



LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF
GREATER CINCINNATI

Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati • Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC

2015 Annual Report

Changing Lives



The mission of the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati is to resolve serious legal problems of low-income people, to promote economic and family stability, and to reduce poverty through effective legal assistance.

Dear Friends:

2015 was an exciting and positive year for Legal Aid. First, our *Change a Life, Strengthen the Community* Campaign was successfully completed in record time. We salute all who contributed and all who participated on the campaign committee. Thanks to you, we surpassed our \$1 million dollar goal by almost 20%!

Contributions to the campaign will enable us to sustain our key partnership programs: Education Advocacy: Supporting School Success, Clearing Legal Hurdles to Employment, Veterans' Assistance, LawLink: Family Safety & Stability, and Child HeLP.

Legal Aid received more than 26,000 requests for assistance in 2015, and we were able to help over 15,000 clients in new and ongoing cases. In addition to resolving individual client needs, Legal Aid's advocacy continues to have broad positive impact for our community. In this report, we highlight activities that are improving living conditions for over 1,000 families, and the safety of their neighbors. We also feature a multi-faceted approach to improving educational opportunities that is transforming one of our largest suburban school districts.

Child HeLP, our groundbreaking partnership with Cincinnati Children's Hospital, was recently named an Outstanding Medical-Legal Partnership in the nation. Also, the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati awarded Legal Aid its 2015 Distinguished Service award. These tributes are the result of hard work and generous support.

Thank you to all of our donors, funders, volunteer attorneys, and partner organizations. With your help, Legal Aid is making a difference in the lives of our clients and in our communities.



Mary
Mary Asbury
Executive Director



Dan
Daniel J. Buckley,
President

Change a Life, Strengthen the Community

Campaign Surpasses Goal

Legal Aid conducted the *Change a Life, Strengthen the Community* major gifts campaign to sustain our innovative collaborations, all of which have significant, measurable impacts on individuals and our community. Our goal for this campaign was \$1 million in unrestricted funds for our key partnership programs: Child HeLP, Clearing Legal Hurdles to Employment, Veterans' Assistance, Education Advocacy: Supporting School Success, and LawLink. Through them, we help people resolve major obstacles and give them the opportunity to help themselves regain economic and family stability.



Kay Geiger, Mark Jahnke, and George Vincent

Campaign Co-Chairs Daniel J. Buckley and Deborah P. Majoras reported that we exceeded the goal by almost 20% thanks to strong support from law firms, individuals, corporations, and our board and staff! Our final total reached \$1,190,000. Our campaign committee devoted considerable time and energy to achieve this great success. We are extremely grateful for their commitment to our mission and thank them for a job well done.



Daniel Buckley, Mary Asbury, and Deborah Majoras

The generosity of the over 150 contributors to the campaign make it possible for us to continue to assist the most vulnerable in our community. Ms. Majoras remarked, "I feel fortunate to be part of a (legal) community that understands that access to justice is integral to a free society."

Thank You to all our wonderful contributors!

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Ginny Whitman and Paul Heldman



Earle Maiman, Hon. Nathaniel Jones, and Tom Cuni

Legal Aid Holds Landlords Accountable

Legal Aid's goal is for low-income families to have affordable housing in safe, stable neighborhoods. In 2015, we partnered with the City of Cincinnati and the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition to address the deplorable housing conditions affecting over 600 families in six apartment buildings owned by an out-of-state landlord. The roof caved in on one building, forcing all the tenants to move. Legal Aid, representing three of the affected buildings' tenants associations, moved jointly with the City to ask the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas to declare the properties a public nuisance and for the appointment of a receiver to manage the properties. Our clients and the City received a favorable ruling on both counts.

The receiver is replacing and repairing the roofs, windows, and elevators and has proposed a budget of about \$4 million for other needed repairs. Legal Aid will continue to closely monitor the progress.



And Preserves Affordable Housing for Hundreds of Families

Members of Legal Aid's Housing Team continue to represent tenants in 19 apartment buildings in Avondale and Walnut Hills to ensure the properties are maintained in safe, livable condition. Several years ago, Legal Aid intervened to protect the buildings' residents when the properties went into foreclosure, utilities were shut off, and families were facing vacate orders. The buildings were sold to new owners who received significant grant funds to renovate the properties.

However, after a promising start, conditions in these properties are still bad. The new owners have been cited for 463 housing code violations and fined more than \$20,000. The buildings still require significant improvements to come up to code. Legal Aid attorneys are working on behalf of the tenants to compel the owner to provide safe and healthy living conditions for the almost 700 families who live there and to ensure that these prominent buildings help revitalize their neighborhoods.

Legal Advocacy is a Catalyst for School Discipline Reform

In September 2015, a team of representatives from the Northwest Local School District, Colerain Township Police, Hamilton County Juvenile Court, and Legal Aid attended the week-long School-Justice Partnerships Certificate Program offered by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University. Their agreed-upon goals were to reduce racial disparities in school disciplinary actions and reduce school referrals to the juvenile justice system through development of a year-long “capstone” project. The Team developed a 3-tiered system of strategies to achieve the goals.



What started as an adversarial situation with complaints made to the US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, concerning discipline of minority students and children with disabilities, and a civil rights lawsuit against the Northwest Local School District, has developed into an innovative joint venture leading to policy changes that will affect the entire district.

The team has already launched a new group, the Student and Family Engagement (SAFE) Council, created to resolve truancy concerns by increasing supports and proactive engagement with students and their parents. The SAFE Council convenes several times a month for an informal docket, held in the township hall, which is presided over by a Juvenile Court magistrate. Within the first few months, Northwest already reported improved attendance by students who came before the Council and a reduction in formal truancy referrals to Juvenile Court.

Another tier of the project involves the creation of single points of contact among agencies involved in the lives of Northwest students so that the school district is better able to intervene to support students who are at-risk of academic failure, school discipline, or other issues that may affect them in school. The third tier involves comprehensive reform of policies and practices to reduce disciplinary removals and improve school climate, by the fall of 2016.



New Managing Attorney Leads the VLP



Anne Lucas was appointed managing attorney of the Volunteer Lawyers Project in December 2015, succeeding Virginia Conlan Whitman, who retired. Anne joined Legal Aid in August 2007, practicing in the areas of family, immigration, and education law, frequently representing children in abuse and neglect cases. She is a 2002 graduate of the University of Cincinnati College of Law, where she completed the joint law and women's studies master degree program. Anne then moved to Connecticut to work as a Staff Attorney for Connecticut Legal Services and also worked as a court mediator for the

Connecticut Judicial Department. "I hope to build on Ginny's efforts and continue to create new opportunities for volunteers to address clients' legal needs," remarked Anne.

Volunteer Lawyer of the Year Award

The Volunteer Lawyers for The Poor Foundation is pleased to award the 2015 VLP Lawyer of the Year to Nancy Brewer! Ms. Brewer is a solo practitioner who specializes in employment discrimination. Since signing up for the VLP five years ago, she has accepted 34 cases in the areas of divorce, custody, consumer, and unemployment compensation. In 2015 alone, she accepted five cases and achieved positive outcomes for her clients. Her VLP case successes reflect her hard work and commitment both to *pro bono* work and to her clients. Congratulations and Thank You, Nancy!



Key Partners Share Perspective on Legal Aid's Impact

The Legal Aid Board and Staff benefited from a unique opportunity to hear insights from three of our partners at our 2015 annual meeting. Peggy Zink, CEO of Cincinnati Works; Rob Kahn, MD, MPH, Associate Director of General and Community Health, Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Co-Director of Child HeLP; and Theresa Singleton, Director, Protection from Abuse Programs at the YWCA shared their thoughts on the importance of Legal Aid's services and on the effectiveness of our joint programs. They are pictured with the Legal Aid attorneys who lead the collaborative programs.



Theresa Singleton and Kelly Malone, managing attorney, Family and Immigration practice



Dave Phillips, Regina Campbell, managing attorney, Income Work and Health practice with Peggy Zink.



Donita Parrish, senior attorney, and Elaine Fink, managing attorney, Children & Education practice with Robert Kahn.

Legal Aid honored with 2015 Distinguished Service Award

Mary Asbury, Legal Aid's Executive Director, accepted the award from the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati. She is pictured with immediate past president, John M. Williams and BLAC president Donyetta D. Bailey.



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Legal Services Corporation*	1,640,696
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United Way.....	468,440
Contributions.....	462,612
Foundation Grants.....	744,040
Rental Income.....	227,913
Other.....	477,800
Total Operating Revenue	\$7,831,031

2015 Functional Expense

Housing & Consumer Program.....	\$1,271,667
Employment & Benefits Program.....	1,369,762
Family & Domestic Violence Program	1,915,710
Children & Education Program.....	1,366,260
General Civil & VLP.....	466,732
Management & General	679,969
Fundraising.....	112,986
Rental Property	254,771
Total Expenses	\$7,437,857

Assets

	2015	2014
Cash and cash equivalents	\$644,524	\$767,307
Cash held in trust for clients	\$10,798	\$56,874
Investments	\$2,768,433	\$3,117,401
Grants and Contracts receivable	\$378,221	\$385,368
Contributions receivable, net	\$1,088,496	\$549,179
Property and equipment, net	\$3,497,291	\$3,518,941
Other	\$119,048	\$70,920
Total Assets	\$8,506,811	\$8,465,990

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$89,191	\$45,628
Accrued annual leave	\$289,418	\$282,765
Assets held for others	\$10,798	\$56,874
Long-term debt	\$1,527,820	\$1,619,608
Other accrued liabilities	\$225,856	\$216,152
Total Liabilities	\$2,143,083	\$2,221,027

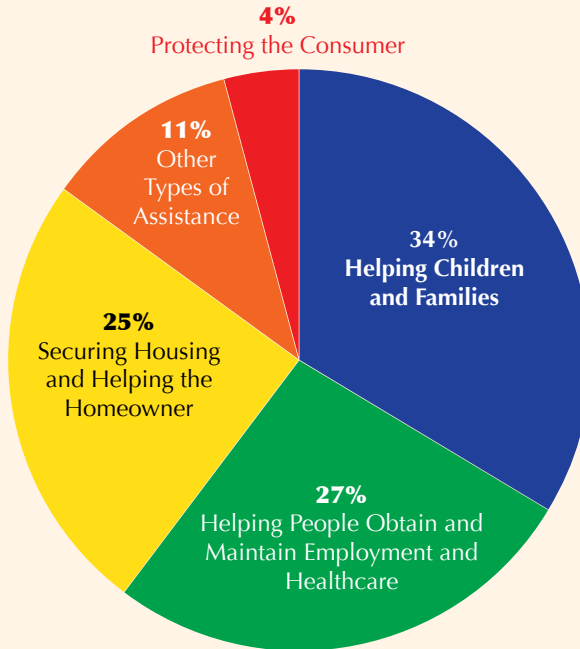
Net Assets

Unrestricted		
Operating	\$3,177,570	\$3,582,248
Board designated	\$1,081,313	\$1,129,846
Temporarily restricted	\$1,437,187	\$887,773
Permanently restricted	\$667,658	\$645,096
Total Net Assets	\$6,363,728	\$6,244,963
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$8,506,811	\$8,465,990

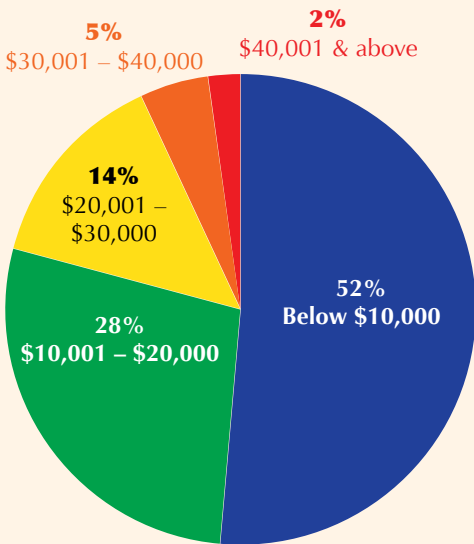
The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati and its affiliate the Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC provide civil legal services in seven southwest Ohio counties: Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Brown, Warren, Clinton, and Highland. Legal Services Corporation supports only the activities of the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati. The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati provides staff support for the Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP). This Annual Report provides information about both Legal Aid Societies and the VLP.

Our Clients

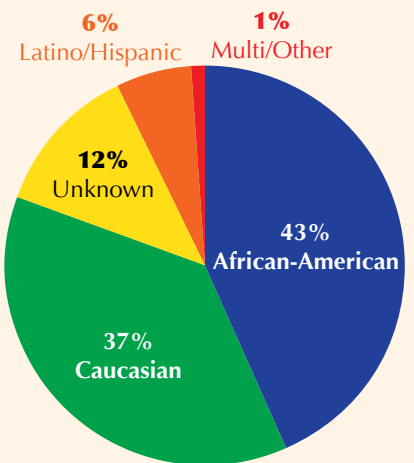
Services Provided



Household Income



Ethnicity



Individual Case Services January – December 2015

COUNTY	Requests for Service	Sent Written Materials	Made External Referral	LAS Case Open	VLP Case Open	Pending LAS & VLP
BROWN	372	61	60	81	31	129
BUTLER	3,690	242	746	977	213	1,551
CLERMONT	1,407	114	311	233	101	189
CLINTON	366	98	54	56	24	36
HAMILTON	17,521	1,281	2,666	3,066	1,013	2,526
HIGHLAND	396	127	65	81	5	29
WARREN	909	78	262	137	44	128
UNSPECIFIED	1,401	23	290	65	2	47
TOTAL	26,062	2,024	4,454	4,696	1,433	4,635

Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati/Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC/Volunteer Lawyers Project

Our Staff

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF GREATER CINCINNATI

Mary Asbury, *Executive Director*

Managing & Senior Attorneys

Regina Campbell
David Cramer
Anne Lucas
Kelly Malone
Donita Parrish
Virginia Tallent
Virginia Conlan Whitman

Staff Attorneys

Gerry Greene
Kate Holley
Erin Tapke
Tom White
Terry Willacker
Elizabeth Zak

EJW Legal Fellow

Ashley Richardson

Director of Development & Communications

Cynthia Cole

Director of Finance

Angie MacKay

Director of Operations

Phillip Harmon

Low Income Tax Clinic Support

Hardrie Diggs

Administrative Staff

Paula Ayer
Beverly Campbell
Phillip Hagan
Joe Hornbaker
Terry Mayle
Sophia Meyers
Joe Styer

Paralegals & Legal Assistants

Nancy Blackwell
Nicole Lesniak
David Phillips
Peggy Pleasant
Rhonda Tucker
Deanna White
Jenny Zellars

Legal Secretaries & Assistants

Tonya Dean
Dawn Finch
Vicky Gibson
Jennifer Gillespie
Sue Hix
Tracy Lott
Trisha Reece
Ron Rigby
Sandy Tyjewski
Connie Young

VLP Intern

Emily Perbix

Reception & Intake Coordinators

Natalie Brown
Sheree Brown
Blake Gibson
Nora Hernandez
Michelle Matthews
Teresa Roush
Teresa Seifert
Arelly Underwood

Law Students

Georgeanna Bien-Aime
Lindsey Burke
Caitlin Case
Adam Clark
Kristin Condor
Jordan D'Addario
Caroline Drennan
Jared Grandy
Josh Homer
Kimberly Jones
William Prest
Morgan Quigley
India Scarver
Brooke Teaford
Laura Thudium
Louise Vanden Bosch
Caitlin Wells
Rebecca Zimmelman
Zachery Zipperer

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST OHIO, LLC

John Schrider, *Director*

Managing & Senior Attorneys

Nick DiNardo
Lori Elliott
Maggie Fibbe
Elaine Fink
Debi Gedling
Marcheta Gillam
Mark Lawson
Stephanie Moes
Noel Morgan
Adolfo Olivas
Col Owens
Debra Rothstein
Steve Sharpe
Elizabeth Tull Laureano
Tracy Washington

Staff Attorneys

Jon Ford
Jason Fountain
Jamie Landvatter
Sarah Owens
Molly Russell
Lee Serbin-Walp
Amanda Toole

EJW Fellow

Melissa Salamon

Paralegals & Legal Assistants

Mayra Casas Ugarte
Cat Cornelius
Charles Duskin
Carrie Francis
Michelle Knox-O'Neal
Jennifer Morgan
Kate Nolan

Law Graduate

Karin Shih

Law Students

Verjine Adanalian
Matthew Dickman
Stephen Doyle
Patrick Higgins
Chelsea Hillman
Emily Papania

LISC Neighborhood Housing Specialist

Caitlin Cliff

Paralegal Externs

Jamela Chafin
Tanya Harper

Daniel J. Buckley, President

Attorney, Partner, Vorys Sater Seymour & Pease LLP

Vincent B. Stamp, 1st Vice President

Attorney, Partner, Dinsmore & Shohl LLP

Sr. Kathryn Ann Connelly, 2nd Vice President

Community Volunteer, Retired Superintendent of Education, Archdiocese of Cincinnati Schools

Adam P. Hall, Treasurer

Attorney, Partner, Frost Brown Todd LLC

Christine S. Wheatley, Secretary

Attorney, Group Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel, The Kroger Company

Earle Jay Maiman, Immediate Past President

Attorney, Retired Partner, Thompson Hine LLP

Karen Bankston

Associate Dean, Clinical Practice, Partnership & Community Engagement, University of Cincinnati College of Nursing

Cassandra Barham

Community Volunteer, The Contact Center

Valarie Dowell

Community Volunteer, Over the Rhine Community Housing

Carey A. Greiner

Attorney, General Counsel, Commercial Engines & Services, GE Aviation

Karla Markley Hall

Attorney, Director of Externships & Public Service, University of Cincinnati College of Law

Irene Herndon

Community Volunteer, Cambridge Arms Senior Housing

Doris Hill

Community Volunteer, CMHA Resident Advisory Council

Hon. Nathaniel R. Jones, Emeritus

Attorney, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Blank Rome LLP

Hon. Eva D. Kessler

Retired Judge, Butler County Domestic Relations Court

Rosiland King

Community Volunteer, Northwest Schools Parent Group

Donald P. Klekamp, Emeritus

Attorney, Partner, Keating Muething & Klekamp PPL

Robert F. Laufman

Attorney, Of Counsel, Gerhardstein & Branch Co., LPA

Joyce E. Lovejoy

Community Volunteer

Deborah P. Majoras

Attorney, Chief Legal Officer and Secretary, The Procter & Gamble Company

Michael A. Marrero

Attorney, Partner, Ulmer & Berne LLP

Stephen M. Nechemias

Attorney, Of Counsel, Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP

James T. O'Reilly

Attorney, Retired Professor, University of Cincinnati College of Law

David C. Phillips

Founder, Cincinnati Works, Inc.

Harry H. Santen, Honorary Trustee

Attorney, Retired Partner, Santen & Hughes

Diane Schneiderman

Attorney, Counsel, Affordable Living, Episcopal Retirement Homes, Inc.

Crystal Steele

Community Volunteer, Interfaith Hospitality Network

Ann Munson Steines

Attorney, Senior Vice President, Deputy General Counsel and Assistant Secretary, Macy's, Inc.

Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC

Board of Managers

Daniel J. Buckley

Paul W. Heldman

Stephen M. Nechemias

