



JUSTICE RESPONDS

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**THE OHIO ACCESS TO
JUSTICE FOUNDATION IS
COMMITTED TO IMPROVING
ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND
ENSURING THAT LEGAL
AID SOCIETIES AND OTHER
RESOURCES, PROGRAMS,
AND SERVICES ADDRESS
THE UNMET CIVIL LEGAL
NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME AND
UNDERSERVED OHIOANS.**

DEAR COLLEAGUES:

2020 was an unprecedented year. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare our vulnerabilities, underscored inequities, and challenged us in ways we never imagined. The murder of George Floyd accelerated the movement to redress structural racism and its consequences. The presidential election was tumultuous, but resolved, in the end, that we are a nation of laws.

Through it all, the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation worked to fulfill our nation's promise of justice for all, ensuring that Ohio's legal aids, Ohio Legal Help, and other access to justice initiatives responded to support low-income and underserved Ohioans.

JUSTICE RESPONDS ACROSS OHIO

As the coronavirus necessitated virtual communications, Ohio Legal Help and the Ohio Justice Bus capitalized on their strengths to reach quarantined Ohioans in need of legal help. Ohio Legal Help became the statewide resource for up-to-date, trustworthy information on everything coronavirus, from changes in unemployment benefits to the CDC eviction moratorium. The Ohio Justice Bus traveled the state to provide a mobile office in which Ohioans can sit privately and communicate remotely with legal aid and pro bono lawyers. Pages 4-5 highlight the work of these justice initiatives.

As COVID-19 upended legal aid's ability to serve clients in person, the pandemic increased Ohioans' civil legal needs. Undaunted, Ohio's legal aids immediately responded and pivoted to a virtual delivery model for all, with the exception of necessary court appearances. Pages 6-9 detail legal aid's transformative work and successes in improving Ohioans' health, financial security, and housing; thereby, stabilizing Ohioans and our communities.

The Foundation's Justice for All Fellows and Justice for All Summer Clerks adapted quickly to our new virtual world, continuing to deliver and support legal services to Ohio's most vulnerable. Page 10 introduces the Foundation's Fellows and Clerks and underscores how the Foundation helps to build a capable next generation of public interest attorneys who are advancing diversity in the profession.

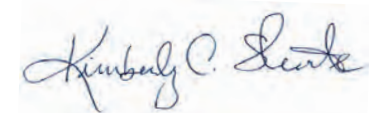
JUSTICE RESPONDS AND LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Cratering interest rates resulted in a dramatic decline in IOLTA/IOTA revenue and extended quarantines diminished court filing fee income, thereby eroding Foundation funding in 2020. Nevertheless, 2020 saw successes. Pages 12-13 highlight some of those accomplishments "By the Numbers."

A week before the coronavirus struck, the Foundation completed a new Strategic Plan. 2020 saw it revised and expanded to anticipate our coming, post-coronavirus world. The Foundation plans to grow funding; develop new collaborations and programming to narrow the civil justice gap; and improve advocacy for access to justice. We are excited about the future!

Diversity, equity, and inclusion must continue to both lead and inform our work. Fairness and equity, the real output of justice in action – in education, in opportunity, and in the creation and application of our laws – is our guiding principle.

Challenges will always lie ahead, but the Foundation and justice are ready to respond.



Kimberly C. Shumate

Foundation Board President



Justice Responds

Throughout Ohio

Ohio Justice Bus

Supported by the American Electric Power Foundation, the Ohio Justice Bus capitalized on its mobility and technology to serve Ohioans across the state throughout the coronavirus health emergency. The Bus hosted clinics in rural counties, like Belmont and Shelby, and provided in-home legal services to assist seniors with their wills and other necessary legal documents. 2020 also saw the Bus partner with new organizations like the Our Lady of Guadalupe Center to reach more underserved Ohio communities.



Justice for All Fellow Jack Maib provides legal help to homebound seniors.

www.ohiojusticebus.org

Our Lady of Guadalupe Center Director Ramona Reyes and Foundation Pro Bono Director Sophia Chang at the inaugural legal clinic.

Ohio Legal Help

Launched by the Foundation in late 2019, Ohio Legal Help, a statewide, secure, mobile-first hub for legal information, forms, and resources, celebrated its first full year of operations in September 2020.

Ohio Legal Help provides clear legal information, court forms, and connections to lawyer referral, legal aid, and community resources so that Ohioans can resolve their legal problems. More than 330,000 Ohioans visited Ohio Legal Help in 2020.

www.ohiolegalhelp.org

“
My landlord is trying to evict me. I am behind on my rent because I lost my job due to COVID-19. I didn't think I could do anything about it, but now I have a little hope.
”

- Tanya*

Ohio Legal Help user survey

*Name has been changed to protect client privacy

Ohio Legal Help Responds to COVID-19:

March 15 - Dec. 31, 2020

Users with eviction or foreclosure issues:

50,000



Referrals to Ohio's courts, legal aids, and local social service agencies:

80,800



310,000

total users assisted during the pandemic



Users with unemployment issues:

89,000

Justice Responds

Through Ohio's Legal Aids

Ohio's legal aid organizations provide essential legal services to help Ohioans resolve their legal issues so they can live safer, healthier, and more financially stable lives.

Preserving a Senior's Financial Stability

Heath and Martha Pierson* shared a lifetime of love and memories before Martha's declining health necessitated that she move into a long-term nursing facility. Mr. Pierson, who remained in the family home, became financially strained with mortgage and housing expenses when the nursing facility billed him for expenses related to Mrs. Pierson's care that were supposed to be covered by her insurance. When the nursing facility threatened to discharge Mrs. Pierson unless the family paid her bill in full, the Piersons' daughter paid the bill to prevent her mother's discharge and reached out to legal aid for guidance.

Legal aid determined that the nursing facility had erroneously billed Mr. Pierson and inappropriately collected money from the Piersons' daughter. Legal aid then helped Mr. Pierson and his daughter recover their money from the nursing facility, enabling Mr. Pierson to stabilize his own finances in the family home. Thanks to legal aid, the Pierson family recovered their money and Mr. Pierson is now financially secure.

**Names and photo have been changed to protect client privacy.*



**Name and photo have been changed to protect client privacy.*

Saving a Veteran's Home During the Pandemic

Peter Lambert,* a 71-year-old veteran, enjoyed his job teaching art at a Columbus senior center. When the center closed in 2020 because of COVID-19, Mr. Lambert suddenly lost his income and worried about making his mortgage payments.

Unsure of what to do and afraid that he might lose his home, Mr. Lambert reached out to legal aid. Legal aid helped Mr. Lambert obtain loan forbearance under the CARES Act. Thanks to legal aid, Mr. Lambert is secure in his home and no longer at risk of homelessness.

“**When I had no hope, legal aid gave me hope. I wouldn't be comfortable and sitting in my home right now if it wasn't for legal aid.**

- Peter Lambert*

”

Justice Responds

Through Partnerships

The Foundation funds a variety of partnerships around the state. Medical-legal partnerships situate legal aid attorneys in hospitals to address underlying legal issues identified by medical staff. Community development partnerships support groups working on neighborhood redevelopment.

Ensuring Safe Homes for Expectant Mothers

Tamya Edwards was four and a half months pregnant when she started having trouble sleeping. Ms. Edwards was experiencing constant stress over malfunctioning electrical sockets in her apartment, which required her to rely on extension cords and created a safety hazard. The management in Ms. Edwards' building was unresponsive to her concerns, furthering her stress.

At Ms. Edwards' prenatal appointment, she mentioned the stress caused by her electrical problems to her medical team. Ms. Edwards' medical providers acted quickly and referred her to legal aid through an established medical-legal partnership. Legal aid contacted Ms. Edwards' building management; and, as a result, the sockets in Ms. Edwards' apartment were quickly repaired. Thanks to legal aid and Ms. Edwards' medical team, Ms. Edwards had a safe living environment and less stress in her pregnancy. Ms. Edwards delivered a healthy baby boy.

“
Within two or three days, they [legal aid] fixed everything.”

- Tamya Edwards



Tamya Edwards and her doctor. Photo credit: Local 12/WKRC-TV.



Historic League Park in the heart of the Hough neighborhood.

Supporting Neighborhood Transformation

Legal aid is providing legal services to Cleveland Owns, an incubator for collective ownership working in the Hough and Detroit Shoreway neighborhoods. Members of the Hough Block Club (the “BC”) rely on legal aid's counsel and representation to develop a local solar energy project, which will generate clean energy and wealth for residents in the predominately Black neighborhood.

“
We appreciate legal aid because they've been our consultant, our resource, and our ally.”

- Deborah Lewis
Hough BC

Watch Hough BC community members explain how legal aid is helping them create clean solar energy and wealth

<https://bit.ly/3qtT6nV>



Justice Responds

Through Dedicated Attorneys

The Foundation funds new attorneys with a passion for public service through Justice for All Fellowships to address urgent legal problems facing everyday Ohioans.



Rachel Barr
Legal Aid Society of
Greater Cincinnati



Jack Maib
Ohio Justice
Bus



Adam Vincent
Southeastern
Ohio Legal
Services



Ayesha Cotton
Community
Legal Aid



Caitlyn McDaniel
Southeastern
Ohio Legal
Services



Julia Lauritzen
The Legal
Aid Society
of Cleveland



Rebekah Tefft
The Legal Aid
Society of
Columbus

“
**One of my overall goals
is to help keep kids in
school and make sure
they have the resources
they need to succeed.**
”
- Rachel Barr

Justice for All Summer Clerks are law students funded by the Foundation working across Ohio to support civil legal services and advance diversity in the profession.

“
**Every day of my
clerkship is a new
opportunity for
me to grow and
learn as a future
attorney, while also
getting to help the
most vulnerable
members of my
community.**
”
- Michael Arnold



Michael Arnold
Community
Legal Aid



Matt Kline
Southeastern
Ohio Legal
Services



Nadia Haile
The Legal Aid
Society of Cleveland



Davona Mason
Equality Ohio



Keria Haugabrook
The Legal Aid
Society of Columbus



Dequee Phillips
Advocates for
Basic Legal
Equality



Danielle Hutchinson
Legal Aid Society of
Greater Cincinnati



Jeremy Pratt
Toledo Bar
Association



Deztaany Johnson
Legal Aid of
Western Ohio



Glenda Wright
Pro Seniors

2020 Award Winners



Presidential Award for Pro Bono Service

Gerry Greene, who volunteers full-time as a staff attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, received the Foundation's Presidential Award for his commitment to helping low-income Ohioans resolve family law matters.

**Watch the WCPO
Cincinnati segment on
Gerry Greene**

<https://bit.ly/3jtW2Op>



“
**I am in awe of my clients, who display a fierce
determination to make life better for their children.
They're my inspiration.**
”
- Gerry Greene



Denis J. Murphy Award

Ann McGowan Porath, managing attorney of The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's Volunteer Lawyers Program and Intake Group, received the Foundation's Denis J. Murphy Award for outstanding leadership and advocacy in growing pro bono service and programs.

**Watch Ann's colleagues
honor her outstanding
contributions**

<https://bit.ly/3qZ9IV6>



Justice Responds

2020 By the Numbers



58,539
Ohioans helped with
COVID-related issues

526 **virtual
clinics**

1,795

families
struggling with
**substance
abuse
disorders**
received legal
support

100%

of Ohio counties
served

\$2,154,227

supporting
**community
economic
development**



134
attorneys provided educational
loan repayment assistance

**Southern District
funding** helped

365
Ohioans

10 Justice for All
Summer Clerks
**advancing
diversity**



Legal aid
helped

124,830 Ohioans

Financial Information

Advocates for
Basic Legal Equality
\$4,870,862

The Legal Aid
Society of Cleveland
\$3,284,724

Community
Legal Aid
\$2,975,686

Southeastern Ohio
Legal Services
\$2,703,573

Legal Aid Society
of Greater Cincinnati
\$2,662,780

The Legal Aid
Society of Columbus
\$2,631,457

Pro Seniors
\$646,268

Ohio Poverty
Law Center
\$461,904

Ohio Legal Help
\$325,000

Legal Aid of
Western Ohio
\$322,682

Justice for All
Summer Clerks
\$40,000

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS
& GRANTS:
\$20,924,936

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2020

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	597,259
Accounts receivable	290,174
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	50,996
Total current assets	\$938,429
Investments	\$16,482,255
Property and Equipment	
Equipment	50,750
Vehicles	116,553
Furniture and fixtures	9,550
Computer software	25,100
Leasehold improvements	18,117
Less: accumulated depreciation	(84,889)
Total property and equipment	\$135,181
Total assets	\$17,555,865

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	
Accounts payable	18,231
Grants payable	118,039
Accrued liabilities	171,979
Deferred rent	33,807
Total current liabilities	\$342,056
Net Assets	
Without donor restrictions	11,912,228
With donor restrictions	5,301,581
Total net assets	\$17,213,809
Total liabilities and net assets	\$17,555,865

Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended June 30, 2020

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Revenue and Support			
Administrative	870,604	–	870,604
State support and special population	923,809	–	923,809
Ohio Access to Justice Foundation Fund	2,681,573	–	2,681,573
Ohio Supreme Court grant	425,000	–	425,000
Other grants	1,177,888	–	1,177,888
Paycheck Protection Program proceeds	216,078	–	216,078
Other income	45,195	3,985	49,180
Investment returns, net	56,808	–	56,808
Net assets released from restrictions	2,329,425	(2,329,425)	–
Total revenue and support	\$8,726,380	\$(2,325,440)	\$6,400,940
Expenses			
Program services			
Pro bono	272,013	–	272,013
Legal services support	7,445,123	–	7,445,123
Public funds compliance	359,133	–	359,133
Ohio Justice Bus	89,177	–	89,177
Grant administration	200,076	–	200,076
Management and general	336,943	–	336,943
Fundraising	97,261	–	97,261
Total expenses	\$8,799,726	–	\$8,799,726
Changes in net assets	(73,346)	(2,325,440)	(2,398,786)
Net assets - beginning of year	\$11,985,574	\$7,627,021	\$19,612,595
Net assets - end of year	\$11,912,228	\$5,301,581	\$17,213,809

OFFICERS

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Paula Boggs Muething
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Public Defender

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Supreme Court of Ohio

EX OFFICIO

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