



ANNUAL REPORT



26,877
Total
Members

20,192
Active
status
Members

19,060
Attendance at
CLE seminars
(including
OnDemand
programs)

7,793
Live-only
attendance

7,261
Out-of-
state active
members

STATE BAR BOARD OF GOVERNORS

PRESIDENT

Samuel J. Saks

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Doreen N. McPaul

VICE PRESIDENT

Kelsi Lane

SECRETARY-TREASURER

D. Christopher Russell

YLD President

Rachel Romaniuk

Senior Lawyers Division President

Mary Helen Maley Maynard

District 1

(Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo Counties)

David J. Johns

District 2

(Yavapai County)

Russell Duerksen

District 3

(Gila, Graham, Greenlee Counties)

Preston L. Pollock

District 4

(Cochise County)

D. Christopher Russell

District 5

(Pima, Santa Cruz Counties)

Louis Fidel

Amy Hernandez

Ted Schmidt, Board Advisor

District 6

(Maricopa County)

J. Damon Ashcraft

Heather Baker-Mushkate

Rebecca Baker

Jena Decker-Xu

Robert J. McWhirter

David B. Rosenbaum

Thomas Ryan

Chloé Woods

District 7

(La Paz, Yuma Counties)

Jimmie Dee Smith

District 8

(Pinal County)

Denis M. Fitzgibbons

Ex-Officio Members

Dean Jason Kreag

Dean Stacy Leeds

Public Members

Cedric Dave

Mignonne Hollis

Jack Lunsford

Cortez W. Smith

At-Large Members

David K. Byers

John Graham



Welcome to your State Bar's 2025 annual report, a summary of the Bar's operations and accomplishments. You fund the Bar and deserve to know how it is doing. Thanks to the stewardship of staff and the Board of Governors, I am happy to report that the Bar is doing well, financially and operationally. We are also

doing good, committed to our Supreme Court-derived mission to serve the public and advance access to justice.

That advancement was substantial in 2025. Our Public Service Center was re-envisioned and restructured, allowing our volunteer lawyers and legal professionals to increase the number of consumers helped by more than 30% compared to 2024. Even more impressive, in 2025, the number of attorneys who stepped up to make a difference more than doubled, a remarkable commitment to service. I am proud of our local legal community, and I know we can continue to use our skills to help even more people. Bar staff continue to look for ways to engage more members and make volunteering easier and more meaningful.

We understand all that good work is possible only because of your support and voluntarism—and because the Bar continues to maintain a strong financial position. We expect an operational surplus again

in 2026 and have built reserve funds to stave off the need for fee increases in the near future. While most everything has gotten more expensive over the last decade, there have been no dues increases, and I'm pleased to report that there are none on the horizon.

The Bar also once again received a clean annual audit by an independent auditor, which concluded that our financial policies, procedures, committee and board oversight are effective and promote fiscal responsibility.

Internally, the Bar made huge strides in increasing the efficiency and security of its technology infrastructure. Savings and safety were achieved by migrating core services to a trusted cloud platform, eliminating a large capital burden related to hardware while increasing reliability. From our CEO down, Bar staff is committed to using its resources efficiently. Our staff also implemented new capabilities to ensure 24/7 visibility and real-time threat detection throughout the organization, which is more important than ever. No organization is perfect, but we stand far more prepared than most.

After you read this report, I hope you commit to join us at the 2026 Bar Convention in Tucson on June 24-26, where you can deepen your engagement with colleagues to advance our profession and serve the public.

– Sam Saks, State Bar of Arizona President

Access to Justice/Public Programs

- The Bar restructured the Public Service Center (PSC) to serve as the Bar's comprehensive access-to-justice arm, allowing us to increase members of the public assisted by 35%, more than doubling attorney volunteers, and increasing volunteer hours by 140%.
- We launched a new partnership with nonprofit Duet Partners in Health and Aging; strengthened partnerships with Maricopa County, Glendale, Avondale and Tolleson, Fresh Start Women's Foundation, Triple M Military and Veterans Committee, and the Bar Foundation—overall delivering approximately \$2.1M in value and assisting 5,451 people.
- We supported the Bar Foundation's pro bono legal services and civics programs. The contribution's value in 2025 totaled \$136,729.
- The Bar expanded its statewide reach through additional ABC15 and KGUN legal help phone banks, reaching over 52,000 viewers every month.
- Staff handled 1,619 incoming calls from consumers and connected them with legal resources, reaching 4,137 Arizonans and with attorney value reaching \$265,000 (at \$200 hourly rate).
- In-person access to legal services was expanded via launch of the first Pinal County legal clinic in Casa Grande and providing legal resources

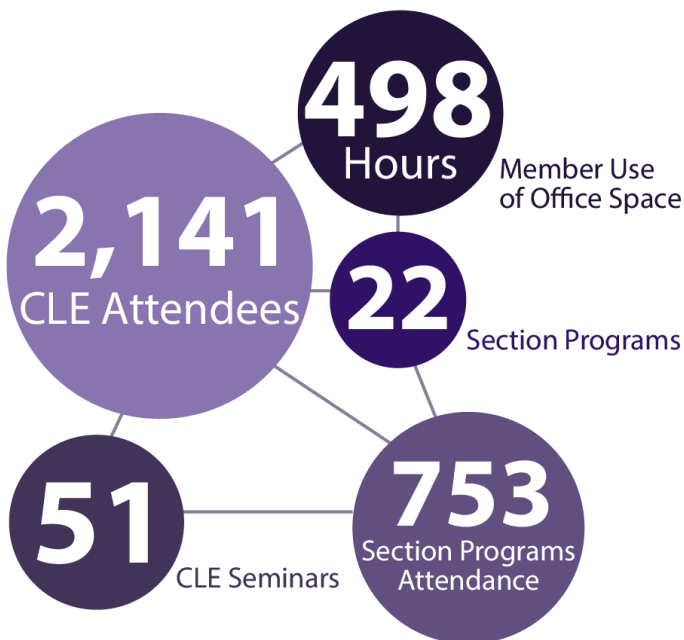
in Cochise County at the Arizona SonShine event in Willcox.

- Wills for Heroes had 12 events in 2025, helping over 300 first responders.
- The Bar implemented the "Connect the Connectors" initiative, identifying community connectors and developing Legal Bridge as a centralized tool to disseminate legal resources statewide.
- In 2025, the Client Protection Fund maintained the integrity of our self-regulated profession by refunding \$785,240 to clients who suffered financial losses due to the misconduct of their lawyer.
- Staff assisted with 135 fee arbitration petitions, resulting in 64 awards and \$390,346 in client fee disputes settled.
- Bar staff intervened in 15 abandoned law practices through the Conservatorship Program, protecting 1,124 clients by securing files, restoring access to legal materials, and responsibly distributing \$558,524 in IOLTA funds.
- The Bar partnered with radio station KTAR to deliver public-service announcements about free legal advice events.

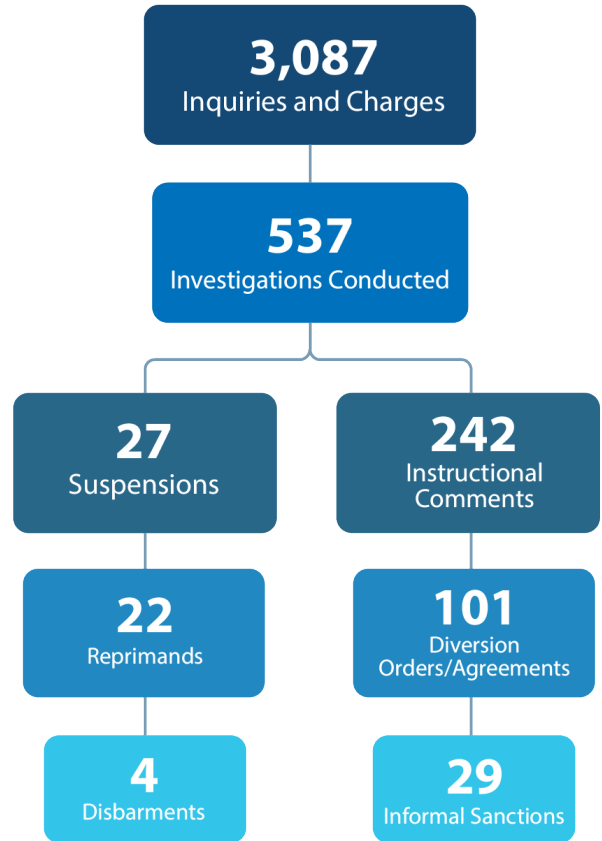
Competency

- The Young Lawyer Bridge Task Force was established to make recommendations for development of a structured education program helping lawyers transition from law student to practice-ready professional.
- AZCLE partnered with the Maricopa County Bar and the Pima County Bar to offer for the first time a CLE Abroad program in Scotland.
- AZCLE provided 538 hours of educational content, including 177.5 specialty hours.
- The Lawyer Assistance Programs helped over 1,000 attorneys.
- The Resource Center assisted 4,812 members and 12,296 members of the public with a wide variety of inquiries.
- Communications staff published the 2025 Economics of Law Practice in Arizona, a triennial volume providing data and economic trends in Arizona's legal community.
- Updated versions of the Arizona Appellate Handbook and Arizona Attorneys' Fees Manual are in progress and will be published in 2026.
- A prototype for a CLE faculty training institute is being tested with the expectation that it be introduced in 2026 to develop new faculty and engage members who have never taught CLE.
- The Southern Regional Office participated in phone banks in collaboration with the PSC team on immigration, landlord/tenant and estate planning. Event cosponsors were the Pima County Bar Association and Southern Arizona Legal Aid.
- BLS promotional videos were created and disseminated.
- BLS Task Force recommendations were presented to the Board of Governors, and implementation has begun. These include revising the standards to make specialization a more attractive option.
- The Bar made significant shift in technology, transitioning to a cloud infrastructure, reducing the capital burden of licensing and maintaining proprietary hardware
- In 2025, the Information Technology Department successfully prioritized a "Security-First" transformation to safeguard the organization's digital assets and operational resilience.
- Internally, the Bar transformed legacy workflows into modernized, digital experiences to enhance organizational workflow process. This included migration of the legal case management system to the cloud.

Southern Regional Office



Lawyer Regulation



Ethics

- In 2025 the Ethics Hotline received 2,141 calls and handled nearly 1,900 of them, routing about 250 to Practice 2.0 or the Trust Account Hotline. This was part of a concerted effort to provide better screening and optimal use of other hotlines. Trending ethics topics included confidentiality, communication, conflicts with current clients and terminating representation.
- In-house attorneys provided the ethics component in more than 23 CLE seminars.
- The Ethics Advisory Group has continued to publish its Best Practices series on azbar.org.

Professionalism

- The Bar collaborated with the Arizona Supreme Court to host a statewide Rule of Law Day at which attorneys in every county reaffirmed their oath to the U.S. and Arizona Constitutions on February 12, 2026.
- The Member Assistance program continues to provide support and resources to members struggling with substance use disorder, mental health challenges, stress, depression and anxiety.
- In 2025, the Bar Leadership Institute (BLI) graduated 15 participants from its eight-month program, strengthening Arizona's pipeline of emerging legal leaders through a curriculum focused on civic leadership, professional responsibility and community impact.
- This BLI cohort continued a multiyear service project compiling and preserving the histories of Arizona's affinity bars through interviews, research and storytelling.

STATE BAR ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD
Linda Benally, Georgia Staton

AWARD OF APPRECIATION
Michael Garth Moore

AWARD OF SPECIAL MERIT
Joseph Kanefield

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD
Elena Nethers

HON. JOHN. R. STICHT EXCELLENCE IN DISABILITIES ACCESSIBILITY AWARD
ASU Disabled Law Students Association

JAMES A. WALSH OUTSTANDING JURIST AWARD
Hon. Maria S. Aguilera

MARK I. HARRISON EXCELLENCE IN MENTORSHIP AWARD
Maya Abela

SHARON A. FULLMER LEGAL AID ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR AWARD
Valentina Restrepo-Montoya

TOM KARAS CRIMINAL JUSTICE AWARD
Thomas E. Higgins

MICHAEL C. CUDAHY CRIMINAL JUSTICE AWARD
Gary Restaino

OUTSTANDING IN-HOUSE COUNSEL OF THE YEAR AWARD
Daniel Jurkowitz

PRESIDENT'S AWARD
Michael R. Murphy, Jennifer Rebholz

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Bar's Income in 2025 **\$19,211,164**
Bar's Expenses in 2025 **\$18,214,736**
Bar Net Investment Gain (includes unrealized loss) **\$1,666,776**

Amounts are based on accounting entries made and significant entries anticipated to be made for 2025 to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Final financial statements will be posted on the Bar's website upon completion of the audit. The Bar has a reserve policy which requires that at the end of each year, any surpluses shall be added to reserve accounts to pay for capital improvements, avoid increases to annual member fees in a future year(s), and provide needed cash resources for unexpected emergency needs or advancement opportunities.

For a complete report of the Bar's finances, go to:
<http://www.azbar.org/AboutUs/FinancialStatements>



ABC15 values its partnership with the State Bar as a vital service to Arizona communities. Together, we ensure consumers understand their

rights—a testament to genuine collaboration. By listening carefully to people's needs and amplifying trusted legal expertise, we help connect Arizonans with timely information and resources. The volunteer attorneys and experts who give their

time and knowledge are an invaluable asset; their dedication exemplifies the true heart of Arizona. We're proud of what we've accomplished together and remain committed to serving our communities.

– **Christel Bell, ABC15**



Since early 2024, Fresh Start Women's Foundation has partnered with the State Bar of Arizona to expand access to high-quality legal services for women. Through family law support, business formation clinics, estate planning, and other offerings, volunteer attorneys provide trusted, actionable guidance that empowers women to protect their families, grow businesses, plan for the future, and advocate effectively for themselves with knowledge and clarity. This collaboration strengthens families and advances equitable access to justice, and we're grateful for the State Bar's leadership as we continue this impactful work together.

– **Fresh Start Women's Foundation**



Fresh Start
EMPOWERING WOMEN TO SUCCEED

Before finding this program, I often felt invisible in a system that seemed to frame my child's trauma as "difficulty" and my advocacy as overreaction. As a survivor and the mother of a child impacted by severe domestic violence, family court frequently felt like an extension of the environment we risked everything to escape. Meeting with volunteer attorneys was the first time I felt truly seen, not just as a litigant, but as a



parent fighting to keep her child safe. Their guidance wasn't transactional; it felt like real advocacy grounded in understanding and respect. They listened, believed us, and helped translate fear and confusion into clear, strategic action. That validation changed how I show up for my case and for my daughter. I cannot imagine continuing to represent myself with the same confidence without this program, and I only wish I had found it sooner.

– **Bree Adams**