Reducing Poverty
Through Effective Legal Assistance
Dear Friends:

Legal Aid helps people living in poverty achieve economic and family stability. We offer assistance to resolve serious obstacles to children’s health and families’ well-being such as unsafe housing, lack of income, or domestic violence.

Safe and affordable housing is fundamental for family stability. One way Legal Aid helps families is by preserving affordable housing. In 2017, Legal Aid won a major victory for tenants in the Alms Hill Apartments by preventing the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from ending the Alms’ Section 8 housing assistance contract.

Housing insecurity is a significant obstacle for many of our clients. In fact, it is the most frequent client problem our medical-legal partnership attorneys encounter. Child HeLP, our award-winning partnership with Cincinnati Children’s, is now in its tenth year. Through Child HeLP, Legal Aid continues to improve health outcomes and stabilize children and families who live in unsafe housing, face eviction, or lack income. M-HeLP, our maternal health-law partnership with TriHealth, supported by a grant from bi3, is achieving similar results for pregnant women. Preliminary results indicate that M-HeLP clients have fewer pre-term births. This result, alone, can lead to life-long, improved health outcomes.

Legal Aid also addresses issues affecting family stability through our Family Law Clinic and our new Juvenile Custody and Companionship Clinic. In partnership with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court and the Volunteer Lawyers Project, Legal Aid has expanded services to stabilize custody for children whose parents are unable to provide care.

This annual report highlights these effective programs, and recognizes Legal Aid teams and individual attorneys for their achievements over the past year.

As always, we extend our deepest thanks to our donors, funders, volunteer attorneys, and partner organizations for your support of our mission.

Mary Asbury  
Executive Director

Vincent B. Stamp  
President

On the cover: Members of the Alms Hill resident association with Legal Aid Attorneys Virginia Tallent and Stephanie Moes
Removing Roadblocks for Young Families

Legal Aid supports family stability by helping clear barriers to employment such as eviction, domestic abuse, and criminal records. We recently expanded our efforts to improve opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency by participating in a statewide initiative: Comprehensive Case Management in Employment Program (CCMEP).

CCMEP provides intensive, managed support to young families (ages 16-24) who are receiving cash assistance, to better equip them to be employed and become self-sufficient. Case managers refer these young parents to Legal Aid for help with barriers that disrupt, delay or impede success in employment.

Legal Aid attorneys, working with Ohio Department of Job & Family Services staff and the Governor’s taskforce, helped design and establish CCMEP. JFS contracted with Talbert House to lead a case management team that includes Easter Seals, the Urban League, and the Cincinnati/Hamilton County Community Action Agency as well as Legal Aid to implement the program in Hamilton County.

In the first 16 months, Legal Aid received 85 CCMEP referrals. One Talbert House referral illustrates how Legal Aid resolved a barrier to seeking employment. “Ms. Ray” was referred by her CCMEP case manager because she was in danger of being evicted from her public housing apartment for non-payment of rent. Even though she had paid her past due rent, the eviction had not been dismissed. An eviction on her record would have prevented her from renting another apartment.

Ms. Ray was also facing harassment and threatening behavior from neighbors. She needed help transferring to a new apartment. Legal Aid ensured that the eviction was dismissed, and worked with CMHA to get transfer options for Ms. Ray. She was able to move to a new apartment, where she feels safe. As a result, she is now able to focus on her employment search.

We look forward to working with our CCMEP partners to help more families overcome obstacles to employment. Overall, Legal Aid was able to resolve a variety of barriers to employment for 725 individuals in 2017. The chart shows the types of barriers our clients faced.
Preserving Affordable Housing

Unsafe housing conditions and the threat of eviction can cascade into problems that create turmoil for families. Legal Aid leads community efforts to prevent homelessness by preserving safe, affordable housing for low-income families and by improving rental housing conditions.

Legal Aid’s success in Federal Court prevented the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from ending the Section 8 housing assistance contract for 150 families in the Alms Hill Apartments. Our attorneys began assisting the Alms residents in 2015 when the bank filed for foreclosure in state court. Legal Aid joined forces with the City of Cincinnati to get a receiver appointed to make needed improvements to the building and to find a preservation buyer. HUD proposed giving the Alms residents Section 8 vouchers to use elsewhere. But, the Alms residents did not want to be forced out of their Walnut Hills neighborhood and given the documented 40,000 unit gap in available, affordable housing in Hamilton County, the likelihood of the residents finding new housing was extremely low. Legal Aid is working with the residents, the City of Cincinnati and HUD to find a suitable buyer who will maintain this important affordable housing asset.

Legal Aid represented several other resident associations during 2017 to ensure that their apartments remained as safe, affordable housing options.

For example, our attorneys helped dozens of elderly and disabled residents of the Advent Apartments in Walnut Hills obtain repairs by advocating successfully in court for the appointment of a receiver. The receiver collected rent and made the repairs necessary to keep the building livable.

Legal Aid attorneys partnered with Santa Maria Community Services to assist residents at the Eagle Watch Apartments in West Price Hill form a residents association in response to several serious issues threatening their housing. The main driveway to the complex had collapsed, making access unsafe. Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) threatened to withdraw vouchers for the property which would have forced 59 families to move. As a result of Legal Aid’s negotiations on behalf of the residents, the driveway was fully repaired, conditions in the complex were improved, and CMHA agreed to keep the vouchers in place.

At Parkway Towers in Over-The-Rhine, Legal Aid and the Homeless Coalition prevented the proposed relocation of 70 low-income resident families. We helped the tenants and the Homeless Coalition form a residents association, and continue to negotiate with the building’s owner, on the residents’ behalf, to preserve the building’s affordable housing units. At Regal Manor in the West End, our attorneys are working with the Homeless Coalition to help the senior tenants organize a residents association to address the multiple security concerns in the building.
Expanding Services to Address Custody Issues

Responding to the needs of an increasing number of low-income individuals filing on their own for changes of custody or visitation, Legal Aid partnered with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court, the Volunteer Lawyers Project and the Hamilton County Law Library to introduce the Juvenile Custody, and Companionship Clinic in October 2017.

The Clinic assists family members or guardians seeking to stabilize custody for children so that school and health care decisions can be made when parents are not able to provide care.

Volunteer Lawyers offer brief legal advice, including explanations of court procedures, guidance on evidence required for court, and assistance to draft agreements and pleadings. Juvenile Court staff are also available to help with forms.

In the clinic’s first six months, eleven volunteer attorneys assisted 286 individuals, spending on average 40 minutes with each.

The Custody and Companionship Clinic is open Monday from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. and Wednesday from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. on the first floor of 800 Broadway in downtown Cincinnati.

VLP Recognizes Attorneys for Outstanding Pro Bono Service

The Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation is pleased to announce its 2017 Volunteer Lawyer of the Year: B. SCOTT BOSTER, a partner at Ulmer & Berne LLP. Scott has taken pro bono VLP cases for over 30 years.

Scott has assisted 7 clients referred through the VLP for Legal Aid’s Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) in the first 16 months of its operation. Scott’s willingness to assist with the LITC has helped it be effective and successful. In one matter, he successfully negotiated a 50% reduction in delinquent taxes for a 79-year-old man suffering from memory loss and heart disease, whose only income is a small pension.

Scott also has handled a variety of consumer matters and has accepted at least two VLP referrals each year for the past 15 years. His dedication to helping clients and his long-term commitment to the VLP’s mission are inspiring. Congratulations, Scott!

CATHERINE EVANS was honored as the Butler County Volunteer Lawyer of the Year. Anne Lucas, managing attorney of the VLP presented the award to Cathi at the 2017 Butler County Bar Association Law Day celebration.

Cathi, a partner at Millikin & Fitton, has a long history as a VLP attorney, representing three pro bono clients every year on average for nearly 20 years. In addition to helping VLP clients, Cathi’s been a VLPF board member since 2003, and served as President in 2014-2016. Thanks, Cathi, for your sustained commitment to serving clients and to providing leadership to the VLP!
2017 Annual Fund Donors

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Thank you to AK Steel Foundation, American Century Investments Foundation, and GE Foundation for matching gifts. The Legal Aid Society appreciates the
generosity of donors who contributed to the Annual Fund from February 1, 2017 – January 31, 2018. Every effort has been made to list donors and respect

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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.


** CLSC campaign. ++ Contribution designated for Child HeLP program.
Legal Aid’s Commitment to Preserving Affordable Housing Recognized with Award from the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition

The Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition honored Legal Aid’s Housing Team with the Julie Martin Service Provider of the Year award. Our thanks to Kimetta Carter and the Alms Hill Residents’ Council for nominating Legal Aid for this award. Thanks also to the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition Board and Executive Director, Josh Spring, for this honor, and for all the their excellent work to help residents keep affordable housing.

Josh Spring, Executive Director of the Homeless Coalition with Legal Aid Attorney, Stephanie Moes at the Coalition’s Awards Dinner.
Our Clients

Individual Case Services  January – December 2017

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<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>Requests for Service</th>
<th>Sent Written Materials</th>
<th>Made External Referral</th>
<th>LAS Case Open</th>
<th>VLP Case Open</th>
<th>Pending LAS &amp; VLP</th>
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<td>4,736</td>
<td>1,754</td>
<td>4,908</td>
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</table>

Legal Aid Named Champion of Fair Housing

Legal Aid’s Housing Team received a Champion of Fair Housing award at Housing Opportunities Made Equal’s (HOME) 50th anniversary celebration on April 19. HOME selected five champions; one for each of HOME’s five decades of existence. Each champion played a significant role in advancing fair housing.

Robert F. Laufman, a 40 year Legal Aid Society Board member and leading fair housing attorney, was also honored as a Fair Housing Champion.
Program Funders

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Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation
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* Legal Services Corporation supports only the activities of the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati.

Statements of Financial Position

2017 Operating Revenue
Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation.................................................$2,215,016
Legal Services Corporation* ...............................................................1,626,720
Government Grants & Contracts.....................................................3,247,249
United Way.......................................................................................428,180
Contributions..................................................................................230,571
Foundation Grants.......................................................................877,925
Rental Income.................................................................................244,131
Other.............................................................................................88,735
Total Operating Revenue ......................................................... $8,958,527

2017 Functional Expense
Housing & Consumer Program.......................................................$1,753,239
Employment & Benefits Program...................................................1,108,967
Family & Domestic Violence Program.........................................1,831,515
Children & Education Program.....................................................1,828,253
General Civil & VLP ........................................................................507,301
Management & General .................................................................907,412
Fundraising...................................................................................120,264
Rental Property..............................................................................269,708
Total Expenses .........................................................................$8,326,659

Assets 2017 2016
Cash and cash equivalents 1,040,425 602,056
Cash held in trust for clients 989,459 8,132
Investments 3,442,104 2,982,752
Grants and Contracts receivable 610,540 612,139
Contributions receivable, net 1,277,454 1,761,897
Property and equipment, net 3,317,930 3,401,678
Other 34,190 116,857
Total Assets 10,712,102 9,485,511

Liabilities and Net Assets
Liabilities
Accounts payable 275,630 139,533
Accrued annual leave 302,998 291,944
Assets held for others 989,459 8,132
Long-term debt 1,329,856 1,431,317
Other accrued liabilities 34,190 116,857
Total Liabilities 3,046,477 2,073,855

Net Assets
Unrestricted
Operating 4,016,431 3,515,202
Board designated 1,316,362 1,155,625
Temporarily restricted 1,665,174 2,073,168
Permanently restricted 667,658 667,658
Total Net Assets 7,665,625 7,411,656
Total Liabilities and Net Assets 10,712,102 9,485,511

The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati and its affiliate the Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, LLC provide civil legal services in seven southwest Ohio counties: Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Brown, Warren, Clinton, and Highland. Legal Services Corporation supports only the activities of the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati. The Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati provides staff support for the Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP). This Annual Report provides information about both Legal Aid Societies and the VLP.
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Kelly Malone
Donita Parrish
Virginia Tallent

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Gerry Greene
Kate Holley
Rebecca Salley
Terry Willacker
Kaeanna Wood

Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation Justice For All Fellow
Kristin Riebsomer

Director of Operations
Phillip Harmon

Low Income Tax Clinic Support
Hardrie Diggs

M-HeLP Coordinator
Elicia Schultian

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Terri Maye
Joe Styer

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Ronique Padda
Stacey Radizwone
Ryan Sirgy
Braedon Tabor

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Mary Grace Ramsay

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Alpha Taylor
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Elizabeth Zak

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Caitlin Cliff-Perbix
Cat Cornelius
Charles Duskin
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Michelle Knox-O’Neal
Jennifer Leeth
Jennifer Morgan
Mayra Casas Jackson

Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation Justice for All Fellow
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Celia Klug
Katherine McDonald
Emily Roberts
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Rebecca Seipel
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Brittany Triggs
Valeria Verro
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