



Legal Aid of Arkansas
Board of Directors Meeting
Saturday, September 19, 2020
9:00 A.M.

Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95929263707>

**Legal Aid of Arkansas
Board of Directors Meeting
September 19, 2020-9:00 a.m.**

Join Zoom Meeting

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Enter the meeting ID 95929263707#

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (Ms. Haun)
2. [Minutes of June 6, 2020 Meeting](#) (Ms. Haun)
3. Personnel Grievance Committee Report (Mr. Price)
4. [Financial Report](#) (Mr. Bowman)
5. [Financial Accounts Update](#) (Ms. King)
6. [Update of Travel Reimbursement Policy](#) (Mr. Richardson)
7. [Update to Student Loan Repayment Assistance Policy](#) (Mr. Richardson)
8. [Arkansas Access to Justice Commission/Foundation Update](#) (Ms. Johnson)
9. Litigation Update from Director of Advocacy (Mr. DeLiban)
10. [Consumer Group Update](#) (Ms. Purtle)
11. [Director's Report](#) (Mr. Richardson)
12. Old/New Business (Ms. Haun)
13. Adjournment (Ms. Haun)

**LEGAL AID OF ARKANSAS
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
June 6, 2020**

The Board of Directors of Legal Aid of Arkansas met via video/conference call at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, June 14, 2020.

The formal agenda was as follows:

1. Call to Order (Ms. Haun)
2. Acceptance of New Board Member(s) (Ms. Haun)
3. Minutes of March 14, 2020 Meeting (Ms. Haun)
4. Executive Committee Report (Ms. Haun)
5. 2019 Independent Audit Report (Yoakum, Lovell & Company)
6. Financial Report/Budget Update (Mr. Bowman)
7. 2020 Financial Eligibility Guidelines (Mr. Richardson)
8. Economic Justice Group Update (Mr. De Liban)
9. VISTA Project Report (Ms. Gratil, Ms. Sims, Ms. Hemann)
10. Director's Report, COVID-19 Update (Mr. Richardson)
11. Old/New Business (Ms. Haun)
12. Adjournment (Ms. Haun)

Present via conference call were Fuller Bumpers, Lori Chumbler, Niki Cung, Steve Davis, Pamela Haun, Val Price, Annie Smith, Curtis Walker, Demetre Walker, Rene Ward and Ron Wilson. Legal Aid staff in attendance included: Lee Richardson, Executive Director; David Bowman, Fiscal Officer; Elizabeth King, HR Manager/Admin Asst; Andrea Walker, Deputy Director; Helen Gratil, Director of Mission Engagement/ Chief Information Officer/ Director of AmeriCorps Program; Kevin De Liban, Economic Justice Work Group Leader; Margaret Foster, Pro Bono Coordinator; Lela Davison, Staff Attorney; Karsen Sims, AmeriCorps VISTA and Elizabeth Hemann, AmeriCorps VISTA. Also in attendance was Zeke Jones of Yoakum, Lovell, and Co.

Ms. Haun called the meeting to order. She welcomed everyone and moved to item two on the agenda, Acceptance of New Board Member.

Mr. Richardson stated Mr. Matthew Cook was appointed by Breaking Bonds which is a faith based non-profit serving the OUD/SUD community. He stated that we received the appointment back in March. He further stated that we currently have one vacant position at this point, and we have several members moving forward waiting on new appointments. He stated that Ms. Faye Reed has resigned as a board member down in Phillips county is now working for us part time as a staff attorney so she could not do both. He further stated that one of the Valleys has expressed interest in joining the board, but we have not received the appointment letter as of yet. He stated that Mr. Cook is the only new board member and he would ask that the board accept Mr. Cook's appointment from Breaking Bonds.

A motion was made by Steve Davis, seconded by Val Price to accept the appointment of Matthew Cook. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun stated that she would move to those that are pending reappointment at this time. She stated that those would be Donna Price, Tim Watson Jr and Ms. Demetre Walker. She called for a motion to approve the continued appointments.

A motion was made by Niki Cung, seconded by Lori Chumbler to approve the continued appointments of members that are pending reappointment letters. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun moved to item three on the agenda, Approval of Minutes of March 14, 2020 Meeting.

Ms. Haun inquired if there were any questions or comments regarding the minutes. Hearing none, she called for a motion.

A motion was made by Val Price, seconded by Curtis Walker to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2020 Meeting. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun moved to item four on the agenda, Executive Committee Report.

Mr. Richardson stated that there was money available under the Paycheck Protection Program that was part of the Cares Act provided by Congress. He stated that this is a loan that you repay at 1% interest, but it can be forgiven if you meet certain requirements. He did not apply in the first round because he had to certify that we had a financial need and he was unsure if he could do that. He stated that when the second round of money came down, he was looking at \$170,000 in losses as a result of COVID-19, so he was comfortable making the application. He stated that there was a quick turn around because the money goes quick once the applications are open so we had a board Executive Committee meeting to approve that loan and the minutes of that meeting are in the board packet. He stated that the committee approved us seeking the loan and then you can see the loan documents beneath that. He stated that we submitted the application to First Security Bank, and you will see the promissory note for \$521,600 with a maturity date of April 29, 2022 but that was changed by a bill signed by the President yesterday. He further stated that we are using the money for payroll and you have 24 weeks to use the funds. He stated that we will expend the money during the required time frame and then we will go to First Security Bank and ask for forgiveness of the loan and pay back whatever amount we were unable to expend immediately.

A motion was made by Niki Cung, seconded by Steve Davis to uphold the approval of the Executive Committee. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun moved to item five on the agenda, 2019 Independent Audit Report.

Mr. Jones of Yoakum, Lovell & Co. reviewed the 2019 Audit and Form 990. He asked for questions.

Hearing none, Ms. Haun thanked him for his presentation and called for a motion.

A motion was made by Curtis Walker, seconded by Demetre Walker to approve the 2019 Independent Audit Report. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun moved to item six on the agenda, Financial Report.

Mr. Bowman stated he would begin by looking at the actual revenue and expenditures for the period January 1st – April 30th. He stated that revenues at the end of April were \$1,862,000 and he has added a couple lines, line 32 and line 33. He stated that line 32 is the small business Paycheck Protection Loan of \$521,600 and line 33 is the Legal Services Corporation money we received for COVID-19 of \$154,783. He stated that under revenues he would point out that we received an additional \$5,000 from United Way of North Central Arkansas and that was money that was uncollected in the 4th quarter of 2018 and all of 2019. He stated that we see expenditures of \$1,128,000 and of that \$931,000 is payroll and non-payroll is \$196,800. He stated that revenue over expenses is \$734,605. He stated that on expenditures for the past two months since we have been working from home, we have saved close to \$7,000-\$8,000 a month on training and travel. He further stated that he would look at the detailed balance sheet through April 30th. He stated that total cash is \$2,080,000 and you will see under liabilities the note payable to First Security Bank is down to \$42,000 remaining and excess revenue over expenditures is \$734,600.

Mr. Richardson stated that right now that \$521,600 for the month of May under the Paycheck Protection Program we would count that as a liability since it is a loan that is unforgiven and then when we get forgiveness in the fall we will remove that.

Mr. Bowman stated that he was working on May and almost had it completed but we had our June 4th payroll and those expenditures would fall in May so he does not have all the payroll to expend as of yet. He stated that currently revenue and expenses are \$721,000 and payroll expenses are about \$123,000 so we will probably have ended in May just under \$600,000 revenue over expenses.

He asked for questions.

Hearing none, Ms. Haun called for a motion.

A motion was made by Val Price, seconded by Lori Chumbler to approve the Financial Report. The motion carried with none opposed.

Ms. Haun moved to item seven on the agenda, Economic Justice Group Update.

Mr. De Liban gave an update on the Economic Justice Workgroup.

Ms. Haun moved to item eight, VISTA Project Report.

Ms. Gratil introduced the Vista Members, Karsen Sims, Development Vista and Elizabeth Heeman, Capacity Building Vista and asked them to present on their projects.

Ms. Heeman and Ms. Sims gave reports on their work as AmeriCorps Vista Members.

Ms. Haun moved to item nine, Director's Report.

Mr. Richardson stated that we have had the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing and we went to remote work the Monday after the March board meeting and have been working mostly remotely since that time. He stated that we have tried to intermittently return but there have been some roadblocks, for example when we started to return in northwest Arkansas the cases spiked here. He stated that we were initially going to return on May 11th, then pushed to June 1st and now June 15th. He stated that some are working back in the office but they are

following proper procedures and keeping the office closed to clients. He stated that we are going to be liberal in allowing folks to continue to work from home if they have reason. He further stated that we have proved that we are very effective working remotely, and in the future we are likely going to allow staff to have more hybrid schedules as opposed to being rigid with in office hours. He stated that you can see the number of cases that had a COVID-19 direct nexus in the attached report and a lot were in Low Income Tax Payer clinic because when stimulus checks were approved the IRS systems basically shut down to deal with that. He stated that those cases were the highest followed by Landlord Tenant cases. He stated that a lot of judicial districts stopped issuing Writs of Possession as a result of ongoing problems as well as some federal regulations that came down. He stated that we expect to see an uptick in that as well as other areas as the pandemic unemployment goes away and people start trying to return to jobs that may or may not be there.

Mr. Richardson stated that nationally we received \$155,000 of a special grant related to COVID-19 from Legal Services Corporation which was part of the CARES Act, there was another 50 million put in a bill that is still pending but seems to be dead in the Senate.

Mr. Richardson stated that Legal Services Corporation made a Program Quality Visit back in October of 2019 and as part of that visit they made some Tier 1 recommendations and these are things we have to take action on or tell them why we did not take action. He stated that there were fourteen of those, which is not unusual when they make a visit. He stated that it was a good report overall but there were several things they wanted us to address or at least tell them why we did not address them. He stated that in the board packet he listed all fourteen of those Tier 1 recommendations and we sent information out to the board and staff asking for ranking of what they felt was top priority. He stated that board participation was just 2-3 but for staff we had over 30 staff members and from that we came up with top seven that we will address first. He stated that some we are already addressing and some we will be addressing or discussing how to address in the coming weeks. He stated that for example, everyone agreed that we need a new comprehensive needs assessment to determine the most pressing legal needs among the communities that we serve, however he is unsure how productive a needs assessment would be during a pandemic unless the pandemic is the new normal which we hope it is not so that will be put off until early next year. He stated that any input the board has on the tier recommendations is welcome as we will be moving forward on these almost immediately.

Mr. Richardson stated that he attached a press release to the board packet showing outstanding pro bono volunteers for the 2019 year. He stated that case reports are attached to the packet as well. He further stated that we just submitted in the last week a one million dollar grant to continue our OUD/SUD project and the Center for Arkansas Legal Services worked with us and submitted a one million dollar grant we well so hopefully we can cover statewide if both grants hit. He stated that have received an additional Fair Housing grant of \$125,000 that starts on August 3rd in addition to our Private Enforcement Grant. He stated that we have a significant amount of HUD money to address fair housing issues, and we are interviewing for an attorney position in Little Rock for the Fair Housing grant. He stated that staff turnover has been insignificant since last Director's report. He stated that we have hired a Grants Manager who started during pandemic and she is already helping greatly. Mr. Richardson stated that he wanted to recognize Kathy Grady who celebrated 40th anniversary in May and has been in Newport since May 12, 1980. He stated that she is often referred to as the heart of the program and that describes her very well.

Mr. Richardson stated that in regard to future board meetings change, September will be in Rogers and December 12th will be in Jonesboro obviously subject to what is happening with the current pandemic.

He stated that earlier in the week we posted a statement on Facebook about the ongoing civil unrest in the country but it has caused some pushback in the community as he used the term "Black Lives Matter" in his statement. He stated that it is a statement of solidarity with the African/American community and not a political statement but since there has been some pushback on social media about it, he wanted the board to be aware.

He asked for any questions

Hearing no further questions, Ms. Haun asked for any old new or old business Hearing none, Ms. Haun adjourned the meeting.

Ms. Lela Davison stated that she had some concerns regarding the salary scale adjustments and how it has affected her. After further discussion it was determined that the Personnel Committee would hear Ms. Davison's grievance. Ms. King will schedule a call with the committee during the month of June to review the grievance.

Hearing no further business Ms. Haun adjourned the meeting.

LEGAL AID OF ARKANSAS
 ACTUAL REVENUE & EXPENDITURES
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1 THRU AUGUST 31, 2020

Line#	Revenue:	2020 Apprd Budget	AUG 2020 Actual	DEC 2019 Actual
1	LSC BASIC GRANT	\$1,564,261.00	\$1,042,841.08	\$1,478,027.00
2	Ark Adm Justice Funds	\$153,978.00	\$95,156.58	\$184,452.43
3	STOP/VAWA/VOCA	\$292,196.00	\$141,127.59	\$292,494.66
4	HUD	\$281,396.00	\$146,228.85	\$175,398.35
5	IOLTA	\$100,100.00	\$130,000.00	\$77,200.00
6	IOLTA-Housing Foreclosure	\$250,000.00	\$227,936.17	\$254,374.84
7	AATJF-Fair Housing Special Grant	\$42,208.00	\$0.00	\$93,178.67
8	IRS-LITC	\$64,000.00	\$39,998.81	\$64,000.00
9	National Health Law Program	\$50,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$37,500.00
10	MLP-EJW&ACH	\$137,250.00	\$82,392.71	\$171,661.37
12	Equal Justice Works-CVJC (2018-2020)	\$24,205.00	\$7,044.38	\$54,520.40
14	AAA-White River	\$2,500.00	\$987.50	\$2,781.25
15	AAA-East Arkansas	\$35,000.00	\$17,500.00	\$35,000.00
16	AAA NWA	\$10,118.00	\$5,200.00	\$9,487.50
17	UW-Boone Cnty	\$2,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
18	UW-Bly	\$3,000.00	\$2,400.00	\$3,000.00
19	UW-NW Ark	\$50,000.00	\$33,332.00	\$66,217.50
20	UW-NE Ark	\$13,125.00	\$8,750.00	\$13,125.00
	UW-NCA (Independence Cnty) \$5,000 for 2018-			
21	2019	\$4,000.00	\$5,800.00	\$0.00
22	UW-Mid South	\$4,781.00	\$4,090.00	\$4,890.00
23	Washington County Law Library	\$14,400.00	\$12,000.00	\$14,400.00
24	Other-	\$32,000.00	\$33,495.25	\$57,534.23
25	Donations	\$100,000.00	\$104,361.35	\$112,235.52
26	Interest income	\$20,000.00	\$11,624.04	\$26,533.40
27	Attorney fees	\$7,500.00	\$36,191.97	\$7,100.00
29	LSC - Midwest Legal Disaster	\$64,400.00	\$32,200.00	\$32,200.00
30	LSC - Private Attorney Involvement Innovation	\$120,656.00	\$48,262.40	\$48,262.40
31	Rural Communities Opioid Response (Planning)	\$75,000.00	\$72,121.01	\$76,248.45
32	PPP	\$0.00	\$521,600.00	\$0.00
33	LSC Cares Act	\$0.00	\$154,783.12	\$0.00
34	State of Arkansas - Arkansas Ready for Business	\$0.00	\$46,500.00	\$0.00
35	Revenue (excludes carryOver)	\$3,518,074.00	\$3,110,424.81	\$3,391,822.97

LEGAL AID OF ARKANSAS
 ACTUAL REVENUE & EXPENDITURES
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1 THRU AUGUST 31, 2020

Expenses:	2020 Apprd Budget	AUG 2020 Actual	DEC 2019 Actual
36 Total-Attny(excludes AMC&EJW; Includes ACH/EJW-MLP)	\$1,951,122.39	\$1,140,819.27	\$1,723,260.23
37 Total-Paralegals	\$479,935.28	\$261,213.94	\$336,468.20
38 Total-Other	\$334,708.55	\$287,114.46	\$358,892.61
40 Benefits Budgeted	\$566,982.07	\$343,061.74	\$424,303.83
41 Grand Total of All Payroll	\$3,332,748.29	\$2,032,209.41	\$2,842,924.87
Space Rent (HA \$675/\$725, WM\$600, Helena			
42 \$275/470)	\$64,140.00	\$40,183.56	\$49,525.68
43 Space Other Expenses	\$29,500.00	\$16,768.37	\$26,120.96
44 Equipment Rental&Maint	\$21,000.00	\$7,825.88	\$15,290.89
45 Office Supplies	\$75,500.00	\$56,610.45	\$75,820.82
46 Postage /Printing	\$15,000.00	\$7,234.53	\$13,828.78
47 Communication Expense	\$62,500.00	\$48,126.82	\$55,782.73
48 Travel Board Members & Mtg Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,980.65
49 Travel Staff & Others	\$88,000.00	\$19,906.64	\$85,472.14
50 Training-Board Members	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
51 Training-Staff & Other	\$78,000.00	\$8,194.28	\$73,077.54
52 Library	\$15,000.00	\$11,551.78	\$17,586.45
53 Insurance-Prof Liab, Prop & Gen Liab	\$31,500.00	\$31,851.97	\$30,287.61
54 Dues & fees	\$18,500.00	\$16,701.50	\$16,547.50
55 Audit	\$15,000.00	\$12,700.00	\$15,000.00
56 Litigation	\$10,000.00	\$4,916.37	\$9,240.85
57 Advertising	\$4,500.00	\$1,319.13	\$1,571.01
58 Property Acquisition	\$15,000.00	\$8,450.00	\$0.00
59 Depreciation (no affect on Cash)	\$14,931.67	\$14,270.00	\$15,345.80
60 Other (Contract Labor)	\$22,500.00	\$12,831.86	\$23,369.32
63 SPG Bldg Loan Pmts (interest Exp)	\$10,296.00	\$7,656.00	\$5,238.96
64 Total Non-Personnel Exp	\$594,867.67	\$327,099.14	\$531,087.69
65 TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,927,615.96	\$2,359,308.55	\$3,374,012.56
66 Revenues over(under)Exp(excluding carryover)	(\$409,541.96)	\$751,116.26	\$17,810.41
67 Carryover/Reserves)	1,365,023.12	1,365,023.12	1,347,212.71
68 PROPERTY&carryover/Reserves)	955,481.16	2,116,139.38	1,365,023.12
69 Expenses >>>>>>>>>	\$327,301.33	\$294,913.57	\$281,167.71
70 CarryOver(Reserves)	2.10	6.27	4.10

Reconciliation to Cougar:			
Excess Revenue Over (under) Exp - per this Rpt	(\$409,541.96)	\$751,116.26	\$17,810.41
Depr Exp	0.00	0.00	0.00
Reconciliation Amt-Excess Rev Over (Under) Exp	(\$409,541.96)	\$751,116.26	\$17,810.41
From Cougar Mnt Software Rpt		751,116.26	17,810.41
Reconciled to Cougar Mntn or Difference Amt>>>>		\$0.00	\$0.00

Board Approved 12/08/2018 (2019)
 Revised-Exec Comm 07/19/2019 (2019)
Board Approved 12/07/2019 (2020)

LEGAL AID OF ARKANSAS, INC (LEGFND)

Detailed Balance Sheet

As of: 8/31/2020

9/4/2020 11:13:48 AM

All Funds

Page 1

Assets

10-00-100 CASH - BANK OF FAYETTEVILLE	1,468,745.72	
10-00-103 FIRST SECURITY BANK MM	129,777.52	Total Cash - \$2,106,579.87
10-00-105 CASH-IN-BANK - B.O.F. LITC	20.00	
10-00-110 CLIENTS TRUST BANK ACCTS	6,387.43	
10-00-111 CASH-FIRST SECURITY BANK-GENERAL	508,036.63	
10-00-140 PREPAID EXPENSES	6,347.90	
10-00-150 LAND	8,000.00	
10-00-151 BUILDINGS	443,268.98	
10-00-155 FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT	122,201.89	
10-00-170 LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS	108,497.45	
10-00-180 ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION	(424,430.43)	

Total Assets

\$2,376,853.09

Liabilities

10-00-204 CLIENTS TRUST	6,387.43	
10-00-210 UNITED WAY W/H	370.50	
10-00-213 GROUP INS. W/H & PAYABLE	1,607.61	
10-00-220 ACCRUED LEAVE	92,186.48	
10-00-240 DEFERRED SUPPORT	130,355.00	
10-00-245 NOTE PAYABLE-FIRST SECURITY	29,806.69	Remaining Balance on Springdal Office

Total Liabilities

\$260,713.71

Net Assets

10-00-301 NET ASSETS - LSC	31,112.86	
10-00-303 Net Assets-Property Restricted	38,376.83	
10-00-304 NET ASSETS-DONATIONS RESERVE	175,000.00	
10-00-305 NET ASSETS-DONATIONS-Unrestricted	591,035.03	
10-00-306 Net Assets-Property Unrestricted	184,343.06	
10-00-320 NET ASSETS- ARK FILING FEES	331,446.24	
10-00-321 NET ASSETS-OTHER "AATJF"	13,709.10	
Excess Revenues Over Expenses	751,116.26	

Total Net Assets

\$2,116,139.38

Total Liabilities and Net Worth

\$2,376,853.09



Office of Inspector General
Legal Services Corporation

3333 K Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3558
202.295.1660 (p) 202.337.6616 (f)
www.oig.lsc.gov

August 20, 2020

Zeke Jones
Yoakum, Lovell & Co. PLC
1106 Military Road
Benton, AR 72015

Subject: Quality Control Review of the 2019 Audit of Legal Aid of Arkansas

Dear Mr. Jones

The firm of McBride, Lock & Associates, an Independent Public Accountant under contract with the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) Office of Inspector General (OIG), conducted a Quality Control Review (QCR) of your audit of Legal Aid of Arkansas for the year ended December 31, 2019. The primary purpose of the QCR was to determine whether the financial statement audit work, compliance audit work, and the associated review of internal controls over financial reporting and compliance were conducted in accordance with applicable standards.

The attached OIG contractor's QCR report, dated August 14, 2020, concluded that your audit of Legal Aid of Arkansas currently meets generally accepted auditing standards, government auditing standards, and the requirements of Uniform Guidance and the LSC Audit Guide for Recipients and Auditors.

We thank you and your staff for your cooperation. If you have any questions concerning the results of this review or if we can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact Porsha Brower at (202) 295-1667 or via email at pbrower@oig.lsc.gov.

Sincerely,

Roxanne Caruso
Assistant Inspector General for Audit

Enclosure

Cc: Lee Richardson, Executive Director
Pamela Haun, Board Chairperson
Legal Aid of Arkansas

Lora Rath, Office of Compliance and Enforcement

McBride, Lock & Associates

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McBRIDE, LOCK & ASSOCIATES, LLC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

August 14, 2020

Ms. Porsha Brower
Director of Audit Operations
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3558

Subject: **Quality Control Review of the 2019 Audit of Legal Aid of Arkansas**

Dear Ms. Brower,

We are pleased to submit the report of our Quality Control Review (QCR) of the audit of Legal Aid of Arkansas as of and for the year ended December 31, 2019 performed by Yoakum, Lovell & Co., PLC, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and generally accepted government auditing standards issued by the Government Accountability Office.

Scope of Services

The objective of our review was to perform a QCR:

1. To determine whether the financial statement audit work, compliance audit work, and the associated review of internal controls over both financial reporting and compliance were conducted in accordance with applicable standards, including GAGAS and the published guidance of the OIG, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants standards as well as Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance) and the *Audit Guide for Recipients and Auditors*, including its compliance supplement, issued by Legal Services Corporation (LSC), Office of Inspector General.
2. To identify any issues that may require additional attention or any additional audit work by the Independent Public Accountant who performed the audit.

Methodology

We performed our review using the *Guide for Quality Control Reviews of Single Audits* (the “Guide”) issued by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (2016 Edition). In performing the review we met with the engagement partner and obtained supporting audit workpapers. Prior to initiating efforts, the LSC-OIG provided the audit report to be reviewed and any additional information in its possession about the audit work to be reviewed to the extent that it believed the information may affect the QCR.

Overview of Procedures Performed and Related Findings

We reviewed the audit report issued on Legal Aid of Arkansas as of and for the year ended December 31, 2019. We reviewed the audit report, using the Guide, to ensure that it included and met the requirements of Government Auditing Standards, the standards for financial audits issued by the AICPA and Uniform Guidance. We reviewed the audit workpapers using the Guide and the evidence documented in the audit workpapers. In each area, we evaluated whether or not the testing performed, results documented, financial statements presented, and findings reported were consistent with and supported the independent accountants report identified in the first paragraph of this report.

Results

Based upon our review, we believe that the audit currently meets the standards set forth by generally accepted auditing standards, Government Auditing Standards and the requirements of Uniform Guidance and the *Audit Guide for Recipients and Auditors*, including its compliance supplement, issued by Legal Services Corporation (LSC), Office of Inspector General.

This report is intended solely for the LSC-OIG.

Very truly yours,



McBride, Lock & Associates, LLC

Check Signer Changes request September 19, 2020

First Security General Account and IOLTA Account

Add:

- Ginger Risner

Remove

- Angela Foster
- Helen Gratil

7000 TRAVEL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

7010 Private Motor Vehicle

All employees and members of the Board of Directors shall be reimbursed for their privately owned vehicle mileage using the General Services Administration rate. The current rates are as follows.

Modes of Transportation	Rate per mile
Airplane*	\$1.27
Privately owned automobile	\$0.575
Motorcycle	\$0.545

* Airplane nautical miles (NMs) should be converted into statute miles (SMs) or regular miles when submitting a voucher using the formula (1 NM equals 1.15077945 SMs). For calculating the mileage difference between airports, please visit the U.S. Department of Transportation's [Inter-Airport Distance](#) web site.

Updated rates can be found at this [link](#).

The shortest major highway route (map mileage whether paper based or electronic) will determine the maximum mileage allowed and in town travel shall be computed by actual mileage. Other travel may require actual mileage computation, such as VOCA travel, depending on the funds being used. Actual tolls and parking fees shall also be reimbursed, with submitted receipts.

7020 Out of State Travel

Travel may be achieved by plane, train, bus, taxi, private vehicle/aircraft, rented automobile; whichever method serves the requirements of Legal Aid most economically and advantageously. Transportation to and from airports, bus terminals, or train depots should be the most economical means available.

Reimbursement for out of state travel will be the lesser of coach class airfare or the established rate of private car mileage, based on map mileage (whether paper-based or electronic) when driven. When figuring private car mileage, if more than airfare, then the traveler may include the saved costs of airport parking and transfers at the destination. Commercial airline tickets should be purchased at least 14 days prior to travel if possible. Airline tickets purchased with less than a 14-day advance shall be explained in writing to the Executive Director and approved by him/her in

writing prior to purchase. Legal Aid may pay or reimburse the traveler for checked baggage fees for the first bag only. Fees for additional bags must be paid by the traveler and are not eligible for reimbursement.

7030 Travel Per Diem Rates

Reimbursement for lodging will be based on the actual amount paid by the traveler. The maximum daily allowance will be limited to the Federal Per Diem Rate depending upon the location. Room taxes are NOT included in the Federal Per Diem Rate and may be claimed for reimbursement.

Current rates are \$96 for all of Arkansas except Garland County, \$103 for Garland County. Staff should check rates at the link below regularly for updates.

Room rates exceeding the Federal Per Diem Rate must include a justification why it was in the best interest of Legal Aid and must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or designee.

Whenever possible, lodging reservations should be made at locations with a preferred cancelation policy of 4 p.m. on the day of arrival, but a minimum cancelation policy of 24 hours. Reservations will not be made using online services that require prepayment with no cancelation allowed.

Per Diem rates can be found at the following link.

[Federal Per Diem Rates](#)

Current meals and incidental expenses for Arkansas are as follows:

M&IE Total (1)	Continental Breakfast/ Breakfast (2)	Lunch (2)	Dinner (2)	Incidental Expenses	First & Last Day of Travel (3)
\$55 (Arkansas except one county)	\$13	\$14	\$23	\$5	\$41.25
\$61 (Garland County)	\$14	\$16	\$26	\$5	\$45.75

The separate amounts for breakfast, lunch and dinner listed in the chart are provided should you need to deduct any of those meals from your Travel Expense Form. For example, if your trip includes meals that are already paid for by Legal Aid (such as through a registration fee for a conference, or meals included with a hotel room), you will need to deduct those meals from your voucher. The last column lists the amount staff receive for the first and last calendar day of travel. The first and last calendar day of travel is calculated at 75 percent. Staff should check the Federal Per Diem rate regularly for updates. The rates include taxes and tips and reimbursement will not be given separately.

7040 Travel Period Defined

The “travel period” extends from the time an employee leaves home or office to the time of return to home or office at the end of a trip (i.e., portal to portal, exclusive of time off for weekends networking, holidays, or leave time). Breakfast may be claimed if the travel begins before, or ends after, 7:00 a.m.; dinner may be claimed if travel begins before, or ends after, 7:00 p.m. No per diem will be allowed when the travel period is less than ten (10) hours and occurs in the same calendar day except as set forth in 7030 above. For out of state travel only, the method of figuring per diem for first day and last day travel set forth at www.gsa.gov/mie applies.

7050 Submission of Travel Reimbursement Requests

All requests for travel reimbursement must be submitted to the Fiscal Officer after review by the immediate supervisor within 5 days following the end of the month which the travel expenses were incurred. Reimbursement will be issued within 2 weeks after approval. Receipts for expenses, except meals, must be submitted for reimbursement. Travel not claimed by the end of the month following the month in which the travel was performed will be forfeited, absent waiver by the Executive Director for good cause shown.

7060 Advance Travel Funds

If travel is anticipated for which the employee does not have adequate funds, the employee may request an advance through the Executive Director based on estimated time and distances. After travel completion, the employee shall present to the Fiscal Officer appropriate documentation supporting the travel. If an underpayment has been made, a check will be written to reimburse the employee for the difference. If an overpayment has been made, the employee will be expected to repay to Legal Aid the amount of the overpayment within 14 days. If the employee has not repaid Legal Aid at the end of this period, the amount will be deducted from the employee’s pay.

7070 Executive Director Travel

The Executive Director will submit his travel/reimbursement/expense requests/training and leave requests to the Northwest Operations Manager for approval. On a quarterly basis, the Fiscal Officer will present to the Audit/Finance Committee of the Board of Directors the Executive Director’s travel/expenses/leave requests for the previous quarter. The Committee will then conduct a desk review of these expenses and make a report to the Board annually at the December meeting, or more often as necessary or if discrepancies or issues arise.

6040 Loan Repayment Assistance Plan (LRAP)

A. Purpose

Legal Aid of Arkansas has a loan repayment assistance plan for attorneys with law school loans and for other exempt positions requiring a minimum four-year college degree. The purpose of the plan is to improve the ability of Legal Aid of Arkansas to attract and retain attorneys-professional staff of ability and commitment who are deterred from applying to, or remaining in, legal services by the burden of their ~~law~~-school loans. Assistance ~~to these employees~~ in meeting ~~these~~ educational debts is likely to increase the attractiveness of employment with Legal Aid ~~of Arkansas~~, increase longevity and reduce turnover, and thus increase the level of experience and skill available to effectively represent clients.

Under the plan attorneys-professional staff will receive direct grants to use toward educational debt payments. ~~Legal Aid of Arkansas recognizes that the assistance provided in this plan will often not be adequate to meet an employee's financial needs in paying debt but hopes this assistance will relieve some of the burden.~~

B. Eligibility

All full-time Legal Aid ~~of Arkansas-professional staff~~ attorneys are eligible to participate in this plan following completion of six months ~~of~~ employment and removal from probationary status and may continue to receive benefits until they have tendered notice of their resignation, have been notified of their termination, or their loan is paid in full. ~~Debts for the cost of law school attendance are eligible for assistance, and payments will be made by Legal Aid of Arkansas to the employee.~~ Payments under the LRAP are subject to taxation as income and will be reported ~~to the IRS as income~~ on the ~~attorneys~~-W-2 form.

Employees will be required to take advantage of any loan reimbursement programs offered by their schools or other programs available to them, and to notify Legal Aid of Arkansas of the existence of such programs, before applying for assistance under this plan. Assistance provided by Legal Aid of Arkansas will be secondary to other assistance that may be available to the employee, including assistance provided by the Legal Services Corporation.

C. Operation

The Human Resources ~~Specialist-Manager or designee~~ will, upon the removal of probationary employment status, ~~ask potentially eligible~~ notify attorneys-professional staff to submit an Intent to Participate form of their opportunity to participate. Each ~~attorney-staff member~~ desiring to participate in the plan shall notify the Human Resources ~~Specialist-Manager or designee~~ of intent to participate no later than ten (10) days prior to the

first scheduled payment. The attorney-staff member will provide the total debt owed, monthly payment, the name, address, phone number, and account number of the creditor. Eligible loans will include Federal Stafford Loans, Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS), Federal Perkins Loans, Law Access Loans (LAL), Law Student Loans (LSL), law school-based loans, other educational loans used for law school to obtain a relevant degree to the professional position, and Bar exam/Bar study loans. Ineligible loans would include ~~non-law school educational loans~~, non-educational loans, loans from family members, credit card debt loans, and loans commingled with spouses, partners or parents. ~~In the event that law school loans are commingled with other loans, then the employee will provide this information, along with an apportionment of the law school and non-law school amounts, and the repayment assistance will be at the discretion of Legal Aid of Arkansas.~~ By the last day of each quarter, participating staff will be required to submit ~~an LRAP Claim Form with proof of loan payments for the quarter to the Human Resources Specialist Manager or designee.~~ It is incumbent upon the employee to avail himself/herself of this benefit by complying with the terms and conditions thereof. Failure to do so serves as a forfeiture of the benefit.

D. Calculation of Assistance Amount

~~Attorneys-Eligible professional staff are eligible for may receive~~ up to ~~\$100~~ 300 per month assistance to be paid in ~~\$150~~ installments on the first two pay periods of each month. ~~Attorneys-Staff~~ should notify the Human Resources ~~Specialist Manager or designee~~ at once if the status of their loan changes, if repayment assistance is received or becomes available from another source, or when the loan is paid in full. In the event of an overpayment to the Employee, Legal Aid of Arkansas may withhold the excess amount paid from any amount due the employee.

E. Discretionary Application

The Executive Director will recommend to the Audit-Finance Committee/Board of Directors ~~each year at the December meeting as~~ necessary whether sufficient resources are available to fund this benefit for the coming Calendar year and the Board will vote on whether to include this benefit in the annual budget.

Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation
Arkansas Access to Justice Commission
Annual Report - 2019
Prepared September 9, 2020

For background information about the formation, mission, and operations, please see the Organizational Overview attached as Exhibit A. This report reflects activities and accomplishments for both the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission and Foundation for 2019, as well as current and pending projects. Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, staff have been working remotely. The transition has been a smooth one, with the technology already in place allowing for weekly video staff meetings, chats, and online project management. Our VoIP telephone system has allowed our staff to continue fielding calls during regular business hours, and all Commission, Foundation, and committee meetings have continued as usual.

Arkansas Access to Justice Commission

Key Activities and Accomplishments

- The Commission, along with the Foundation, adopted a comprehensive work plan for 2020-2023. A copy of this plan is attached as Exhibit B.
- Commission staff made 24 presentations to bar associations, civic organizations, and other groups on topics related to limited scope representation, IOLTA, access to justice, and legal aid
- Eight estate planning and expungement clinics held in partnership with legal aid, churches, bar associations, and other community partners.
- AR Free Legal Answers is an online legal advice clinic managed by the Commission in partnership with the American Bar Association and the Arkansas Bar Association. In 2019, the Commission partnered with both of the state's law schools to host four clinics where law students worked with licensed attorneys to provide answers to questions submitted by low and moderate-income Arkansans. Through these clinics and CLE trainings, 31 new attorney volunteers were recruited to the program. This substantial increase in volunteers helped AR Free Legal Answers serve a total of 318 clients in 2019, a 53% increase compared to 2018.
- The Commission partnered with the Arkansas Bar Association to develop an "Emeritus Attorney Rule", Administrative Order 15.3, which was ultimately adopted by the Court. This rule will facilitate more pro bono by clarifying that retired and voluntarily inactive attorneys are permitted to do pro bono work.
- Approximately 100 attorneys attended a symposium hosted by the Commission in Fayetteville. The symposium focused on equipping attorneys to provide limited scope representation to clients. Judges, the Office of Professional Conduct, the Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission, and limited scope representation practitioners participated in panels at the event.

Current and Pending Projects

- The Commission is currently completing an assessment of available technology (computers, internet, wi-fi, etc.) in courthouses and county law libraries around the state to determine what technical assistance and resources are needed to best serve the self-help public, consistent with Judicial Branch Strategic Plan and the Conference of Chief Justice's 100% Access Resolution.

- Committees of the Commission are studying and developing recommendations for possible modification of Ark. R. Civ. P.'s provisions regarding service by mail and service by publication in light of USPS policy changes during the coronavirus pandemic regarding signatures for restricted delivery certified mail and in light of the digitization and expense of newspapers of general circulation, including the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation

Financial Overview

As of the close of 2019, the Foundation's assets totaled \$2.57 million, of which \$1.56 was restricted for specific grantmaking purposes. The Foundation's annual audit recently concluded, with the Foundation receiving an unqualified opinion.

The Foundation's 2019 IOLTA income was \$622,990--the highest it has been since 2007, due largely to higher interest rates and bank compliance reviews conducted by Access to Justice staff. Revenue from unclaimed and unidentifiable trust account funds was \$14,345. As of 12/31/2019, a total of \$1.52 million of the Bank of America Settlement funds remained available for grants. Under the terms of an agreement with the Foundation's grantees, those funds will be distributed by the close of 2021.

Grants

The Foundation's grantmaking capacity has been greatly diminished since the 2008 financial crisis. The 2019 recovery, though very promising at the time, has proven to be short-lived in light of the 2020 financial crisis brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. Bank settlement funds have bridged much of the gap left by the lack of sufficient IOLTA Revenues, allowing the Foundation to make grants primarily out of those funds since 2012. In 2019, the Foundation made a total of \$909,190 in Bank of America Settlement grants and \$200,000 in IOLTA grants.

The grants have been used by the Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas for a variety of projects, including the establishment of a Clean Slate Program that provides criminal records sealing and other reentry services and a comprehensive fair housing program, which our grants were leveraged to obtain larger grants from HUD. Services that stabilize families, housing, education, and economic security were among other services funded by grants from the Foundation in 2019.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

- The Foundation conducted grantee site visits for the Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas for the first time in the program's history. The visits served both as a means of monitoring program quality and identifying unaddressed needs. The site visits resulted in grants issued in early 2020 to upgrade technology that allowed for a nimble transition to remote work when the coronavirus pandemic struck, and for increased grant management capacity.
- The Foundation also completed a transition to the use of Quickbooks for its bookkeeping and financial reporting and to use the use of Hogan Taylor, LLP to handle the Foundation's bookkeeping, accounts payable, and financial statement preparation. The transition has resulted in a significant decrease in staff time devoted to financial matters and has enabled the implementation of a formalized system of internal controls to ensure all financial transactions receive appropriate approvals and oversight.
- The Supreme Court's creation of an IOLTA Program Manager position to oversee operation of the IOLTA Program and conduct routine attorney and bank compliance reviews has resulted in

the recuperation of thousands of dollars owed to the Foundation, as well as a significant increase in the amount of unclaimed and unidentifiable funds remitted to the Foundation.

- For the first time in the Foundation's history, staff and board members developed a Reserve Policy and, in early 2020, funded a reserve fund, to hedge against future economic downturns for both operating costs and grantmaking. The 2020 economic downturn has halted contributions to the reserve fund, but a substantial amount has been set aside and remains available as a resource if needed.
- The Foundation raised a total of \$61,679 in donations for legal aid also held its second annual fundraising event, netting a total of nearly \$6,600 for the Foundation's endowment fund.

Current and Pending Projects

- The Foundation is developing a comprehensive set of financial policies and procedures to address all aspects of the organization's financial management, including accounts payable and receivable, segregation of duties, investments, gifts, conflicts of interest, and other matters.
- The Foundation is initiating comprehensive attorney IOLTA compliance efforts, as well as sustained bank compliance monitoring efforts to cushion the financial blow of the current economic crisis, and is working to build its endowment fund in the hopes that it will ultimately generate enough revenues to allow the Foundation to engage in sustained grantmaking, regardless of the economic climate.

Organizational Overview

Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation

The Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity that serves as the fundraising and grantmaking arm of the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission. The Foundation also manages the state's Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program. Since its formation in 1985, the Foundation has been one of the largest sources of funding for civil legal aid in the state, having made grants collectively totaling more than \$15 million.

The Foundation was originally created in 1985 as the Arkansas IOLTA Foundation, Inc. Its authority to manage the IOLTA program is governed by court rules that prohibit attorneys from profiting from their clients' money and that require them to deposit client funds in interest-bearing accounts that benefit the Foundation.¹ All 50 states have IOLTA programs. In addition to receiving interest earned on lawyer trust accounts, the Foundation also receives unclaimed and unidentifiable IOLTA trust account funds.

The Arkansas IOLTA Foundation's name changed in 2014 as a result of a merger with a non-profit corporation formed in 2009 that was created for the purpose of raising money to support legal aid. The merged entity's purposes now include not only administration of the IOLTA Program and related grants, but fundraising to support legal aid and access-to-justice-related initiatives. The purposes, as restated in the Arkansas Supreme Court's 2014 opinion approving the merger and in the merged organization's Articles of Incorporation, are as follows:

- To receive interest income generated by deposits in trust accounts for the benefit of clients maintained by attorneys practicing in the state of Arkansas;
- To conduct fundraising; and
- To utilize such revenues received from interest income and fundraising to support programs
 - that promote and support access to the justice system by persons in Arkansas who cannot afford a lawyer and for whom the law does not provide a right to counsel;
 - that educate the public regarding the needs of Arkansans related to meaningful access to the civil justice system;
 - that provide student loans and scholarships for the education of lawyers;
 - that improve the administration of justice in the State of Arkansas;
 - that assist in support activities of institutions and organizations which improve the administration of justice, including, but not limited to, the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, the Center for Arkansas Legal Services, Inc., and Legal Aid of Arkansas, Inc., to fulfill their missions of providing access to justice and legal aid to Arkansans who cannot afford a lawyer and who qualify for legal services; and
 - that carry out other purposes that may be approved from time to time by the Arkansas Supreme Court.

¹ Ark. R. Prof'l Conduct 1.15

The Foundation is currently staffed by employees of the court who also operate the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission. It has no employees of its own, and has not since 2009. The 2008 financial crisis so adversely impacted interest rates that the Foundation was not generating enough revenue to support any staff or make grants. This crisis coincided with the creation of the Executive Director position for the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, to which the Court assigned responsibility for managing the IOLTA program. The subsequent addition of Commission staff who also provide staff support to the Foundation has allowed the IOLTA Program to rebuild and grow. The Foundation currently provides reciprocal support to the Commission by covering nearly all of its expenses outside of personnel and Commission-related travel.

Arkansas Access to Justice Commission

The Arkansas Access to Justice Commission was created at the request of the Arkansas Bar Association, which petitioned the Arkansas Supreme Court in August of 2003 to establish the Commission. The Arkansas Supreme Court granted the Association's request in a per curiam opinion handed down on December 18, 2003, giving the newly-formed Commission the mission of providing "equal access to justice in civil cases to all Arkansans." See *In re Ark. Bar Petition for Creation of the Ark. Access to Justice Comm'n*, No. 03-079, 178 S.W.3d 457 (2003).

The Commission operates as a committee of the Supreme Court and receives funding for basic operating costs—staff salaries and benefits, insurance, and Commission travel expenses—from the Supreme Court Bar of Arkansas, which is the Supreme Court fund through which annual attorney license fees are paid ("Bar of Arkansas").

The Commission's responsibilities, as set forth in the per curiam order establishing it, include the following:

- Develop an objective and accurate understanding of the problems Arkansans face in using our legal system to obtain justice in civil cases
- Devise a strategic plan for statewide delivery of civil legal services to all Arkansans
- Review and report on the efficient allocation and application of available resources
- Educate the people of Arkansas about the importance of equal access to justice and of the problems many Arkansans face in gaining effective access to our civil justice system
- Encourage a strong and consistent commitment to providing equal access to justice among the leaders of our state
- Suggest innovations that will increase effective access to the civil justice system for all Arkansans
- Provide technical and other support to the efforts of the legislature, courts, and other government agencies to improve access to justice for the people of Arkansas
- Develop stable, long-term funding and other resources to support access to civil justice

The Commission's Executive Director, Program Coordinator, and Executive Assistant oversee the work of fulfilling these objectives in coordination with various stakeholders, including the judiciary, the bar, legal service programs, and the state's two law schools. In addition, they staff the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation, which oversees the Arkansas IOLTA Program. The

Commission's IOLTA Program Manager administers the day-to-day operations of that program, including all aspects of attorney and bank compliance with Arkansas rules governing IOLTA. Commission staff also manage other aspects of the Foundation's operations, including the development of an annual budget, board management, fundraising, grant program oversight, timely preparation of all required filings with the Arkansas Secretary of State and IRS, and website maintenance and content development. The ability of state-employed Commission staff to provide such support to the Foundation is specifically authorized in special language contained in the Supreme Court Bar of Arkansas's appropriation.

Arkansas Access to Justice Commission Work Plan (2019-2022)

Policy, Rules & Legislation Committee			
Outcomes: What do we want to achieve?	Strategies: How can we achieve it?	Metrics: How can we measure progress?	Commissioners Responsible: Who will do it?
<p>Rules of Civil Procedure should be simplified, consistent with constitutional requirements, to put self-represented parties on notice of court proceedings and afford them a meaningful opportunity to participate and appear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amend Ark. R. Civ. P. 4 to simplify service of process and permit service by warning order to be accomplished by posting on a website designed for that purpose ● Study and recommend revisions to Rule 55 on default judgments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 50-state survey of rules on service by publication completed, including review of states with alternatives to paper publication ● Engagement of other groups to review and offer input (Committee on Civil Practice, Circuit Clerks, ATLA, ArkBar, Administrative Office of the Courts) ● Proposed amendments submitted to Committee on Civil Practice for study and submission to the Arkansas Supreme Court 	
<p>Private criminal background check companies release only accurate records reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop proposal for Arkansas that would condition access to court records on periodic updating of private databases and elimination of any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study how other states have done this (UT, HI, MN, etc.) and the approaches used (court rule, legislation, etc.) 	

	record not contained in CourtConnect (base on Uniform Criminal Records Accuracy Act?)		
Attorneys in government practice provide more hours of pro bono service within two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a model policy regarding pro bono service by government attorneys. • Meet with agency leaders to discuss pro bono service and encourage adoption of model policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example policies from other states are gathered • A working group of officials from state agencies (Attorney General, DHS, DFA, etc.) is convened to review draft(s) • Self-reported pro bono hours from government attorneys are higher in 2020 and 2021 than in 2019 	
Every law student in Arkansas will provide at least six hours of pro bono service within three years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with administration at the University of Arkansas School of Law to discuss a mandatory pro bono service requirement. • Meet with the Arkansas Bar Association's Law School Committee. • Collect research on benefits of pro bono service during law school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Dean McCabe for preliminary feedback. • U of A adopts a pro bono service policy. 	

Resource Development Committee			
Outcomes: What do we want to achieve?	Strategies: How can we achieve it?	Metrics: What can we measure?	Persons Responsible: Who will do it?
Settlement funds received by the Arkansas Attorney General's office to address consumer fraud and the opioid crisis are directed to legal aid programs to provide legal interventions that address and prevent resulting harms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with Administrative Office of the Courts and legal aid programs to craft proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal completed • Meeting scheduled with Attorney General Rutledge and staff 	
The Arkansas General Assembly will provide more funding for civil legal aid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach the legislature every two years with a proposal tailored to the current environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request completion of interim legislative study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim McLarty to contact Rep. Dwight Tosh
The endowment fund has sufficient resources to serve as an adequate rainy day fund for legal aid, should other funding sources dwindle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct a portion of IOLTA revenue to the endowment fund. • Increase giving to endowment fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation to adopt a reserve policy directing a portion of annual IOLTA revenue to endowment • Foundation to evaluate feasibility of conducting a spring fundraising appeal 	
Staff capacity for resource development is increased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a resource development position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show progress to Supreme Court with additional IOLTA 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternatively, engage a resource development consultant to provide support for resource development efforts. 	<p>staff position already created; consider asking the Court next year for additional staff position for resource development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation to evaluate feasibility of engaging a consultant to assist with on-the-ground work of building and staffing a successful annual campaign 	
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Research & Technical Assistance Committee			
Outcomes: What do we want to achieve?	Strategies: How can we achieve it?	Metrics: What can we measure?	Persons Responsible: Who will do it?
Self-help resources will be available at every circuit clerk's office within three years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the Arkansas Association of Counties and similar associations to provide training to all 75 circuit clerks and/or their staff on legal information vs. advice and available resources, including "on-demand" training videos. Provide website links to printable self-help fact sheets to clerks. Survey e-filing judicial districts to determine which ones have public access terminals; equip clerks to set up computer stations with access to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website landing page is created for training videos, materials, forms, and other resources. # of trainings held # videos created; # views Pilot project completed and evaluated Law library expenditures for FastCase and other resources 	

	<p>self-help resources by developing “landing page” of such resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with county law library boards to direct existing resources to support the upkeep of local technology, starting with Jefferson and Sebastian Counties as possible pilots. ● Provide training and resources to public libraries on landing page of self-help resources 	that can be used by public	
Judges better understand how to interact with self-represented litigants and provide support resources, to the extent permitted by the Code of Judicial Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop benchbook with best practices for interacting with self-represented litigants, using National Center for State Courts as a starting point. ● Provide training to judges, including training by peers in other jurisdictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benchbook and other training materials developed ● Training curriculum developed ● # of trainings held 	
Litigants with contested matters will have the opportunity to use limited scope legal services and mediation to inexpensively resolve simple or discrete matters that are contested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with the ADR Commission and limited scope attorneys to develop a limited scope “toolkit” for contested cases that get mediated ● Study the possibility of utilizing issue mediation and conflict coaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Toolkit developed ● # of cases with contested issues resolved through mediation 	
The Arkansas Supreme Court adopts standardized forms for high need case types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission studies existing Supreme Court Committees and develops recommendation for creation of Arkansas Supreme Court Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forms Committee is established ● Number of forms that 	

	<p>on Forms, with parameters for composition, scope, and charge (e.g., goal is the standardization of frequently-used pleadings to improve the practice of law)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forms Committee to update and publish existing forms (based on legal aid forms, Arkansas Form Book) ● Forms Committee to publish other forms based on areas of highest need. 	<p>Committee publishes annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of forms that Committee review and updates annually ● Form usage (website analytics on page views, downloads, available data from Office of Justice Statistics, etc.) 	
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The Consumer Protection Group is comprised of three full time attorneys, Anaicka Ortiz Reed, Susan Purtle, Mallory Sanders, a part time attorney, Hollie Wilson, Jonathan Burgess, who is in the family group but who will file bankruptcies for us in the North Central and Jonesboro area, a part time paralegal, Heidi Jamison and two substantive part time attorneys, Chris Hussein, United Way attorney and Disaster coordinator, and George Butler, vet clinic volunteer and volunteer attorney both who provide support on helpline and review cases as Advocates of the Day. The Low-Income Tax Clinic Director, Jennifer Gardiner provides back up helpline support and participates as a full member of the group providing tax support to the consumer group and all of the substantive practice groups. Margaret Foster and Grenada Johnson from pro bono participate in group meetings and activities giving useful pro bono support on tort cases and working closely with the group on larger issues like sealing records. Mykayla Ladd, intake specialist in Jonesboro, assists Ms. Ortiz Reed and Ms. Jamison to speed the petition to seal cases along and meet clients in Jonesboro to retrieve papers and get documents signed.

Our group continues to examine and pursue methods that will make the group more efficient and effective for clients. The tension between helpline and substantive advocacy continue but group members are encouraged to pursue complaints, counterclaims, third-party complaints and motions to dismiss on cases accepted for extended services.

With the encouragement of Legal Services Corporation, the group adopted a work plan which is attached to give you an idea of the work and community education and outreach of the group during 2020.

The advocacy goals of the group for the remainder of 2020 and into 2021 are to combat racism and discriminatory practices pre- and post-sale in the marketplace using consumer law remedies. An additional focus is to combat racism in the courts and court personnel in Crittenden county where clients need to seal their records for employment. We've centralized the sealing process with our paralegal handling all the petitions except those in North Central Arkansas under the supervision of attorneys and the work group leader to push courts and court personnel to stop refusals to file petitions, repeated "lost" petitions, failure to present petitions to the Judge, failure by the Judges to sign petitions with no rational basis to do so except that the petitioner is African American. The work group recently discovered a practice in Crittenden county of breaking the charges from one arrest into multiple cases, requiring petitioners to file multiple cases to seal.

Community education efforts to rural communities and non-English speaking communities are a must. Working with the communications group using social media and in person outreach regarding the availability of resources to help with home improvement scams, sealing records and avoiding judgments by responding to lawsuits. This is critical to allow clients to raise defenses which are available because of discriminatory and illegal practices pre- and post-sale. The communications team will help the group push simple messages that translate well to at risk populations such as elderly, convicted felons who need to reenter the work force and limited English speakers unfamiliar with court processes and for whom simple message translate best. For example, the consumer group learned during 2019 that Marshallese clients believe that civil legal processes result in jail time. Their extreme fear of jail results in their failure to respond and follow through when served with lawsuits. At every stage of the process, advocates receive questions from Marshallese clients about whether they will go to jail if you raise the defense(s) available.

Litigation will be strengthened through training and support from the Director of Advocacy. The group has a paralegal with 8 months experience and two attorneys who have not practiced consumer law before. In addition to the advocacy discussed above, we have begun a bankruptcy practice to stop garnishment of wages, complaints have been initiated for racially based sales practices, repossessions, and failures to allow redemption of vehicles once repossessed. The three fulltime attorneys and the paralegal will attend the Consumer Rights Litigation conference in November. Since it will be virtual due to COVID-19, we

can afford to send all members. Our Marshallese and Spanish translators will attend Interpreter training offered by the Administrative Office of the courts in September.

Good stories

A Clay County husband and wife who were 75 and 74 respectively, came to Legal Aid because they wanted to file bankruptcy. They had recently purchased a truck that the wife could not drive due to a crippling condition. The truck was their only transportation and the dealer assured them she would be able to drive it. She did the grocery shopping and had to drive to provide care for her disabled sister. They felt their only option was to file bankruptcy. Legal Aid looked at the documents and revoked acceptance for failure to provide certain mandated disclosures. The dealer refunded the \$20,000+ paid and all negative credit reporting was avoided. The clients were able to purchase a smaller car and did not need to file bankruptcy.

A Greene County mom purchased a car and had a few payments left when the President declared a state of emergency due to COVID-19. The client's young daughter was exposed to COVID-19 at day care and doctors from St. Bernard's put the family in quarantine. The client communicated with the Seller that she could not leave her home or make payments because she was off the job due to COVID-19 but that she would catch up and pay the vehicle off in full when she returned to work. The Seller persisted in harassing her, threatening repossession, and driving by her home despite the circumstances. The client contacted Legal Aid of Arkansas in a panic because the seller had been to her work to threaten and law enforcement had been called. A Legal Aid of Arkansas attorney intervened with the seller to stop the repossession explaining the rules of quarantine and that the client would be able to pay when she resumed work. The attorney negotiated with the seller to permanently drop the repossession, pay the seller the remaining balance and obtained clear title to the car for the client.

CONSUMER WORKGROUP WORK PLAN

2020

General Aspirations

- Use advocacy to address the need for racial justice in the consumer marketplace.
- Protect clients with sealed records from workplace discrimination, provide access to employment through access to professional and drivers licenses, and ensure employers follow proper procedure with regard to background checks.
- Protect wages, housing, employment or otherwise stabilize a client household.
- Seek attorney fees in all consumer cases where fees are available.
- Defend debtors in collection actions filed by unscrupulous debt buyers.
- Enforce debtors' rights under state and federal law by challenging default judgments and defective service; raise due process and subject matter jurisdiction when appropriate.
- Coordinate with ongoing Legal Aid of Arkansas projects to prioritize clients from certain groups: veteran's hospitals, MLP, LEP community outreach, etc., and considering minority populations and those with no other resources.
- Identify population groups likely to experience consumer law issues and address systemic issues that perpetuate poverty.
- Partner with other workgroups to provide comprehensive services.
- Partner with pro bono team to develop training materials for pro bono attorneys handling consumer cases.
- Partner with pro bono team to bring in more private attorney and corporate attorney support, while encouraging outside counsel to join Legal Aid of Arkansas' Pro Bono Panel.

Overall Considerations for Case Acceptance

The priorities of the Consumer Work Group for 2020 are incorporated by reference in this work plan. Priority is given to those cases most likely to result in widespread systemic change for large numbers of the client population. Cases for extended services should have good facts, a sympathetic and cooperative client, and an available legal remedy. Legal Aid of Arkansas has three full time attorneys for consumer cases covering 31 counties and limited consumer pro bono attorneys.

When evaluating a case for extended representation, the workgroup will consider:

1. The likelihood of **legal success**;
2. The amount of **program resources required** to address the legal problem;
3. The **availability of program resources** for effective representation;
4. Any particular **vulnerability of the applicant**;
5. **Alternative community and pro bono resources**;
6. The **seriousness** of the legal matter, including its impact on the applicant and whether the matter is common or systemic in nature; and
7. The long-term **benefit of representation** to the client and/or client community.

2020 Goals

- Use advocacy to achieve racial justice in the marketplace.
- Make advice letters easily accessible for use by work group members.
- Recover a minimum of \$500 for each case with 3.5 or more hours work.
- Aggressively pursue fees in appropriate cases.
- Collect \$5,000 in attorney fees for 2020.
- Handle 120 new LITC cases in order to meet measurable outcomes expected by IRS.
- Conduct 250 LITC consultations in order to meet measurable outcomes expected by IRS.
- Avoid \$1.1 million in tax for LITC clients
- Recover \$100,000 for LITC clients from the IRS.
- Handle 10 US Tax Court cases and recover attorney fees if possible.
- File two substantive cases in our priority areas in Federal Court.
- File or counterclaim in 15 substantive cases in our priority areas in any court in 2020.
- Advise and close helpline cases on the same day when appropriate.
- Put cases with questions into “pending work group meeting” status.
- Produce CLE on relevant consumer topics once per quarter.
- Respect one another and the work group members’ time.
- Coordinate with pro bono group to develop at least one training video for pro bono counsel.
- Coordinate with pro bono group to outline consumer portion of training and forms packet for pro bono counsel.

Other Matters

- PAI referral cases:
 - Draft substantive legal advice to be given
 - provide an assessment of the course of action to be taken
 - evaluate the chances of success
 - provide the name of the cause of action if known
- Income Tax – where there is a tax dispute with state or federal collectors, extended services for meritorious claims through Low Income Taxpayer Clinic. See attached Low Income Taxpayer Priorities for more detail.
- Identity Theft – brief services to victims, referral to law enforcement, provide clients with assistance in disputing inaccurate credit reporting.
- Incorporation for Nonprofits – where a nonprofit has legitimate basis for incorporation and for application for tax-exempt status, extended services to client wishing to start the nonprofit. Refer to pro bono panel or to University of Arkansas School of Law Transaction Clinic if no available attorney.

Advice and Limited Services

For cases that are not accepted for extended services the attorney will draft advice in the Legal Server record so they can be reviewed and closed. If the client needs written advice, the attorney will draft the advice and/or the request for further information.

Consumer group members will make materials accessible for advice and brief services. Consumer group members will save good advice letters clearly designated as to the subject of the advice in the letter in Sharepoint for use by work group members.

Attorneys will refer clients to financial counselling when free resources are available.

Attorneys will negotiate payment plans to avoid garnishment of wages or bank accounts as resources are available.

Community Education

- Educate low income client groups in budgeting using materials developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.
- Make financial literacy, budgeting, and counseling available to individual clients when referred by a work group member as resources allow.
- Provide one training with the Center for Arkansas Legal Services at the statewide conference in the fall of 2020 on consumer issues affecting Legal Aid clients and the attorneys that represent them.
- Participate and present at the Opioid Symposium in Jonesboro on January 29, 2020, to learn what legal issues keep coming up for clients so those needs can be matched with the legal community. Use the symposium to identify the role Legal Aid can play.
- Conduct petition to seal outreach events during the Spring Break Road to Justice in Cross, Woodruff, and St. Francis counties.
- Conduct petition to seal outreach events in Cross, Woodruff, and St. Francis counties with pro bono attorneys.
- Continue to promote and build relationships with drug courts and probation officers, parole officers, court clerks, judges, and prosecutors.
- Partner with regional correctional facilities to assist incarcerated and recently released consumers regarding consumer issues such as accruing debt, child support, petitions to seal, and their rights regarding background checks.
- Develop user-friendly content for Arkansas Legal Services Online website with focus on *pro se* materials clients can use to respond to debt issues, including You Tube videos on student loans, repossession, and reentry.
- Develop and implement community presentations on pertinent issues affecting consumers as well as partnering with other work groups to provide presentations.
- Partner with John 3:16, a spiritual boot camp for men with addictions in Independence County to address reentry issues.

- Partner with John 3:17, a twelve-month faith-based recovery center for women in Jackson County to address reentry issues for women.
- Partner with the Arkansas Coalition for Marshallese to educate consumers regarding car buying, avoiding medical debt, and preventing garnishment.
- Work with the Communications team to produce a video about prevention of consumer problems before a lawsuit as part of the preventive prong of the communication plan.
- Adequately publicize events to provide maximum participation and impact.
- Focus on underserved communities in Legal Aid's service area, including but not limited to the Marshallese community, people with criminal records, and rural populations including Madison, Carroll, Izard, Stone, Fulton, Sharp, Clay, Lawrence, Randolph and Woodruff counties.
- Partner with Elder Victims of Crime attorney to perform outreach in Boone, Baxter, Carroll, Cleburne, Fulton, Izard, Madison, Marion, Newton Searcy, Stone, Van Buren, Cleburne, Izard, and Stone counties.
- Continue outreach partnership with Mississippi County Economic Opportunity Commission.
- Distribute Legal Aid of Arkansas and LITC materials to all counties in the North Central counties as early as possible in 2020.
- Continue to support the Washington County Public Law Library helpdesk and Seven Hills Homeless Shelter helpdesk.
- Develop relationships with universities and community colleges in the Legal Aid of Arkansas service area and arrange presentations at these schools.
- Each full-time attorney/advocate should strive to perform a minimum of two outreach events during 2020 as long as it doesn't conflict with an existing work project.
- Give annual presentation to Brother to Brother Chapter at Mid-South Community College about petitions to seal and background checks.
- Conduct disaster outreach as part of the LSC Disaster Preparedness grant.
- Work with the Young Lawyers Section of the Arkansas Bar to provide outreach and education.
- Work with I Made a Difference in Jackson County helping young minorities with budgeting, job applications, self-sufficiency, and financial responsibilities.
- Focus on issues that most affect clients
 - Answering a complaint to prevent default judgments
 - Dealing with collections
 - Financing a vehicle
 - Understanding credit and interest
 - Understanding tax issues and avoiding scams
 - Preventing problems *before* a lawsuit is filed
 - Exploring issues that impact racial justice.

School Presentations as resources are available

- Develop presentations for schools
- Teach high school students and parent groups about the services Legal Aid of Arkansas and the Low Income Taxpayer Clinic offer.

- Provide information to students in areas affecting their lives
 - Credit cards
 - Car financing

Communication

- Work with the Communications team to update the Legal Aid of Arkansas and the Central Arkansas Legal Services website so that it is client friendly, readable, and visually understandable, in order to communicate the general services of Legal Aid, the priorities adopted for 2020, and the work we are doing.
- Provide client stories where we have impacted lives in a positive way. Mark cases as good stories in Legal Server.
- Build out a Consumer work group profile for posting on website and Facebook.
- Provide flyers and information regarding events and outreach on social media and the website.
- Provide stories about pro bono attorneys who consistently volunteer for consumer clients.
- Coordinate with the Communications team to provide a general overview of the services of the consumer work group and LITC as part of their general overview prong of the communications plan.
- Consider the creation of some type of Google form for communication support.
- Participate in the Opioid planning grant. After the Opioid symposium work with the communications team to develop a communications strategy for the people affected. This includes interviews, focus groups, helping with the assessment of unmet civil legal needs in the area of consumer law and taxes. For ex. Have you forgone refunds because of your addiction? Consider highlighting possible delinquencies in filing tax returns, problems with drivers' licenses and sealing records.
- Author and submit blog posts monthly on the website.
- Post good stories and details about the work of the consumer group monthly on LITC Facebook and Legal Aid of AR Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube regarding reentry issues. The work group will evaluate using Tik Tok based on the Economic Justice work group's response to their Tik Tok videos.
- Work with Morgan O'Neill and the communications team to develop a comprehensive media strategy calculated to inform on tax and consumer issues. Prior to and during Reentry week, work with the communication team to focus on the importance of successful reentry for our communities. Consider a short video of an attorney, a provider, a parole officer or a client talking about issues they face with individuals seeking employment and shelter. Review the strategy every six months to ensure maximum penetration and success.
- Record and post a video of Chris Hussein using the Petition to Seal script developed by the Consumer Work group.
- Utilize local media and social media to promote the mission of the consumer work group and new issues affecting consumer protection. Schedule one interview on the community spotlight segment of KUAF 91.3 to highlight the work of Legal Aid during or prior to reentry week.

Attorney Training

- Attend training events throughout the year to enhance knowledge and practical skills.
- Host Artificial Intelligence CLE for the work group on how Artificial Intelligence is affecting the consumer marketplace.
- If funds permit, send attorneys to attend a national training event.
- Invite members of the Attorney General's office to give consumer law updates.
- Conduct 1 in-person consumer workgroup meeting.
- Participate in quarterly statewide task force meetings.
- Attend events that address racial justice in the marketplace.

Individual Member Goals

Anaicka- Get faster on cases and case management to maximize the services. Do outreach to underserved, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups. Work with client groups and providers to stress the importance of resolving consumer problems early.

Chris H. - Win more cases. Take on more cases.

Heidi- Get more comfortable with cases. Increase the number of cases that are sealed; increase the assistance she can provide for discovery and responses for attorneys.

Hollie- Be aware that toxic people or clients can slow your progress, make efforts to remove and resolve toxic situations. Do outreach to the counties within my responsibility.

Jennifer G. - Find an earned income tax case with a 2-year ban. Recruit new volunteers for the tax clinic. Do more presentations and panels about tax. Coordinate tax outreach with the communications teams.

Mallory- Continue progress made on getting Marshallese to seek help before judgment and garnishment of their wages. Protect wages, and thus housing and securing for underrepresented populations specifically by defending against, when possible, and working to reduce settle existing judgments with car lots and subsequent debt buyers of those deficiencies.

Margaret Foster- Prepare analysis of data for the Pro Bono grant (PBIF). Attend consumer group meetings as available, and work with team members to support outreach to potential consumer pro bono attorneys, to redesign pro bono attorney forms to address consumer workgroup areas and priorities, and begin development of training materials for pro bono counsel.

Susan- Spend limited time on advice; spend a majority of work and time focused on cases to be filed and in litigation. Focus on racial justice.

Veronica- Position career and goals to maximize the time for Legal Aid of Arkansas and pro bono clients.

COVID-19 Update

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with public health recommendations, Legal Aid of Arkansas staff started working remotely on March 16th. In May we allowed staff to start returning to the office, leaving it up to each individual staff member and their comfort level whether they would work in the office or remotely. This has been effective and those with health or childcare concerns are easily accommodated. Some staff are fully back in the office, some are working exclusively from home, and some are engaged in a hybrid model. This has had no adverse impact on client services. We will continue to allow staff to self-select their work location through the end of 2020.

There have been two cases of COVID among staff, both in the Springdale office. In each case staff had been closely following mask wearing and social distancing protocols and the infection was isolated to the one staff member. We had a professional deep cleaning after each incident prior to staff returning to the office.

We received an Arkansas Ready for Business grant for \$46,500 to assist us in reopening the offices and making them safe. This has included buying protective screens, signage, masks, deep cleaning, hand sanitizer dispensers, and various other efforts to assure the safety of our staff and clients.

The Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$521,600 has been fully expended on staff salary and benefits. This allowed to remain fully staff, and even increase staffing, despite some COVID related funding cuts that will be discussed below. We will apply for loan forgiveness through First Security Bank as soon as the government is ready to entertain those applications.

We have opened 3,059¹ new intakes during this time frame, only a 3% decrease from the same period in 2019. A sheet breaking down services in a variety of ways is attached. Some things of note:

- Low Income Taxpayers Clinic cases increased 97% (the IRS assistance lines were basically closed so people came to us for help);
- Medical Legal Partnership cases at Arkansas Children's Hospital decreased 55% (COVID resulted in decreased hospital provider referrals);
- New Marshallese clients increased 154.5% (we engaged in significant community outreach and the majority of these were tax cases)
- We have only 38 cases open for Spanish speaking clients, an alarmingly low number.
- While cases are up significantly in Benton and Washington County, they are down significantly in other locations, with this magnified in the Delta.
- The number of clients finding us through web searches or social media is up significantly. The number of clients listing social media as how they heard about Legal Aid increased 746% over 2019.

In 14.1% of new cases the client has identified COVID-19 as having a direct nexus to their legal problem. The top counties are consistent with the highest populations, while the top problem type has been Taxes followed by Landlord/Tenant. A breakdown is attached.

¹ 3-1-2020 to 7-31-2020

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

National Developments

The House of Representatives passed an FY 2021 appropriations package on July 31st that included \$465 million for the Legal Services Corporation. This is \$25 million more than the 2020 appropriation and would amount to almost a 6% increase in funding, including a 5% increase for field grants. Legal Aid would receive approximately \$1,642,474, or just over \$78,000 more than the current year. Last year, Congress and the White House reached agreement on a two-year budget deal, which provided top line spending numbers. The agreement provided for only a 1% increase in discretionary funds across-the-board in FY 2021. It is significant that LSC is one of the agencies that received an increase. The breakdown is in the table below.

Budget Category	FY 2020 Enacted	FY 2021 LSC Request	FY 2021 House Appropriation
Basic Field Grants	\$402,700,000	\$608,800,000	\$423,400,000
Technology Initiative Grants	\$4,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Pro Bono Innovation Fund	\$4,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Loan Repayment Assistance Program	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Management and Grants Oversight	\$22,000,000	\$26,200,000	\$24,000,000
Office of Inspector General	\$5,300,000	\$5,600,000	\$5,600,000
Total	\$440,000,000	\$652,600,000	\$465,000,000

The Senate has not yet considered regular appropriations bills over the summer and now has just a few weeks before the start of FY2021 on October 1st. The most likely outcome is a continuing resolution at 2020 funding levels until after the election.

Statewide/Program Developments

We closed 4,477 cases so far in 2020, comparable with the pace we were on in 2019. A closed case report for the period 1-1-2020 to 8-31-2020 is attached. We have completed 5,296 intakes in 2020 as of August 31st, a 2% increase over the same period last year.

Our statewide legal aid providers conference this year will be virtual, by Zoom, October 14-16. The agenda is attached. If you are interested in attending as a board member, please let us know and we will see if there are any slots available.

We received a Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Implementation Grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration. This \$1,000,000 grant, the largest in Legal Aid history, is spread over three years and geared to provide direct legal services to survivors of substance use disorder and their families. The grant started on September 1, 2020 and provides funding for approximately 2.6 FTE attorneys in addition to administrative and intake/support staff. This grant was written in partnership with the Center for Arkansas Legal Services, who also received \$1,000,000. The Center will provide the project director while Legal Aid will provide the data coordinator and both programs will have one legal support staff member focused on the project. Together, we were the only Legal Aid programs in the country to receive this funding. This is a progression of our HRSA Opioid planning grant we are in the final stages of, and a well-received presentation made by Helen Gratil at the HRSA

national conference in Washington, DC, the week before COVID started shutting everything down. We hope to leverage other Opioid funds as they become available to expand these services to “urban” areas, which include Benton, Craighead, Crittenden, Poinsett, Madison, and Washington Counties.

Our Fair Housing project also continues to grow, as we received a \$125,000 Education and Outreach initiative grant from HUD that started in August. This allows us to focus outreach and education about Fair Housing throughout Arkansas. When the grant is completed in 12 months, we have already been awarded an additional 12-month period. The EOI grant compliments our HUD Fair Housing Enforcement grant which is \$282,000 for the current year and rises to \$341,000 in year three. Combined, the HUD project is bringing in over \$800,000 in funding over the next 24 months.

Grants/Contracts/Fundraising

In addition to the two grants listed above, we received a donation from the Walmart Legal Department for \$75,000. The Walmart money comes without restrictions but will be used primarily to assist domestic violence survivors in Northwest Arkansas and Medical-Legal Partnership efforts.

Our Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant has been extended from 24 to 36 months. The original grant was for 24 months at \$241,312. We will receive an additional \$128,451 in year three, which allows us to continue with enhanced pro bono staffing and development. A full report on this grant will be the centerpiece of the December board meeting.

The special projects grant we receive from the Access to Justice Foundation was not renewed when it expired in June. The \$102,000 will be added to the back-end of the current Bank of America funding of \$250,000 annually. These funds will be totally depleted in the first half of 2022. IOLTA collections have declined throughout 2020 because of COVID and declining interest rates. After receiving \$130,000 for 2020, we expect a significant decline in 2021.

We received a distribution of \$17,124 from the Access to Justice Foundation Annual Campaign for Legal Aid for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. This represents 38.6% of total campaign revenues and is unrestricted funding.

We are supposed to receive an allocation of \$384,000 from the Arkansas Administration of Justice Fund annually. First, we saw this amount cut to around \$250,000, then \$200,000, then \$150,000. In August, we received only a 16.235% distribution, or \$5,336.29, down from \$12,831.47 the previous month, and from \$32,000 monthly when the funding was first received. This fund has been decimated by the lack of case filings as a result of COVID-19, but the decline started when the Circuit Judges raided the fund to pay for trail court assistants/case coordinators several years ago, and then convinced the legislature to protect their funding at 100% without regard of how this impacted the more than 20 programs without such protection.

Staff Recognition/Changes

Deputy Director [Andrea Walker](#), who is also responsible for our Helpline and Database, celebrated her 15th year with Legal Aid on August 19th.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We had [several students](#) who assisted us over the summer. [Here](#) is video reflection of one of the interns.

Angie Foster, an attorney in our Domestic Justice group working in Jonesboro, left in July with no notice. [Lauren Graham](#), a private attorney in Paragould who previously worked for Legal Aid in our Jonesboro office, is now working part-time to fill some of this void. [Teresa Franklin](#) will be transitioning from our Housing Group to Domestic Justice to help stabilize those services in the Northeast part of our service area. To that end, we are currently advertising a Housing attorney position in our Jonesboro office.

[Miki Sisco](#) has joined us in West Memphis as a staff attorney in our Domestic Justice group, coming to Legal Aid after working for the Legal Aid Society for Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland in Nashville.

[Johnathan Burgess](#) has joined us part-time, working out of his office in Batesville, primarily as a staff attorney in our Domestic Justice group and providing some bankruptcy assistance.

Kat Haley, a staff attorney in the Domestic Justice group working out of our Harrison office, was not retained at the end of her probation period. She has been replaced by [Mary Goff](#), who had previously worked as a staff attorney with Legal Aid. Ms. Goff is bilingual and will be oriented 50% of her time toward the Harrison area but work out of our Springdale office. This will be supplemented by [Rachael Freeman](#), a private attorney and ad litem in Harrison, also working part-time with our Domestic Justice group.

[Kevin DeLiban](#), our Economic Justice group leader, was named Director of Advocacy after a search and interview process assisted by staff members Teresa Franklin, Beth Shoupe, Margaret Foster, Mallory Sanders and board member Annie Smith. I very much appreciate the hard work devoted to this process by Professor Smith and our staff. Staff attorney [Victoria Frazier](#) has been hired to replace Mr. DeLiban in the Economic Justice group in West Memphis, while [Trevor Hawkins](#) has assumed the role of group leader. We are currently advertising an Economic Justice attorney position to be placed in Harrison or Springdale.

[Natalie Ramm](#) has joined us as a Fair Housing attorney in our Little Rock office. We are in the market for a Fair Housing investigator as [Nimi Ostowari](#) will be leaving at the end of October. We have also added **DeShawn Beard** as a paid Fair Housing community education intern in Little Rock, through a partnership with Philander Smith College.

[Joshua Lester](#) has joined us as an Equal Justice Works fellow at Arkansas Children's Hospital, sponsored by Walmart and Akin-Gump. Because of COVID, he was unable to take the Tennessee bar exam in July and will sit for the exam at the next opportunity.

[Maddy Goolsby](#) has joined us as a VISTA, focused on strategic planning, legal needs assessment, and task force development.

[Helen Gratil](#), our Director of Mission Engagement, has left Legal Aid to join the Center for Arkansas Legal Services as Director of the Opioid project. We will continue to benefit from Ms. Gratil, as she will

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

provide support and leadership for the Opioid grant/project listed above. We will be hiring a data collection and paralegal/legal support specialists to supplement administration of the Opioid project. We will advertise for a part-time Development Specialists to fill some of the void in the wake of Ms. Gratil's departure and supplement that with some reassignments among staff.

Veronica Fasciana has left her pro bono coordinator position with Legal Aid and we are currently conducting interviews for a replacement.

We have two additional part-time hires. [Dr. Sherry Thompson](#) will be working with our Opioid Planning grant until it expires at the end of November, while [Joan Camerlingo](#) will be returning to Legal Aid to engage in community outreach and education, primarily focused on our LITC program and the ESL community.

A current [office directory](#) and [organizational chart](#) are attached.

Future Board Meetings

The December 12th meeting will be held in Jonesboro. The current plan is for the meeting to be in-person and via ZOOM, but this is subject to change depending on the prevailing public health outlook.

Non-priority, non-emergency case types- None

COVID-19 CASES

03/01/2020 - 08/24/2020

Total COVID-19 Cases	Breakdown by County	Breakdown by Legal Problem Code	Rank
505	Arkansas: 3	01 Bankruptcy/Debtor Relief: 6	
14.10%	Baxter: 7	02 Collect/Repo/Def/Garnsh: 22	6
overall	Benton: 81	03 Contract/Warranties: 4	
21.60%	Boone: 18	09 Other Consumer/Finance: 2	
Housing	Carroll: 8	13 Special Education/Learning Disabilities: 1	
57.30%	Clark: 1	21 Employment Discrimination: 5	
Tax	Cleburne: 2	22 Wage Claims and Other FLSA Issues: 3	
8.80%	Craighead: 52	23 EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit): 1	
DJ	Crawford: 2	24 Taxes (Not EITC): 101	1
17.50%	Crittenden: 36	25 Employee Rights: 14	8
EJ	Cross: 3	29 Other Employment: 7	
11.80%	Desha: 1	30 Adoption: 3	
Consumer	Faulkner: 5	31 Custody/Visitation: 48	4
	Fulton: 1	32 Divorce/Sep./Annul.: 58	3
	Greene: 10	33 Adult Guardianship / Conservatorship: 8	
	Independence: 14	34 Name Change: 1	
	Izard: 1	36 Paternity: 6	
	Jackson: 7	37 Domestic Abuse: 23	5
	Lawrence: 3	38 Support: 2	
	Lee: 2	42 Neglected/Abused/Dependent: 2	
	Logan: 1	44 Minor Guardianship / Conservatorship: 9	
	Madison: 4	51 Medicaid: 7	
	Marion: 3	54 Home and Community Based Care: 1	
	Miller: 1	61 Federally Subsidized Housing: 5	
	Mississippi: 13	62 Homeownership/Real Property: 2	
	Monroe: 6	63 Private Landlord/Tenant: 82	2
	Newton: 2	64 Public Housing: 3	
	Not in Arkansas: 7	66 Housing Discrimination: 14	8
	Phillips: 2	69 Other Housing: 3	
	Poinsett: 5	73 Food Stamps: 4	
	Pulaski: 8	74 SSDI: 2	
	Randolph: 7	75 SSI: 2	
	Saint Francis: 1	76 Unemployment Compensation: 18	7
	Searcy: 3	87 Criminal Record Expungement: 23	5
	Sharp: 5	93 Licenses (Drivers, Occupational, and Others): 2	
	Stone: 3	94 Torts: 1	
	Van Buren: 2	95 Wills and Estates: 7	
	Washington: 173	96 Advanced Directives/Powers of Attorney: 3	
	Woodruff: 1		
	Yell: 1		

OPEN CASES	
March 1 - July 31	
Years	Open Cases
2019	3157
2020	3059

INTAKE		
March 1 - July 31		
Intake Type	2019	2020
N/A	5	0
Appointment Application	3	19
HelpLine	2299	2110
In Person	359	163
Online Intake	235	430
Outreach	30	15
Quick Intake	73	48
Referral	153	274
	3157	3059

GENDER		
March 1 - July 31		
Gender	2019	2020
Female	2339	2279
Male	808	779
Transgender (F2M)	2	0
Transgender (M2F)	1	1

CITIZENSHIP		
March 1 - July 31		
Citizen?	2019	2020
Yes	3023	2857
No	133	202

DV		
March 1 - July 31		
Caller DV?	2019	2020
Yes	778	877
No	2372	2182

DISABLED		
March 1 - July 2020		
Disabled?	2019	2020
Yes	979	929
No	2172	2099

LEGAL PROBLEM CODE	
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ASSIGNED PROGRAM		
March 1 - July 31		
Program	2019	2020
Consumer	529	425
Domestic Justice	1413	1380
Economic Justice	317	330
FHIP	1	1
Housing	527	516
LITC	77	152
Medical-Legal Partnership	127	57
Order of Protection	17	9
Pro Bono	134	77

LANGUAGE		
March 1 - July 31		
Language	2019	2020
ASL	1	1
English	3027	2861
Hmong	1	0
Laotian	0	1
Marshalllese	55	140
Not Entered	1	1
Other	1	0
Other Asian Languages	2	0
Spanish	67	55

LIVING ARRANGEMENT		
March 1 - July 31		
Living Arrangement	2019	2020
Homeless	14	28
Jail (not Prison)	1	0
Living in Shelter	19	19
Living with Friends/Relatives/Others	542	423
Mental Health Facility	4	3
Nursing Home	15	10
Other or Unknown	85	107
Owens Home	526	305
Owens Mobilehome	40	26
Rents Apartment	576	400
Rents Condominium	15	10
Rents House	695	519
Rents Mobilehome	46	61
Rents Room	18	22

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT US?		
March 1 - July 31		
Method	2019	2020

RACE		
March 1 - July 31		
Race	2019	2020
Asian	77	165
Black	734	603
Hispanic	156	113
Multiple	9	20
Native	11	30
Not Listed	1	27
Organization/Group	41	4
Other	8	34
White	2113	2057

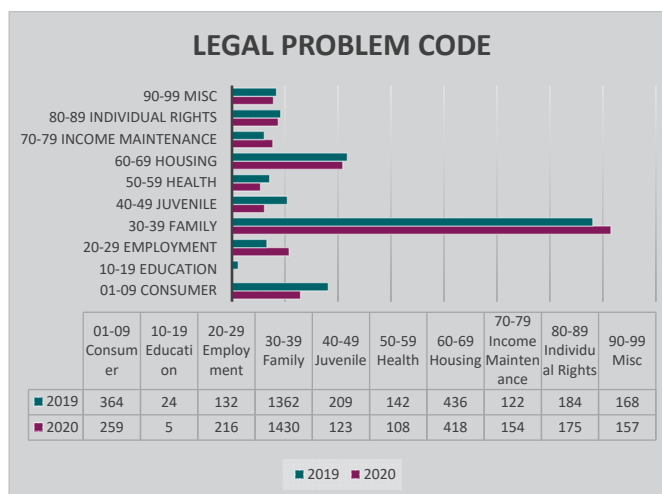
COUNTY		
March 1 - July 31		
County	2019	2020
Arkansas	10	17
Baxter	65	63
Benton	309	393
Boone	147	101
Carroll	62	47
Chicot	1	0
Clark	2	0
Clay	50	32
Cleburne	31	41
Columbia	1	2
Conway	0	1
Craighead	383	355
Crawford	4	3
Crittenden	262	214
Cross	41	26
Dallas	1	0
Desha	4	1
Drew	1	0
Faulkner	8	11
Franklin	1	0
Fulton	11	12
Garfield	0	3
Garland	11	1
Grant	3	0
Greene	121	98
Independence	115	108
Izard	28	13
Jackson	86	65
Jefferson	7	6
Johnson	1	2

March 1 - July 31		
LPC	2019	2020
01-09 Consumer	364	259
10-19 Education	24	5
20-29 Employment	132	216
30-39 Family	1362	1430
40-49 Juvenile	209	123
50-59 Health	142	108
60-69 Housing	436	418
70-79 Income Maintenance	122	154
80-89 Individual Rights	184	175
90-99 Misc	168	157

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN	
March 1 - July 31	
Years	#households
2019	1645
2020	1597

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED	
March 1 - July 31	
Years	#children served
2019	3618
2020	3446

Advertisement	13	54
Billboard	1	1
Community Partner or Provider of other Services to Low-Income Community	338	306
Court or Courthouse	224	197
Family or Friend	915	341
IRS or Taxpayer Advocate Services	2	4
Other Legal Aid Program	36	19
Other or Unknown	257	598
Outreach and Education Event	17	22
Prior Use	972	738
Private Bar	25	73
Social Media	13	110
Website or Internet Search	112	186



Lafayette	0	1
Lawrence	44	47
Lee	17	14
Little River	0	1
Logan	0	1
Lonoke	2	5
Madison	28	30
Marion	33	40
Miller	1	2
Mississippi	124	89
Monroe	34	17
Montgomery	1	0
Nevada	0	1
Newton	8	18
Not in Arkansas	67	68
Ouachita	3	2
Perry	0	2
Phillips	71	33
Poinsett	95	62
Polk	1	0
Pope	7	1
Prairie	0	2
Pulaski	62	37
Randolph	35	33
Saint Francis	74	61
Saline	10	2
Searcy	23	25
Sebastian	6	2
Sevier	1	1
Sharp	34	51
Stone	22	12
Union	0	2
Van Buren	32	30
Washington	536	579
White	7	7
Woodruff	11	16
Yell	1	3

<u>Legal Problem Code</u>	<u>A - Counsel and Advice</u>	<u>B - Limited Action (Brief Service)</u>	<u>F - Negotiated Settlement w/out Litigation</u>	<u>G - Negotiated Settlement with Litigation</u>	<u>H - Administrative Agency Decision</u>	<u>IA - Uncontested Court Decision</u>	<u>IB - Contested Court Decision</u>	<u>IC - Appeals</u>	<u>L - Extensive Service</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
09 Other Consumer/Finance	20	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	23
Consumer Total	333	35	28	20	1	12	4	0	8	441
13 Special Education/Learning Disabilities	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	14
14 Access (Including Bilingual, Residency, Testing)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
16 Student Financial Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
19 Other Education	6	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	10
Education Total	18	4	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	26
21 Employment Discrimination	20	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
22 Wage Claims and Other FLSA Issues	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7
23 EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit)	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
24 Taxes (Not EITC)	23	29	76	5	0	0	0	0	1	134

<u>Legal Problem Code</u>	<u>A - Counsel and Advice</u>	<u>B - Limited Action (Brief Service)</u>	<u>F - Negotiated Settlement w/out Litigation</u>	<u>G - Negotiated Settlement with Litigation</u>	<u>H - Administrative Agency Decision</u>	<u>IA - Uncontested Court Decision</u>	<u>IB - Contested Court Decision</u>	<u>IC - Appeals</u>	<u>L - Extensive Service</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
42 Neglected/Abused /Dependent	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
43 Emancipation	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
44 Minor Guardianship / Conservatorship	133	8	0	7	0	12	4	0	5	169
49 Other Juvenile	18	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	20
Juvenile Total	164	8	0	7	0	14	4	0	5	202
51 Medicaid	32	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
52 Medicare	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
54 Home and Community Based Care	65	10	5	6	9	0	6	0	6	107
55 Private Health Insurance	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
56 Long Term Health Care Facilities	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
59 Other Health	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9
Health Total	116	21	5	6	9	0	6	0	7	170
61 Federally Subsidized Housing	28	3	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	37
62 Homeownership/Real Property	58	9	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	72

<u>Legal Problem Code</u>	<u>A - Counsel and Advice</u>	<u>B - Limited Action (Brief Service)</u>	<u>F - Negotiated Settlement w/out Litigation</u>	<u>G - Negotiated Settlement with Litigation</u>	<u>H - Administrative Agency Decision</u>	<u>IA - Uncontested Court Decision</u>	<u>IB - Contested Court Decision</u>	<u>IC - Appeals</u>	<u>L - Extensive Service</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
79 Other Income Maintenance	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Income Maintenance Total	164	26	0	0	8	0	2	0	0	200
82 Mental Health	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
84 Disability Rights	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
85 Civil Rights	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
86 Human Trafficking	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
87 Criminal Record Expungement	156	24	0	1	0	51	0	0	2	234
89 Other Individual Rights	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10
Individual Rights Total	170	24	0	1	0	51	0	0	4	250
91 Legal Assist. to Non-Profit Org. or Group (Incl. Incorp./Diss.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
93 Licenses (Drivers, Occupational, and Others)	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
94 Torts	14	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16

<u>Legal Problem Code</u>	<u>A - Counsel and Advice</u>	<u>B - Limited Action (Brief Service)</u>	<u>F - Negotiated Settlement w/out Litigation</u>	<u>G - Negotiated Settlement with Litigation</u>	<u>H - Administrative Agency Decision</u>	<u>IA - Uncontested Court Decision</u>	<u>IB - Contested Court Decision</u>	<u>IC - Appeals</u>	<u>L - Extensive Service</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
95 Wills and Estates	144	39	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	186
96 Advanced Directives/Powers of Attorney	18	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
99 Other Miscellaneous	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Other Total	189	56	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	250
Grant Total	2,952	379	137	191	19	359	126	1	313	4,477

Unconventional Connections: Justice in a Virtual World

2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



OCTOBER 14-16, 2020

Virtual Conference | Meet in Microsoft Teams



UNCONVENTIONAL CONNECTIONS

2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



DAY 1

Wednesday, October 14, 1pm-5pm



WELCOME AND AWARDS CEREMONY

1:00 - 1:30 PM

*Amy Johnson, Arkansas Access to Justice
Jean Carter, Center for Arkansas Legal Services
Lee Richardson, Legal Aid of Arkansas*

Leaders present organizational awards and welcome staff to virtual conference.



RACIAL JUSTICE AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN 2020 (1.0 CLE ETHICS)

1:45 - 2:45 PM

*Martie North, Senior Vice President and Director of Community
Development/CRA, Simmons Bank*

This session will explore the implications of cultural competency and how we navigate this with our clients and community in a virtual world.



THE NATIONAL SCENE W/ NATIONAL LEGAL AID & DEFENDER ASSOCIATION (NLADA)

3:00 - 4:00 PM

*Christopher Buerger, Counsel, Civil Legal Services at NLADA
Don Saunders, Senior Vice President of Policy at NLADA
Radhika Singh, Chief of Civil Legal Services at NLADA*

In this session, NLADA members give an update on the national legal context. We will hear a national overview about funding and explore LSC regulatory compliance.



YOGA (OPTIONAL)

4:30 - 5:00 PM

CALS (Caren Thompson) or Legal Aid of Arkansas (Susan Duell)

Simple stretches to let the mind unwind and body relax.

UNCONVENTIONAL CONNECTIONS

2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



DAY 2

Thursday, October 15, 12pm-5:30pm



LUNCH (OPTIONAL)

12:00 - 1:00 PM

Speaker or Moderator about a specific topic.

Join us for a virtual lunch with conversation about _____.



CONSUMER PROTECTION (1.0 CLE)

1:00 - 2:00 PM

Chuck Harder, Deputy Attorney General for Public Protection, Office of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge

Build your capacity to protect Arkansas citizens by understanding comprehensive application of the Deceptive Trade Practice Act and its relevance to current issues in our state. This session will explain the state of current litigation and strategies to file cases which can most effectively bring about justice for Arkansas citizens.



NATIONAL HOUSING LAW PROJECT (1.0 CLE)

2:15 - 3:15 PM

Eric Dunn, Director of Litigation at National Housing Law Project

Session Description



FAMILY LAW PRACTICE UPDATES (1.0 CLE)

3:30 - 4:30 PM

Lauren Hoover, Partner, LaCerra, Dickson, Hoover, & Rogers, PLLC

This session brings Family Law expert, Lauren Hoover, to provide case law and statutory update.



VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS (OPTIONAL)

4:30 - 5:30 PM

Pick a room and join us to connect with coworkers.

UNCONVENTIONAL CONNECTIONS

2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



DAY 3

Friday, October 16, 9am-12:30pm



YOGA (OPTIONAL) 8:00 – 8:30 AM

CALS (Caren Thompson) or Legal Aid of Arkansas (Susan Duell)

Start your day with easy movements to wake up your mind and body.



APPELLATE ADVOCACY (1.0 CLE) 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Judge D.P. Marshall, Chief United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas

Joshua Ashley, Attorney, Friday Eldredge & Clark

Moderator: Kevin De Liban, Director of Advocacy, Legal Aid of Arkansas



The Honorable D. Price Marshall, federal district court judge, and Joshua Ashley, attorney at the Friday Firm and Judge Marshall's former law clerk, will share thoughts and best practices on trial and appellate advocacy informed by their experiences in the judiciary and as practitioners. While touching on topics useful to all advocates, the session will be geared toward federal court practice.



OPIOID CRISIS IN ARKANSAS (1.0 CLE) 10:15 – 11:15 PM

Kirk Lane, Arkansas State Drug Director

Learn about the opioid crisis in Arkansas with updated statistics on prescription and overdose rates, recovery plans, and statewide efforts to fight stigma affiliated with addiction



CLIENT RECOVERY AND CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES (1.0 CLE)

11:30 – 12:30 PM

Brandon George, Vice President, Mental Health America of Indiana, and Director, Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition

Brandon narrates his personal experience with the destructive impact of the stigma associated with substance use disorder. Now Brandon is a renowned expert and national speaker on drug addiction and recovery. He will lead a conversation about the four essential components of recovery.

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2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



MARTIE NORTH

Session Title: Racial Justice and Cultural Competency in 2020

Martie North currently serves as Senior Vice President and Director of Community Development/CRA for Simmons Bank, a \$18 billion-dollar financial institution headquartered in Pine Bluff, Arkansas serving over 150 communities in Arkansas, Kansas, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma and Tennessee. North is responsible for developing systems, implementing policies and procedures, monitoring performance training staff and fostering community development efforts within low wealth communities in compliance with the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

North developed a variety of successful financial instruments supporting low wealth communities and advising executive management on issues relating to affordable housing and community development. North believes progress will occur once diverse voices are working together learning about each other with a unified determination to move “things” forward.



CHRISTOPHER BUERGER

Session Title: The National Scene w/ NLADA

Christopher Buerger has spent most of his career fighting on behalf of low-income parents in the family courts of New York City, first at the center for Family Representation, and then with The Bronx Defenders. Before that, he worked and interned in New York, Louisiana, Oregon, and Ghana.

He is a graduate of Columbia Law School, where he was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and a member of the Human Rights Clinic. Chris received a M.P.P from Oregon State University while focusing on quantitative methods, rural communities, and child welfare policy. He received a B.A., graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, from American University with a major in literature and a minor in chemistry.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



DON SAUNDERS

Session Title: The National Scene w/ NLADA

Don Saunders is a nationally-recognized leader of America's civil justice community. He has spearheaded NLADA's civil division for more than 20 years, building the organization's expert training and technical assistance capacity and advocating with Congress, the Legal Services Corporation, federal agencies, and four Presidential administrations on a wide array of issues relating to the effective delivery of civil legal services.

Prior to joining NLADA in 1990, Don was Executive Director at the North Carolina Legal Resource Center in Raleigh, NC. He received his J.D. from the University of North Carolina School of Law.



RADHIKA SINGH

Session Title: The National Scene w/ NLADA

Radhika is the chief of the civil legal services division at NLADA. She works with civil legal aid providers across the country, and represents the civil legal aid community in advocacy and education efforts with federal representatives and in national conversations focused both on civil legal aid's substantive work and increasing resources to support this work. Radhika also leads NLADA's Project to Advance Civil Legal Aid Collaborations, advocating for federal funding and policies to integrate civil legal aid into cross-sector collaborations that serve low-income and vulnerable populations and advance federal objectives.

She previously worked in engagement and advocacy at Equal Justice Works and as a staff attorney at the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, focusing on constitutional and civil rights litigation and advocacy. Radhika received her B.A. from American University and her J.D. from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



CHUCK HARDER

Session Title: Consumer Protection

Chuck Harder presently serves as Deputy Attorney General for Public Protection for the Office of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge. Mr. Harder has 28 years of experience in the energy industry. He previously served as Assistant Attorney General representing the interests of utility ratepayers in matters before the Arkansas Public Service Commission, the Arkansas General Assembly and Federal agencies. Before joining the Office of Attorney General, he served as the Vice President of Regulatory and Government Affairs for SourceGas LLC., and he has held legal and regulatory leadership positions at CenterPoint Energy, Inc. Harder currently serves on the advisory boards of the New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities and the Financial Research Institute.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics and business from Hendrix College in Conway and a Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law. He is both an attorney and a certified public accountant (inactive).



ERIC DUNN

Session Title: National Housing Law Project

Eric Dunn is a national expert on tenants' rights and consumer law issues, known for high-impact advocacy on matters affecting subsidized housing tenants and families struggling to access housing because of criminal and eviction records. Prior to NHLP, Eric was an attorney with the Virginia Poverty Law Center, the Northwest Justice Project in Seattle, and the Legal Aid & Defender Association of Detroit.

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2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



LAUREN HOOVER

Session Title: Family Law Practice Updates

Lauren's practice consists of a wide variety of domestic relations litigation including divorce, visitation, paternity, child support, child custody, and relocation. She also focuses her practice on probate matters, including guardianships, adoptions, and estate and trust litigation.

Lauren is a native daughter of North Little Rock. After graduating from the U.A.L.R. Bowen School of Law and being admitted to the bar, Lauren served as the law clerk in Pulaski County Circuit Court and a Deputy prosecuting attorney for the Sixth Judicial District. She is a member of the Arkansas Bar Association and Pulaski County Bar Association. She serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors for the Pulaski County Board Foundation and is a graduate of the 2012 ABA Leadership Academy. She and her husband, Joel, reside in North Little Rock with their blended family of five children.



JUDGE D.P. MARSHALL

Session Title: Appellate Advocacy

Judge D.P. Marshall Jr. joined the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas in May 2010. He was on the Arkansas Court of Appeals for more than three years. Before joining the bench, he practiced law at Barrett & Deacon in Jonesboro. Judge Marshall attended Arkansas State University, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Harvard Law School. He clerked for U.S. Circuit Judge Richard S. Arnold. He is the co-author of Arkansas Civil Practice and Procedure (5th ed. 2011).



JOSHUA C. ASHLEY

Session Title: Appellate Advocacy

Joshua C. Ashley concentrates his practice in appellate advocacy, commercial litigation, oil-and-gas litigation, and railroad litigation. Josh clerked for the Honorable Susan O. Hickey of the United States District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, the Honorable D.P. Marshall Jr. of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas and the Honorable Lavenski R. Smith of the US Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. He also practiced oil-and-gas and complex commercial litigation at a law firm in Texas. Josh graduated with honors from the University of Arkansas School of Law, where he was articles editor of the Journal of Food Law & Policy. He received his undergraduate degree from Southern Methodist University.

UNCONVENTIONAL CONNECTIONS

2020 Arkansas Legal Services Conference



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



KIRK LANE

Opioid Epidemic in Arkansas

Kirk Lane was appointed the Arkansas Drug Director by Governor Asa Hutchinson on August 7, 2017. Previously, Director Lane served as the Chief of Police for the City of Benton, Arkansas. Director Lane began his law enforcement career in 1982. He has served on boards representing Arkansas for the Regional Organized Crime Information Center, and was the Chairman of the Arkansas Chief's Association Legislative Committee. Director Lane also served on advisory boards for the Criminal Justice Institute, the Arkansas Prescription Monitoring Program and the Arkansas Alcohol and Drug Coordinating Council. Director Lane is an active member of the Arkansas State working group for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and received the 2012 Marie Interfaith Leadership Award for his work in this area.

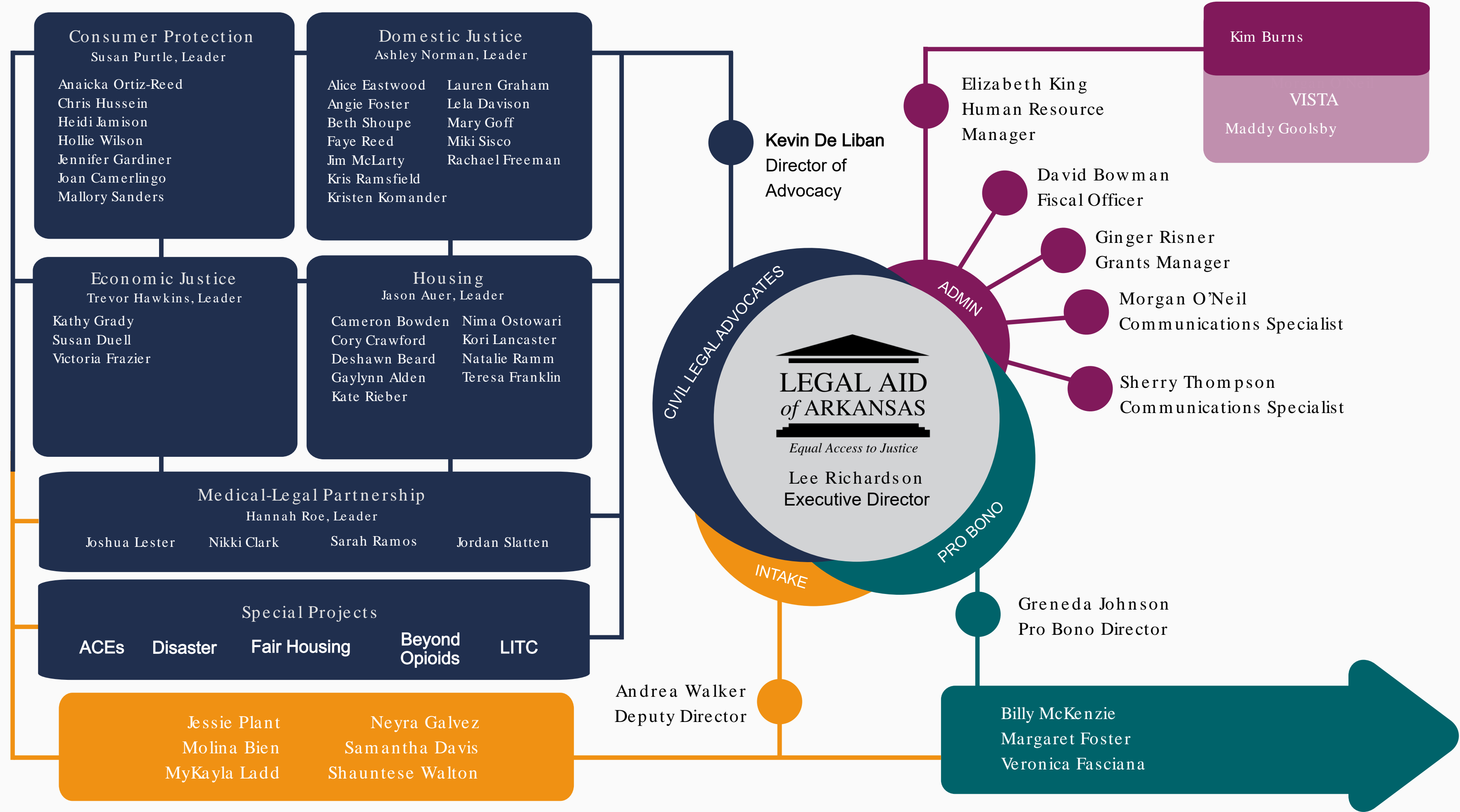


BRANDON GEORGE

Session Title: Client Recovery and Civil Legal Services

Brandon George is the Vice President for recovery, advocacy and programs for Mental Health America Indiana and the Director of Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition, which advocates for recovery through public policy and education. As a person in long-term recovery, Brandon dedicates his time personally and professionally to fighting addiction and promoting recovery. Brandon has been used as a consultant for SAMHSA's Opioid Response Network, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and is a contributor to Harvard's Law Blog. He served as a trusted advisor to the National Judicial Opioid Task Force, on the leader's council for Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and recently spoke at the White House for the Office of National Drug Control Policy regarding addiction workforce issues and recovery messaging.

LEGAL AID OF ARKANSAS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Legal Aid of Arkansas Office Directory

All Offices 870-972-9224 or 1-800-967-9224

Arkansas Children's Hospital

11 Children's Way	501-364-1541 – Phone
Little Rock, AR 72202	501-978-6479 - Fax
Mailing: One Children's Way, Slot 695, Little Rock, AR 72202	
Clark, Nikki	Staff Attorney 6317
Lester, Joshua	EJW Fellow 6309
Ramos, Sara	Paralegal 4310
Roe, Hannah	Supervising Attorney 6306
Slatten, Jordan	Bowen Law Extern 6320

Harrison

205 W. Stephenson Avenue	800-967-9224 – Fax
Harrison, AR 72601	
Davis, Samantha	Paralegal 5304
Freeman, Rachel	VOCA Attorney 5301

Little Rock

711 Towne Oaks Dr.,	Little Rock, AR 72227
Auer, Jason	Housing WG Leader 6318
Beard, DeShawn	Fair Housing Intern 6604
Bowden, Cameron	Fair Housing Attorney 6603
Ostowari, Nima	Fair Housing Investigator 6601
Ramm, Natalie	Fair Housing Attorney 6319

Helena-West Helena

622 Pecan	Helena-West Helena, AR 72342
Reed, Faye	Staff Attorney 1301

Jonesboro

714 S. Main St., Jonesboro, AR 72401	870-910-5562 – Fax
Franklin, Teresa	Staff Attorney 6310
Graham, Lauren	Staff Attorney 6301
Hawkins, Trevor	Staff Attorney 6313
Ladd, MyKayla	Intake Specialist 6312
McKenzie, Billy	Pro Bono Coordinator 6315
Ortiz-Reed, Anaicka	Staff Attorney 6316
Shoupe, Beth	Dom. Justice Paralegal 6307
Walker, Andrea	Deputy Director/HelpLine 6303

Newport

202 Walnut St., Newport, AR 72112	870-523-9892 – Fax
Burgess, Johnathan	Staff Attorney 2204
Grady, Kathy	Economic Justice Paralegal 3301
McLarty, James	Staff Attorney 870-664-0463
Wilson, Hollie	Staff Attorney 3304

Rogers

1200 W Walnut, Suite 3101	800-967-9224 – Fax
Rogers, AR 72756	
Bowman, David	Fiscal Officer 4308
De Liban, Kevin	Director of Advocacy 2206
Goolsby, Maddy	AmeriCorps Member 4326
King, Elizabeth	Human Resources 4311
O'Neil, Morgan	Communications/Community Ed 4325
Richardson, Lee	Executive Director 6305
Risner, Ginger	Grants Manager 4312

Springdale

1200 Henryetta	479-751-0002 Fax
Springdale, AR 72762	
Alden, Gaylynn	Housing Paralegal 4315
Bien, Molina Mia	Marshallese Liaison 7303
Burns, Kim	Operator-Reception 4319
Camerlingo, Joan	LITC Outreach 4327
Crawford, Cory	Staff Attorney 4323
Duell, Susan	Staff Attorney 4321
Eastwood, Alice	VOCA Attorney 4314
Fasciana, Veronica	Pro Bono Coordinator 4324
Foster, Margaret	Pro Bono Project Attorney 4307
Galvez, Neyra	Spanish Interpreter 4317
Gardiner, Jennifer	Tax Clinic Director 6304
Goff, Mary	VOCA Attorney 4303
Hussein, Chris	Staff Attorney 4306
Jamison, Heidi	Consumer Paralegal 4318
Lancaster, Kori	Fair Housing Testing Coordinator 4320
Norman, Ashley	Domestic Justice WG Leader 4302
Plant, Jessie	Intake Specialist 4322
Purtle, Susan	Consumer WG Leader 4301
Ramsfield, Kris	Staff Attorney 4304
Sanders, Mallory	Staff Attorney 4309

West Memphis

310 Mid-Continent Plaza, Suite 420	870-732-6373 – Fax
West Memphis, AR 72301	
Davison, Lela	Staff Attorney 2207
Frazier, Victoria	Economic Justice Attorney 2205
Johnson, Greneda	Pro Bono Director 2202
Sisco, Miki	Staff Attorney 2208
Rieber, Kate	Staff Attorney 2203
Walton, Shauntese	Intake Specialist 2201