

**Nomination Form for  
2016 Public Service Award and Outstanding Members Program Award**

The National Conference of Women’s Bar Association’s (NCWBA) Public Service Award and Outstanding Member Program Award recognize significant accomplishments of women’s bar associations across the country. The **Public Service Award** is given to recognize a wide variety of outstanding and unique public service projects. The **Outstanding Member Program Award** is given to recognize bar associations’ innovation projects, programs and service to their members. The NCWBA hopes that these Awards will inspire other women’s bar associations to initiate similar programs in their own regions. For information about past recipients of both Awards, go to [www.ncwba.org](http://www.ncwba.org).

**Nominations are due Friday, January 22, 2016.**

Nominations are only accepted from member organizations of NCWBA (whose dues are current or submitted with the application). Projects co-sponsored with other non-bar association organizations may be considered, although more weight is given to those carried out solely by a women’s bar association.

**Instructions**

Complete the nomination form and return it to the NCWBA Awards Committee at [awards@ncwba.org](mailto:awards@ncwba.org) Supplemental information about your nominee is also accepted, however, the total number of pages for the nomination (including the nomination form) should be limited to 10 pages.

**Nominee:**

**(boxes will expand as you type)**

Name of women’s bar association being nominated: Military Spouse JD Network

Name of project, program or service being nominated: Justice for Miltiary Families

Name of contact person for purposes of award notification: Gabriela Nostro

Association’s address: PO Box 1175, Ft. Myer, VA 22211--0175

Telephone number of contact person: (203) 912-0511

Email of contact person: JMF@msjdn.org

Number of members in the bar association: 500+

\*\*Please make sure to notify the NCWBA of any change in contact information after submission of nomination to ensure timely notification of the awards decision.

**Indicate which Award the bar association is being nominated for:**

Public Service Award

Outstanding Member Program, Award

**1. About the Bar Association being Nominated:**

In the space that follows, tell us about the women’s bar association being nominated for an award. Include the year the association was established, a brief sketch of its growth and development, its major contributions to the legal community or community at-large, and its current membership. The space below is designed to expand to fit the length of your narrative.

Year Established: 2011

Number of Members: 500

About the Organization:

MSJDN is a bar association for military spouse attorneys. We support military spouses in the legal profession by advocating for state bar licensing accommodations, educating the public about the challenges faced by career-minded military spouses and their families, encouraging the hiring of military spouses, and providing a network connecting military spouse attorneys with one another.

## **2. About the Project, Program or Service being Nominated:**

In the space that follows, tell us about the project, program or service being nominated for an award. First, describe the project, program or service in one sentence (i.e., a sound bite). Then go on and describe the project, program or service in detail, giving sufficient detail so that another women's bar association wishing to do a similar project could use your description as an outline of their action plan. Include information on how and why the project, program or service was initiated, historical information for the project, program or service, give the number of women attorneys involved, the number of people impacted and overall results achieved. Copies of photographs, news clippings or other supporting documentation may be attached to the narrative. The space below is designed to expand to fit the length of your narrative.

Description of project, program or service in one sentence:

• *Example: "The Pipeline to Leadership Project provides leadership training to women attorneys who are interested in securing positions on public boards and commissions."*

Details about the project, program or service:

Justice for Military Families (JMF) was launched in 2014 as the pro bono initiative of the Military Spouse JD Network. JMF is the first national program designed to connect not just military members but also military families to legal assistance on a pro bono or reduced fee basis, regardless of financial need, a factor limiting their access to many other legal service clinics. In the past eighteen months, JMF has worked with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) to match over forty-five families of fallen service members with legal assistance on a pro bono or reduced fee basis.

JMF also allows military spouse attorneys the opportunity to provide meaningful legal work, as volunteers, despite the obstacles of the military lifestyle to our profession. Our members are licensed all over the country and our combined work and subject matter experience is significant. The work MSJDN members are able to do through JMF, either by taking cases directly, helping to place cases among our networks, or using our research skills to contribute to the newly created library of information on the JMF website, keeps our legal skills active and strengthens our future employment possibilities.

To date, the program has helped over 45 surviving families with legal issues at their time of greatest need. JMF placed a case where a deceased Army retiree had not named his children to his VA benefits, leaving the children without benefits. JMF has also placed numerous probate cases whether the deceased serviceman or woman left their families with unresolved issues pertaining to their estate. Additionally, the new leadership initiated a project to create a library of statutory compilations affecting military families.

JMF volunteers will compile these documents under categories of law that we have identified as most relevant to the families that contact TAPS. TAPS is enthusiastic and supportive of this initiative and plans to link the JMF website to theirs as our library grows.

### **3. Tell Us What Makes Your Project, Program or Service Special**

In the space that follows, tell us what is unique about your project, program or service and why is it special. The space below is designed to expand to fit the length of your narrative.

What makes this project, program or service special:

• *Example: “The Visiting Mom Project” is special and unique because it filled an unmet need of young children visiting their incarcerated mothers. The Project created a new visiting room for the children which was warm and inviting, looking more like a public library than a jail, and sent a message to incarcerated mothers that reaffirmed their humanity and their roles as mothers.”*

Justice for Military Families (JMF) is a unique initiative developed after the Military Spouse JD Network (MSJDN) became frustrated with the inability to help military spouses who approached the organization with legal issues. Since the legal issues of military families are often affected by their service, MSJDN members are uniquely qualified to provide assistance to these families. Given MSJDN’s limited resources and the all-volunteer nature of the organization, JMF began with a partnership to support those who had paid the ultimate cost to support their country. At the beginning of 2014, MSJDN created JMF’s partnership with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS).

TAPS works to support the families of fallen service members. Cases are initiated by the families of recently deceased service members and generally involved probate issues, military benefits or family law issues, although the subject matter varies. TAPS then refers eligible families to JMF, and volunteer military spouse attorneys provide legal assistance or help place the family’s case with an attorney in their network on a pro bono or reduced fee basis.

### **Submission Deadline: Nominations are due Friday, January 22, 2016.**

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