

LEGAL AID SOCIETY
OF GREATER CINCINNATI

LEGAL AID SOCIETY
OF SOUTHWEST OHIO, LLC

LIAS

ANNUAL
REPORT 2010

RESOLVING SERIOUS LEGAL
PROBLEMS OF LOW-INCOME PEOPLE,
PROMOTING ECONOMIC AND FAMILY STABILITY
AND REDUCING POVERTY
THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

LEVERAGING RESOURCES THROUGH EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

How to use an organization's resources most effectively, when community needs continue to mount, is an ongoing challenge.

One strategy is to create programs that focus on resolving problems affecting many individuals and families in our region. These shared problems are often ones that negatively impact not only the client, but the community. Therefore, if Legal Aid resolves large numbers of similar client concerns, communities benefit.

Foreclosures devastate individual homeowners. When foreclosures are grouped together the result is neighborhood decline. This decline has an economic impact that affects the other homes and businesses in the area. Legal Aid has ramped up its foreclosure prevention work in recent years to target specific neighborhoods and to help as many homeowners as our resources permit.

When children drop out of school the consequences for the youth and the community are well known. Education provides the best opportunity to avoid a lifetime of poverty. Dropping out puts the youth on the road towards a low-paying job, if not unemployment, and is linked to a greater likelihood of adult criminal activity. Thus, when Legal Aid provides a troubled youth with an attorney, who advocates for him to stay in school and receive the special education services he may need to reach graduation, the youth's life is turned around and the community benefits in the long run.

This Annual Report highlights Legal Aid programs, like the two just mentioned. As an organization we are proud of our role in using legal assistance to improve individual lives, while also improving the community-at-large.

Legal Aid achieves its good results due to partnerships with other nonprofit organizations, the support of local, state and federal government agencies, private and corporate foundations, volunteer lawyers and of course the many individuals who continue to contribute to Legal Aid's Annual Fund.

With thanks for your support of Legal Aid and its client community for another year,


Mary Asbury
Executive Director




David C. Phillips
President



PROGRAMS

Legal Aid has developed programs to focus resources on resolving critical issues for clients, while also strategically addressing broad community concerns.

Child HeLP

This medical-legal partnership with Cincinnati Children's Hospital promotes children's health and well-being by resolving legal problems affecting the entire family. Legal assistance results in improved housing conditions, special education services, much-needed income and medical benefits, or resolution of other problems that interfere with good health outcomes.

Clearing Legal Hurdles to Employment

Legal assistance helps low-income job seekers overcome barriers to obtaining and retaining employment. Job training programs refer men and women to Legal Aid when they are having difficulty getting hired, traveling to work, or maintaining their regular hours, for reasons as diverse as loss of a driver's license, threatened eviction, needing expungement of a minor criminal record, or even getting a child back in school.

Covering Kids and Families

Legal Aid advocates for streamlined policies so that working families get health care benefits provided by Ohio's Healthy Start medical program. Through targeted outreach, Legal Aid helps homeless children, children living in rural areas, and Hispanic families establish eligibility and prevent benefit termination.

"Legal Aid helped me with a domestic violence situation and expedited my divorce due to the emergency situation. I feel like a free women. I could not have done this on my own."

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Legal Aid manages the Hamilton, Clermont, and Butler County tax preparation sites for the United Way's Regional EITC Collaborative. We organize training for volunteers who prepare returns at no charge. Tax refunds provide additional income for working families, and return over \$18 million to the regional economy.

Guardian *ad Litem* (GAL)

Legal Aid serves as the attorney and GAL for children in Butler County who have been removed from their parent's custody due to neglect or abuse. Legal Aid works to secure a safe and permanent home for each child, while advocating for the child's health and educational needs.

"Your program saved my home. Literally. It forced my landlord to fix safety and damage issues. Thank you."

PROGRAMS

LawLink: Family Safety and Stability

This program provides comprehensive legal services to women struggling to recover from domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Legal services include restraining orders, child support, custody, divorce, visitation restrictions, visa adjustments and division of debts and property. By breaking legal and financial ties with the abuser, clients move towards economic self-sufficiency, and can provide a safe home for themselves and their children.

Quality Rental Housing

Legal Aid represents individual renters and groups of tenants so they can keep safe and affordable rental housing. Legal Aid helps families avoid eviction, maintain utility service and obtain repairs by enforcing tenants' legal rights and building, health, and fire codes. As a result, Legal Aid prevents deterioration of apartment buildings in many urban neighborhoods.

Stabilizing Neighborhoods through Secure Housing


Legal Aid provides representation to homeowners so they avoid foreclosure and save their homes. Legal Aid provides training and backup for homeowner counselors throughout southwest Ohio, so that more homeowners can stay in their homes. This program also reduces neighborhood blight caused by neglected foreclosed properties.

TeamChild: Supporting School Success

In partnership with Hamilton County Juvenile Court, Legal Aid's TeamChild attorneys obtain school support and mental health services for youth caught up in the juvenile justice system so they return to and remain in school, and avoid further court involvement. Through TeamChild, families also get legal assistance, such as representation in housing and family law disputes, to help establish a stable home environment.

Safety Net and Work Support Benefits

Legal Aid assists unemployed working people, veterans, and individuals with disabilities who need help to prevent a termination or denial of income benefits. Our staff also help clients understand how to access childcare, transportation, and transition-to-work benefits to increase household income and maintain medical coverage.



"I had just given birth and two days later my husband was laid off. So for the next few months we struggled, but with Legal Aid's help we got back on track and have had no problems since."

THRIVING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN LEGAL AID SOCIETY & VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

Since 1982, Legal Aid and the Private Bar have worked together to create one of the best Volunteer Lawyers Projects in the country.

The Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation, a separate 501(c)(3) organization, raises private funds to help support VLP operations. With management and administrative support from Legal Aid, the VLP provides opportunities for private attorneys to assist clients with a wide range of legal problems.

Each year, over 500 local lawyers and law firms accept *pro bono* referrals from Legal Aid through the VLP.

The VLP operates out of offices in Legal Aid's downtown headquarters. Legal Aid staff conduct initial client interviews, recruit attorneys, offer training, and provide paralegal support for divorce and wills clinics. A Legal Aid Managing Attorney oversees the entire VLP operation.

Through this strong partnership between Legal Aid and the VLP, in 2010 private attorneys resolved 1,483 cases and donated 10,876 hours of *pro bono* representation, valued at \$1,413,880.



Mardee Sherman

Mardee Sherman VLP Attorney of the Year

Mardee Sherman, an associate with Robbins Kelly Patterson & Tucker, LPA, is the 2010 VLP Attorney of the Year. Immediately after graduating from Chase College of Law and becoming an attorney in 2006, Mardee started accepting several VLP family law or adoption cases each year.

When asked why she is an active VLP lawyer, Mardee reflected back on the time when her now thirty-one year-old daughter was an infant: *When I was a young single mom an attorney gave me legal assistance at a substantially reduced fee. I have never forgotten how desperate I felt at that time in my life and how this attorney helped me. Now that I am in my second career as a lawyer, and in a position to help others, I give as much time as I can to the VLP. I believe everyone, regardless of their means, should have access to the legal system.*

VLP-Legal Aid Partnership is Saving Homes and Stabilizing Families

The clients helped by two Legal Aid programs, Stabilizing Neighborhoods Through Secure Housing (foreclosure prevention) and LawLink (family safety and stability), particularly benefit from the strong partnership with the VLP.

Given the large number of people needing legal assistance to prevent foreclosure, Legal Aid has stepped up its effort to recruit and train *pro bono* attorneys on the challenging and shifting legal landscape related to saving homes. Since 2008, the VLP has recruited 83 *pro bono* attorneys to handle foreclosure cases. During the past two years, VLP attorneys have helped 82 families keep their homes.

Forty percent (40%) of all VLP cases involve helping clients with family law matters. The majority of these cases are referred through LawLink.

Legal Aid and VLP staff have worked with the Domestic Relations Courts to set up streamlined dockets for uncontested VLP divorce cases. Legal Aid paralegals and VLP lawyers conducted 37 clinics in 2010, and helped 299 clients get a divorce. VLP attorneys completed 218 additional divorce, custody, and protective visitation cases on the regular docket.

SERVING SEVEN COUNTIES IN SOUTHWEST OHIO

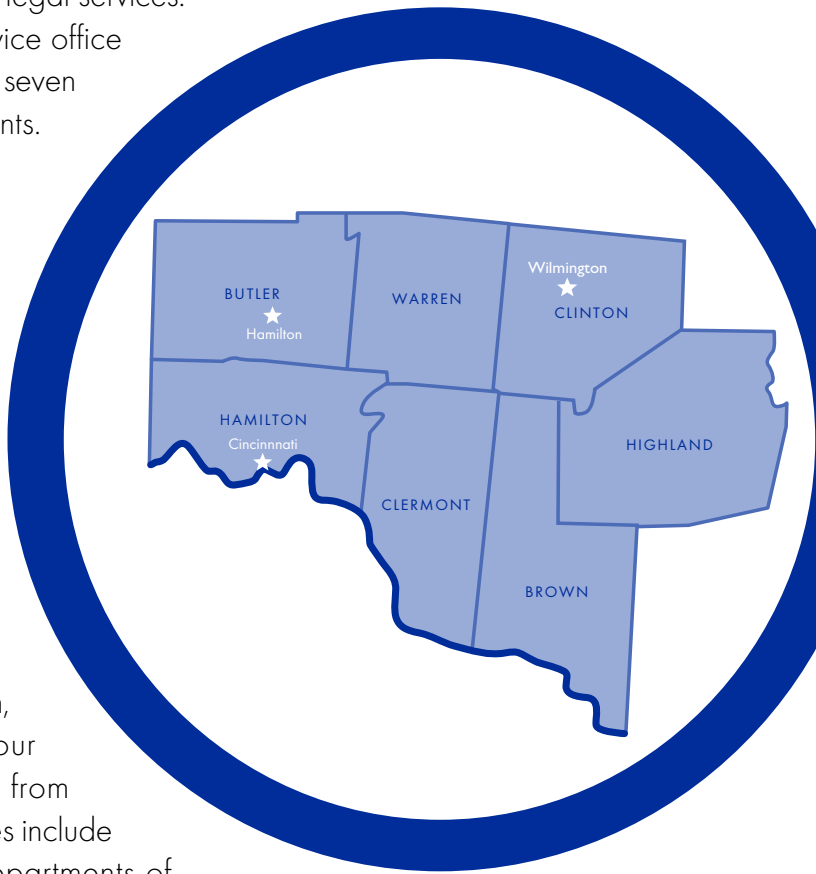
Legal Aid is southwest Ohio's primary provider of free civil legal services. With headquarters in downtown Cincinnati and a full-service office in Hamilton, our attorneys and paralegals travel throughout seven southwest Ohio counties to meet with and represent clients.

In 2010, 34% of new cases opened by Legal Aid and Volunteer Lawyers Project attorneys were for clients living outside of Hamilton County.

The chart below details, by county, the 7,619 new cases opened, as well as other services provided to the 31,401 households who got in touch with Legal Aid in 2010.

Removing Barriers to Employment in Seven Counties

Through the *Clearing Legal Hurdles to Employment* program, Legal Aid partners with 30 different agencies within our service area to eliminate problems that prevent people from finding meaningful and stable employment. Partner agencies include One Stop Workforce Development Centers, county Departments of Job and Family Services, and non-profit employment readiness programs.



Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati/Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC/Volunteer Lawyers Project Requests for Individual Case Services - January - December 2010

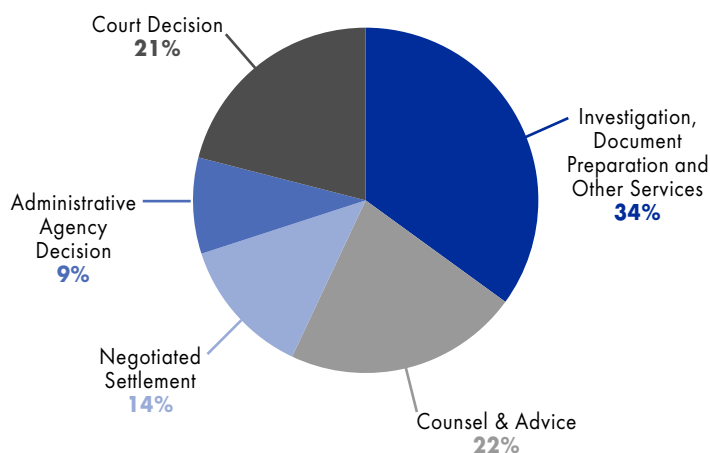
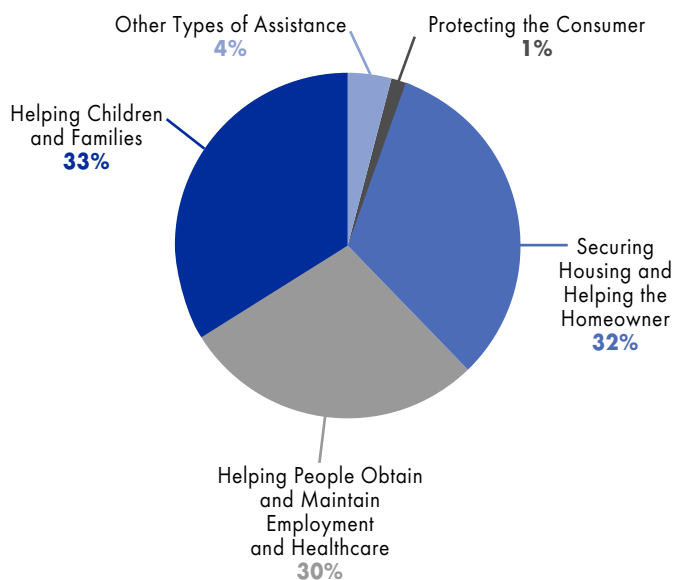
County	Requests for Service	Sent Written Materials	Made External Referral	LAS Case Open	VLP Case Open	Pending LAS & VLP
BROWN	526	30	243	73	19	155
BUTLER	4,888	131	2,084	1,274	256	1,476
CLERMONT	2,204	82	1,087	325	142	289
CLINTON	627	80	309	80	16	62
HAMILTON	19,436	829	7,877	3,881	1,122	2,651
HIGHLAND	543	68	249	73	10	42
WARREN	1,442	51	719	253	50	174
UNSPECIFIED	1,735	17	965	40	5	50
TOTAL	31,401	1,288	13,533	5,999	1,620	4,899

ABOUT LEGAL AID CLIENTS 2010

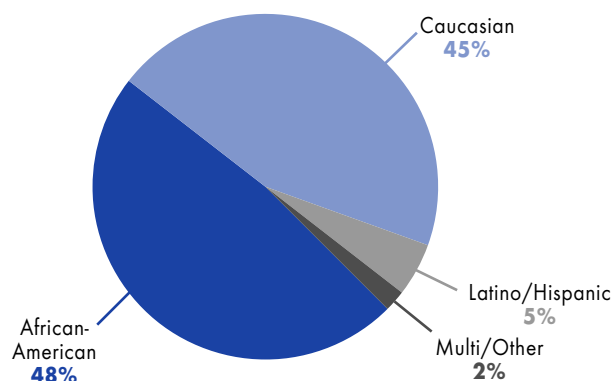
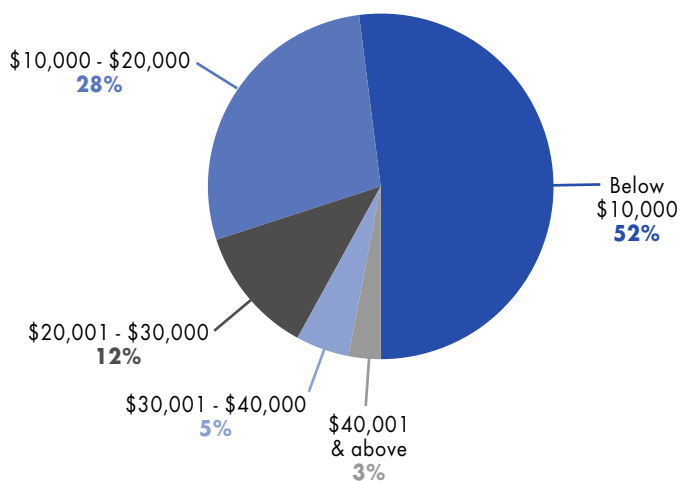
From the pie charts below, you get an overview of Legal Aid clients and, in broad categories, the types of legal services they receive.

The pie charts are based on the 7,619 new cases opened in 2010 by Legal Aid staff and *pro bono* attorneys working through the Volunteer Lawyers Project.

Type of Legal Service Provided



Client Demographics



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The Legal Aid Society greatly appreciates the generosity of donors who contributed to the Annual Fund from February 1, 2010 - January 31, 2011.

Every effort has been made to list donors and respect anonymous contributions as requested. Please forgive any unintended errors and notify us of changes by calling (513) 362-2815.

All private donation income is used in support of our mission, and in accordance with Legal Services Corporation and other funder regulations.

* Indicates Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

December 31, 2010 and 2009

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,078,023	\$ 1,205,563
Cash held in trust for clients	106,299	92,534
Investments	2,984,860	2,919,367
Grants and contracts receivable	606,194	697,341
Contributions receivable, net	638,410	794,764
Other accounts receivable	15,834	17,164
Property and equipment, net	3,788,517	3,808,241
Other	178,007	274,745
Total Assets	\$ 9,398,154	\$9,809,719

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 114,976	\$ 108,092
Accrued annual leave	317,026	325,222
Equipment Lease	30,916	41,517
Assets held for others	106,299	92,534
Long-term debt	1,933,420	2,000,000
Other accrued liabilities	80,608	89,855
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,583,245	\$2,657,220

Net Assets		
Unrestricted		
Operating	\$ 3,709,097	\$ 3,885,701
Board designated	1,548,439	1,676,988
Temporarily restricted	910,274	944,235
Permanently restricted	645,096	645,096
Total Net Assets	\$ 6,812,906	\$7,152,020
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 9,396,150	\$9,809,240

2010 OPERATING REVENUE

Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation	\$2,215,759
Legal Services Corporation*	1,658,304
Government Grants and Contracts	2,025,717
United Way	705,958
Contributions	256,043
Foundations Grants	784,008
Rental Income	231,107
Other	83,683
Total Revenue	\$7,960,579
Operating Reserve Allocation	339,113
Total Operating Revenue	\$8,299,692

2010 EXPENSES

Client Services	
Housing and Consumer Program	\$ 1,734,294
Employment and Benefit Program	1,764,236
Family and Domestic Violence Program	1,585,962
Children and Education Program	1,325,045
General Civil and VLP	589,309
Subtotal Client Services	\$6,998,846
Management and General	872,797
Fundraising	147,202
Rental Property	246,881
Total Expenses	\$8,265,726

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REGINA CAMPBELL

NEWEST PRACTICE GROUP LEADER

As Managing Attorney for Legal Aid's Income, Work and Health Practice Group, Regina Campbell provides leadership and supervision for all activities related to public benefits, healthcare, disability and employment, as well as policy advocacy and community impact strategies in these areas. There are currently 23 staff members in the Practice Group, including 9 attorneys and 9 paralegals.

Ms. Campbell has this to say about her work at Legal Aid. *I enjoy my current position because I am involved in all facets of our work: representation of individual clients, involvement in impact work that affects our community, supervision of attorneys and paralegals, and management of the services provided by the Income Work Health Practice Group.*

Because community outreach is essential to the success of her team's work, Ms. Campbell is a member of the United Way of Greater Cincinnati Financial Stability Workgroup, the Clermont County Department of Job & Family Services Planning Committee, the Clermont Transportation Connection Advisory Committee, and the Hamilton County Work Supports Committee. She participated in Class XIII of the Cincinnati Academy of Leadership for Lawyers. Ms. Campbell graduated from the University of Cincinnati College of Law and joined the staff of Legal Aid in 1996.

Regina lives in Hartwell, with her husband Ryan Nelson, an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Hamilton County, and their two children, Maisy, age 8 and Lucy, age 6.

Regina Campbell



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