

JUSTICE

TIPS THE SCALES

2022 | ANNUAL REPORT



JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES TOWARD



STABLE HOUSING

A STRONGER WORKFORCE

EQUITY

THRIVING FAMILIES

NEW BEGINNINGS



IN 2022, the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation and its grantees tipped the scales of justice toward safer, more stable, and financially secure lives for low-income Ohioans. Through the Foundation's funding, Ohio's spectrum of civil legal service providers helped Ohioans address their civil legal challenges to tip the scales of justice toward a better future.

MISSION

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.



JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD **STABLE HOUSING**



Preserving Mrs. Henderson's Family Home

Josephine Henderson* is an 80-year-old homeowner in the Cincinnati Bond Hill neighborhood. Mrs. Henderson has lived in her home for 35 years, raising her family and now retiring there. After falling ill, Mrs. Henderson fell two months behind on her mortgage payments and worried that her bank would foreclose on her house. Fearful of losing her home, Mrs. Henderson reached out to legal aid.

After meeting with Mrs. Henderson, Justice for All Fellow Stacy Purcell identified multiple ways that she could help Mrs. Henderson stabilize her situation so that she could remain financially stable and independent in her retirement. Ms. Purcell succeeded in getting a mortgage forbearance for Mrs. Henderson on account of her illness. Most critically, Ms. Purcell helped Mrs. Henderson obtain Save the Dream funding to preserve her home ownership. In addition, Save the Dream funding enabled Mrs. Henderson to make needed repairs to her home.

Ms. Purcell also identified that Mrs. Henderson qualified for tax credits, which reduced her annual property tax payments going forward. When Ms. Purcell realized that Mr. Henderson, who was deceased, was still listed on the home's deed, she connected Mrs. Henderson with a pro bono attorney who removed her husband's name from the deed and drafted a will for Mrs. Henderson. Thanks to Save the Dream, a pro bono attorney, and legal aid's holistic representation, Mrs. Henderson didn't just avoid foreclosure, she increased her housing stability in her long-time family home and legally solidified her future.

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

“Mrs. Henderson can now age in place and pass on the generational wealth she has built through decades of homeownership to her grandchildren.”

- Stacy Purcell, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio



IN 2022,
LEGAL AID HELPED
416
HOMEOWNERS
AVOID FORECLOSURE.

Saving the Dream of Homeownership for Low-Income Ohioans

Ohio's legal aids help homeowners experiencing pandemic-related economic hardship avoid foreclosure by combining civil legal services with funds from the Save the Dream Ohio: Help for Homeowners program. Legal aid works collaboratively with the Ohio Housing Finance Agency to help Ohio homeowners at risk of foreclosure access funds to pay their mortgage, property taxes, utility bills, or other housing costs.

“With access to Save the Dream, we're able to very quickly get clients the funds they need to bring their taxes current and dismiss the case.”

- Stephanie Moes,
Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio



Justice for All Fellow Stacy Purcell and her client Karen Greynolds talk on Ms. Greynolds' front porch. Ms. Purcell saved Ms. Greynolds' home from foreclosure through legal representation and funds from Save the Dream.

Photo by Julia Frymier

JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD A STRONGER WORKFORCE

Helping to Launch a Business and Create Stable Jobs

During the pandemic, community members in East Columbus approached legal aid for help in launching an employee-owned coffee company. The group wanted to build a company to redress systemic racism and class disadvantages through the equitable treatment of employees.

Legal aid helped to incorporate Parable Coffee, creating bylaws that provide for employee ownership and fair wages without reliance on tipping. Thanks to legal aid, Parable Coffee launched a successful business, which proved so popular that the company recently expanded from a pop-up shop with limited hours to a full-service coffee shop just off Capitol Square in downtown Columbus.



Parable Coffee founders and co-owners Ben Willis and Jeffrey Clark. Photo by Julian Foglietti and courtesy of Parable Coffee.

Parable Coffee's new space in downtown Columbus. Photo by Julian Foglietti and courtesy of Parable Coffee.



Providing a Clean Slate for Mr. Lehman

More than ten years ago, Jared Lehman,* a 37-year-old father of three, made some mistakes that resulted in a criminal record. In the last decade, Mr. Lehman has turned his life around. Due to his past, however, Mr. Lehman had trouble finding housing and quality employment opportunities, so he reached out to legal aid for help.

Legal aid helped Mr. Lehman seal his criminal records. Thanks to legal aid, Mr. Lehman has a fresh start, with improved employment prospects and the chance for a better future for his children.

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



“

“It was pretty life-changing for me. It’s like a fresh start.”

- Jared Lehman*



**IN 2022, LEGAL AID HELPED
2,669 OHIOANS
SEAL OR EXPUNGE THEIR CRIMINAL RECORDS
OR REINSTATE DRIVER’S LICENSES TO
IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS.**

JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD EQUITY



Helping Spanish-Speaking Ohioans Address their Legal Challenges

In 2022, Ohio Legal Help, a nonprofit that leverages technology and innovation to provide plain language legal information, interactive self-help tools, and connections to local legal and community resources, launched a Spanish version of www.ohiolegalhelp.org. The translated site includes information to help Spanish-speaking Ohioans handle housing, consumer, family, and other legal issues to help them live safe and stable lives.



“

“We were able to take something that normally takes several weeks or months and get it done in a day.”

- James Levin, LegalWorks

Spearheading a New Approach to Criminal Record Sealing

In Cleveland, a specialty legal aid partnered with the municipal court and the clerk of courts to develop and pilot a new and efficient way to help Ohioans seal their criminal records. During a single-day event at a local community center, hundreds of Ohioans attended the groundbreaking clinic, which consolidated all steps of the record sealing process into a one-stop shop.

The clinic stretched hours beyond its planned end time to accommodate as many people as possible with direct representation from the specialty legal aid and onsite rulings from a judge. The collaborative effort sealed 236 records in just one day, helping 80 Ohioans increase access to employment opportunities and better housing. The clinic was so successful that the partners plan to replicate the model throughout the region.

Hundreds of Ohioans attend a one-day record-sealing clinic at the Glenville Recreation Center in Cleveland.



Advocating for Domestic Violence Survivors with Disabilities

In northwest Ohio, legal aid partnered with Bethany House, a Toledo domestic violence shelter, to create a project that is one of the first in the country: targeted multidisciplinary services for victims of domestic violence with disabilities. Project SAFE – Safety and Accessibility For Everyone – used extensive interviews and focus groups to identify the unique challenges faced by survivors with disabilities and to build a responsive program to provide them with services.

Thanks to legal aid’s leadership and engagement with community partners, survivors of domestic violence in and around the Toledo area have new, more accommodating physical spaces in which to seek services and new, more accommodating ways to access the legal services that are critical to establishing their safety and independence. Today, not only will more survivors with disabilities have their legal needs met and achieve safety and security, but a new service model exists for others to follow.



Legal Aid of Western Ohio Managing Attorney and Project SAFE team member Lucinda Weller conducts an accessibility review at Bethany House to ensure a safe environment for domestic violence survivors with disabilities.



**IN 2022, LEGAL AID HELPED
4,984 DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE SURVIVORS
ACHIEVE SAFETY AND SECURITY.**

JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD THRIVING FAMILIES

Increasing Stability and Economic Security for Families Providing Kinship Care

Legal aid and the Ohio Justice Bus partnered with Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator (OhioKAN) to increase stability and economic security for kinship caregivers. Kinship caregivers are grandparents or other adults who take in children whose biological parents cannot provide appropriate care. This keeps children out of the foster system and provides them a nurturing family environment. OhioKAN supports kinship families and connects them to needed resources like legal aid.

Legal aid helps kinship caregivers navigate legal issues related to custody and guardianship, access to public benefits, educational needs, and housing stability. Throughout the summer, OhioKAN and the Ohio Justice Bus held 21 clinics across the state. This partnership helped ensure stable homes for Ohio's children.

“When caregivers have legal resources available to them, they can get the benefits they’re entitled to that they might otherwise not have been able to access.”

- Baylee Butler, Southeastern Ohio Legal Services



Baylee Butler, Lisa Remy, and Madi Phillips at an Ohio Justice Bus clinic in Jackson, Ohio.



Improving Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

Through a partnership with CareSource, the Foundation funded legal aid organizations to address SDOH by removing barriers to employment, increasing access to earned unemployment compensation and public benefits, and building financial resources for low-income Ohioans. In addition, legal aid helped low-income Ohioans avoid eviction and foreclosure and ensured healthy housing conditions.

These financial and housing improvements put families in a position to achieve better health outcomes. Resolving legal challenges results in families enjoying stable housing and increased income, so both the family and the community benefit.



IN 2022, THE CARESOURCE PARTNERSHIP HELPED
2,355 LOW-INCOME OHIOANS
– PARTICULARLY IN APPALACHIA –
IMPROVE SDOH.



JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD NEW BEGINNINGS



Helping Ms. Ahmadi Gain Safety in the United States

Lida Ahmadi, a 27-year-old Afghan, worked with the United States military as an interpreter in Afghanistan. When the Taliban took control of the country, her life was at risk, so she fled. Arriving under the Operation Allies Welcome program, Ms. Ahmadi feared that she might have to return to Afghanistan, where everything from her ability to work, to travel, to walk around outside would be threatened, so Ms. Ahmadi sought legal help.

A specialty legal aid helped Ms. Ahmadi file a petition for a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV), for which she qualified because she had worked for the U.S. government. Following her grant of an SIV, her attorney also assisted Ms. Ahmadi in applying for and gaining permanent residence status. Additionally, her attorney helped Ms. Ahmadi find more suitable housing. Thanks to the civil legal help she received, Ms. Ahmadi has a green card, a better apartment, and a new job helping other Afghans adjust to life in the U.S. Most importantly, Ms. Ahmadi has a bright future, safe from the dangers she faced in Afghanistan.



IN 2022, CIVIL LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS, RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES, AND PRO BONO ATTORNEYS HELPED 1,794 AFGHANS GAIN SAFETY AND SECURITY IN OHIO.



Helping Veteran Mr. Johnson Gain Employment and Keep His Home

Erick Johnson,* a veteran with physical disabilities, was employed full-time at a factory until he suffered a brain aneurysm. Mr. Johnson spent several months rehabilitating and could not return to his former job. He lived off his savings for some time but fell behind on his rent and was at risk of eviction. Mr. Johnson had hoped to return to work part-time in a more sedentary job. However, he was concerned that if he went back to work, he might no longer qualify for the veterans medical benefits on which he relied while he continued to recover. Mr. Johnson reached out to legal aid for help.

Legal aid completed a holistic benefits analysis for Mr. Johnson and determined that obtaining employment would not impact his veterans medical benefits. Relying on legal aid's advice, Mr. Johnson searched for and found a part-time job with the call center of a local restaurant. As time passed and his health improved, Mr. Johnson's hours increased. Today, Mr. Johnson is working 32 hours a week with the hope of moving to full-time employment. With his stable salary, Mr. Johnson was able to pay his landlord the entirety of the rent he owed.

Thanks to the advice and assistance of legal aid, Mr. Johnson is no longer in danger of eviction, financially stable, and very happily working.

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



IN 2022, LEGAL AID SECURED \$660,036 IN EARNED BENEFITS FOR VETERANS.

JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TO BE THERE WHEN NEEDED



24/7
IN 2022,
OHIO LEGAL HELP SERVED
740,560 OHIOANS.



Where You Are
IN 2022,
THE OHIO JUSTICE BUS HOSTED
68 LEGAL CLINICS IN
36 COUNTIES.

Courthouses



Libraries



Community
Events

What You Need
IN 2022,
20 SPECIALTY LEGAL AIDS
SERVED THE LEGAL NEEDS OF
8,455 OHIOANS.



Justice for All
IN 2022, OHIO'S LEGAL AIDS SERVED
132,640 OHIOANS,
HELPING THEM LIVE SAFER, MORE
SECURE, FINANCIALLY STABLE LIVES.



“[Legal aid] doesn’t tell you that you’re at the bottom of your bucket and you’ll never crawl out. They’re like, ‘there’s a ladder somewhere, and we’re going to help you find it.’”

- Vanetta Jamison, former legal aid client and former board president of The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland



JUSTICE TIPS THE SCALES

TOWARD LEADERSHIP

Justice for All Fellows

Justice for All Fellows are new attorneys funded by the Foundation to develop and execute two-year projects to address urgent legal problems facing everyday Ohioans.

Justice for All Summer Clerks

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



Alaina Collins
LegalWorks



Royce Johnson
The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland



Tavis Daluz-Cates
Disability Rights Ohio



Eashan Menon
International Institute of Akron



Michael Hakes-Rodriguez
Pro Seniors



Zainab Raza
Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati



Veronica Hodges
Equality Ohio

“My goal for the summer following my first year of law school was to gain experience with the skills I learned in my first year while still helping others. Being a law clerk at LegalWorks allowed me to do that and then some.”

- Alaina Collins, LegalWorks

2022 FOUNDATION HONOREES



PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Judge Andrew Logan of the Trumbull County Court of Common Pleas received the Foundation’s Presidential Award for leading and developing several crucial programs that have been instrumental in helping Ohioans address housing and consumer issues.



DENIS J. MURPHY AWARD

B. Janelle Butler Phifer, staff attorney at Legal Aid of Western Ohio, received the Foundation’s Denis J. Murphy Award for groundbreaking leadership and outstanding advocacy for Ohioans facing legal challenges.

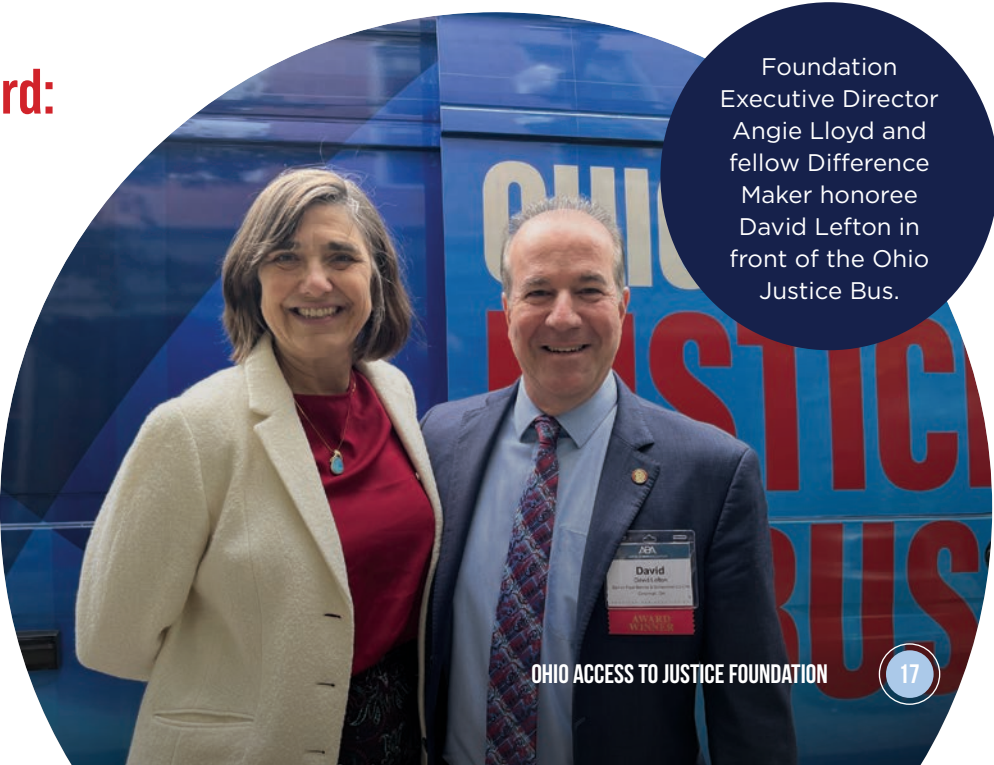


VOICE OF JUSTICE AWARD

State Senator Nathan Manning received the Foundation’s Voice of Justice Award for his legislative leadership to direct Attorney Unclaimed Funds toward access to justice, ensuring that more funding is available to help low-income Ohioans overcome life-changing civil legal issues.

Difference Maker Award: Pro Bono Category

The Ohio Justice Bus received the American Bar Association’s Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division Difference Maker in Pro Bono Award for its work traveling the state to deliver civil legal services to low-income and underserved Ohioans.



GRANTS & DISBURSEMENTS

TO CIVIL LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS



\$6,293,416



\$5,374,706



\$4,004,321



\$3,114,791



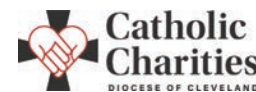
\$2,820,905



\$618,236



\$369,899



\$211,000



\$147,223



\$126,000



\$78,137



\$40,172



\$15,000



\$14,630



\$13,540

Other Civil Legal Service Nonprofits

\$12,250

TOTAL AWARDED:
\$23,254,226

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2022

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	2,342,850
Accounts receivable	318,990
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	57,092
Total current assets	\$2,718,932

Investments

\$20,485,640

Property and Equipment

Equipment	24,919
Vehicles	116,553
Furniture and fixtures	9,550
Computer software	25,100
Leasehold improvements	18,117
Less: accumulated depreciation	(105,404)
Total property and equipment	\$88,835
Total assets	\$23,293,407

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

Accounts payable	24,333
Grants payable	129,184
Accrued liabilities	222,685
Deferred rent	37,600
Total current liabilities	\$413,802

Net Assets

Without donor restrictions	20,191,041
With donor restrictions	2,688,564
Total net assets	\$22,879,605
Total liabilities and net assets	\$23,293,407

Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended June 30, 2022

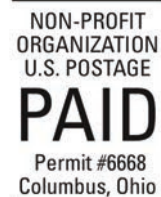
	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Revenue and Support			
Access to Justice Foundation Fund	7,286,100	1,060,859	8,346,959
Ohio Supreme Court grant	425,000	—	425,000
Other grants	11,138,850	82,392	11,221,242
Other income and contributions	133,120	—	133,120
Investment returns, net	(1,645,696)	—	(1,645,696)
Net assets released from restrictions	1,872,111	(1,872,111)	—
Total revenue and support	\$19,209,485	\$(728,860)	\$18,480,625
Expenses			
Program services			
Pro bono	206,256	—	206,256
Legal services support	13,194,814	—	13,194,814
Public funds compliance	288,563	—	288,563
Ohio Justice Bus	160,456	—	160,456
Grant administration	181,720	—	181,720
Management and general	376,404	—	376,404
Fundraising	73,918	—	73,918
Total expenses	\$14,482,131	—	\$14,482,131
Changes in net assets	4,727,354	(728,860)	3,998,494
Net assets - beginning of year	\$15,463,687	\$3,417,424	\$18,881,111
Net assets - end of year	\$20,191,041	\$2,688,564	\$22,879,605

Legal aid attorneys, staff, and board members attend the Foundation's Legal Aid Day at the Ohio Statehouse on May 10, 2022.



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www.ohiojusticefoundation.org



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