



PRAIRIE STATE LEGAL SERVICES
Equal Access to Justice

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April 30, 2020

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in support of Emily Petri's nomination for MCBA Young Lawyer of the Year Award. Emily and I have worked together at Prairie State Legal Services for over six years, first in separate offices, and in the same office for the past two years. Emily is my most frequent sounding board, and I rely on Emily's wisdom often in evaluating cases. She is a great friend and a dream coworker, and she deserves this award.

At Prairie State, I have observed Emily handle a wide variety of cases with her usual hard work, flexibility and organization. Her typical caseload includes Orders of Protection, divorce and family law matters, eviction and public housing cases, and public benefits cases involving Social Security, Medicaid and SNAP appeals. As an example, Emily is currently representing two medically fragile children in an appeal with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services. The children both have tracheotomies and require around the clock care to ensure their ability to breathe, but HFS has reduced their caretaker hours through the medically fragile dependent waiver program. Emily's work is nearing the 100 hour mark to prepare for the appeal hearing. If she wins the appeal, and I anticipate she will, I doubt I will ever hear about it from her. On top of her case work, Emily is a co-chair of the Public Benefits Task Force for all of Prairie State, which consists 12 offices, approximately 75 attorneys, and numerous support staff. As a task force co-chair, she creates guidance and resources on all public benefits matters for all case handlers, and plans biannual training events. Our organization values and respects Emily enormously.

As the chair and a member of the MCBA CLE committee, Emily has taken the lead on creating, developing, and implementing interesting and varied CLE opportunities. The CLE events raise thousands of dollars each year for the MCBA. They are always well run, and Emily puts countless hours into her work on the committee. She is an invaluable asset to the MCBA, and her efforts have raised the bar of the CLE we receive.

On top of her professional commitments, Emily serves on the board of the West Bloomington Revitalization Project, and is involved in her church.. She is raising the energetic and sweet Olivia and Ian with her husband, Aaron. Emily has helped create a website for Aaron's beekeeping business. I have no idea when she sleeps. She is a person of endless talent, and someone I look up to. I hope she will be strongly considered for this award. Please contact me if I can provide any other information in support of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

M. McGlothlin Wood

Megan McGlothlin Wood