

BARRY

The GRANT Seeker

A quarterly spotlight recognizing excellence in grantsmanship by a Barry University employee

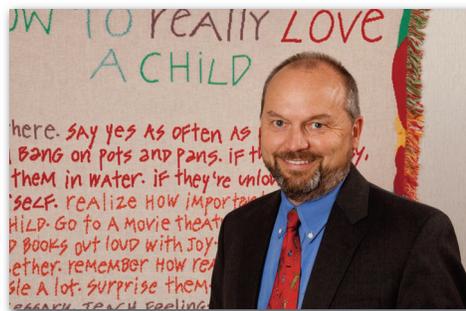
Gerard F. Glynn, MS, JD, LLM Advocate for Justice

There are those lawyers for whom the allure of the *private firm* and the promise of “making partner” overpower what is, perhaps initially, an inherent desire to put to compassionate use the volumes of legal statute and case precedent occupying large amounts of real estate in the brain. Gerry Glynn is *not* one of these lawyers and, although he did not expect to dedicate his career to training the next generation of advocacy attorneys, he would not have it any other way. Glynn’s knowledge of and passion for the law improves the lives of juveniles, victims of domestic violence, and the financially- and socially-disadvantaged.

Gerard F. Glynn received his MS and JD from American University Law School and an advanced law degree (LLM) from Georgetown University. It was at Georgetown where he discovered an affinity for teaching and the opportunity to connect with others whose eagerness to influence social change paralleled his own.

As a result of Glynn’s development efforts, Barry’s School of Law facilitates two unique, direct-service legal initiatives to support underrepresented youth in Florida: the *Juvenile Justice Center* and the *Juvenile Life without Parole Defense Resource Center*.

The *Juvenile Justice Center*, supported through a three-year, \$680,000 grant from the MacArthur Foundation, and previously supported through a multi-year \$787,500 grant from the Eckerd Family Foundation, serves to train public defenders in the legal and interpersonal intricacies of representing children in the juvenile justice system. Currently, over 50% of juveniles in the state of Florida plead guilty before ever conferring with an attorney about their rights. The resulting uninformed



concessions of guilt have lifelong social, academic, and career consequences. While the services provided by Barry’s *Juvenile Justice Center* ultimately benefit children, the true clients are the juvenile defenders and judges, for whom intensive training is provided on the dynamics of communicating with children and understanding their unique perspectives. A recent national study found that public defenders rotated out of the juvenile system in large quantities due to “burnout.” As a result, there are far fewer qualified public defenders available to children than to other populations. Since its inception three years ago, the efforts of Barry’s *Juvenile Justice Center* have resulted in a 10% reduction in guilty pleas among children in Florida. This success resulted in yet another \$100,000 challenge grant award to Glynn from the Eckerd Family Foundation just this month.

The May 2010 Supreme Court decision *Graham vs. Florida* held that “juvenile offenders cannot be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole for non-homicide offenses.” Florida currently does not offer parole and cannot simply re-categorize the sentences to “life with the possibility of parole.” Juvenile inmates

in Florida must be resentenced. Following the acquisition of a two-year, \$200,000 grant from the Florida Bar Foundation and a \$95,000 grant from the Open Society Foundation, Glynn lobbied successfully to establish the *Juvenile Life without Parole Defense Resource Center*. The *Defense Resource Center* coordinates representation for eligible inmates and recruits and trains experts to reexamine original case files. Through its efforts, 20 of the 77 eligible inmates have been resentenced, often receiving reduced sentences due to new information.

Glynn also leads a clinical law firm made up of third-year law students, under the supervision of full-time faculty, operated out of Barry’s School of Law. Three specific legal initiatives are addressed through the clinical practice: the Children and Families Clinic; the Earth Advocacy Clinic; and the Immigration Clinic.

Asked what program he is most proud of, Glynn explains that while the social justice initiatives originating out of Barry’s School of Law are invaluable, it is the growth and compassion evident in his students for which he is most grateful.

Through his work at Barry, Glynn feels fortunate for the opportunity to, as he puts it, “place a foot in both worlds – in the ivory towers of academia and in the court.”

“I hope to continue to get grants to support the good work we are doing,” Glynn said. “My personal goal is to find a funder that is committed to the communities we serve and that will endow these worthy programs.”



Barry thanks you

It's people like this who move Barry forward. If you are interested in pursuing a grant opportunity or have any questions, please contact the Office of Grant Programs at 305-899-3072.