

LAWVO



LEGAL AID OF WESTERN OHIO, INC.

2022

ANNUAL
REPORT



“Moving Forward with Justice and Innovation”

MISSION STATEMENT

LAWO represents individuals and groups of people living in poverty in civil (non-criminal) legal matters. We are committed to protecting the rights of people with much at stake and nowhere else to turn. Through litigation and other forms of advocacy, we prevent homelessness, domestic abuse, and financial loss. We improve opportunities for education, housing, employment, and access to health care and public benefits for people living in poverty in 32 counties in western Ohio, and agricultural workers throughout Ohio. Every day, we work to address the root causes of poverty by seeking systemic solutions.

Without legal aid, tens of thousands of people would go without legal help when they need it.

LAWO
LEGAL AID OF WESTERN OHIO, INC.



Moving Forward with Justice and Innovation



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WELCOME MESSAGE

MOVING FORWARD WITH JUSTICE AND INNOVATION

On behalf of **Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc.**, I am pleased to share our Annual Report for 2022. The past year was one of transition and progress as we began to operate in a post-pandemic world. This meant making significant changes to improve the client experience across our 32-county service area and in our state-wide services to agricultural workers, as well as developing thoughtful and innovative ways to accommodate staff as they navigated a hybrid work environment.

Reestablishing face-to-face communications was crucial in helping **LAWO** move forward with our mission of serving the civil legal needs of low-income households. Through a concentrated effort to provide more in-person outreach and legal assistance, we saw a significant increase in our client numbers in 2022. Additionally, we were able to build stronger relationships and collaborate more effectively with community partners to address the varied needs of our clients and communities by meeting in person. Examples of this included our SAFE Project (Safety and Accessibility for Everyone) assessments with Bethany House in northwest Ohio, and our collaboration with Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE) and HUD in expanding our housing services to rural communities outside of Montgomery County.

Transitioning out of the pandemic brought more staff members back into our offices on a regular basis. To accommodate employees from the various places where they conduct their work, we sought to improve our use of technology. Projects included the implementation of our new intranet site, and the beginning stages of introducing LegalServer as our new case management system and NetDocuments as our document management system.

LAWO went through a rebranding in 2022. Our new logo and branding assets reflect our commitment to people, community, and diversity.

Also in 2022, **LAWO** conducted a Community Legal Needs Assessment with our partner, the Center for Community Solutions. An assessment was sent to hundreds of people living in poverty asking them about their legal needs, their experiences in accessing help, and the resources (or lack thereof) available to them. We also created a survey for our community partners to complete, asking them to weigh in on some of the common requests, services, and gaps in assistance for our community members living in poverty, and conducted focus groups and individual interviews. The results from the assessment will guide our mission and focus over the next several years.

Please review the full scope of our growth in 2022 in this Annual Report—all of it made possible because of generous donors like you.

PRACTICE GROUP MILESTONES

Learn about some of the programs and services that LAWO's focused practice groups worked on in 2022.

Agricultural Workers and Outreach

LAWO conducts extensive outreach to the agricultural worker population and provides legal assistance to clients identified through outreach activities. In 2022, COVID-19 continued to create outreach-related challenges as we sought to reach as many agricultural workers as possible while maintaining staff safety. We provided workers with a "Legal Bag" containing numerous educational tools and collaborated with Justice for Migrant Women to provide items such as masks, disinfectants, toiletries, and hygiene items. In 2022, LAWO visited 261 agricultural camps in 48 of the 64 counties identified as having seasonal and migrant farmworkers. The outreach staff visited 706 housing units; **reached 3074 workers**; distributed 2507 harvest calendars, which include summaries of laws pertaining to employment, domestic violence, education, field sanitation, housing, and immigration; distributed 2299 work record books, which provide agricultural workers with a means of documenting the dates and hours of employment and their wages received; and distributed 2366 heat stress handouts. We also distributed 2346 COVID-19 CDC Factsheets in Spanish and English. Additional outreach was conducted at area restaurants and agencies.

Empowering Older Adults

LAWO's Access to Justice Practice Group and Senior Project continued to collaborate to provide legal services to older adults in 2022. We successfully represented this population in consumer debt collection cases, bankruptcy cases to protect income or a home, housing conditions and housing preservation cases, and health care and public benefits cases. Outcomes included reduction or elimination of debt; relief from creditor harassment; income and asset preservation; housing stability; health care assistance, and income maintenance.

Through our **Plan Ahead and Protect Yourself Legal Series**, older adults participated in free legal education classes and clinics that helped them achieve peace of mind through the completion of advance directives and other planning documents. These services made it possible for our clients to remain in their homes and neighborhoods, living independent and autonomous lives for as long as possible.

To address the growing challenge of elder abuse, and increase the help available, LAWO offered free **Legal Needs Check-Ups** for older adults ages 60+ in our service area. The Check-Ups were available throughout the month of June (Elder Abuse Awareness Month) as a telephone-based service through our central intake unit, Legal Aid Line. The Legal Needs Check-Up consisted of approximately 15 questions that helped identify whether the caller had legal issues that we or one of our partners could assist with.

PRACTICE GROUP MILESTONES

(Con't)

Housing Justice and Community Economic Development

In 2022, LAWO greatly expanded our housing advocacy in the City of Toledo. Toledo City Council passed a **Right to Counsel in Eviction Proceedings** ordinance (RTC) in 2021, providing \$250,000 in funding for the first year of the project. In 2022, we hired two attorneys to provide representation for tenants under the RTC Project. RTC staff assisted clients in 227 eviction cases in the Toledo Municipal Court in 2022, providing comprehensive representation in 210 cases. Advocates closed 139 cases, preventing an eviction in 62 cases and delaying an eviction in 60 cases. In total, 88% of households who received representation were able to avoid an eviction or an involuntary move. RTC attorneys also helped clients seal their eviction records in 46 cases.

LAWO attorneys also worked closely with community partners in 2022 to ensure that they reached the hardest to serve clients, and to provide referrals for matters outside our legal skillset. LAWO, along with our community partners and under the direction of the Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board, formed the **Eviction Prevention League**. Under the newly signed Memorandum of Understanding, this group meets regularly to discuss the big picture and individual needs in the local homelessness and housing landscape.

Pro Bono Representation

After creating a virtual training video and written materials in 2021, LAWO's Pro Bono Program and the Toledo Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services Program continued to use those resources to support pro bono attorneys in **helping clients seal their criminal records**. The materials incorporated new statutory changes and included informational sheets and a process by which all volunteer attorneys can easily access criminal records and check for eligibility.

Additionally, our Pro Bono Program collaborated with law firms and justice community partners throughout our 32-county service area to host a variety of pro se clinics on family law, domestic violence, and driver's license reinstatements. We also partnered with the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation's **Justice Bus** to provide mobile clinic services to reach vulnerable populations in our rural counties.

Safety & Stability for Domestic Violence Survivors

LAWO remained engaged in two innovative projects to meet the needs of domestic violence survivors: the SAFE (Safety & Accessibility For Everyone) Project and the Justice for Families Project in Lucas County.

Women with disabilities are uniquely vulnerable to all forms of gender-based violence and experience higher rates of victimization than women without disabilities. Shelters and other systems-based supports are often physically or procedurally inaccessible.

PRACTICE GROUP MILESTONES

(Con't)

Additionally, culturally competent services are non-existent, making it even more difficult for survivors of color to get help.

In 2022, the **SAFE Project** finalized and began to implement a strategic plan based on a needs assessment conducted in 2021. The assessment identified six key findings and fifteen strategic plan activities that will be implemented at all partner agencies over the next year. Implementation of each activity will make SAFE partner agencies better equipped to provide safe and appropriate services to survivors with disabilities.

Additionally, LAWO and its partners, The Lucas County Court Juvenile Court, the Children's Rights Collaborative, and Bethany House, began to implement a DOJ grant to enhance services to domestic violence survivors involved in the Juvenile court system in Lucas County. The **Justice for Families Project** uses a specialized intake center at the juvenile court to screen for domestic violence and prioritizes representing parents experiencing domestic violence to increase safety and stability for families.

A multi-disciplinary team meets twice a month to review cases and create individualized action plans for survivors and their families. The action plans ensure survivors receive wrap-around services that address the unique safety issues of survivors and their families when they are involved in the juvenile court system.

In 2022, LAWO continued to collaborate with rural Victim Assistance Programs and other domestic violence advocates to increase our representation of survivors in our rural areas. The advocates referred many victims to LAWO for continued legal representation. LAWO received referrals for representation for victims in domestic violence civil protection order cases, stalking civil protection order cases, sexually oriented offense cases, juvenile protection order cases, divorce cases, and contested custody cases. LAWO also aided in other areas of law, such as survivors' rights and housing.

In the rural counties covered by LAWO's Sandusky office, we focused on both direct representation of domestic violence survivors and systemic change to improve the opportunities for domestic violence survivors throughout our service areas. Examples of our systemic work included active involvement with the rural county domestic violence task forces, training nurses at local hospitals to document suspected domestic violence in patient records, and working with the courts to make sure survivors who appear in court are directed to the resources available in Sandusky County and regionally. For example, the court in Richland County attempted to use a single interpreter when both parties were Deaf. We entered an appearance for the survivor and educated the court on the need for an interpreter for each Deaf party. The court then made the policy change resolving the issue for future cases involving Deaf parties. At the same time, we also enabled our client to obtain a civil protection order to stop the domestic violence.

PRACTICE GROUP MILESTONES

(Con't)

Veterans

LAWO expanded its services to veterans in 2022. We signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a veteran-serving organization in the Defiance area and with another based in Fremont. With these two additions, LAWO has signed Memorandums of Understanding with four veteran-serving organizations that cover much of our service area. We maintained relationships with other veteran-serving organizations and veteran interest groups, and regularly met with veteran-serving organizations to provide staff training and consultation to identify and address the unique legal issues most common to veterans. LAWO successfully represented veterans in the areas of housing, debt collection, benefits, family law, and others to prevent homelessness and improve stability. Outcomes include evictions prevented, SSI benefits maintained, name change achieved, civil protection order assistance, and others. **We represented 179 veterans in 2022.**



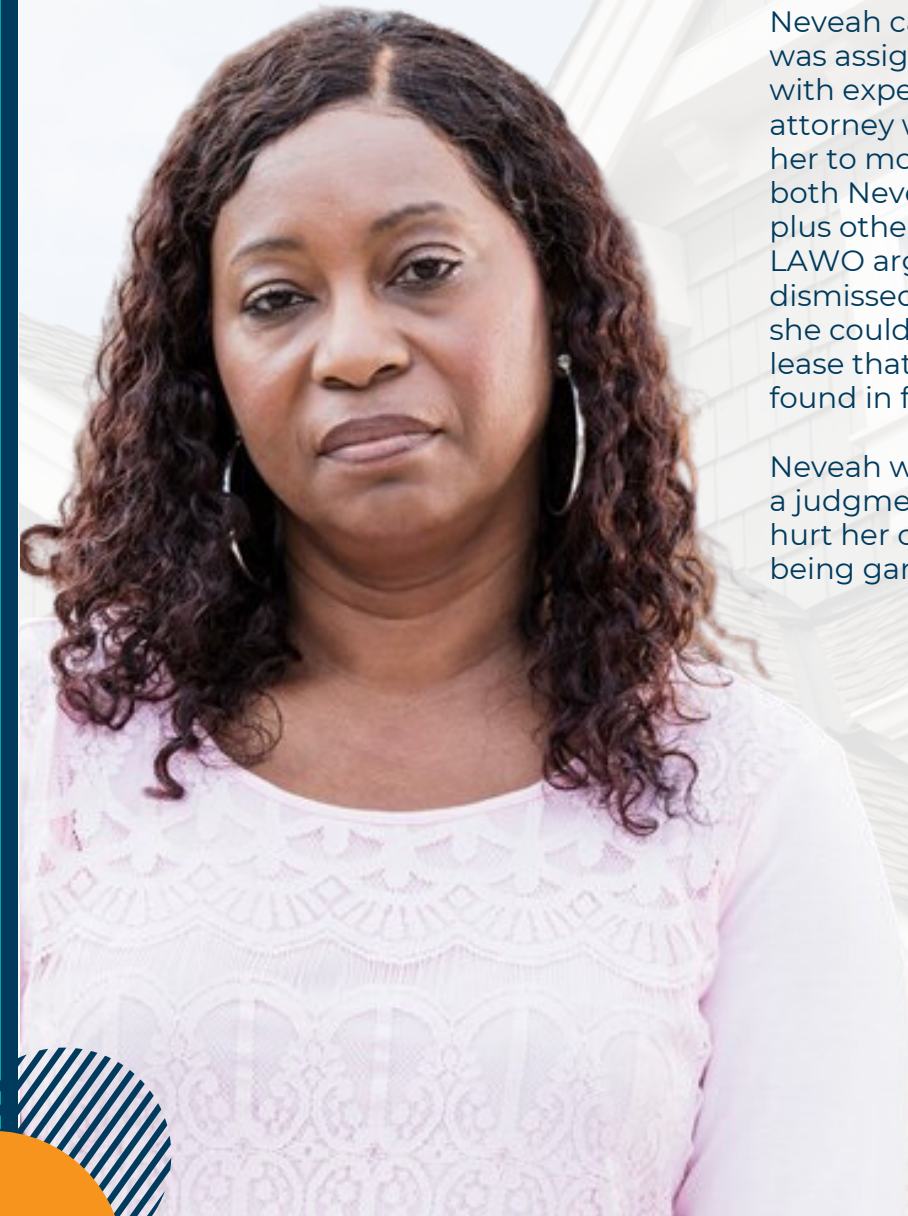
“**Neveah Prevails in Subleasing Eviction Case**”

Neveah* had been subleasing her apartment from her friend Christy* and was paying her portion of the rent directly to Christy. She never had any reason to doubt that Christy was paying the rent in a timely manner to the landlord. When Christy decided to move out, Neveah contacted the landlord to ask for a written lease and said that she would be willing to pay the full rent amount. In response, the landlord filed an eviction action against her.

Neveah called LAWO's Legal Aid Line and was assigned a legal aid housing attorney with experience in eviction cases. Neveah's attorney was able to negotiate for time for her to move out. The landlord was suing both Neveah and Christy for the back rent, plus other monetary damages. However, LAWO argued that Neveah should be dismissed from the lawsuit, noting that she could not be held to the terms of a lease that she never agreed to. The judge found in favor of Neveah.

Neveah was relieved that she did not have a judgment against her, which could have hurt her credit score and led to her wages being garnished.

**Names changed for privacy.*



2022 RECORD OF SERVICE

Requests for
Legal Assistance

12,550

(81 applications carried over from previous period)

1,307

Cases Carried Over
from Previous Period

Cases Opened

4,850

4,701

Cases Closed

Cases Remaining
Open

1,456

6,157

Total cases
worked On

Individuals Helped

14,281

\$5,080,073*

Total Monetary
Awards for Clients

\$1,234,991

Monthly Awards Times 36 Months

\$3,845,082

Total of Lump Sum and Annual Awards

\$5,080,073 Total Monetary Awards

Approximately 14,281 people were helped by LAWO legal staff and paralegals in 2022. Countless others received help through materials and information that appear on our websites, pro bono legal assistance clinics, legal presentations, and continuing legal education trainings for lawyers. Our staff also visited homeless and domestic violence shelters, senior centers, health clinics, nursing homes, and agricultural labor camps to make people aware of their legal rights.

OPERATING REVENUE & EXPENSES

2022



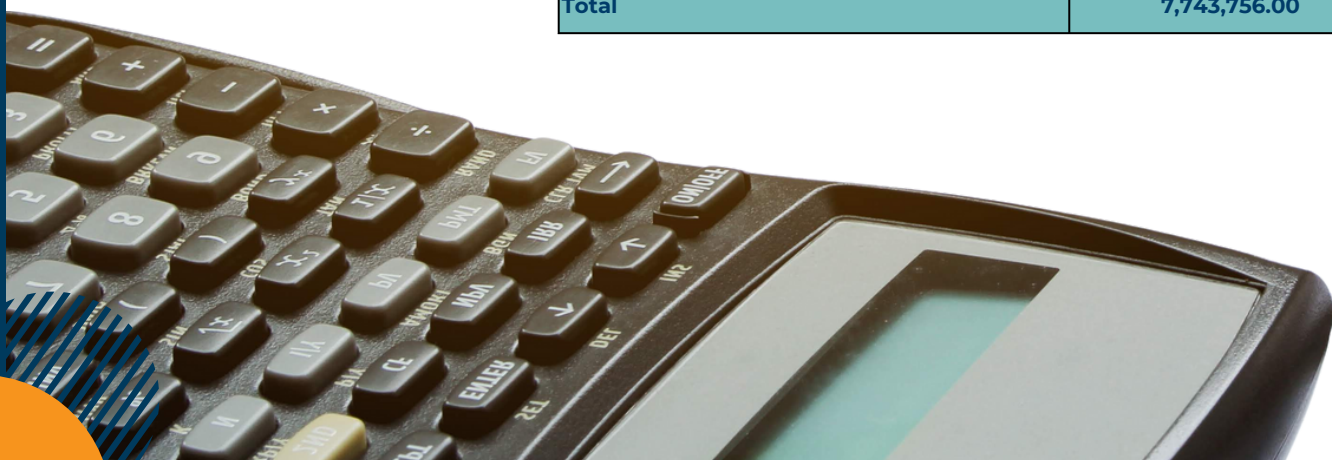
This report is related to LAWO’s operations budget and does not include revenue or expenses related to depreciation.



2022 LAWO Operating Revenues and Expenses

Support and Revenue	
Grants and Contracts	1,947,937.00
LSC	4,837,348.00
OAJF	740,042.00
Fundraising and Special Events	40,104.00
Other Revenue	102,109.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>7,667,540.00</i>
Transfer from Reserves	76,216.00
Total	7,743,756.00

Expenses	
Compensation and Benefits	5,686,434.00
Operating Costs	1,008,395.00
Contracted Services	931,084.00
Travel, Support and Training	87,546.00
Other Expenses	30,297.00
Total	7,743,756.00



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2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Thomas J. Schaffer
Attorney
Schaffer & Associates, LPA
Toledo

Vice-President

Khadijah H. Ali
Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Dayton

Vice-President

Jonathan Hollingsworth
Attorney
Hollingsworth &
Washington, LLC
Centerville

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Nathan D. Turner
Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Holland

Treasurer

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Attorney
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Dayton

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Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Toledo

Catherine Bitwayiki

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Dayton

Robert M. Curry

Attorney
Thompson Hine, LLP
Dayton

Rebecca (Becky) Fahim

Attorney
Marathon Petroleum
Corporation
Findlay

Twila R. Ferguson

Attorney
Toledo

Jordan Jennings

Attorney
Taft Stettinius & Hollister, LLP
Dayton

Thomas J. Lucente, Jr.

Attorney
The Hearn Law Office
Wapakoneta

Barry F. Luse

Attorney, Retired
Fremont

Eve Mitro

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Sidney

Leslie Murray

Attorney
Leslie Murray Law
Huron

Victor H. Perez

Attorney
Seneca Co. Dept. of Job and
Family Services
Tiffin

Lindsey Posey

Attorney
Office of Disability
Adjudication
Dayton

Cassandra Andres Rice

Attorney
Foos & Lentz, LLP
Dayton

Robert Salem

Attorney
University of Toledo,
College of Law
Toledo

Pamela Sullivan

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Toledo

Robert Tucker

Attorney
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O'Connell, LLC
Toledo

Carasusana (Cara) Wall

Attorney
Zoll & Krantz, LLC
Toledo

Ethel Washington-Harris

Community Advocate
Dayton

Kathryn A. Watson

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Toledo

Shunta Weatherspoon

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
San Antonio, TX

Molly Williams

Client Representative &
Community Advocate
Yellow Springs

Mechelle Zarou

Attorney
Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick,
LLP
Toledo

John F. Hall

Attorney (Emeritus)
Perrysburg

Justice G. Johnson, Jr.

Attorney (Emeritus)
Marshall & Melhorn, LLC
Toledo

James Stahler

Social Worker (Emeritus)
Plano, TX

2022



More than **3,000 hours** of legal services were donated by volunteer attorneys who handled cases in 2022. Nearly 200 volunteers engaged in pro bono legal assistance through our pro bono program and our pro bono partnerships with the **Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project** and the **Toledo Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services Program**. With their assistance, we expanded the legal services provided by LAWO attorneys.

2022 Pro Bono Partners

Thomas Adam
Ryan N. Agee
Jennifer Babak
Christina J. Back
Johnathan Balcerzak
Matthew J. Barbato
Seth E. Barefoot
Kerri Barton
Martin A. Beyer
Amy R. Blair
Jennifer Bock
Karen D. Bradley
Michael Briley
Jennifer L. Brogan
Jennifer N. Brown
Matthew G. Bruce
Jennifer Brumby
Corey Bushle
James L. Butler, Jr.
Patricia Campbell
Julius Carter
Elizabeth M. Chinault
Jennifer Ciszewski
Jaden Cleland
Alicia Coleman
Misty M. Connors

Christopher F. Cowan
Clayton J. Crates
Thomas P. Croskey
F.A. Crossman
Kristina Curry
Douglas A. Daley
Remington Daniel
Ebony D. Davenport
Lauren E. Davenport
Nicolas L. Davis
Steven J. Davis
Lindsey K. Deck
Jennifer Delaplane
Kent Depoorter
Keara R. Dever
Andria Dorsten Ebert
Daryl R. Douple
Conner Dowd
Trisha M. Duff
Melissa Duke Jones
Aaron G. Durden
Angela M. Elliott
Mark Engling
Lawrence English
Lauren Epperley
Lorena Esparza

Roberta S. Fay
Scott Forsman
Jordan Foster
Vincent Foulk
Joanna V. Garcia
Jennifer S. Getty
Helen Geyer
Joanna Gisel
Matthew Gottschall
Dalma Grandjean
Sarah Gregg
Michele L. Gregory
Toby R. Grytafey
Tom Hahn
John Hardisky
Sean H. Harmon
William M. Harrelson
Randal A. Harvey
Summer D. Hawks
Zachary S. Heck
Bransen Henderson
Nora Hendrickson
Kelly A. Henrici
John P. Hilgeman
Jonathan Hilton
Stanley A. Hirtle
Katie Holman

Jessica L. Holton
Elizabeth Hudson
John C. Huffman
Francisco A. Irizarry
Jacob M. Jeffries
Kara Jennings
Katherine Jones
John Juergens
Michael J. Jurek
C.B. Kelley
Laurel Kendall
Thomas W. Kendo
Paul Kendrick
Kelsey Kennedy
John F. Kennel
Jamar King
Scott A. King
Tami L. Kirby
Stephen E. Klein
Channing Kordik
James G. Kordik
Patricia Kovacs
Kenneth J. Krochmal
Judy LaMusga
John Leahy
Adam Lefeld
Scott A. Liberman
Kermit F. Lowery
Michelle M. Maciorowski
Deborah L. Mack
Diane E. MacLeod
Stephen J. Malkiewicz
Thomas J. Manning
David Martin
Patrick Matheny
Craig T. Matthews
Jason P. Matthews
Kevin McCarthy
Sean P. McCormick
Patrick McGrath
William J. McGraw
Frank Meder
Kaitlyn Meeks

Daniel R. Michel
Dominique Michel
Karen S. Miller
Peter Miller
Kelsey J. Mincheff
Matthew M. Mitchell
Callum S. Morris
Robert Mues
Robert Mumma
John Musto
Gabrielle R. Neal
Todd Newmister
James F. Nooney
Karen Novak
Jason Nye
Ilya Polyakov
Clayton J. Prickett
Kristina M. Rainer
Cassandra A. Rice
Meghan Richmond
Enrique Rivera-Cerezo
Nancy A. Roberson
Paul B. Roderer
Charles J. Roedersheimer
Nida Salahuddin-Mohler
Jessica E. Salisbury
Emily Samlow
David Savage
Zion Savory
Michael J. Scarpelli
Alan Schaeffer
Brooke A. Schleben
Benjamin Schnier
Kelly M. Schroeder
Tiffany R. Schwartz
Amy Scruggs
Sue Seeberger
Nicholas Seger
Anna Self
Jeffrey S. Senney
Todd D. Severt
R. Anne Shale
Francis Sheard

Sara J. Sherick
Melissa R. Sherrick
Devin Shinkle
Charles W. Slicer
Wilson A. Smith
Robert N. Snyder
Matthew Sorg
Mary K. Soter
Eli T. Sperry
David E. Stenson
Matthew D. Stokely
Adam C. Stone
Jonathan Sutermeister
Lester R. Thompson
Ira H. Thomsen
Sabra Tomb
Bryan Tschanz
Peter R. Van Arsdel
T. Andrew Vollmar
Richard H. Wallace
Adam R. Webber
Cathy Weithman
Cynthia L. Westwood
Merle F. Wilberding
Jane Williamson
Katie Wright
Macy Zachary
Andrew J. Zeigler
William R. Zimmerman



LAWVO 2022 VOLUNTEERS

LEGAL AID OF WESTERN OHIO, INC.

.....

LAW STUDENT VOLUNTEERS:

Ohio Northern University Petit College of Law

- Macy Zachary

University of Oregon School of Law

- Todd Newmister

University of Toledo College of Law

- Paul Kendrick
- Crystal Lynch
- Amy Scruggs

PARALEGALS AND OTHER INTERNS:

High School Students

- Kaitlyn Diggins
- Shaunassy White

LAWO Former Employee

- Lisa Leis

Sinclair Community College

- Kerri Barton



“ **Beatriz Receives Protection Order Against Abusive Husband** ”

Beatriz* has a disability that prevents her from hearing and speaking which she has had since birth. She uses an American Sign Language interpreter to communicate, and her preferred communication method is through email.

Beatriz is married but has no children with her husband (the respondent). Her husband physically abused Beatriz throughout their marriage. The last time he was physically violent was in the summer of 2022 when he punched Beatriz and left bruises. She took photos of those bruises.

The most recent episode of abuse took place on October 4, 2022. Respondent, who owns firearms, mimicked a gun with his finger and kept pointing it at Beatriz's head saying he was going to kill her. Beatriz was frightened and she knew that she was vulnerable. She contacted her daughter, who understands American Sign Language. Her daughter reached out to the police, and three officers came to the home and arrested the respondent. Beatriz filed for a Civil Protection Order (CPO). Because of the difficulty of getting an American Sign Language interpreter, she and her advocate decided not to seek an ex-parte order.

Beatriz contacted LAWVO, and we filed a notice of appearance in her CPO. The respondent also obtained an attorney. On the day of the final hearing, we negotiated a 2 1/2 -year protection order. In addition, the respondent was to sell his guns and ammunition, and Beatriz was to receive half the proceeds. Respondent is also responsible for the parties' mortgage payment in the approximate amount of \$966 per month, and the real estate taxes of \$1,132.67 for the first six months of 2023.

**Name changed for privacy.*



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2022 FUNDING PARTNERS



Area Agency on Aging

Area Agency on Aging, PSA2

Support for legal assistance for older adults in Champaign, Clark, Darke, Green, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA3

Support for legal assistance for older adults in Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Putnam, and Van Wert counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA5

Support for legal assistance for older adults in Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Richland, Seneca, and Wyandot counties.



Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc., PSA4

Support for legal assistance for older adults in Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Sandusky, Williams, and Wood counties.



City of Toledo

City of Toledo

Federal Community Development Block Grant and general revenue funds supporting legal assistance in housing matters for low-income City of Toledo residents.

Dayton Legal Heritage Foundation

Support for the Education Advocacy Project and community legal services.

Greater Toledo Community Foundation

Support for projects to assist tenants in housing eviction cases.

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership

Support for housing stabilization services in Ottawa, Sandusky, Seneca, and Wood counties, and for legal services for veterans.

Hancock Hardin Wyandot Putnam Community Action Commission

Support for legal assistance in housing matters.



Legal Services Corporation

Support for LAWO services in 32 northwest and west central Ohio counties, state-wide legal services for agricultural workers, and LAWO's Tornado Recovery Project.

Lucas County Department of Job and Family Services

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Title XX funding for legal assistance to low-income Lucas County individuals and families.



Maumee Valley Guidance Center

Support for legal services for veterans.

Miami County Department of Job and Family Services

Support for legal services for eligible Miami County residents.



Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners

Support for legal services for older adults, survivors of domestic violence, and people seeking employment.

Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission

Support for legal assistance in housing cases in Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Van Wert and Williams counties.



Ohio Access to Justice Foundation

Support for legal services for individuals and families in LAWO's 32-county service area, those seeking assistance with the opioid crisis, and veterans; for pro bono services in several rural counties; and for internal communications technology including a document management system and intranet.

Ohio Attorney General Office

Support for legal assistance to survivors of domestic violence.



Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Support for homeowners assistance.

Pathway Toledo

Support for legal assistance in housing cases in Lucas county.

Sandusky Municipal Court

Support for legal assistance for tenants in the Municipal Court.



Springfield Foundation

For good. For ever.®

Springfield Foundation

Support for legal services for low-income residents of Clark County.

St. Vincent de Paul

Support for legal services for veterans.

Toledo Law Library

Support for a Case Management System.

Toledo Municipal Court

Support for legal services for low-income City of Toledo residents in eviction and debt collection cases.



United Way of Defiance County

Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Defiance County.

United Way of Fulton County

Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Fulton County.



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development RELIEF Grant

Support for rural eviction education and legal services.



U.S. Department of Justice
OVW
Office on Violence Against Women

U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

Support for training and services to end violence against women with disabilities, and support for the Justice for Families Program.



Volunteers of America

Support for legal services for veterans.

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Ensuring equal access to justice for all!



The **Justice for All Campaign** is a fundraising partnership among Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc. (LAWO), Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), and the Toledo Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services Program. As the primary providers of free civil legal aid to people living in poverty in northwest Ohio, the Justice for All Campaign unites our fundraising efforts to ensure that vulnerable and disenfranchised members of our community have equal access to the legal system. We appreciate the generosity of individuals and organizations who give to the Campaign and make it possible for us to serve thousands of people in our community every year.



JUSTICE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

Steven P. Collier

University of Toledo College of Law

Robert (Rob) Salem

The University of Toledo, College of Law

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Cheri A. Budzynski

Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP

Emily Desmond

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.

Janet E. Hales

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.

Maggie Humphrey

Toledo Bar Association

Bradley J. Lagusch

Toledo Bar Association

Kevin C. Mulder

Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc.

Gina Scherzer

Toledo Bar Association

Karl E. Strauss

Owens Corning

Nathan Turner

Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc. (Board Member)

Carmen Vega-Perez

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc.

Laura A. Wilson

Schaffer & Associates, LPA

CAMPAIGN AMBASSADORS

Cheryl Mendenhall

Allotta & Farley Co., LPA

Charles E. Boyk

Charles E. Boyk Law Offices, LLC

Margaret G. Beck

Brady, Coyle & Schmidt, Ltd.

James E. Yavorcik

Cubbon & Associates Co., LPA

Adam S. Nightingale

Eastman & Smith, Ltd.

Jeffrey W. Swiech

Gallon, Takacs & Boissoneault Co., LPA

Christopher F. Parker

Goranson, Parker & Bella Co., LPA

Bruce S. Schoenberger

Gressley, Kaplan & Parker

John S. Wasung

Kitch Drutchas Wagner Valitutti & Sherbrook

Jay E. Feldstein

Liebenthal Levine, Ltd.

Peter A. Dewhirst

Lyden, Chappell & Dewhirst, Ltd.

Richard S. MacMillan

MacMillan, Sobanski & Todd, LLC

Richard R. Malone

Malone, Ault & Farell

Meghan Anderson Roth

Marshall & Melhorn, LLC

Kara M. Maruszak

Owens Corning

J. Randall Engwert

Reminger Co., LPA

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NORTHWEST OHIO

2022 ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Awards Dinner

The annual **Northwest Ohio Access to Justice Awards Dinner** took place in person after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 300 guests attended the event, held on May 12, 2022, at The Pinnacle in Maumee in support of **LAWO**, Advocates for Basic Legal Equality (ABLE), and the Toledo Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services Program (TBA) and our combined efforts to assist people living in poverty with critical legal services.



Hon. Glenda Hatchett

Keynote speaker, the **Honorable Glenda Hatchett**, provided motivation and encouragement to the audience and discussed the importance of keeping one's purpose and passion in the legal field, despite the challenges that legal professionals and support staff face.

Judge Hatchett was Georgia's first African American Chief Presiding Judge of a state court and head of one of the largest juvenile court systems in the country. She is a graduate of Emory University School of Law and an Earl Warren Scholar. Judge Hatchett has keynoted several national conferences, including the Diversity Conference in the U.S. Senate, the Minority Employer's Conference at Newell Rubbermaid, Home Depot's Women's History Speaker's Series, and Black Enterprise's Entrepreneurs Conference. She has received many awards, including the Outstanding Jurist of the Year, Atlanta affiliate of the National Bar Association;

Roscoe Pound Award, National Council on Crime and Delinquency; and the Thurgood Marshall Award, NAACP, among others. Since 2016, Judge Hatchett has starred in the television court series, *The Verdict*.

During the dinner, LAWO, ABLE, and TBA honored three individuals and an organization for their extraordinary service to people living in poverty in northwest Ohio.

The **2022 Public Interest Law Award** was awarded to **James F. Nooney, Sr.**, a member of Eastman & Smith and Toledo-area attorney who has been practicing law for 54 years. Nooney was recognized for his dedication to serving the community through pro bono work, and his commitment to assisting clients through TBA's Pro Bono Program with the complicated paperwork associated with guardianships. Providing legal services to those unable to pay for them is a core feature of Nooney's professional identity. He believes that providing pro-bono services is the responsibility of all professionals, particularly lawyers. He often encourages his colleagues and newer associates to take on pro bono work.

Two individuals received **2022 Community Advocacy Awards** for their roles in fostering change through community organizing.

Beatriz Maya, a co-founder of the nonprofit organization La Conexion, received the award for her endless pursuit of empowering immigrants, refugees, farmworkers, and the Latinx community. Her advocacy began decades ago when she worked for the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), doing everything in her power to bring education and justice to migrant farmworkers. Maya was instrumental in forming the Northwest Ohio Immigrant Rights Network (NWOIRN) in 2019. The network of advocates and allies is comprised of immigrant-based organizations, advocacy groups, and individuals acting in solidarity with our immigrant community to build humane, just, inclusive, safe, equitable, and welcoming communities for everyone.

David L. Beckwith received the award posthumously for his contributions as a community organizer for many decades. Beckwith's local organizing efforts began in 1981 when he assumed the role of director of the East Toledo Community Organization, focusing on housing and neighborhood issues, including the environment and economic development. Known as a community mentor for social justice and environmental activists in the Toledo community, Beckwith touched the lives of many and motivated others to understand that they had the power to lead and to hold people accountable for their actions. Beckwith's daughter, Schuyler, accepted the award on behalf of the family.

The **2022 Distinguished Service Award** was given to **Dana Incorporated** for its long history of service to legal aid and the Medical-Legal Partnership for Children (MLPC) in Toledo. Creating the Corporate Counsel Legal Aid Fellowship in 2013, Dana's Legal Department formed a unique partnership among the counsel of the major corporations in northwest Ohio with ABLE and LAWO. Their support expanded the capacity of the firms to serve more vulnerable families through the MLPC, which addresses the social determinants of health through partnering with medical providers. Dana's assistance allowed the MLPC to grow and garner other financial support, helping nearly 3,500 people in poverty between 2013 and 2021.

2022 AWARDEES:



James F. Nooney, Sr.
Public Interest Law
Award



Beatriz Maya
Community Advocacy
Award



David L. Beckwith
Community Advocacy
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We express appreciation to the following individuals who served on the **2022 Access to Justice Awards Selection Committee**. They include Margarita De Leon, Senior Consultant and Transformation Leader, The Kaleidoscope Group; the Honorable Myron C. Duhart, Ohio Six District Court of Appeals; Veralucia Mendoza, Disability Rights Advocate: Housing and Transportation, the Ability Center, and former Community Advocacy Award Recipient; E. James Stengle, III, Senior Vice President, Hylant (retired), and former Distinguished Service Award Recipient; Aly Sterling, President, Aly Sterling Philanthropy; and Robert C. Tucker, Partner, RCO Law.

“ **Barry and Levi Receive Legal Aid Assistance for Special Education Services** ”

Barry*, a white veteran with a disability and a single father of two children, contacted Legal Aid seeking assistance with obtaining special education services for his youngest child, Levi.* Levi has learning disabilities, and Barry did not believe Levi’s school was providing him with the appropriate support to be successful. Levi was having particular challenges transitioning back to an in-person educational school environment after remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Barry’s LAWO attorney advocated for a new school schedule to help Levi transition back to an in-person learning environment. The attorney also advocated for an appropriate Individualized Education Program that reflected Levi’s placement and service needs. A Functional Behavior Assessment to document Levi’s behaviors and a Behavior Intervention Plan to address behaviors were also put in place. The attorney also provided information and resources on special education law and advocacy to ensure Levi’s long-term success in school.

**Names changed for privacy.*





2022 CAMPAIGN FOR EQUAL JUSTICE

The **Campaign for Equal Justice** is a fundraising partnership among Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc. (LAWO), Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), and the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project (GDVLP). As the primary providers of free civil

legal aid to people living in poverty in the Miami Valley region, the Campaign for Equal Justice unites our fundraising efforts to ensure that vulnerable and disenfranchised members of our community have equal access to the legal system. The Campaign is supported through two events held annually in Dayton: The Justice on Tap cocktail event, and the Access to Justice Awards Celebration. We appreciate the generosity of individuals and organizations who give to the Campaign and make it possible for us to serve thousands of people in our community every year.

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Brian D. Wright
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James E. Beyer

In Honor of Dinsmore & Shohl

Joseph R. Tafelski & Jennifer Teschner

In Honor of R. Michael Frank

Brianne Trappe

In Honor of Myla Cardona-Jones

Paula Ewers

In Memory of Willie Righter

Marjorie A. Kuhns

In Memory of Edward Kuhns



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2022 JUSTICE ON TAP

JUSTICE ON TAP!

More than 75 guests, including sponsors, ambassadors, board members, and staff, joined us for our annual happy hour fundraising event at Mudlick Tap House on September 21, 2022.

We hosted Justice on Tap with the help of the Young Lawyers Division of the Dayton Bar Association.

Attendees got to mix and mingle with the Dayton legal community, enjoyed food and drinks, placed bids on raffle baskets, and heard from Campaign organizers at LAWO, ABLE, and the GDVLP on why their donations to the Campaign for Equal Justice were more important than ever. Over \$11,000 was raised by sponsors and guests through the event.



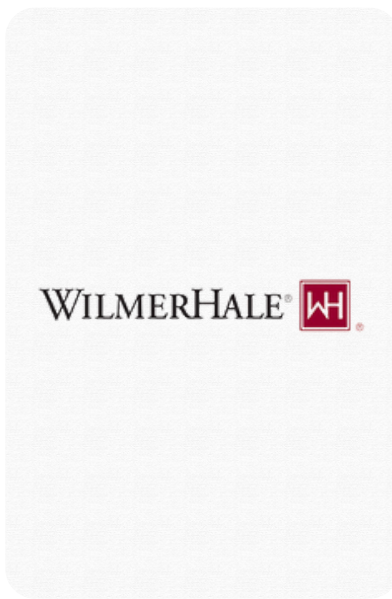
2022 ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARDS

ACCESS² JUSTICE AWARDS

The **2022 Access to Justice Awards Celebration** was held on November 3, 2022, at Sinclair Community College's Ponitz Center in downtown Dayton. Approximately 200 guests from Dayton's legal community attended the fundraiser in support of LAWO, ABLE, and the GDVLP and our collective mission to assist people and groups in the Miami Valley area who are living in poverty. Co-hosts for the evening were Sarah Cunningham from LexisNexis and Myla-Cardona Jones from Sinclair College. The Honorable E. Gerald Parker, Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, General Division, presented the awards to our recipients. ABLE and LAWO board members Brandyn E. Dobyns and Jordan Jennings from Taft, Stettinius & Hollister, LLP were additional presenters. During the event, we recognized two individuals and an organization for their extraordinary service to the community.



The **Hon. Robert W. Rettich, III** received the **2022 Lloyd O'Hara Award** posthumously for his well-known position as a Miamisburg Municipal Court Judge, where he prioritized substance abuse treatment and behavioral programs over incarceration.



WilmerHale's Legal Resource Center received the **2022 Community Impact Award** for its impactful pro bono initiative through the GDVLP. WilmerHale's community record sealing and juvenile family law clinics have been a tremendous asset and have helped hundreds of community members in the sealing of records and family law issues.



Tom Roberts, State President of the Ohio NAACP, received the **2022 Patricia Rousseau Community Advocacy Award** for his involvement in the Dayton community, as well as his lifelong commitment and advocacy for criminal justice reform and voting rights.

Through sponsorships, ticket sales, and text-to-give donations, we raised **over \$43,000** for the Campaign for Equal Justice at this year's celebration.

“ **Amanda Gains Legal Custody of Her Grandchild** ”

Amanda* contacted LAWO seeking assistance with one of her grandchildren. The 49-year-old grandmother was referred to us by a Juvenile Court clerk who was familiar with our Grandfamily Legal Assistance Program. Both parents struggled with substance abuse issues, and the mother also struggled with mental health issues and maintaining stable housing. The father was incarcerated while the case was pending. Amanda’s Legal Aid attorney assisted with filing for emergency temporary custody of her

grandchild. With further assistance from LAWO and after a custody trial, Amanda was awarded legal custody of her grandchild. Visitation for both parents is restricted until further order of the court. Amanda was awarded child support and the ability to claim the child each year for tax purposes, which provided much-needed financial assistance. She was also provided information on applying for and accessing available public benefits, including Kinship Permanency Incentive Benefits for the child.


**Name changed for privacy.*





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