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THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND
2016 ANNUAL REPORT

“The first duty of society is justice.”

— Alexander Hamilton



IN 2016, THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND STAFF, BOARD, VOLUNTEERS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR SUPPORTERS, IMPACTED NEARLY 18,000 PEOPLE –

including veterans, the elderly, foster youth, and single mothers — who share in common the burden of living with low income. Without free legal assistance, these clients faced daunting barriers to their safety, shelter, and economic stability.

We thank you for being a vital part of an engaged community, and for taking up the work of balancing the scales, establishing fairness for those who are most in need. In the words of Alexander Hamilton, “The first duty of society is justice.” And we did that duty.

We pursue justice under the leadership of our Board, one-third of whom know the devastation of poverty firsthand. For example, one Legal Aid Board Member has experienced homelessness. Several Board Members have fought to get their children the educational services to which the law entitles them, but schools turned a deaf ear. One Board Member lives in public housing, advocating for her fellow residents. Another is a U.S. Veteran who knows the scars and pride of military service. These board leaders keep us grounded in our community and focused on our clients. By working toward justice for our community’s most vulnerable, Legal Aid alleviates poverty and makes our society fairer – and stronger as a result.

We are proud of our work to bring justice and fairness to our community in 2016. You should be as well; this is work we could not do without your partnership!

Colleen M. Cotter, Esq.
Executive Director
The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland



IN 2016, LEGAL AID IMPACTED 17,769 PEOPLE

7,459 total cases handled = 6,122 Cases Handled & Closed + 1,337 Cases Continued into 2017 including 1,462 cases handled by volunteers and 137 advice clinics



LEGAL AID'S SUCCESS IN 2016 INCLUDED:

Increased assets and income, and reduced debt by \$15.7 million for clients



PREVENTED
68% of foreclosures



PREVENTED
92% of evictions



REMOVED
barriers to education in
84% of cases

SECURED
safety in
98%
of cases



PEOPLE

OUR STAFF:

40 Attorneys
27 Support Staff

OUR SUPPORTERS:

2,720 Pro Bono Attorneys
474 Volunteer Attorneys Engaged
54 In-House Volunteers
230 Volunteer Law Students
1,467 Individual Donors

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS 2016

46% of all households
helped included
CHILDREN



18% of all
clients were
OLDER ADULTS
(60+)

29%
Male



71%
Female



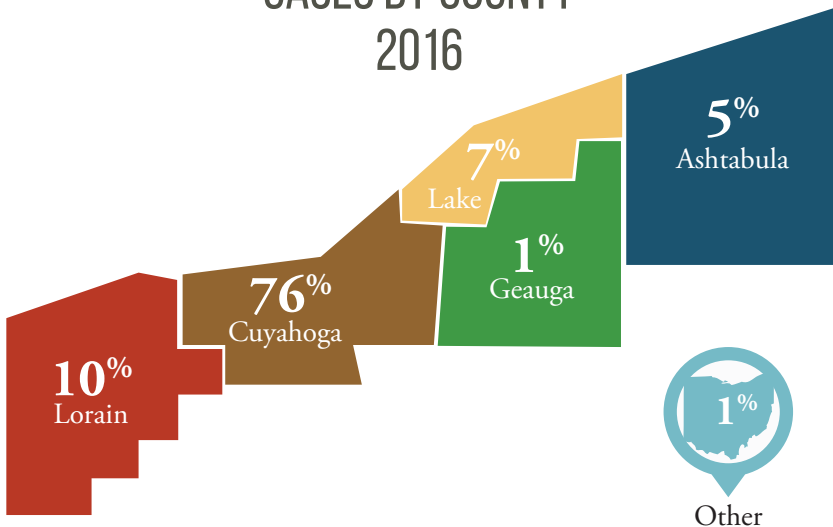
494 cases involved
U.S. VETERANS.
These cases IMPACTED
878 PEOPLE



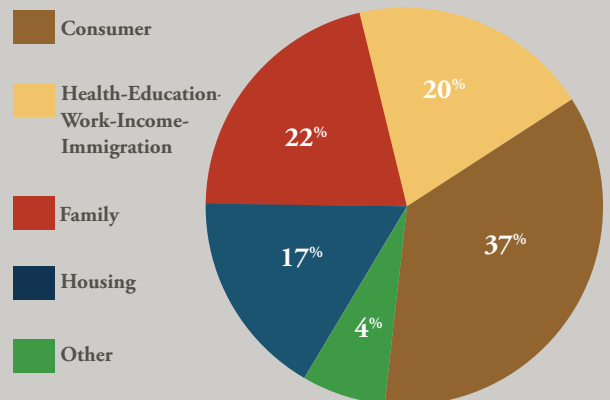
83% of households served
MAKE LESS THAN
\$25,000/year

RACE/ETHNICITY **56%** BLACK **34%** WHITE **7%** HISPANIC **3%** OTHER

CASES BY COUNTY 2016



CASES BY PRACTICE 2016



The mission of The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland is to secure justice and resolve fundamental problems for those who are low income and vulnerable by providing high quality legal services and working for systemic solutions.

2016 FINANCES

REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	2016	2015
Legal Services Corporation (LSC)	\$2,290,097	\$2,300,369
Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation (OLAF)	\$2,311,520	\$2,327,148
Donations and Private Grants	\$1,687,665	\$1,568,238
Donated Services	\$857,541	\$947,098
Other Government Grants	\$612,101	\$408,231
United Way	\$325,075	\$303,117
Partner Agencies (contracts for legal services)	\$199,622	\$220,982
Other Income	\$270,060	\$216,851
TOTAL REVENUE	\$8,553,681	\$8,292,034
EXPENSES	2016	2015
Program Services	\$6,767,597	\$6,742,990
Support Services (administration & development)	\$1,370,136	\$1,321,308
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$8,137,733	\$8,064,298
Excess of Revenue over Expenditures	\$415,949	\$227,736
Beginning Net Assets	\$6,274,555	\$6,046,819
NET ASSETS as of year end	\$6,690,504	\$6,274,555
BREAKDOWN OF NET ASSETS	2016	2015
Unrestricted		
-Net Investment in Property	\$2,978,809	\$2,918,474
-Board Designated Endowment	\$15,188	\$14,094
-Board Designated Reserve Fund	\$3,292,297	\$2,823,520
	\$6,286,294	\$5,756,088
Temporarily Restricted	\$289,085	\$403,417
Permanently Restricted	\$115,125	\$115,050
NET ASSETS	\$6,690,504	\$6,274,555

2016 LEGAL AID DONORS

We are grateful to members of our ten-year giving society (noted with an “**”) and those donors in our five-year giving society (noted with a “*”). These donors and their consistent support deserve special recognition. We welcome our first-time givers (noted with a “#”) to the Legal Aid Family.



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John Moran +
Richard and Patricia Pogue *

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Calvin Griffith +
Richard and Jessica Gurbst *
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Michael Farago +
James and Kathleen Young +
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Mark Rodio +
Barbara Roman and
Richard Dorman +



Malika's mom tried for three years to get her daughter evaluated for learning disabilities, but was ignored. When Legal Aid joined her cause, the school listened and gave Malika the extra help she needed.

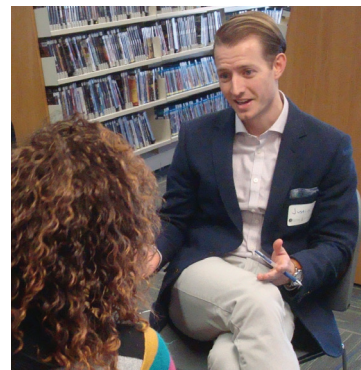
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*A juvenile criminal record threatened Tim's hopes for a career.
Legal Aid helped get his record sealed, and Tim enlisted.*



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We welcome our first-time givers (noted with a "#") to the Legal Aid Family

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After a long legal battle, Lynn was awarded social security back benefits, only to have the money wrongfully attached by a creditor. Legal Aid traced the electronic trail to show the creditor illegally took protected funds.

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(CONTINUED)**

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We are grateful to members of our ten-year giving society (noted with an “*”) and those donors in our five-year giving society (noted with a “+”). These donors and their consistent support deserve special recognition.

Single mom Hailey's landlord demanded illegal side fees, and then threatened to evict her when she refused. Legal Aid helped get her out of her lease so she could find a new home.



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Raquel suffered domestic violence while she and her family were seeking asylum in the U.S. Legal Aid helped her and her children secure U Visas, and eventually green cards.

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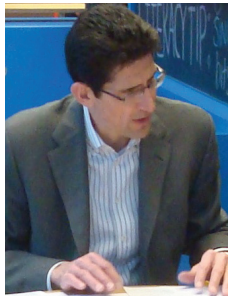


*Unemployed with health issues, Toni got behind on her water bill.
When Toni faced shut off, Legal Aid negotiated with the utility for an affordable payment plan.*



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At 20, Lauren lost her mom and faced eviction from the apartment they shared. With Legal Aid representation, she was able to stay in her home and finish school.

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Tom struggled with adjusting to civilian life after his time in the Army, then he lost his job. Legal Aid helped him secure housing benefits, and he was able to get back on his feet.



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Despite her mother's insistence that Dee needed extra help, the school overlooked Dee's learning disability because of her good behavior. With Legal Aid's help, Dee got evaluations and special education.

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Lori faced eviction for missing two months of rent while caring for her sick relative out of town. She tried to pay what she owed, but the landlord wouldn't accept her payment. Legal Aid intervened, and Lori was able to stay in her home.



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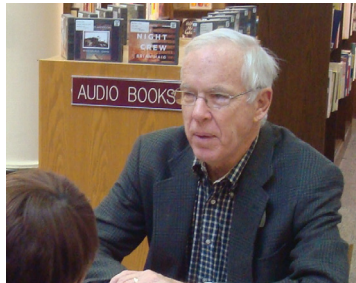
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A bank glitch caused 80-year-old Paula to miss one rent payment, and she received an eviction notice. Legal Aid resolved the issue and helped prevent future errors so Paula could stay in her home.

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Unemployed after a back injury, Helene was struggling under ballooning debt for student loans she took out for her son to go to college. Legal Aid helped negotiate several months of forbearance and secure a loan consolidation with new monthly rate she could afford.



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The Smiths faced a \$10,000 lawsuit for the demolition costs of their vacant home — which they thought they'd lost in foreclosure 10 years earlier. A Legal Aid volunteer negotiated with the city to cut their debt in half, working out a no-interest payment plan they could afford.

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Special thanks to all attorneys who participated in the Volunteer Lawyers Program and provided pro bono service to Legal Aid clients between January 1 – December 31, 2016.

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Bernadette, aged 68, lived in constant fear of her adult daughter's aggressive behavior and physical abuse. With a Legal Aid attorney by her side, Bernadette faced her abuser in court and was granted a five-year civil protection order.



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*Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this listing as of December 31, 2016.
If you have feedback or want to note a correction, please email melanie.shakarian@laslev.org*