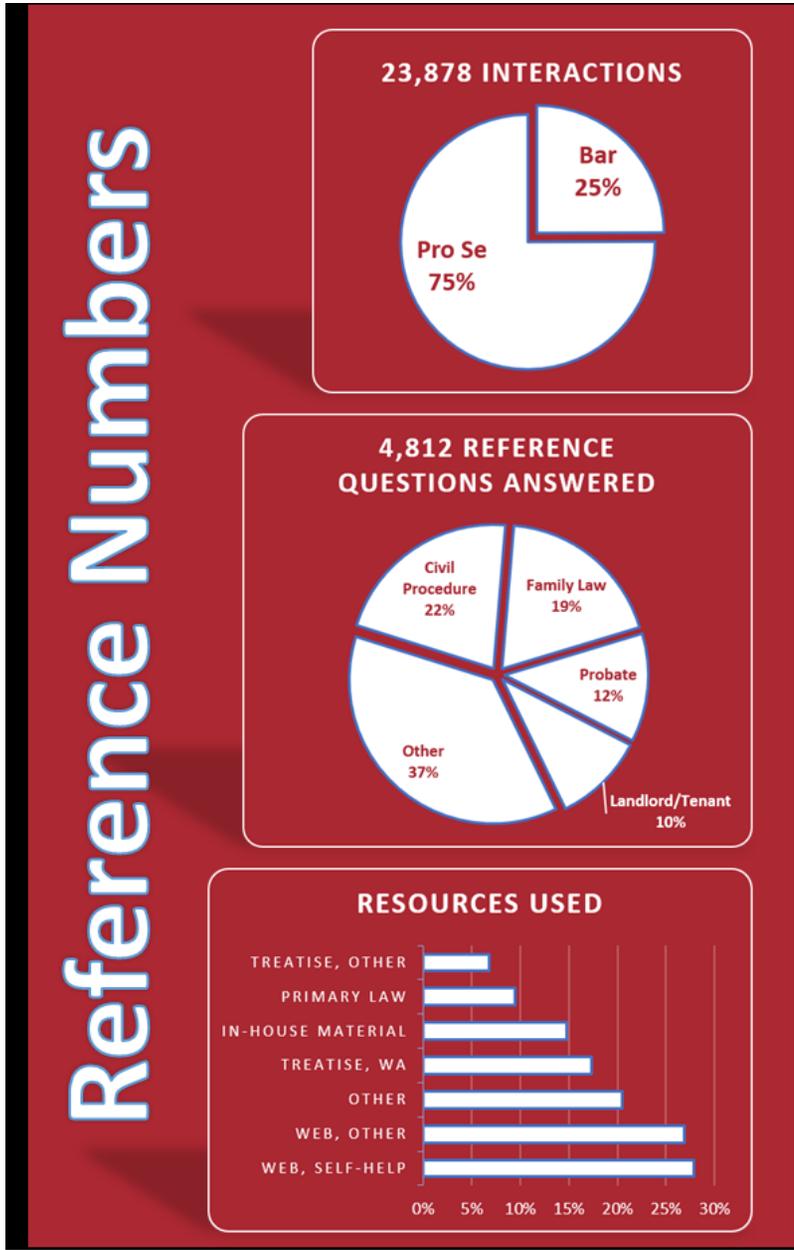
CLEs at PLLKC



In 2018, the Law Library continued to offer lunchtime CLEs and classes as a means of reaching out to the legal community, promoting the Law Library’s visibility, and increasing engagement with our patrons. By

offering classes at the noon hour and giving registrants the choice of in-person or webcast attendance, the Law Library has developed a reputation as a convenient, low-cost, and reliable source of CLE programming. In 2018, attorney guest speakers and library staff presented more than 15 classes on a wide array of topics, such as:

- The Mobile Practice of Law
- Lawyers, Technology, and Social Media
- Mediation Basics
- Washington’s New Uniform Power of Attorney Act
- History of Washington’s Professional Conduct Rules



THE COLLECTION

2018

Materials Available

39,617

Volumes Added

148

Volumes Discarded

924

Missing or Lost

14

NOTABLE TITLES

2018

Legal Writing: Getting It Right and Getting It Written, 6th Ed.

The Millennial Lawyer: How Your Firm Can Motivate and Retain Young Associates

Being Heard: Presentation Skills for Attorneys

Zero Tolerance: Best Practices for Combating Sex-based Harassment in the Legal Profession

Joint Tenancies: Property Leasing in Cannabis Commerce

Blattmachr on Income Taxation of Estates and Trust, 17th Ed.

Washington Law of Wills and Intestate Succession, 3rd Ed.

Transaction Risk: A Legal Guide to Contractual Management Strategies

Reinventing Witness Preparation