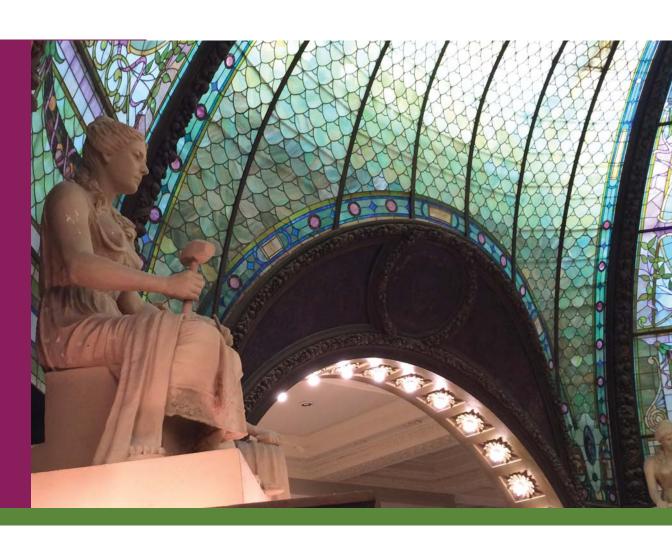


ANNUAL REPORT

2016 Justice Partners Report



Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation Center for Arkansas Legal Services Legal Aid of Arkansas Legal aid often means the difference between employment and joblessness, between staying at home and going to a nursing facility, or between life with a loving family member and a stint in foster care.

44

-Kevin De Liban, Staff Attorney Legal Aid of Arkansas

Justice Denied: Unmet Legal Need in Arkansas



Two-thirds of adults have experienced a civil legal problem in the past 18 months.



Only 14% made their way to a court, lawyer, or legal aid.



Arkansas has the fewest attorneys per capita in the country, with **one attorney** for every **500 Arkansas residents.**



1 in 4 Arkansans qualify for civil legal aid.



The state's 25 least populous counties are critically underserved, with one attorney for every 1,300 residents in those counties.



By comparison, there is **one legal aid attorney** for every 16,204 eligible Arkansans.



The Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas receive 30,000 calls each year for help.



More than half are turned away because they lack the resources or capacity to meet the demand.

Center for Arkansas Legal Services

The Center for Arkansas Legal Services ensures fairness for low-income clients in 44 counties located in western, central, and southern Arkansas. In 2016, we accomplished this with a staff of 27 attorneys and paralegals, as well as 236 volunteer attorneys who accepted cases through our regional pro bono programs: Volunteer Organization for the Center for Arkansas Legal Services (VOCALS) and the River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project (VAP).

2016 AT A GLANCE -

25 ATTORNEYS 02 PARALEGALS



25 attorneys and 2 paralegals who provided \$7.2 million worth of services

236 VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS **261** CASES



236 volunteer attorneys who handled 261 cases at a value of more than \$476,520

3,961
CASES IMPACTING



3,961 cases impacting 10,134 people, including 4,418 children and 161 veterans

\$2.8 MILLION



\$2.8 million in financial recoveries or losses avoided for clients

WHO WE HELPED





500 consumers victimized by scams or harassed by creditors



563 TENANTS/HOMEOWNERS

563 tenants and homeowners facing eviction or foreclosure



CHILDREN

who were

360 children who were abused, neglected, or in need of permanency



1,565 FAMILIES

1,565 families in need of stability through orders of protection, custody, or guardianship



472 ELDERLY/DISABLED

472 elderly or disabled people needing financial security



486 INDIVIDUALS

486 individuals needing help accessing employment, health coverage, or education

REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

REVENUES \$3.11 million

70% Legal Services Corporation
10% Public Legal Aid Fund
10% IOLTA & Mortgage Settlement Funds
05% Private Donations

05% Grants & Contracts

EXPENDITURES \$3.41 million

63% Direct Services
20% Operational Costs
18% Support Staff

Center for Arkansas Legal Services

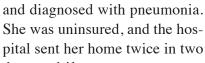
CLIENT STORIES -



A mother of two young children reached out to the Center for Arkansas Legal Services for help divorcing her abusive husband. Both she and the children had experienced abuse, with the daughter saying her father had once grabbed her by the neck so hard that she couldn't breathe.

When the client told her husband she wanted a divorce, he threatened to take the children from her. In the past, he'd refused to return the children after visitation. Staff attorney David Rogers helped the client get a divorce and custody of her children. As a result, the mother can rebuild a safe, loving home for her children.

During a January cold snap a few years ago, an Army veteran was admitted to the hospital emergency room





days while the pneumonia spread to her second lung. On the third day, she was

taken to the same hospital by ambulance and was treated in the Intensive Care Unit for nine days. More than two years later, the hospital filed an action to collect more than \$28,000 from the veteran who was now living in a homeless shelter in Little Rock. Our AmeriCorps Attorney, Alexander Jones, met her at a legal clinic for veterans and ultimately got the collections

suit dismissed. His success provided this veteran with tremendous emotional relief and an opportunity to get back on her feet.

A 74 year-old veteran contacted CALS for assistance to prevent a foreclosure on his home of thirty years.

There had been a pest issue in his home. When he couldn't solve the issue, his homeowners' association resolved the problem, but charged him \$1,000. Our client couldn't afford to pay such a large, unexpected expense and the HOA initiated foreclosure proceedings. CALS staff attorney Joycelyn



Bell successfully filed for Chapter 13 bankruptcy on behalf of the client. As a result, this elderly veteran is able to stay in his home while he pays off his debt on a manageable timetable.

WHERE WE HELP



Legal Aid of Arkansas

Legal Aid of Arkansas ensures fairness for low-income clients in 31 counties located in northern and eastern Arkansas. We also serve clients statewide through our Low Income Taxpayers Clinic and Medical-Legal Partnerships. In 2016, we accomplished this with a staff of 27 attorneys and paralegals, as well as 272 volunteer attorneys who accepted cases through our pro bono programs.

2016 AT A GLANCE

27 ATTORNEYS 05 PARALEGALS



27 attorneys and 5 paralegals who provided \$3.55 million worth of services

272 VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS **505** CASES



272 volunteer attorneys who handled 505 cases at a value of more than \$874,000

7,152 CASES IMPACTING



7,152 cases impacting 19,304 people, including 9,285 children and 456 veterans



\$7.4 million in financial recoveries or losses avoided for clients

WHO WE HELPED



679 CONSUMERS

679 consumers victimized by scams or harassed by creditors



863
TENANTS/HOMEOWNERS

863 tenants and homeowners facing eviction or foreclosure



407 children who were abused, neglected, or in need of permanency



3,021 FAMILIES

3,021 families in need of stability through orders of protection, custody, or guardianship



474 ELDERLY/DISABLED

474 elderly or disabled people needing financial security



1,172
INDIVIDUALS

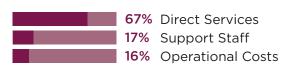
1,172 individuals needing help accessing employment, health coverage, or education

REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

REVENUES \$2.69 million

55% Legal Services Corporation
21% Grants & Contracts
09% Public Legal Aid Fund
09% IOLTA & Mortgage Settlement Funds
05% Private Donations
01% Other

EXPENDITURES \$2.53 million



Legal Aid of Arkansas

CLIENT STORIES •



Louella Jones, a 54-year old woman with cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis, was one of dozens of Arkansans with disabilities who came to Legal Aid after DHS started using a computer formula to drastically cut Medicaid home-

care aid hours. In Louella's case, she went from an average of 6 hours of caregiver assistance per day to 3. As a result, Louella was forced to lie in her own waste, go without proper meals, and stay shut in her home without social contact or the ability to get out. Legal Aid staff attorney Kevin De Liban successfully represented our client to have her home-care aid hours fully restored. By winning a federal lawsuit dealing with identical issues, Legal Aid ensured that dozens of individuals in Louella's situation got their hours back. Despite losing, DHS persists in making widespread cuts. The Legal Aid team continues to represent Louella and others to keep the care necessary to staying in their homes with dignity.

sitive evidence to a judge. The family walked out of the courtroom with an Order of Protection, ensuring the safety of the children.



A client came to Legal Aid of Arkansas seeking help

after the father of her children died abroad. The father had left assets overseas that the children were entitled to and which were needed to support them following his passing. To complicate matters further, the mother of the children did not speak English fluently, making an already difficult situation even more challenging for her. Mary Green, a pro bono attorney in Fayetteville stepped in to assist. She was able to obtain a guardianship, a requirement to receive the money on behalf of the children, and then arranged the transfer of the funds to the U.S. Thanks to Mary, the money left to the children is now being used to support their education.

After spending a weekend with their mother, two young girls were terrified at the prospect of returning to their father's home. They were hesitant to reveal details of what their father had done to them, but their mother noticed that they were so scared that they'd stopped eating. She contacted Legal Aid attorney Rachel Pisors to secure an Order of Protection for her girls. Pisors worked tirelessly to collect the evidence necessary to prove that the girls needed protection and helped them to present this sen-

WHERE WE HELP



Pro Bono Attorneys of the Year



Jimmy Dill



Katelyn Busby

10th Judicial District VOCALS Attorney of the Year Hashem Law Firm



John Blair

Equal Access to Justice Panel Outstanding Service Award Law Office of John M. Blair

Jefferson County VOCALS

Pine Bluff Title Company

Attorney of the Year



Steven Davis

Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly Service Award Davis Law Firm



Outstanding Medical-Legal Partnership Attorney of the Year Friday Firm





W. Ray Nickle

Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly Service Award Nickle Law Firm



Pulaski County VOCALS Attorney of the Year Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus

Abtin Mehdizadegan



River Valley Volunteer Attorney Project Attorney of the Year Law Office of Susan Johnson-Wakefield

Susan M. Johnson-Wakefield



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^{*}Donations were received in the 2016 calendar year and were gifts made to the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation, Volunteer Organization of Center for Arkansas Legal Services, or Legal Aid of Arkansas as part of the Campaign for Legal Aid

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Too many Arkansans that need our help had to be turned away last year, and the same will be

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For a monthly investment of just \$20, 50, or \$100, you can cover what it costs for legal aid to represent a domestic violence victim, a veteran struggling to

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To learn more about volunteer opportunities or to sign up through legal aid, visit www.arlegalservices.com/node/888/volunteer-today and ar.freelegalanswers.org.

How You Can Help



DIRECT CY PRES AWARDS TO LEGAL AID

Cy pres awards are made by a court when some or all of the funds from a class action cannot

be distributed to the intended recipients. In making an award, the Court attempts to put them to a use that is as near as possible to their intended purpose. In many cases, directing these funds to legal aid will satisfy that purpose. Legal aid serves client populations that often mirror plaintiff classes. Furthermore,

cy pres awards made to support legal aid can be tailored to a specific region or purpose, such as combating abusive collection or foreclosure practices.

If you're interested in learning more about how cy pres awards can support legal aid, contact Amy Johnson at (501) 492-7172 or adjohnson@arkansasjustice.org.



OPEN YOUR IOLTA ACCOUNT AT A PREFERRED BANK

The Arkansas IOLTA rules require

that attorneys place IOLTA accounts at financial institutions that pay interest rates comparable to other similarly situated accounts. Preferred Banks are those that go above and beyond the eligibility requirements of the rules to support the IOLTA program in its mission to ensure that low-income Arkansas residents have access to the legal services they desperately need.

If you are an Arkansas attorney with an IOLTA account, one simple way for you to support justice is to bank with one of the IOLTA Program's Preferred Banks. Preferred Banks are financial institutions that waive fees and pay competitive interest rates, generating more funding to support grants for legal aid. By banking with a Preferred Bank—or by encouraging your financial institution to join—you can help ensure that domestic violence victims, veterans, families in need of economic security, and children with special education needs have equal access to the justice system.

To learn more and to see a list of Preferred Banks, visit http://arkansasjustice.org/iolta/banks.

Did You Know? Ethics Rule Establishes Process for Disposition of Unclaimed and Unidentifiable Client Trust Account Funds.

The Arkansas Supreme Court has adopted changes to Arkansas Rule of Professional Conduct 1.15 to lay out a mechanism by which attorneys or estates of deceased attorneys can deal with unclaimed or unidentifiable funds in client trust accounts by reporting and remitting those funds to the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation.

The provision addresses situations where an attorney, law firm, or estate of a deceased attorney (1) winds up in possession of client or third party funds and the client or third party cannot be located, despite diligent efforts to locate the rightful owner; or (2) is in possession of funds in a client trust account that cannot be traced back to a particular client.

The Arkansas rule change addresses these scenarios by providing a simple process for attorneys to dispose of unclaimed and unidentifiable funds consistent with applicable ethical obligations, while generating additional revenue for the IOLTA Program of the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation, which will use the funds to make grants supporting the provision of free civil legal aid to the poor.

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For more information about the Campaign for Legal Aid, please visit www.arkansasjustice.org/CampaignForLegalAid.

To champion equal access to justice for all regardless of economic or social circumstances



Legal Aid of Arkansas

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