

AMARA LEGAL CENTER

Support “Amara Pride=Legal Services” Campaign in June



As we celebrate Pride Month, Amara reaffirms its commitment to the LGBTQ+ community! Most of Amara’s clients are African-American, U.S. born cis- and trans-women between the ages of 18 and 30, who are also survivors of sex trafficking. Help us continue to provide critical legal services to a community that can be vulnerable to sex trafficking. Your donation supports our clients with expungement of criminal records, name and gender marker changes, civil protection orders, family law, victim-witness advocacy, and more.

Donate Today!

Amara Team Updates

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Christine Greene, Washington, DC Staff Attorney, as our new Legal Program Director.

In this new role, Christine will manage Amara's staff attorneys for all legal issues, working collaboratively with them to support their cases, clients, professional development and legal processes and protocols. Christine joined Amara in 2018 as a staff attorney, bringing a wealth of experience after having practiced family and domestic law in the private sector. She is licensed to practice law in both in the District of Columbia and Maryland. She has facilitated new partnerships with Howard University School of Law’s Fair Housing Clinic, Friendship Place, The Safe Sisters Circle, and Calvary Women’s Services.



We also have appointed Virginia Staff Attorney Sidney McCoy to Staff Attorney and Policy Counsel.

In this role, Sidney will work with the Executive Director and staff in developing the organization’s policy agenda and advocacy activities for the organization. Sidney joined Amara in June of 2019. She is licensed to practice law in Virginia and will continue



helping our Virginia clients with their legal cases. She also is a co-founder of the Virginia Coalition Against Human Trafficking and has successfully worked on vacatur policies in Virginia.

Amara's New Interns & Fellow

We are excited to welcome three interns and one fellow to the Amara team. This new cohort will assist the Amara staff with its work, while learning and gaining hands-on experience about trauma-informed legal services, human trafficking, advocacy, project management, nonprofit operations, and more. Please join us in welcoming them to the Amara team!

Jourdan Wells, a Montgomery County native, is our new Project Management Intern! He is currently a junior at the University of Maryland, majoring in philosophy, with a strong interest in project management. Jourdan also is a huge sports fan, and his favorite teams are the Baltimore Ravens and the Washington Wizards. He enjoys watching anime and superhero movies. Jourdan is helping the organization with a technology inventory, researching tech solutions for the organization, and serving as project manager for a new software implementation.



Why did I want to intern at Amara?

“I wanted to get experience in the field of project management. Amara is giving me the opportunity to prove myself as a project manager and gain experience working in a professional environment as well.”



Valerie Cook is our Legal Research Intern! She is a rising 2L at American University Washington College of Law, a junior staffer on the International Law Review, and a research assistant for the International Refugee Assistance Project. She also is a recipient of the Equal Justice Foundation Fellowship for her commitment to public interest law and advocacy. She enjoys practicing yoga, running, and reading nonfiction. Valerie is providing support to our Maryland attorneys in the areas of legal research on policy issues and for various types of legal cases.

Why did you want to intern at Amara?

“I am excited about interning at Amara because I can receive a large amount of direct attorney supervision. I also have opportunities to work with clients and gain hands-on experience in victim witness advocacy. I will gain experience across a variety of civil and criminal issues at both the trial and appellate levels. Most importantly, compassion and dignity are at the center of the work. I am looking forward to learning as much as possible about being an effective advocate for survivors of sex trafficking.”

Isabella Dixon Smith is our Policy Research and Advocacy Intern! She recently graduated from American University with a BA in International Studies, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. This is Isabella's second internship with Amara. In her role, Isabella assists Amara attorneys and staff in researching and developing policy priorities, developing an advocacy toolkit, and building relationships and new partnerships with student networks at colleges and universities locally and across the country.



Why did you want to intern at Amara?

“The Amara team is incredibly welcoming and supportive, and working with Amara you know you are doing meaningful work which is both client-centered and trauma-informed.”



Shardé Hoff is our Legal Fellow! She obtained her bachelor of science in Interdisciplinary Studies, with a concentration in Neuropsychology, from the University of Maryland Baltimore County. As an undergrad, Shardé worked the nonprofit organization, the E. Diane Champé Institute and grew her passion for fighting for the rights of survivors of sexual abuse. In May of 2019, she graduated from Howard University School of Law. Shardé is helping our Legal Program Director with legal research and client cases.

Why did you want to be a fellow at Amara?

“I came to Amara to finally get a chance to help a community that I believe has been silenced for too long. “

Advocacy Update

Amara Legal Center continues to advocate on behalf of its clients and marginalized populations. In May and June, Amara submitted written testimony and testified virtually at the following hearings below:

- 5/4 - Prince George's County FY 22 Budget Hearing & Police Reform
- 5/13 - Judiciary and Public Safety Committee Hearing - B24-0075, Expanding Supports for Crime Victims Amendment Act of 2021
- 6/10 - Metropolitan Police Department FY 22 Budget Hearing
- 6/11 - Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants FY 22 Budget Hearing

Check out our [Policy page](#) to learn more!



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DIGNITY & THEIR LIVES!**

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