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DEAR friends,

AT LEGAL AID CHICAGO, WE BELIEVE that people should not be denied equal justice simply because they cannot afford a lawyer. Legal Aid Chicago enables our at-risk clients to obtain adequate housing, employment, health care, education, personal safety, and other basic necessities through the legal system.

Legal Aid Chicago not only wins cases (although we do have a 95% success rate); Legal Aid Chicago also helps change our clients’ lives, by aiding people together, through ensuring equal justice for all. (More about the “aiding people together” theme in a moment.)

Our work is about keeping a family in their home and off of the streets; securing earned public benefits for Veterans to help them get back on their feet; protecting a mom and her children from an abuser; protecting a senior from losing her home to a financial scam; and obtaining an Individualized Education Plan for a special needs child, so the child can be successful in school. And when we help one individual, we invariably are helping all the people who interact with that individual, including the community in which they live. This is why we are committed to this work, and why aiding people together is the theme of this year’s annual report.

The team at Legal Aid Chicago consists of over 230 employees: including over 110 attorneys, 69 paralegals, and 50 support staff. Legal Aid Chicago has seven practice groups with expertise in virtually every area of poverty law. Our staff takes a multi-disciplinary approach to identify the legal issues that must be resolved to fully address our clients’ challenges. We also have social workers on staff who can help clients with counseling, make referrals to address non-legal problems, and assist with advocacy for our clients. Our team also has many critical partners, including the community groups who refer clients to us, who identify issues of concern for their community members, and with whom we work to develop services to address those concerns, among other partnership efforts.

Our approach is holistic. Sometimes winning a single case can help a client meet a serious challenge, like stopping an illegal eviction. But often the client’s challenge has multiple facets, necessitating a multi-faceted response. For example, a client may need help obtaining appropriate medical treatment, but if the housing condition that caused the problem is not corrected, the health problem will persist. Or a protective order might be necessary to keep a mother and her child safe from domestic violence, but the child also needs an Individualized Education Plan to succeed in school.

In 2022, we served over 20,000 clients and their families. The total financial value of the outcomes we achieved for our clients dramatically increased, from $18M in 2021 to $27M in 2022. These financial outcomes included increased assets of $71M (such as protecting a home from foreclosure); increased income of $81M (such as applying for and receiving food stamps and other public benefits); and decreased debt of $2.2M (such as eliminating debt incurred by an abusive spouse). Notably, our team also worked on many cases where the value of the outcomes cannot readily be quantified, such as cases where we secured protective orders to stop domestic violence or obtained Individualized Education Plans to help children with special needs. Our housing practice addressed the most cases of any group, due in part to the end of the eviction moratorium and ongoing repercussions from the pandemic; it was followed closely by our expungement/sealing and our public benefits practices.

In the following pages, you will read about:
✓ How Legal Aid Chicago addresses the critical civil areas of poverty law through our legal work (and seven practice groups), our diverse partnerships and community partners, and other special initiatives;
✓ Real-life examples of people we have helped in the past year;
✓ Our geographic impact and specific demographics of the people whom we assist;
✓ Our ground-breaking Medical Legal Partnership with the University of Chicago;
✓ A well-deserved Volunteer Spotlight on David Yen, who was a staff attorney here from 1987 until his retirement in 2013, and who in the ten years since his retirement has been volunteering with us; and
✓ A new section debuting this year: In Our Own Words, where you will hear directly from our staff in their own words about what makes Legal Aid Chicago such a special organization and what particularly resonates with them about the work that we do.

With this report, we invite you to learn more about our people, our work, and our clients. If you already are a supporter, thank you! We hope you will see in this report that your contributions have been effectively utilized.

If you are not yet a supporter, we hope you will consider joining our mission to provide equal justice for all to thousands of our neighbors throughout Cook County and the Chicagoland community.

Thank you, in advance,
## 2022 Organizational Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual legal matters handled</td>
<td>14,300+ (includes brief advice as well as extended representation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of direct case activity logged</td>
<td>122,760+ HOURS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of individuals impacted (including clients and their families)</td>
<td>22,400+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total financial impact in increased assets, increased income, and decreased debt</td>
<td>$27,329,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average financial impact per client</td>
<td>$19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals whose health was improved by accessing health and nutrition benefits, including Medicaid, SNAP, etc.</td>
<td>1,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal records expunged or sealed</td>
<td>3,000+ (including both juveniles and adults).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orders of Protection obtained or modified for survivors of sexual and domestic violence/abuse</td>
<td>1,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who avoided homelessness by avoiding eviction/foreclosure or obtaining/retaining subsidized housing</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legal Aid Chicago opened more cases in 2022 than in any of the past five years. Case types also shifted in 2022 to reflect our clients’ changing legal needs. In particular, housing issues increased dramatically. Our Pro Bono & Community Partnerships group also expanded its work, taking on hundreds of cases related to criminal records expungement/sealing.

In 2022, Legal Aid Chicago made equal justice a reality for tens of thousands of people across Cook County, with a particular focus on underserved populations. The following demographics represent clients whose cases were closed in 2022:

- 100% In poverty or otherwise at-risk
- 64% Women
- 33% People living with a disability
- 15% Seniors
- 6% Veterans

Legal Aid Chicago’s commitment is clear: we provide life-altering legal assistance to our most vulnerable neighbors, and we never charge for our services. As the maps presented here illustrate, our impact is concentrated in the communities that experience the greatest need. ZIP codes in red represent the highest concentrations of case activity and poverty, respectively, in Cook County.
At Legal Aid Chicago, we believe everyone deserves access to a safe and affordable home, free from discrimination. Our Housing Practice Group (HPG) is dedicated to housing advocacy, protecting housing rights, and preserving stability of residents across Cook County. HPG staff provide legal assistance in cases that jeopardize the security of homes. We also defend the rights of tenants by preventing wrongful evictions and avert terminations of subsidized housing. In addition, we challenge housing discrimination and provide support to vulnerable clients, including survivors of gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

Many landlords impose blanket policies barring all individuals with criminal records. However, these policies have a disparate impact on Black and Hispanic individuals and therefore violate the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

In one recent case, we represented a tenant who was denied housing due to a single misdemeanor record. We assisted this tenant in negotiating a settlement, and in the end, she was awarded $15,000 in settlement funds.

In another case, our team helped a tenant named Gabriella, whose daughter suffered severe asthma attacks. These attacks were exacerbated by the mold Gabriella discovered in her new apartment shortly after moving in. Our staff met with Gabriella and drafted a reasonable accommodation letter, requesting a transfer to a different (mold-free) apartment. As a result, Gabriella and her family successfully relocated to a new unit, and her daughter’s health has greatly improved.
LONG-TERM CARE

The Long-Term Care Practice Group at Legal Aid Chicago supports residents of long-term care facilities, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. Our staff advocates for residents facing various challenges, such as quality of care issues, involuntary discharge, financial abuse, and Medicaid concerns. Additionally, we conduct educational efforts to raise awareness about residents’ rights.

CLIENT STORY

Janine hoped that her mother Sharon would receive the best medical attention possible as she approached the end of her life in hospice care. Imagine Janine’s shock when the nursing home expressed plans to move her mother to a less-favorable area of the facility with fewer staff members. Distraught, Janine called Legal Aid Chicago’s Long-Term Care Practice Group.

She did not want much; she simply wanted her mother to stay in her current room, where she could transition in peace. It was the only room she had occupied, and she was familiar with many of the staff on the floor. The day before the change took place, Volunteer Ombudsman Donna Fox began to advocate for both Janine and Sharon.

According to Janine, Donna “swooped in to save the day like a bulldog with angel wings.” As a result, Sharon was allowed to remain in her room, and Janine took comfort knowing that her mother would have a peaceful and dignified place to live during her final days.

IMMIGRANTS AND WORKERS’ RIGHTS

The Immigrants and Workers’ Rights Practice Group (IWR) is committed to supporting vulnerable workers and communities, providing a range of legal services in the areas of employment, immigration, human trafficking, and the protection of migrant farmworkers. This includes challenging discrimination and retaliation, seeking redress for wage theft, and other worker protections.

Our immigration and human trafficking work focuses on victim advocacy and assisting immigrant crime survivors, asylum seekers, and survivors of labor and sex trafficking. We also provide services to migrant, seasonal, and foreign visa workers through statewide outreach and claims addressing housing, employment, human trafficking, and health and safety laws.
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Legal Aid Chicago’s Children and Families Practice Group (CFPG) is dedicated to safeguarding the well-being and stability of families in the Chicagoland area. For example, the CFPG team helps victims of domestic abuse or sexual violence obtain protective orders and assists clients in divorce and custody matters, ensuring fair distribution of marital assets and advocating for custody arrangements that prioritize the child’s best interests. The group also advocates for students’ rights to fair and inclusive education and works to protect families from unwarranted actions by the Department of Children and Family Services.

CLIENT STORY

Every day, Legal Aid Chicago fights to preserve families and keep children safe in the care of their loved ones. Last year, for example, a 4-year-old boy was taken from the custody of his mother, Shania, when she was briefly hospitalized due to depression. Shania was discharged after only two days with a positive prognosis and a hopeful outlook. Nevertheless, a judge took protective custody of her son and forced him into the foster care system.

Shania and her son were incredibly close, and the separation was devastating for them both. Desperate to regain custody, Shania connected with several private attorneys who were eager to help but lacked the knowledge needed to navigate a complex child protection case. Supervisory Attorney Melissa Staas happily agreed to extend her expertise as co-counsel. In less than 2 months, the judge returned the child to the care of his mother. Shania and her son can now begin the process of healing and rebuilding their lives together.

PUBLIC BENEFITS

The Public Benefits Practice Group (PBPG) is dedicated to protecting access to essential benefits and ensuring that each individual and family in Cook County has enough to meet their basic human needs. Through holistic legal advocacy, they assist clients in obtaining a range of benefits, including SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Medical Assistance (Medicaid, Medicare), SSI (Supplemental Security Income), Social Security, Veterans Benefits, AABD Cash (Aid for the Aged, Blind, Disabled), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and Crime Victims Compensation from the State of Illinois.

In 2021, Christopher suffered a stroke and was paralyzed on his right side, losing his independence. He could no longer work and lived in a second-floor apartment with no elevator, surviving on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the goodwill of friends.

Unsure about his future, Christopher contacted Legal Aid Chicago. Fortunately, he was eligible for Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD) cash assistance. Christopher’s attorney helped him apply, but he was initially denied because he owned life insurance. Fortunately, his lawyer knew that his policy was exempt and filed an appeal with proof of this exception.

Under normal circumstances, AABD cash is less than $100 a month. However, because Christopher used a wheelchair, the benefit was multiplied to over $600, covering all his rent, and he was given months of back pay totaling over $3,000. Thanks to his attorney, Christopher can now search for a first-floor apartment and feel safe and secure in his home.
CLIENT STORY

An unlucky mishap can sometimes turn a happy occasion into a legal nightmare, as Naomi experienced when she bought a car. She had purchased insurance, but when she got into an accident and totaled her new vehicle, the insurer refused to cover the loss, claiming that Naomi had failed to inform them of her teenage daughter’s learner’s permit. However, the insurance agency had never asked about Naomi’s family during the application process, and her daughter had never even driven the vehicle. We immediately drafted a complaint against both the insurance company and the body shop where the damaged car sat, racking up $12,000 in storage fees. Our staff then represented Naomi in a formal hearing, putting forward a compelling argument. The arbitrator ultimately concluded that the insurance company violated its contract, as well as the Illinois Insurance Code and the Illinois Consumer Fraud Act. As a result, Naomi was awarded $10,000 from the insurance company and the body shop’s fees were canceled. Naomi was thrilled with this outcome and looks forward to purchasing another vehicle with the proceeds.

CLIENT STORY, LOW-INCOME TAXPAYER CLINIC

Legal Aid Chicago’s Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic helps individuals settle tax disputes, solve cases of identity theft, and more. Last year, Francisco contacted the Clinic after the IRS alleged that he owed over $12,000 in unpaid taxes. As a rideshare driver, Francisco knew that driving expenses qualified as eligible deductions. However, when Francisco filed his taxes, the IRS disallowed his deductions and applied an additional 20% penalty for the alleged errors. Francisco sought help from the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic. Francisco’s lawyer used records from the rideshare companies to demonstrate that most of the IRS denials were incorrect. After filing a petition in U.S. Tax Court, Francisco’s attorney worked with the IRS Office of Appeals, hoping to resolve the case before it was heard. He successfully argued that the deductions were accurate and persuaded the Appeals Office to waive the penalty, reducing Francisco’s tax burden by nearly 90% and securing a win (our clinic’s first!) in Tax Court.

“*They put me at ease with my legal issues and let me concentrate on getting my health back. What they’re doing for the people in the community is amazing!*”

—KEVIN, A FORMER LEGAL AID CHICAGO CONSUMER CLIENT
PRO-BONO & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Legal Aid Chicago’s Pro Bono and Community Partnerships Practice Group (PCG) collaborates with dedicated volunteers and pro bono attorneys. We leverage connections with local partners (both individual and institutional) to provide expert services across a wide range of legal issues. In particular, PCG handles all of our criminal records expungement cases, facilitates legal help desks, organizes community engagement and outreach, and hosts virtual and in-person legal clinics across Cook County.

CLIENT STORY

Each year, hundreds of clients meet with Legal Aid Chicago attorneys and pro-bono volunteers to receive free legal advice at one of our walk-in community clinics. In late 2019, one of these clients, Emmanuel, attended our Jose de Diego clinic in Humboldt Park, seeking assistance in obtaining a new birth certificate from Puerto Rico. His original document, he explained, contained an error, misspelling the name he had gone by for over 60 years.

We first worked to change Emmanuel’s name in Illinois and then contacted a Puerto Rican law firm that helped navigate legal intricacies unique to the territory. At this point, COVID-19 hit the world, and Puerto Rico was devastated by multiple, historic hurricanes.

Nevertheless, we continued to partner with the firm in Puerto Rico to advance Emmanuel’s case. After three years, our team finally succeeded in securing Emmanuel’s new Certificado de Nacimiento (Birth Certificate).

In an email to our partners in Puerto Rico, one of our volunteer attorneys wrote: “My thanks go to you and to our partners at Legal Aid Chicago for introducing me to Emmanuel, and for giving me the opportunity to serve this most deserving client. He could not possibly be more pleased or more grateful for this wonderful outcome.”

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There are many ways to include Legal Aid Chicago in your estate plan, like designating us:

✓ a specific dollar amount named in your will,
✓ a percentage of your estate described in your trust,
✓ as a beneficiary of your retirement account, a donor advised fund, and/or a life insurance policy.

If you would like any more information about doing so, OR have already remembered us in your estate plan, please contact:

Jen Miller, Chief External Relations Officer
jemiller@legalaidchicago.org
(312) 347-8381

Our staff, our clients, and their families cannot thank you enough for remembering us!
Changing the Lives OF SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCES’ LIVES WITH A CRITICAL PARTNERSHIP

Ben Weinberg, Pro Bono Partner at Dentons US LLP, is no stranger to Legal Aid Chicago’s work and how it can dramatically alter the lives of its clients. In fact, Ben started his legal career working in Legal Aid Chicago’s Englewood office, where he handled many domestic violence (DV) cases. These cases and potential legal ramifications stayed with him long after he left to clerk for Seventh Circuit Court Judge Bauer, and later at Jenner and Block, where he was a partner in commercial litigation.

In 2008, Ben became Pro Bono Partner at Dentons. Here, he saw an opportunity to make a real difference by encouraging pro bono participation not only in his own firm but also by working with community not-for-profits.

One of the first pro bono projects that Ben developed was with Legal Aid Chicago. As a result of the mortgage foreclosure crisis, Legal Aid Chicago lawyers were concerned about the tax consequences for clients whose mortgages were forgiven or written down. Ben organized a system whereby Dentons’ tax lawyers would advise Legal Aid Chicago lawyers on the relevant tax implications for their clients.

This project lasted long enough for the Legal Aid Chicago lawyers to develop their own tax expertise sufficient to represent clients without pro bono assistance.

In addition, from his past experiences, Ben had observed that the Illinois Domestic Violence Act was being misapplied in DV trial courts. As a result, DV clients would often have Orders of Protections (OP) denied under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act, when according to the correct interpretation of the law, relevant facts of the case, and/or prior case law, the OP should have been granted. To help correct this, in 2013, Ben helped create the Order of Protection Appeals Project by partnering with Legal Aid Chicago and Ascend Justice, a local DV rights not-for-profit that helps provide client referrals.

With this Project, Dentons attorneys and staff partner with Legal Aid Chicago by appealing OPs that have been wrongly denied by the trial court. First, Legal Aid Chicago’s Children and Families Services Practice Group (CFPG) identifies through a referral process clients whose OPs have been incorrectly denied, and then sends a memo to Ben, identifying the issues at the lower case level. Among other invaluable things, Dentons generously supplies the financial resources (including ordering transcripts from the lower court’s proceedings, which can cost thousands of dollars alone). Dentons and Legal Aid Chicago CFPG attorneys then handle the appeals and the next steps together.

“We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the Richardson case’s outcome. We are now seeing Illinois trial court judges citing this case regularly in these types of DV cases. This incredible end result would not have been possible without our fantastic Dentons partnership!”

Teressa Sullivan, General Counsel & Benna Crawford, Director - Children and Families Practice Group
In 2022, we partnered with the University of Chicago Medicine Trauma Center to launch our newest MLP: Recovery Legal Care. This MLP offers a broad range of public benefits assistance to patients who are admitted for violent injuries. It also represents the first MLP in the country to focus on gun violence, based on research indicating that people receiving public benefits are less likely to become victims or perpetrators of gun violence.

“MLPs are a delivery mechanism for stabilizing resources, such as public benefits, and a way to spread knowledge of our complex legal systems,” said Equal Justice Works Fellow, Attorney Carly Loughran, who spearheaded this partnership. MLPs integrate the unique expertise of lawyers and legal advocates into healthcare systems, helping clinicians and violence recovery specialists address structural problems that affect entire communities.

The other two Legal Aid MLPs are the Health Justice Project, in partnership with Erie Family Health Center; and the Health Law Clinic at Loyola University and Health Forward/Salud Adelante, in partnership with Cook County Health. These two MLPs serve a broader population of patients needing general medical care, whereas the Recovery Legal Care MLP focuses on victims of gunshot wounds.

Recovery Legal Care is composed of three attorneys and one paralegal, working in tandem with trauma surgeons and social workers from UChicago to provide resources and assist victims of gun violence in obtaining public benefits. Such timely assistance helps patients maintain their homes and employment while recovering from traumatic injuries. As the team grows, they hope to provide additional services related to expungement, education, and domestic violence, which has a disproportionate impact on low-income communities in Chicago’s South Side. This program is set to run for five years, serving an estimated 150 patients within the first year and building a model for other trauma centers across the country.

In the words of Mona Elgindy, Supervisory Attorney in the Public Benefits Practice Group: “We have the best of both worlds with these partnerships. Doctors, lawyers, clinicians, and other staff are working together in a multi-disciplinary environment that puts our clients and their needs at the core. We have the capacity to truly transform lives here.”
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to each and every one! (This list reflects cumulative gifts of $1,000 and
ever received between January 1, 2022 and December 30, 2022.)

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Heather Ross and Nora Zuckermann

Legal Aid Chicago is proud to recognize Heather Ross and Nora Zuckermann, two former Legal Aid Chicago employees who have continued to support our mission as donors while pursuing pioneering careers in a unique area of the law.

Nora and Heather, founders of Ross & Zuckerman LLP, began working at Legal Aid Chicago in the late 1990s, when our name was Legal Assistance Foundation (LAF). At that time, before the development of practice groups, LAF attorneys served as generalists, assisting clients across a range of legal issues. Nora and Heather took on cases involving divorce, foreclosure, unemployment, eviction, special education, and much more, thus exemplifying the passion and expertise that drive our mission today.

The connections we build at Legal Aid Chicago often last a lifetime. In Heather and Nora’s case, working at LAF led to a partnership that would change the course of their lives. While working at LAF, both Nora and Heather navigated reproductive challenges in their path to become parents. After having children, they decided to unite their experiences to support other prospective parents and growing families. Together, they founded Ross & Zuckerman LLP, a private law firm specializing in reproductive law and alternative family building.

At the time, reproductive technologies and alternative family-building strategies, like surrogacy and in-vitro fertilization, were growing in popularity. However, laws and legal services related to these practices struggled to keep pace. Early on, Nora and Heather relied on the skills they learned at LAF to develop their practice. Today, they are well-known in their field, representing a range of clients including intended parents, egg donors, sperm donors, embryo donors, and surrogates.

Despite their busy lives and successful careers, Nora and Heather still find time to give back, as both donors and volunteers. In their words: “We understand the crucial impact Legal Aid Chicago has for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families in the Chicagoland area. Legal Aid Chicago provides advocacy with dignity and compassion and clients receive the highest quality legal representation. For all of these reasons and more, Ross & Zuckerman LLP is incredibly proud to support Legal Aid Chicago.”

Thank you to Heather and Nora for your outstanding advocacy and for your ongoing support of Legal Aid Chicago’s mission, both personally and professionally!
David Yen

David joined Legal Aid Chicago in 1987. After graduating from Yale in 1971 and receiving his JD from the University of Pennsylvania, David built an impressive record of dedication and expertise at legal assistance organizations in Alabama and upstate New York. From his first day on staff with us, David’s brilliance was immediately on display. At the time, our consumer law practice did not represent individuals in bankruptcy court, but David recognized the enormous impact such services could have on the lives of our clients. David knew that “for those who will benefit from filing, it is an extremely powerful tool.” It took several years for Legal Aid Chicago to fully adopt these services as a priority, but David’s experience and determination eventually led us to develop a highly respected legal aid bankruptcy practice.

According to Tim Hufman, former longtime Legal Aid Chicago attorney, “David’s depth of knowledge in so many areas of law is amazing. He is an authority in bankruptcy, consumer, and social security law. In the years that I worked with David as co-supervisor at the Englewood neighborhood office, I repeatedly relied upon his depth of knowledge in litigating cases that required a creative use of the law. His willingness to share his innovative thinking repeatedly made me look good to the rest of the world.”

Perseverance in the face of adversity is another of David’s strengths. In the late 1990s, David and other Legal Aid Chicago attorneys wanted to use bankruptcy to prevent evictions of tenants from subsidized housing. At the time, however, the law on the intersection of bankruptcy and eviction was unclear. The success of these efforts varied depending on which judge was assigned the case. In two such cases, David and fellow Legal Aid Chicago attorney Larry Wood obtained favorable rulings from the U.S. District Court on behalf of subsidized housing residents who were facing eviction. Although the landlords eventually won those cases on appeal in the Seventh Circuit, the opinion was helpful because it clarified when in the eviction process a tenant can still file bankruptcy and save their tenancy. This clarification has helped tenants’ rights advocates throughout Illinois understand how to use the Bankruptcy Code to preserve numerous low-income tenancies.

In the years since, this hard-won clarity has helped countless clients successfully leverage bankruptcy as a defense against eviction, especially in public housing cases. “Working with David was one of the most instructive and rewarding experiences I’ve had in my career,” recalls Larry Wood, now a Supervising Attorney at Legal Action Chicago. “David’s arguments were thoughtful and creative. He taught me a tremendous amount about housing law, the Bankruptcy Code, and federal practice that I used during the next 25 plus years of my career.”

Many Legal Aid clients, who become homeowners, find themselves in danger of losing their homes because of the convoluted system for collecting property taxes. In 2014, after two prior appeals settled before David could get a ruling, David helped Legal Aid Chicago, on behalf of a third homeowner, bring another case before the Seventh Circuit. Here, the third time was the charm: the Seventh Circuit issued a ruling that established homeowners’ rights to use Chapter 13 bankruptcy to save their homes.

Another of David’s lasting legacies is the role he played in developing our Bankruptcy Help Desk. Fifteen years ago, after Legal Aid received generous support from the Chicago Bar Foundation and the Bankruptcy Court, David helped launch the Help Desk in order to provide pro se debtors with expert bankruptcy advice and brief services. In his honor, the Help Desk gives an annual award, named after David; to the Desk’s most dedicated volunteer.

Since retiring from Legal Aid Chicago in 2016, David has generously volunteered his time to our Consumer Practice Group and the Bankruptcy Help Desk. David is always willing to go the extra distance to help support both clients and staff. According to our Chief Litigation Officer (and former Consumer Practice Group Director) Dan Lindsey, “David serves as the agency’s Bankruptcy Guru Emeritus. He doesn’t just advise, he also contributes to our work on bankruptcy appeals and in amicus briefs filed in the district court, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. In a word, David’s long-term impact on our client community has been phenomenal.”

Thank you, David, for everything that you have done for us over the decades! Clearly, you have made a lasting impact on our clients’ and our staffs’ lives.
FINANCIALS

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended
December 31, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contributions - LSC</td>
<td>$7,681,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contributions - Other Government</td>
<td>$8,059,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations, Fellowships, and Other Private Awards</td>
<td>$2,397,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$2,509,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>$121,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less cost of direct benefit to donors</td>
<td>$(115,619)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cy Pres Awards</td>
<td>$144,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney’s Fees</td>
<td>$205,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Return (Loss), Net</td>
<td>$(753,938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$192,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services, In-Kind</td>
<td>$1,944,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22,287,947</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$20,048,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and Administration</td>
<td>$3,554,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$961,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$24,564,942</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets - Beginning of Year</td>
<td>$111,493,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets - End of Year</td>
<td>$9,269,405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2022 Total Revenue**
- Legal Services Corporation: 33%
- Private Support: 21%
- In-Kind Services: 8%
- Federal, State, & City Grants: 35%
- Other Revenue: 3%

**2022 Total Expenses**
- Program Services: 83%
- General & Administration: 13%
- Fundraising: 4%
# Financials

## Statement of Financial Position

*as of December 31, 2021 and December 31, 2022*

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$2,319,781</td>
<td>$3,881,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Cash - Client Deposits</td>
<td>397,866</td>
<td>454,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Cash - Letter of Credit Deposit</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contributions Receivable</td>
<td>3,005,021</td>
<td>2,547,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Receivable</td>
<td>231,230</td>
<td>476,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due from Affiliate</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
<td>553,666</td>
<td>560,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>2,600,107</td>
<td>2,603,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>$9,465,661</td>
<td>$11,330,261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noncurrent Assets</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>2,701,464</td>
<td>3,258,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and Equipment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Equipment and Software</td>
<td>285,709</td>
<td>287,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Equipment</td>
<td>790,557</td>
<td>1,024,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leasehold Improvements</td>
<td>3,269,328</td>
<td>3,269,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,345,594</td>
<td>4,581,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Accumulated Depreciation</td>
<td>(3,440,214)</td>
<td>(3,413,182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and Equipment, Net</td>
<td>905,380</td>
<td>168,429</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Noncurrent Assets</strong></td>
<td>3,645,544</td>
<td>4,477,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Right-of-Use Asset</td>
<td>4,747,266</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>$18,051,371</td>
<td>$15,557,581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

#### Current Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits and Payroll Withholdings</td>
<td>104,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>153,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Payable</td>
<td>274,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
<td>118,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Rent</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Lease Liability - Operating</td>
<td>1,661,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Vacation Expense</td>
<td>732,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to Affiliate</td>
<td>13,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Deposits</td>
<td>397,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$3,416,041</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Noncurrent Liabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term Lease Liability - Operating</td>
<td>5,365,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Rent</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Noncurrent Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>5,365,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$8,781,967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Without Donor Restrictions:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
<td>6,150,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board-Designated Endowment</td>
<td>5,101,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Without Donor Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>11,252,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Donor Restrictions</td>
<td>517,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>11,769,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$18,051,371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lee Muench is a Partner in the Chicago office of Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP. He focuses on complex commercial litigation and internal investigations. He also serves as the Recruitment Committee Co-Chair on the AB Executive Committee.

“Before I joined the AB, I provided pro bono services for various organizations,” Lee says. “But I felt like I was bouncing around, and, over time, forgetting what I learned from each engagement. I wanted to concentrate my time and make steadier contributions to one organization. The pro bono counsel at my firm recommended that I join the AB. I gave it a shot and have made Legal Aid Chicago my go-to ever since.”

Since joining the AB in 2020, during the COVID-19 global pandemic, Lee has always viewed challenges as opportunities. He wanted to help rebuild the AB as workers returned to offices. From 2020-
LEGAL AID CHICAGO LEADERSHIP TEAM*

John N. Gallo       Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director
Katherine W. Shank  Deputy Director/Chief of Staff
Mark Kennedy       Chief Financial Officer
Daniel P. Lindsey  Chief Litigation Officer
Jennifer E. Miller Chief External Relations Officer
Cynthia Sadkin     Chief Strategy Officer
Vivian R. Hessel   Chief Information Officer
Teresa Sullivan    General Counsel

“When I volunteered at Legal Aid Chicago prior to law school, I learned how lawyers could use the power of law to obtain justice for people who are often shut out of the systems that are meant to protect them. This experience ignited my commitment to equal justice that I’ve had the privilege of fulfilling along with amazing colleagues over the span of 30+ years.” —CYNTHIA SADKIN

LEGAL AID CHICAGO STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

The following staff represent long-standing members of our community who recently celebrated anniversaries with us.

30+ Years
Cynthia Sadkin
Denise Davis
Lisa Palumbo

20+ Years
Ana Franco
Erica Adams
Colleen Connolly
Jessica Kalmewicki

15+ Years
Dennericka Brooks

10+ Years
Ainat Margalit
Benna Crawford
Desiree Mathews-Plonowski
Shirley Wilkins
Talissa Guerrero

5+ Years
John Gallo
Trey Daly
Marisol Guadarrama
Regina Rizzo
Jennelle Pedroza
Teresa Sullivan
Regina Hernandez
Steve Phillips
Aziza Khatoon
Anna Reynoso
Naeem Nulwala
Anna Maitland
Lauren Dana

* Chief Strategy Officer, Cynthia Sadkin, with Intake Specialist, Amanda Palacios.
This year, we are pleased to debut a new feature. We asked a cross-section of our incredible staff why they work at Legal Aid Chicago and what makes them feel like they are making a difference. Here are some of their responses.

**Barbara Bertini**
Associate Director of Community Partnerships, Pro Bono and Community Partnerships Practice Group

Barbara focuses on creating new community partnerships and expanding existing ones.

“I love being in the community, answering questions and clarifying issues and concerns. The civil legal system is so complicated, and I have the incredible opportunity to help people navigate it and share the numerous ways Legal Aid Chicago can offer support.”

**Joey Carrillo**
Equal Justice Works Fellow, Children and Families Practice Group

Formerly a volunteer, intern, and now an EJW Fellow, Joey Carrillo leads Legal Aid Chicago’s effort to ensure LGBTQ+ clients have access to legal services. Through Legal Aid Chicago’s LGBTQ+ Task Force, Joey connects with LGBTQ+ organizations across the city and implements organization-wide training to support clients. Joey hopes this work will help make the legal system more accessible to LGBTQ+ clients across Chicago.

“Moving forward, I am looking to utilize Legal Aid Chicago’s LGBTQ+ Task Force to systematize training, ensuring all Legal Aid Chicago staff have consistent guidance for interacting with the LGBTQ+ communities. Since this is such an incredibly vulnerable population, putting these types of trainings in place will help us better serve the LGBTQ+ community with not only their legal issues but with advocacy and increased awareness.”

**Sarah Ferguson**
Paralegal, Public Benefits Practice Group

The Public Benefits Outreach and Enrollment (PBOE) program informs different communities about Legal Aid Chicago’s services. One PBOE paralegal is assigned to each of the six Department of Family Support Services Community Service Centers across Chicago. Sarah is primarily at the Garfield Community Service Center site, where she encourages members of the community to access available public benefits, sometimes by partnering with other organizations.

“One client I met was very skeptical. However, after we continued to show up every week, he eventually reached out for assistance. We helped him obtain a housing voucher from one of our partners, among other services. This client would not have trusted us with referring him to a community partner if we hadn’t built that confidence first. I love how we help people together!”

**Joseph Garcia**
EJW Fellowship Attorney, Immigrant and Workers’ Rights (IWR) Practice Group

Joseph, an Equal Justice Works Fellow, provides domestic workers legal representation that combats wage theft, harassment, and discrimination. Thanks to the new Illinois Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights, Joseph’s work is more impactful than ever.

“Ultimately, I would like to provide as many resources as possible to domestic workers in Illinois. Domestic workers have been excluded for far too long from protection, and it’s time we include them in the conversation. I am so glad I have the opportunity to do so working with my Employment team (part of IWR) at Legal Aid Chicago.”

**Mona Green**
Senior Intake Specialist, Client Screening Unit

For over twenty years, Mona Green has spoken to and carefully listened to potential clients who seek to use our services.

“Many people we interview are faced with some of the greatest challenges of their lifetime. Clients benefit from supportive listening, which is a big part of making a difference. I enjoy helping our clients and am proud to be a part of Legal Aid Chicago!”

**Valarie Owino**
Staff Attorney, Pro Bono and Community Partnerships Practice Group

The expungement team in Legal Aid Chicago’s Pro Bono & Community Partnerships Practice Group helps clear people’s criminal records, working to remove barriers so people can rent an apartment or obtain a job.

Valarie Owino, staff attorney on the team, files clients’ required paperwork and attends court hearings. She is a client’s primary advocate and works to get them the best outcome possible: a judge granting the client’s petition to expunge their record.

“I know my job is meaningful, because my clients are so thankful that someone is finally listening and giving them a chance. I also love when we succeed in getting our clients’ record expunged, which is over 98% of the time!”
In April, 2022, Legal Aid Chicago lost a beloved colleague, Rich Cozzola. In honor of his many years of service and friendship, our staff share their memories of Rich’s kindness, commitment, and incalculable impact:

Rich gave support staff respect and showed his appreciation for the work we do here. He always found the right words to say to make you feel better.
—IRMA AMARO, OFFICE ASSISTANT

One quality I admired in Rich is how much he admired his colleagues. He taught me to take pride in the work everyone in this organization does and be interested in who they are outside of work.
—BEN BENNETT, STAFF ATTORNEY

When Chicago Public Schools was attempting to close NTA Elementary, the parents and students protested, chanting in unison. Rich loved watching these young people and their parents stand their ground. Rich was a revolutionary in his heart and his work.
—ASHLEY FRETHOLD, SUPERVISORY ATTORNEY

Rich was instrumental in founding the Juvenile Expungement Help Desk (JEHD). This initiative is a monument to his work in the youth system—easily tens of thousands of juvenile cases have been expunged since the Help Desk opened. The impact of our presence in the Juvenile Center is tremendous, and JEHD is Rich’s legacy.
—NATANYA POPE, STAFF ATTORNEY

Rich was a gifted guitarist and songwriter. He continued to maintain the friendships and the folk band he started in high school throughout his life. I played with that band and his long-time friends. Rich’s songwriting reflected his deep love for Americana music and his many diverse interests, many of which intersected with Legal Aid Chicago.
—HUGH F. “TREY” DALY III, PUBLIC BENEFITS PRACTICE GROUP DIRECTOR

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—HUGH F. “TREY” DALY III, PUBLIC BENEFITS PRACTICE GROUP DIRECTOR

I was with one of the judges in the Child Protection Division when I learned of Rich’s passing. He knew Rich and said he remembered thinking the first time Rich appeared in his courtroom, “If I had five lawyers like him in my courtroom, we would be set.”
—ANONYMOUS

Rich was everything a legal aid lawyer should be: passionate, empathic, a zealous advocate, and committed to social justice for all, with an exceptional commitment to children and families.
—LISA PALUMBO, DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRANTS AND WORKER’S RIGHTS PRACTICE GROUP

To Rich, everyone was worth the investment to start a friendship and build a community. He cared about the future of Legal Aid Chicago and was so proud of the work every single person does here.
—EMMA MCMULLEN, STAFF ATTORNEY

Once, it came out in a conversation with him that I missed easy access to good bagels like they have in New York. He told me about his favorite Chicago bagel shops. Later, he asked when I’d be in the office next, and when I came in, he had a bag of bagels for me (and a StreetWise magazine).
—JUSTIN BRYANT, FORMER EXTERNAL RELATIONS COORDINATOR

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—JUSTIN BRYANT, FORMER EXTERNAL RELATIONS COORDINATOR
OUR MISSION
At Legal Aid Chicago, we work together to provide high quality civil legal aid to people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups. Through advocacy, education, collaboration, and litigation we empower individuals, protect fundamental rights, strengthen communities, create opportunities, and achieve justice. In carrying out our mission, we treat everyone with compassion and respect.

OUR VISION
It is our vision that poverty will not be an impediment to justice in Cook County. Legal barriers that perpetuate poverty and inequality will be dismantled. Laws and legal systems will be open and equally effective for all who need their protection, especially those who experience unfair and disproportionately unjust treatment due to personal or community characteristics.