

# Attention WSU Undergraduate Students, Graduate Students, and Law Students: Opportunity to Assist with Court Watch Program

[Street Democracy](#), a Detroit non-profit organization, is looking for student volunteers, specifically for their new Court Watch Program.

## What is Street Democracy?

- A public interest poverty law organization that provides representation and policy advocacy for Detroit citizens who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
  - Fills the legal service gap for clients who do not qualify for traditional legal aid representation.
  - Advocates for policy reform to alleviate the burdens that poverty places on individuals involved with the justice system.

## What is the Court Watch Program?

- Utilizes social audit methodology to collect data in a participatory fashion for use in policy reform advocacy.
- The project involves collecting data on how judges interact with low-income citizens who are unable to pay fines for minor civil and criminal infractions.
- The data being collected will be analyzed and used by the American Civil Liberties Union, the Michigan State Bar Association, and other organizations that have expressed interest in this project.

## How Can I Assist with the Court Watch Program?

- Visit assigned Metro Detroit district courts during sentencing and arraignments
- Recording information about the way that citizens are treated when they are unable to pay court fines due to poverty.
- Volunteers will receive training on how to observe and record information and how to complete the observation forms.
- Enter data into the online database
- Students should expect to commit between 4-8 hours per week.
- Contact Cheryl Courage: [cheryl.courage@wayne.edu](mailto:cheryl.courage@wayne.edu) if interested in volunteering for the Court Watch Program. Email ASAP, as volunteers will be selected soon. Or call Street Democracy directly at 313-355-4460

**Will I be working with clients?** Due to the nature of the Court Watch Project, students will not work with clients directly in the initial project. However, students who show commitment and express an interest in continuing to assist Street Democracy may be provided with the opportunity to attend court with the organization's attorney's to view client representation in action, as well as work with clients and assist attorneys.