



2022



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Annual Report

Who We Are

Legal Aid of North Carolina is a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity.

What We Do

We fight for families and protect survivors of violence.

We save homes and prevent homelessness.

We protect income and ensure economic opportunity.

Our Belief

At Legal Aid NC, we believe that every individual's legal situation should be approached holistically. We support our clients with all-encompassing and helpful services, including accessing government assistance, housing and safe employment with emergency services, protective orders, and consumer protection. Each service has been carefully and thoroughly designed so that everyone struggling day-to-day can live with the dignity they deserve.

2022

Board of Directors

We express our deepest gratitude to our board members who volunteer their time and make our work possible.

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Diane Wardlow
Client Representative

John R. Wester
Robinson Bradshaw

Message from the CEO



As I approach my one-year anniversary as CEO of Legal Aid NC, I see that fostering relationships is the most invaluable tool in our pursuit of enhancing access to justice. Every civil legal hurdle we tackle begins with establishing trust and rapport with our clients and colleagues within the judicial system. Our work is made possible by the unwavering support of funders and donors. I find inspiration from the people I meet across our beautiful state, particularly the emerging generation of brilliant, compassionate advocates who have committed their lives to helping the most vulnerable among us. As I look ahead, I am excited to forge stronger connections with our donors, staff, and colleagues in all 100 counties we serve.

-Ashley Campbell, Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Board



Legal Aid is important because its services provide a huge return on investment. Both time and funding go a long way at Legal Aid, both through its impact with individuals and the community.

We celebrate our client successes while remaining ever-aware of the thousands of people we aren't currently able to reach.

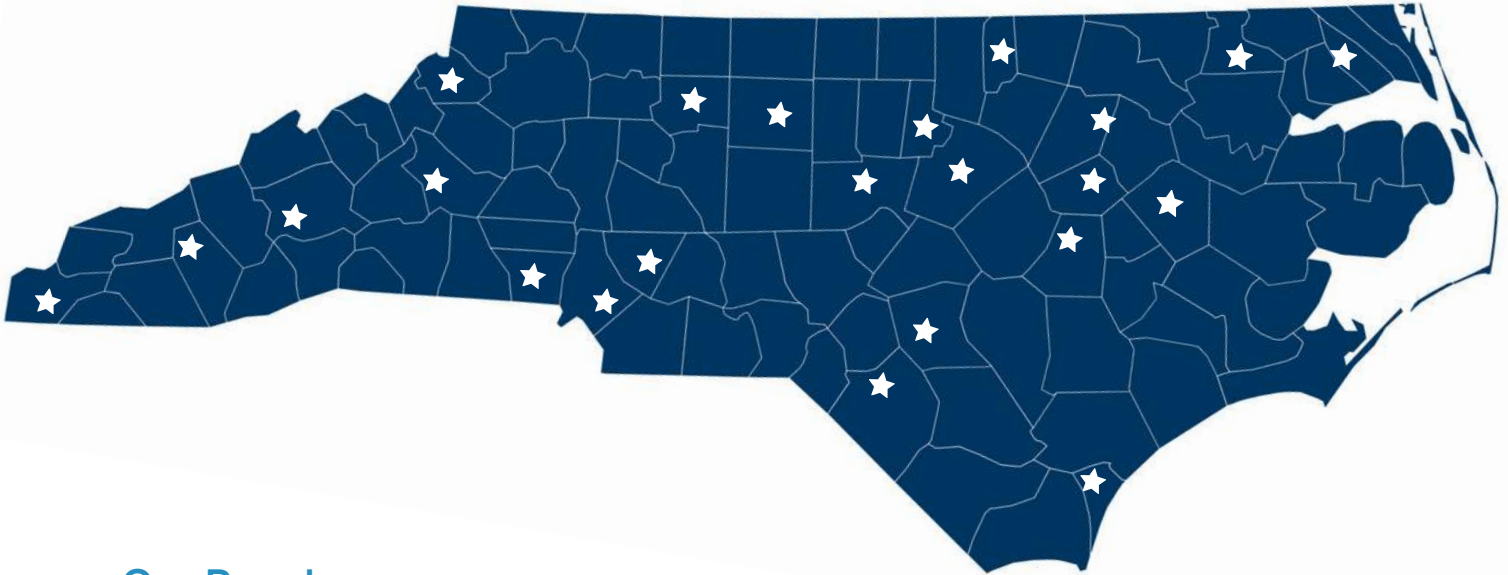
-Gonzalo Frias, Board Chair



Ever since I was a child, I've had a deep desire to help people. I'm always involved in my community, helping people however I can. When the door opened for me to get involved with Legal Aid, I was ecstatic. It has made me hungrier to help people at a higher level.

Legal Aid does so much more than people think. I've seen so many doors open for people enduring domestic violence and injustice. I always want to be a part of Legal Aid. Even after my Board service is done, I will always be spreading the message.

-Diane Wardlow, Client Council Chair



Our Reach

With 23 local offices across the state, we serve North Carolinians in all 100 counties.

For those that may not be able to see us in person, we offer toll-free statewide helplines, virtual clinics and self-help libraries, and an online application process.

Our Offices

Ahoskie

Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans

Asheville

Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania

Charlotte

Mecklenburg

Concord

Cabarrus, Stanly, Union

Durham

Caswell, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, Warren

Fayetteville

Cumberland, Harnett, Sampson

Foothills

Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, McDowell

Gastonia

Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln

Greensboro

Davidson, Guilford, Montgomery, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan

Greenville

Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Hyde, Jones, Martin, Pamlico, Pitt, Tyrell, Washington

High Country

Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga, Wilkes, Yancey

Pembroke

Hoke, Robeson, Scotland

Pittsboro

Alamance, Anson, Chatham, Lee, Moore, Orange, Richmond

Raleigh

Johnston, Wake

Smoky Mnts.: Murphy

Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Territory of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Smoky Mnts.: Sylva

Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Territory of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Wilmington

Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender

Wilson

Edgecomb, Greene, Lenoir, Nash, Wayne, Wilson

Winston-Salem

Davie, Forsyth, Iredell, Stokes, Surry, Tadkin

*Listing does not include 4 satellite offices

2022



Angeleigh Dorsey
Western Regional Manager

2022 Deborah Greenblatt
Outstanding Legal Services Attorney
Award recipient



Larissa Mañón Mervin
Managing Attorney, Charlotte Office

Elected to the Board of Governors
of the NC Bar Association



Suzanne Chester
Project Manager, The Child's Advocate

Named a Leader in the Law by
NC Lawyers Weekly



Legal Aid of North Carolina's
Statewide Expunction Project

Partner/Organization of the Year,
UNC Law Pro Bono Publico Awards

SPOTLIGHTS



Celebrated the grand opening of our new Charlotte office



Celebrated the grand opening of our new Elizabeth City office



Ashley Campbell, CEO

Completed a statewide tour to meet field office staff and learn about their communities



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Legal Aid of North Carolina celebrated its 20th Anniversary

Introduced our new branding and website!

Safety and Security

Abuse and assault, the denial of education, and family instability are incredible threats to the safety and security of survivors, and children in poverty in North Carolina. Pain, fear, neglect, and stress have extreme future and immediate consequences. Without the income needed to secure representation and address these consequences, outcomes can be permanent or even fatal. In times of crisis, low-income North Carolinians can turn to one of our four special projects dedicated to securing protection for victims, defending students' rights, and representing children in family disputes.

Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative



Our Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative protects victims of domestic violence so that they can find safety and begin to live independently after abuse. Our staff secure and enforce emergency protective orders to shield victims from further abuse, and work with community programs, agencies, task forces, and UNC Law School to educate advocates, form referral processes, and supervise law students working with victims.

In 2022, domestic violence legal issues accounted for nearly

30%

of our closed cases.

The Battered Immigrant Project (BIP), part of Legal Aid NC's Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative, provides free immigration assistance to immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

BIP attorneys work statewide with advocates from other organizations to provide them with resources and information regarding the rights of immigrant survivors.

The Battered Immigrant Project

One of the many accomplishments of our Battered Immigrant Project was a successful effort to obtain a T visa, along with access to social services and public benefits, for Toni*. As a victim of human trafficking brought to the US under false pretenses from a Northern African country, Toni was subjected to terrible physical and sexual abuse for many years, which kept her in forced labor.

Another BIP client from the Philippines, Joclyn*, received assistance after her abusive US citizen husband, who previously brought her to the US as his fiancée, refused to file immigration applications and prevented her from obtaining legal status in the United States. A Battered Immigrant Project advocate helped Joclyn file and win approval for her self-petition, which allowed her to remain safely in the U.S. and become financially independent while her application to become a permanent resident was in process.

*names changed to protect anonymity



"For the domestic violence victim who just reported the crimes of their abusive partner, the very same partner that paid the rent, it's essential that work authorization is available as soon as possible, not five years from now."

Rona Karacaova

Managing Attorney, Battered Immigrant Project



The Child's Advocate

The Child's Advocate (TCA) program represents children caught in high conflict custody cases. In NC, children caught in custody disputes have no advocate of their own. In 70% of cases, parents do not have their own attorneys and are unable to present evidence the court needs to make custody rulings. TCA advocates ensure that the child's experience, concerns, and preferences are considered. Currently active in Wake and Durham counties, TCA has been recognized by the judiciary, attorneys, parents, and children's therapists for its effectiveness in giving children a strong voice in decisions that will have life-altering effects. TCA often settles cases without the need for a trial and saves the court valuable resources.



**Scan the QR code
to learn
more about
The Child's Advocate**

Right to Education Project

For public school students, Our Right to Education Project defends their right to a sound and basic education, and challenges unfair disciplinary actions that contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. Our attorneys work with students and parents on issues related to enrollment, suspension, special education and disability services, racial discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Access to public, basic education, appropriate accommodations, and learning environments free of harmful bias and excessive punishment supports students' intellectual and individual growth, and can help break the cycle of poverty.

When Ty*, a smart, inquisitive kindergarten student with autism was suspended multiple times for behavior, his mother became concerned that he was struggling to adjust to a large class size and that his needs were not being met. Right to Education advocates helped Ty's mom develop an action plan to improve his supports that involved the school conducting assessments, collecting data about Ty's behavior, and communicating with his mother regularly to determine the right school setting for him. After extensive advocacy, and communication, Ty is now thriving in an autism-support classroom. We were also able to connect Ty's mom with community organizations that support Black parents so she can build a network of support as Ty continues his education.

*name changed to protect anonymity

Shelter

The loss of a home is not just the loss of shelter. It's the loss of security and confidence as well as the loss of a place to create memories, share wisdom and meals, or find comfort and refuge.

Those in poverty facing loss and unfair treatment often have nowhere to turn, and no means to secure alternative housing. We step in to defend our neighbors in need by stopping unlawful evictions and foreclosures, fighting housing discrimination, and supporting victims of disaster as they recover from extreme loss through four special projects across the state.

Durham Eviction Diversion Project

With the support and partnership of the Duke Civil Justice Clinic and the Durham Department of Social Services, the Durham Eviction Diversion Project defends low-income renters in Durham, Vance, and Person counties. Advocates here fight evictions to keep renters housed, educate tenants on their rights, and maintain a rental assistance fund to increase housing security.

In 2022, our Durham Eviction Diversion advocates closed **783** cases impacting **874** children and generated over **\$279k** in benefits, awards, and savings for our clients.



Fair Housing Project

Legal Aid NC's Fair Housing Project aims to eliminate housing discrimination so that all people have access to affordable, accessible, and accommodating housing opportunities. Attorneys and staff fight instances of discrimination so that all protected classes can have the housing options that are right for them and their family. They also work to research and reduce housing discrimination throughout the state. Providing training and seminar opportunities to service providers helps prevent discrimination at the source and educate renters and home buyers about their rights. To gauge threats to fair housing, the team deploys "testers" who have undergone training to evaluate homes and apartments, and provide feedback on their experience.



Mr. and Mrs. Wilson*, an elderly Black couple, were represented by our Fair Housing Project advocates after they were subjected to continuous racial harassment and discrimination at the hands of their neighbor, property manager, and landlord. After enduring threats of violence, the frequent use of racial slurs, and intimidation, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson filed numerous complaints with their landlord and property manager. Instead of taking action against their neighbor, the property manager attempted to evict Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

With the support of our team, the Wilson's neighbor was convicted of federal fair housing violations and The Wilson's received a total of \$500,000 when the case was settled.

*name changed to protect anonymity



***We believe that everyone
deserves safe, affordable,
accessible housing, and ways to
protect and preserve ownership
of their property.***

Disaster Relief Project

The Disaster Relief Team works with individuals and communities who are victims of natural disasters to support economic and physical recovery efforts. After the destruction of their home or shelter, our clients can be told they lack the proper documentation to receive emergency assistance. In other cases, they may be defrauded by unethical contractors, or become victimized by their landlords.

We educate tenants about their rights, defend those who were taken advantage of financially, help draft legal documents necessary to clarify ownership, host clinics, and connect community members with local emergency resources.

Economic Justice Initiative

For homeowners, we work to prevent foreclosures and save homes to protect our clients' most valuable investments. Our advocates also produce educational materials to help potential buyers stay informed of financial best practices and avoid scams.

The Economic Justice Initiative team joins six other justice and legal service organizations to work on loan modifications and reach those facing foreclosure in all 100 counties. Fighting against foreclosures prevents credit ratings from dropping and exposes bad-actor brokers and lenders in court to prevent them from continuing their predatory business practices.

In 2022, the Economic Justice Initiative secured over \$386,000 in benefits, awards, and savings for their clients.



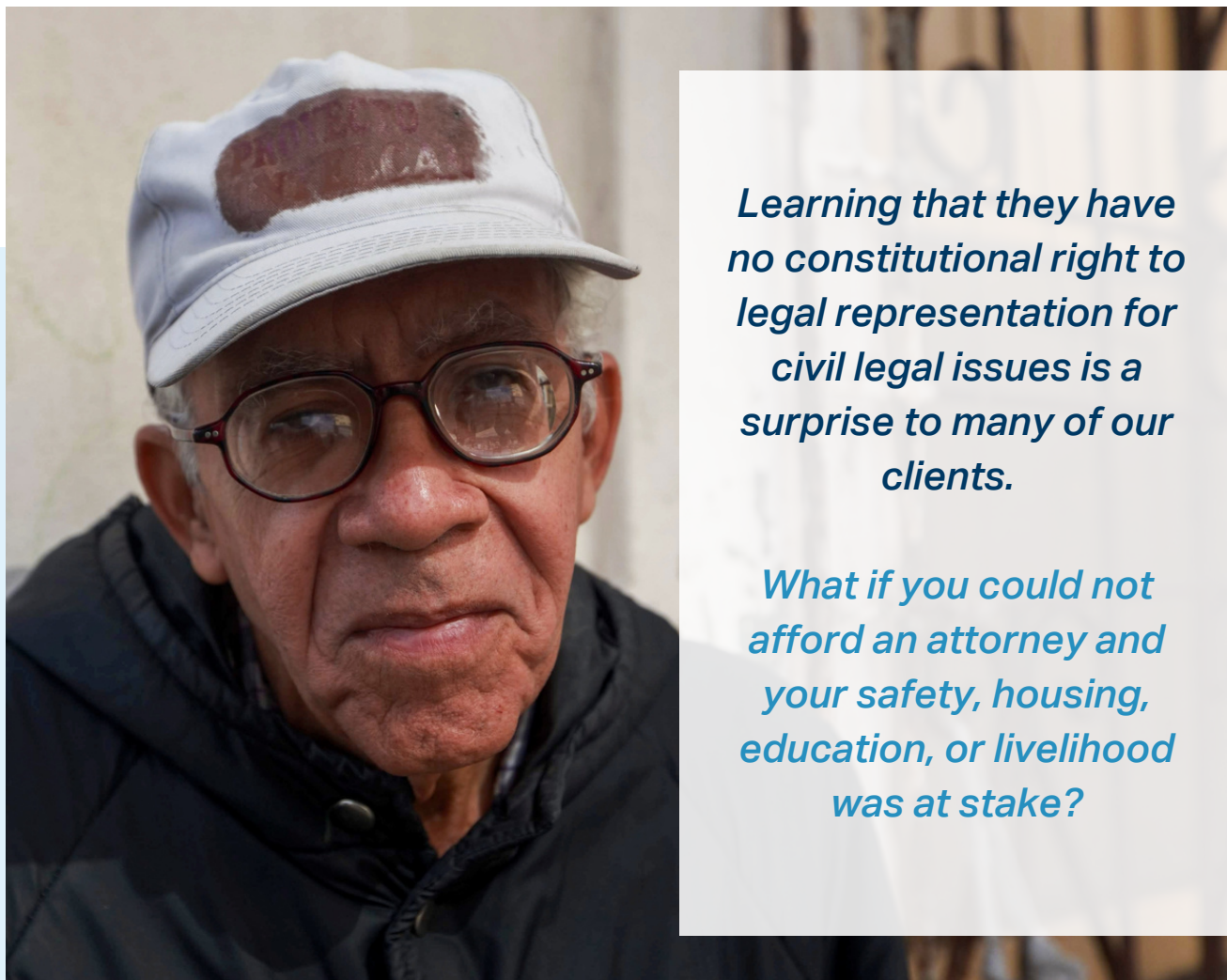
After losing her home in a natural disaster, Jenny* had to live in her car and stay with friends. When she lost her job, her unemployment benefits and occasional work were not enough to pay for housing and basic needs simultaneously.

Jenny had little to no resources and lived in a rural community. When she came to Legal Aid, she was connected with a social worker who advocated for her to receive \$1,700 in financial assistance with rent, security deposits, and travel-related expenses. Once she was able to get a full time job, she was approved for an apartment and was able to move in right before the holiday season.

*name changed to protect anonymity

Stability

For individuals and families already struggling to make ends meet, threats to their employment, benefits, and future can impact their economic stability for years and throw their children into the cycle of generational poverty. Violations of employment rights, the denial or termination of benefits, and criminal records that prevent North Carolinians from securing jobs rob families of stable futures and perpetuate unnecessary inequity and hardship. To protect and ensure economic stability in our communities, advocates in four of our special projects fight against predatory and illegal employment practices, obtain benefits and earned income, and process convictions that are eligible for expungements.



Learning that they have no constitutional right to legal representation for civil legal issues is a surprise to many of our clients.

What if you could not afford an attorney and your safety, housing, education, or livelihood was at stake?

Farmworker Unit

To defend migrant and seasonal farmworkers throughout the state, the Farmworker unit meets the specialized needs of farmworkers and educates them about their employment rights. Our attorneys take on litigation to uphold safe working conditions and practices, defend workers against fraudulent labor contractors and secure the compensation and benefits to which they are legally entitled. Advocating for the ethical treatment of farm workers protects their physical health, families, and income so that they can thrive in the rural communities and state they work to feed.

Senior Law Project

Legal Aid NC's Senior Law Project works with senior citizens 60 years and older to secure housing subsidies, public benefits, and disability compensation to make sure they can support their everyday needs. These advocates also assist with will and estate planning, and power of attorney so our senior clients can be confident in their plans for the future.

When two senior renters dealing with irresponsible and unethical landlords came to us for help advocates in our Senior Law Project answered the call. With their assistance, the seniors won their cases and received refunds and monetary compensation, the rent reduction they were entitled to, and much-needed, serious repairs.

Legal Aid NC Farmworker Unit advocates and advocates from the North Carolina Justice Center represented a group of migrant labors who were lied to and illegally trafficked by a migrant labor contractor. Promised the chance to work in the U.S. legally, the farmworkers ended up in debt because of recruitment fees, and costs for visas and travel from Mexico. After they arrived in the U.S., the labor contractor and farmers that had recruited them failed to reimburse them for these costs, forced them to live in dangerous and unsanitary conditions, and offered very few opportunities for work.

The case settlement secured \$120,000 in unpaid wages and damages. The contractors and farmers responsible received restrictions on their ability to hire migrant farmworkers using H-2A visas, must post information regarding the rights of migrant laborers regarding housing and human trafficking, and improve the conditions of their camps.



**In 2022, our advocates
were able to assist over
3,000 seniors.**



Veterans Law Project

Veterans that have been denied benefits and compensation can be represented by attorneys in our Veterans Law Project who can help them receive the pension benefits they earned and disability compensation they are entitled to. Veterans Law Project advocates also help veterans navigate discharge upgrades that help them become eligible for assistance.

In 2022, our advocates assisted over 1,100 veterans.

Second Chance Project

The team of attorneys, staff, and paralegals working in Legal Aid NC's Second Chance Project handle expunctions and petitions so that North Carolinians in poverty can be freed from the burden of a criminal record. With a clean record, our clients can work towards economic stability by applying for jobs and public benefits, and becoming eligible for driver's license restoration and affordable housing. Beyond opportunities for immediate stability, they have new opportunities for student financial aid, military service, and can regain their right to vote.

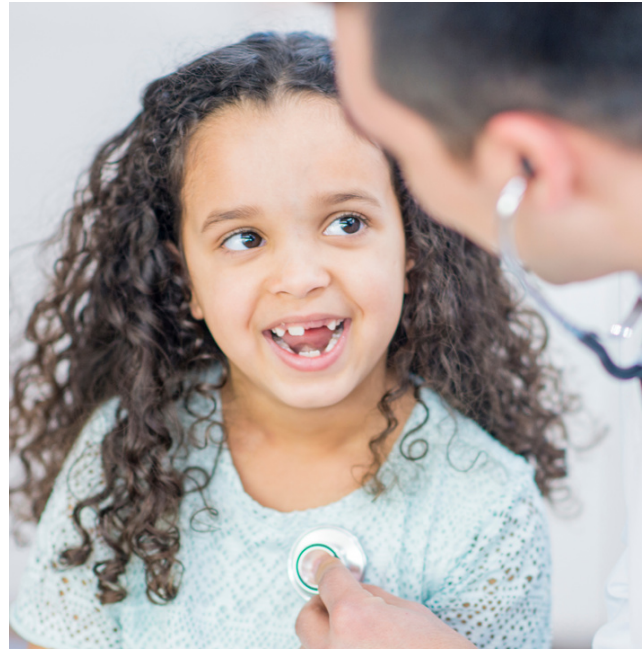


Wrongly accused of first-degree murder and armed robbery in 1988, Reginald "Scottie" Paige spent 18 months in jail before evidence exonerating him was unearthed just ahead of his death-penalty murder trial. Even after he was exonerated, the charges remained on Scottie's record and severely affected his employment, housing, and quality of life

With help from our Second Chance team, Scottie's murder charge and others were finally expunged. Free from the weight of a criminal record, Scottie has created many new opportunities for himself. He is now a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate & Recovery Coach and runs his own organization, Roc Wit Me®, to help others with their recovery.

Health

Declines in physical and emotional health can impact independence, physical safety, employment potential, and housing. Low-income individuals and families struggle to find affordable, accessible means of care to address their health issues as well as resources to address the negative impacts their health has had on other aspects of their life. Without intervention, defense, or guidance, our neighbors are left to face these issues alone. We operate two special projects and partner with other organizations on two health care advocacy projects to make sure our clients receive the benefits, assistance, and care they need.



Medicaid Appeals Technical Team

Legal Aid NC's Medicaid Appeals Technical Team assists Medicaid beneficiaries with a variety of problems they may face after being enrolled into a Prepaid Health Plan to reinforce their rights. They offer advice and consultation for eligibility and access issues, as well as billing problems, and represent clients when they have been denied Medicaid benefits.

In their inaugural year, our Medicaid Appeals Technical Team closed 221 cases, and assisted 81 children and seniors.

After Medicaid approved the family of a three-year-old client for cancer treatment at an out-of-state facility, a provider improperly billed the family for tens of thousands of dollars. Our MATT team was able to negotiate with the provider and successfully reduced the family's balance to \$0.

After having a limb amputated and incurring hundreds of thousands dollars in related medical bills, Medicaid denied a finding of disability for our client. Legal Aid NC advocates on our MATT team obtained a reversal of the decision that resulted in coverage of both the medical debt and the expense of a prosthetic limb.

Medical Legal Partnerships

With six community and statewide partners, Legal Aid NC's Medical Legal Partnerships team works to identify and find legal solutions to various social and environmental factors that contribute to our clients and their families' poor health. Problems such as food insecurity, lack of stable or sufficient income, violence or abuse, issues related to hazardous or impermanent living situations, and the denial of benefits, healthcare, or special education services can all have negative impacts on health. Once these are identified by medical professionals and social workers at our partner agencies, our advocates work to secure housing, protective orders, benefits, and services to keep our clients safe, secure, and stable.

Legal Aid of North Carolina and our Medical Legal Partnerships team has been proud to join Wake Forest University's Law and Medical schools and their students, as well as other local organizations in providing emergency support to Winston Salem residents facing eviction. To better assist these tenants and pro bono attorneys, our organization collaborated to create educational flyers and manuals about housing law and tenant's rights in North Carolina.

Legal Aid of NC is always excited and honored to join forces with active individuals and organizations that are dedicated to helping their communities.

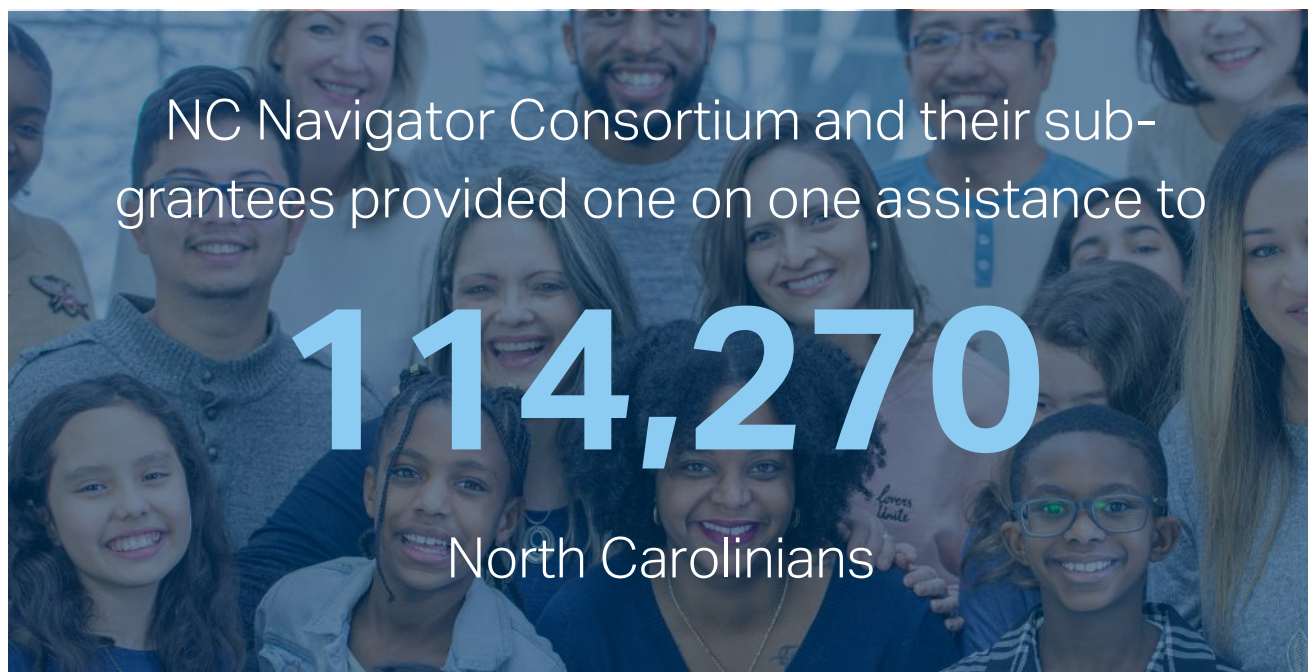




Incorporating a health justice and equity lens to this work helps staff address inequities in our healthcare system, including systemic barriers created by structural racism and other forms of oppression.

North Carolina Navigator Consortium

Partnering with five other health, social, and legal service organizations in the state, we lead the North Carolina Navigator Consortium. Advocates and staff that work as Navigators can help clients understand options and coverage that are available through the health insurance marketplace and assist with enrollment in affordable plans. Knowing about eligibility, financial assistance opportunities, and specific plan details gives consumers the confidence to decide what is best for them and their family.



North Carolina Medicaid Ombudsman

In partnership with the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Pisgah Legal Services, and the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, we operate the NC Medicaid Ombudsman program to provide legal assistance, education, referrals, and guidance to the millions of North Carolinians with Medicaid coverage. Those who work for the Ombudsman team can assist with the enrollment process, help beneficiaries get access to the care they need, answer questions about bills or notices, or provide information about the complaint and appeals process for the NC Medicaid Managed Care Program.

Pro Bono

Legal Aid NC attorneys, paralegals, social workers and other advocates work tirelessly to serve tens of thousands of clients a year, yet we can't do this alone. There are far more we can't help due to limited resources. That's where our corps of committed pro bono volunteers comes in. Private attorneys, paralegals, law students, and other professionals join us on our mission for justice by volunteering to serve clients we could not otherwise reach. From giving legal advice over the phone to representing clients in court, our pro bono volunteers do whatever it takes to provide justice for our clients.

To everyone who gives so generously of your time and talents: Thank you. We can't do this without you.

"Just knowing that someone now has a path forward makes me feel good. I would love to do this more!"

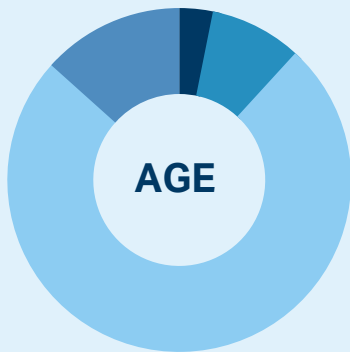
Daniela Tijerina, Director of Honeywell's Integrity and Compliance Division and Legal Aid NC pro bono volunteer

To learn more

- Visit us at legalaidnc.org/pro-bono
- Follow us on social media at [#LANCprobono](https://twitter.com/LANCprobono)
- Subscribe to our email list at bit.ly/lancpbemail



2022 Snapshot



<17 (3%)
 18-24 (9%)
 25-64 (75%)
 65+ (13%)

55,165 Individuals impacted in over 22,000 cases

RACE & ETHNICITY

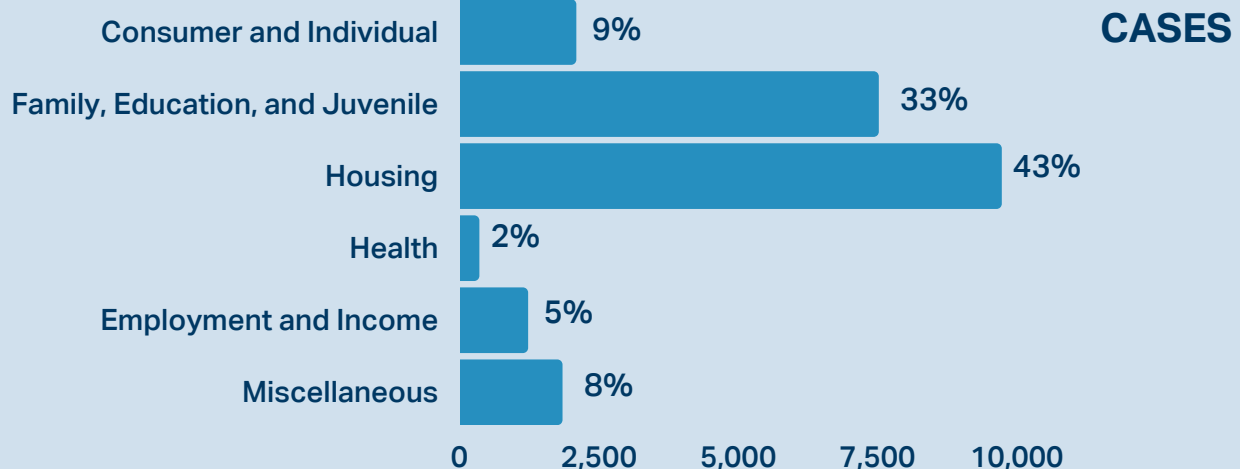
White	35%
African American	49%
Hispanic	8%
Native American	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1%
Other	5%

1 IN 3

Clients reported an annual income of \$10,000 or less

6,669

Domestic Violence Protective Orders Filed or Enforced

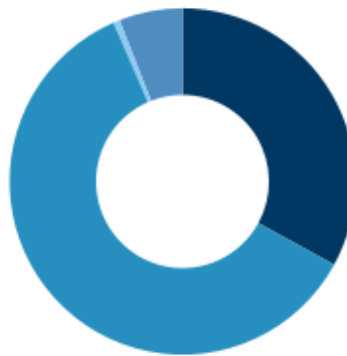


2022 Financials

We are committed to leveraging the incredible support of our funders, donors, and communities to responsibly and effectively serve those in poverty. In 2022, administrative costs made up only 8% of our expenses and \$0.91 of every dollar went directly to our programs.

Revenue **\$52,830,834 M**

LSC Grants.....	\$17,420,144
Community & Gov. Grants.....	\$31,951,662
Other Income.....	\$325,456
Contributions.....	\$1,671,320
Donated Services.....	\$1,462,252



Expenses **\$53,869,359 M**

Programming.....	\$49,207,202
Administrative.....	\$4,420,744
Fundraising.....	\$241,413



\$16.6 M

Generated in client benefits, awards, and savings

30

Major Funders that gave over \$50,000

\$11.4 M

Pass-through funding distributed to 19 nonprofits

*Based on 2022 Audited Financials. Legal Aid NC will provide financials upon request.

Major Funders

Grants of \$500,000 or more

Interest on Lawyer's Trust Accounts (IOLTA)
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust

Grants of \$250,000 or more

Blue Cross and Blue Shield
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
United Way of Greensboro

Grants of \$100,000 or more

Cone Health Foundation
North Carolina Bar Association and Foundation
United Way of Forsyth County

Grants of \$50,000 or more

North Carolina Community Foundation
NHeLP/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
UNCG Guilford County TEAM
Wells Fargo

Thank You!

60% of the revenue that supports our work comes from foundations, charitable funds, businesses, organizations, and governments.

We are incredibly proud to have the support of the communities we serve and want to thank each and every one of our funders for making our work possible year after year.

*If you believe there is an omission or error in this list, please contact Missy Hatley at missyh@legalaidnc.org.

Municipal, State, and Federal Grants

City of Durham
City of Raleigh
Forsyth County
Governor's Crime Commission
Healthy Opportunities Pilot- Access East
Healthy Opportunities Pilot- Community Care
of the Lower Cape Fear River
Healthy Opportunities Pilot- Impact Health
Legal Services Corporation
Mecklenburg County
North Carolina Division of Aging (Title III)
North Carolina Emergency Management
NC Council for Women and Youth Involvement
NC Housing Finance Agency

North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
Wake County

Our Supporters

Donors to Legal Aid NC power our mission and impact with gifts that help meet the justice gap across the state. The following list includes donors who gave \$250 or more in 2022.

We send our sincere gratitude to all Legal Aid NC donors.

DEFENDER

Anonymous
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
Wake County Bar Association
and Foundation

CHAMPION

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Community Foundation
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Nat Hwilc Foundation
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& Kinsey, PLLC
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& Garofalo LLP
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