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.

""

-Kevin De Liban, Staff Attorney
Legal Aid of 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.

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

1 in 4 Arkansans qualify for civil legal aid.

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

30,000 calls each year for help.

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 and 2 paralegals who provided $7.2 million worth of services

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

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

$2.8 million in financial recoveries or losses avoided for clients

WHO WE HELPED

500 consumers victimized by scams or harassed by creditors

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

472 elderly or disabled people needing financial security

563 tenants and homeowners facing eviction or foreclosure

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

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
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 and diagnosed with pneumonia. She was uninsured, and the hospital sent her home twice in two 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.
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 and 5 paralegals who provided $3.55 million worth of services

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

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

$7.4 million in financial recoveries or losses avoided for clients

**WHO WE HELPED**

679 consumers victimized by scams or harassed by creditors

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

474 elderly or disabled people needing financial security

863 tenants and homeowners facing eviction or foreclosure

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

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

- 67% Direct Services
- 17% Support Staff
- 16% Operational Costs
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.

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

WHERE WE HELP

[Map of Arkansas with highlighted areas indicating where Legal Aid of Arkansas provides services]
Pro Bono Attorneys of the Year

Jimmy Dill
Jefferson County VOCALS
Attorney of the Year
Pine Bluff Title Company

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

Steven Davis
Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for
the Elderly Service Award
Davis Law Firm

William Waddell, Jr.
Outstanding Medical-Legal
Partnership
Attorney of the Year
Friday Firm

W. Ray Nickle
Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for
the Elderly Service Award
Nickle Law Firm

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

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

For more information about the 2016 Pro Bono Award winners, visit:
http://arkansasjustice.org/pro-bono-awards-2016/
CORPORATE, FIRM, AND FOUNDATION DONORS

Champions of Justice ($50,000+)

Walmart Stores, Inc.

Benefactors of Justice ($20,000-$49,999)

Friday, Eldredge & Clark

Defenders of Justice ($10,000-$19,999)

University of Arkansas Student Bar Association

Supporters of Justice ($5,000-$9,999)

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Kutak Rock LLP
Mitchell Williams
Oldham Law Firm, PLLC
Tyson Foods, Inc.

Circle of Justice (Gifts up to $4,999)

Acxiom Corporation
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Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield
Arkansas Community Foundation
Craighead County Bar Association
First Security Bank
Barber Law Firm
Bartels Law Firm
Baxter, Jewell & Dobson
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Cross Gunter Witherspoon & Galchus
Design Shoppe Screen Printing
Dillards - General Counsel
Dover Dixon Horne PLLC
Entergy
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Front Page Cafe
Gary Holt & Associates
Gearhead Outfitters
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Hankins Law Firm, PA
Hardin & Grace PA
Henry Law Firm
Hytrol Conveyor Company, Inc.
Johnson & Vines, PLLC
Kamps & Stotts PLLC
LaCerra, Dickson, Hoover & Roger PLLC
Laser Law Firm
Law Offices of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz
Law Offices of Lax, Vaughan, Fortson, Jones & Rowe, PA
Lueken Law Firm
Mackie Wolf Zientz & Mann PC
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McMullan Law Firm
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Public Relations Society of Arkansas
Rainwater, Holt & Sexton, P.A.
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R. S. Irving Law Firm, LLC
Sarah Creasman Art
Shults & Brown, LLP
Skinny J’s
St. Bernard’s Hospital
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Taylor Law Partners
Temple B’nai Israel Sisterhood
Trammel Piazza Law Firm, PLLC
Trotter Firm
Tyson Foods, Inc.
UAMS Cytogenetics Laboratory
Waddell, Cole & Jones
Warrior Table Soccer
Watts, Donovan & Tilley
Wells & Wells, PLLC
Williams & Anderson
Wilson & Associates
Womack, Phelps, Puryear, Mayfield, & McNeil
Worley, Wood & Parrish
Wright, Lindsey & Jennings LLP

*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.
**INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

**Champions of Justice ($5,000+)**

Rod & Jacquie Nagel  
Warren & Harriet Stephens

**Benefactors of Justice ($2,500-$4,999)**

Henry & Justice Annabelle Imber Tuck  
Bill & Patty Waddell

**Defenders of Justice ($1,000-$2,499)**

Nate Coulter  
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Kathryn W. Roberts  
Frank B. Sewall  
Robert S. Shafer  
James D. Sprott  
Katie & Miles Stephens

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In honor of Jim Argue
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In celebration of the Arkansas Transgender Community
Andrea Zekis

In honor of Kenneth B. Baim
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In honor of Dr. Jay Barth
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In memory of Robert C. Compton
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In honor of Sue, David & Anna Kay Frueauff
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In honor of Rejena Grotjohn
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In memory of Justice Steele Hays
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In memory of Chief Justice Bradley Jesson
Judge Ben T. Barry
Chief Justice Jack W. Holt, Jr.

In honor of Amy Dunn Johnson
Kathy Webb
Patrick D. Wilson

In celebration of Just Jeans Event
Brad Phelps

In honor of Sam Ledbetter
Stacy Sells & Tim Gauger

In memory of John Lisle
Steve Lisle

In memory of F.H. Martin
Judge Kim M. Smith

In memory of Marcia McIvor
Mort Gitelman

In honor of Virginia L McMurray
M. Shawn McMurray

In memory of Maurice Mitchell
Don & Leslie Hollingsworth

In memory of Judge James Mixon
Judge Ben T. Barry

In honor of Charles "Skip" Mooney
Jordan Mooney

In memory of Rev. Ollie Neal, Sr.
Karama Neal

In honor of Olly Neal
Karama Neal

In honor of Rev. Vic & Freddie Nixon
Stacy Sells & Tim Gauger
In honor of Nicole Powell & Richard Carey  
William Powell

In memory of Carolyn Jean Raddatz  
David Schoen

In honor of Rep. Warwick Sabin  
Stacy Sells & Tim Gauger

In honor of Several Clients  
William Stuart Jackson

In honor of Douglas O. Smith  
Joel D. Johnson

In honor of Michael & Rosi Smith  
Anne B. Smith

For the birthday of David Solomon  
Jim Ross

In memory of Daniel M. Sprott  
James D. Sprott

In honor of Katie Stephens  
Warren Stephens

In memory of Betty Terry  
Bill & Patty Waddell

In memory of Chris Thomas  
Chief Justice Jack W. Holt, Jr.

In honor of Those Who Have No Voice  
Steve Snider

In honor of Justice Annabelle Tuck  
Casey Rockwell

In honor of Rep. Clarke Tucker  
Stacy Sells & Tim Gauger

In honor of Bill Waddell  
John & Claudia Courtyard

In honor of Mary Kathryn Williams  
Kathryn W. Roberts

In memory of Professor Al Witte  
Chad R. Oldham

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Jim & Jan Sprott
Katie & Miles Stephens
Henry & Justice Annabelle Imber Tuck
Mark P. Yablon
Andrea Zekis

6.1 REPRESENTING HOPE
How You Can Help

DONATE

Too many Arkansans that need our help had to be turned away last year, and the same will be true this year. As Arkansans and as lawyers, we can do better for those less fortunate in our community. Please consider a gift to the Campaign for Legal Aid. 100% of the donations received go directly to the Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas to provide legal aid that supports families, preserves homes and maintains economic stability.

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 readjust to civilian life, or a child in need of a stable home or special education and fulfill your responsibility under Arkansas Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1. Monthly donors become part of our 6.1 Society and receive a decal and a listing on our website.

You can make your one-time or monthly gift online today at www.arkansasjustice.org/donate.

VOLUNTEER

There are many reasons to volunteer. It’s a great opportunity to network, to learn new skills, and, most importantly, to give back to the community.

Our volunteer opportunities aren’t just limited to taking cases. We offer a wide range of services, and attorneys, law students, and community members of all backgrounds are needed to support our efforts. Volunteers can do something as simple as give advice to a client through AR.FreeLegalAnswers.org, help us keep legal fact sheets up to date, or give one-on-one consultations to clients at outreach events.

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.


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.
Name ___________________________________________________________________
(Please write your name as you want it to appear in next year’s recognition publication.)

☐ I/We would like to remain anonymous

Additional Names ____________________________________________________________

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I/We want to join the 6.1 Society with a monthly gift of $___________ to be debited
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Campaign for Legal Aid

c/o Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation

1111 West 6th Street, Suite D | Little Rock, AR 72201

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