



# IMPACT REPORT

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# 2023



**LEGAL AID**  
OF NORTH CAROLINA

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*We are incredibly grateful for the time that our board members dedicate to our mission.  
Thank you for your leadership in 2023!*

Lenneka "Nikki" H. Feliciano  
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The challenges facing our clients are ever-changing and multiplying day by day. Access to civil justice is increasingly impacted by financial resources, a lack of technology and a lack of lawyers and legal services in rural communities.

At Legal Aid, we are thinking critically about how we can provide legal services in more creative and innovative ways. Our newly launched mobile legal unit is delivering services directly to rural areas. Our Innovation Lab is revolutionizing our intake process to assist the hundreds of thousands of people who seek our help annually. We are sharing our clients' stories in more powerful ways, through documentaries, social media and impact videos.

Looking back on 2023, I see a strong foundation laid for the future of legal service delivery in our state. Our dedicated staff is pursuing comprehensive, actionable solutions to address the justice gap, not by altering our identity, but by refining our approach.

As you read this report, I invite you to join me in embracing the belief that progress starts with meeting our clients where they are, empowering our teams, and fostering collaboration with external partners. Our achievements are amplified by the support and engagement of our community. As we embark on another year of service and advocacy, we extend an invitation for you to join us in this vital work.



*Ashley Campbell*

**Ashley Campbell**  
Chief Executive Officer



*Nikki Feliciano*

**Nikki Feliciano**  
Board Chair



*Diane Wardlow*

**Diane Wardlow**  
Client Council Chair

Legal Aid of North Carolina is a powerhouse law firm with amazing attorneys, staff, and administration, who are steadfast in their efforts to provide legal services and legal benefits guidance to the low-income individuals in North Carolina.

Without Legal Aid of North Carolina many low-income individuals would not achieve landlord-tenant resolution, secure domestic violence protection, receive necessary public benefits, have a child advocate, and would not receive so many other valuable legal tools and benefits available under the law because they lack the necessary financial resources to do so.

Client Council board members serve as representatives for the client eligible population throughout the state and are leaders in their communities.

With Diane's leadership, council members discuss the needs of their regions of the state, serve as local representatives of Legal Aid, gather to participate in community engagement as a group, and help to bring the perspectives of their neighbors into firm-wide discussions about service delivery and decisions impacting the client facing aspects of our programming.

# INNOVATING

## TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTIONS

*Launched in 2023, the Innovation Lab is one of our newest projects, and the first of its kind in the country.*

Combining technology, interprofessional collaboration, and data analysis, the lab aims to improve access to civil legal resources, expand and improve service offerings, and create opportunities for other legal services organizations to learn and adapt our findings for their own communities.

The lab will focus initially on:

- Improving access to Legal Aid NC services
- Modernizing call center technology and processes
- Making higher-quality referrals to partner organizations
- Improving processes to smooth the delivery of client services and the adoption of new technology and tools

Tasked with leading these efforts, Our Chief Innovation Officer, Scheree Gilchrist has been with Legal Aid NC for over 17 years.

Having served as the Managing Attorney of our Central Intake Unit from 2020-2023, she is intimately familiar with current legal services intake and delivery models and the challenges of scaling and improving these to reach North Carolinians in need.



**Scheree Gilchrist**  
Chief Innovation Officer

Advisory Board Chair, Jeff Kelly is a partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, who focuses his legal practice in areas of emerging technology.

He currently serves on the Governing Council of the American Bar Association's Center for Innovation and is a fellow at Duke Law School's Center on Law and Technology.



**Jeff Kelly**  
Advisory Board Chair

# INNOVATION LAB ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Supported by the diverse talent of our Innovation Lab Advisory Board members, we are uniquely prepared to oversee the development and implementation of new technology and practices driving equitable solutions to the justice gap.

Caitlin Moon  
Vanderbilt School of Law

Camille Stell  
Lawyers Mutual  
Consulting and Services

Diane Littlejohn  
NCCU School of Law

Jeff Ward  
Duke Center on  
Law and Technology

Joseph Garner  
American Bar Association

Matt Miller  
DocuSign

Maya Markovich  
Justice Technology Association

Natalie Knowlton  
Access to Justice Ventures

Pegeen Turner  
Legal Cloud Technology

Sonja Ebron  
Courtroom5

Warren Savage  
Lawyers Mutual

Our Innovation Lab Launch party hosted in September was attended by over 30 partners and friends of Legal Aid NC, including Mayor of Raleigh, Mary Ann Baldwin.

Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough's Raleigh office graciously provided a one of a kind venue for the launch where we were able to provide interactive demonstrations of new technology and display plans for a new Southeast Raleigh office that will serve as the Lab's home.



Chief Innovation Officer Scheree Gilchrist, Raleigh Mayor Mary Ann Baldwin, and Legal Aid NC CEO Ashley Campbell celebrate at the launch party hosted by Nelson Mullins.

In August, we were invited to discuss all things Innovation and the driving force behind the Lab on the Legal Services Corporation's Talk Justice Podcast.



Use the QR code to listen to the episode, *The First Legal Aid Innovation Lab*.



Rendering of future Southeast Raleigh Office



# OUR FIRST DOCUMENTARY

We believe that one of the most meaningful ways we can demonstrate the impact of our work is by empowering our clients to share their lived experiences and how having their own attorney impacted them and their families. Last year, the courage of three incredible women to tell their stories made it possible for us to film our first ever documentary about our work, [Beyond Fear](#).

Amy, Aracely, and Gina, all survivors of domestic violence and former clients, joined Chief Communications Officer Helen Hobson and Videographer Bryan Miller to detail their journeys to safety and stability after escaping abuse.

Since it was first released in October, *Beyond Fear* has been viewed over 1,500 times.



Use the QR code to watch and share our Documentary, ***Beyond Fear.***

**“The willingness to share their stories with us, to relive those painful moments, and to open their hearts and homes to our team was an act of immense courage and selflessness. They are the heart and soul of ‘Beyond Fear,’ and their strength will undoubtedly inspire countless others who watch their journey.”**

-Helen Hobson, Chief Communications Officer



# REINVENTING THE WHEELS

*We are hitting the road to reimagine what it means to be an accessible, informed, and responsive service provider.*

Thanks to a 2023 grant from the Legal Services Corporation, we were able to purchase a 18' box truck with a connected 7'7" cabin to provide mobile legal services. Through conversion and outfitting, this van has been designed to serve as a traveling Legal Aid NC office that will visit rural underserved communities and those impacted by disaster.

## LANCMobile Driven By Justice

With the launch of the LANCMobile we will strengthen access to justice in rural communities across the state by:

- providing mobile intake and outreach services; and
- serving as a mobile hotspot for areas that have limited access to broadband internet.

Local Office and project staff will work and travel on the bus in order to provide a wide variety of civil legal resources, representation, and services, and assistance with non-legal issues commonly facing our clients.

Year-round, we will utilize our partnerships with local organizations, pro bono volunteers, law schools, and community centers to identify local events where mobile legal services may be of additional help or interest.

By maintaining a route and public calendar, we will be able to coordinate with our Central Intake Unit and local offices to provide holistic support for clients even after the van has left their community.

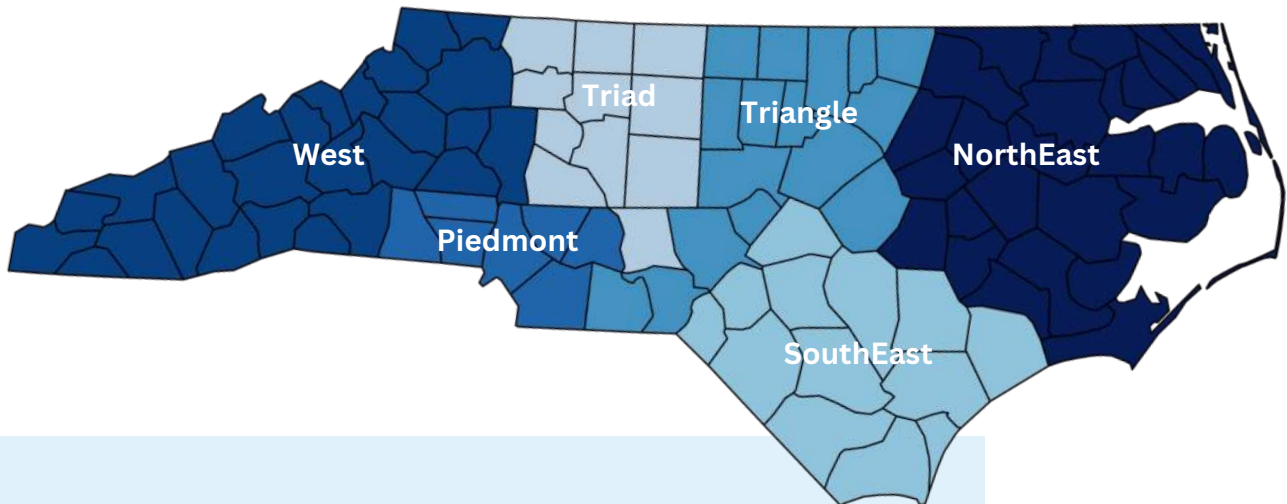


# SERVING

## OUR COMMUNITIES

Each of our local offices serve multiple counties and collaborate to create a service region. These unique service regions allow us to focus on the unique or diverse needs of clients in different parts of our state without comprising the quality or quantity of legal services we provide.

In 2023, demand for services led to our Charlotte, Gastonia, and Concord Offices forming their own Piedmont region. Larissa Mañon Mervin is the first Piedmont Regional Manager and Meredith Gregory is serving as our Western Regional Manager.



To strengthen the connections of our regional managers and their service areas, we introduced the Chief Regional Manager position. Long-time Durham Office Managing Attorney Gina Reyman will serve as our inaugural Chief Regional Manager.

With over 20 years of experience at Legal Aid NC, Gina has a deep appreciation for our history, local relationships, and the challenges facing our regional leaders. In her new role, Gina will unite our six service regions to discuss policies and procedures impacting their service areas, review processes and staff roles, and examine changes or increases in community needs.



**Gina Reyman**  
Chief Regional Manager



## Local Advisory Committees

Supporting and engaging with our communities doesn't stop with our legal work or local staff. Each of our offices is supported by a Local Advisory Council (LAC) made up of community leaders, partner representatives, and legal professionals. These local groups discuss the current needs of low-income communities and available resources to help identify legal issues and gaps in their area.

Through fundraising, pro bono activity, government relations and regular meetings members support our local offices in their efforts to respond to local issues and needs, and assist in the coordination of local services and statewide efforts.



Last year, our Raleigh LAC held its first ever community fundraiser, Taste for Justice, in Selma, NC. This event raised over \$8,000 to support our work in Wake and Johnston Counties.

## Office Updates

In 2023, two of our offices moved to new locations. Our Asheville office moved out of its long-time location on Haywood Road to a new building on Artful Way, and in the last quarter of the year, our Pittsboro Office moved to a new location in Carrboro. Each of these moves increases access for our clients and provides both clients and staff with improved facilities.

Thanks to a generous \$450,000 housing justice grant from Wells Fargo, our Pro Bono team, Raleigh and Wilson Offices are helping low-wealth families and communities of color in Eastern NC with housing legal issues through a new Heir Property Pro Bono Project and by increasing eviction defense work in Raleigh, and Edgecombe and Nash counties.



# OUR STATE

Our local offices and 14 special projects and 2 health care justice partnerships collectively closed over 19,000 cases in 2023. Combining regional access with the individual focus of our projects and partnerships allows us to meet the various civil legal needs of low-wealth North Carolinians.

In November, The Child’s Advocate celebrated 10 years as a project of Legal Aid NC. To celebrate this milestone, the TCA team debuted a new logo. In addition to this celebration, longtime managing attorney and Co-Director Atiya Mosley became TCA’s new Project Director. Atiya follows former director Suzanne Chester, who is now working with the Child’s Voice Project to expand the TCA model across the country.



In 2023, our TCA advocates closed 81 cases in Wake and Durham Counties.



Our Second Chance Project celebrated the opening of a second office in Wilmington and welcomed a new Statewide Project Director, Emily Mistr.

This additional location will increase access to driver’s license restoration and expunction opportunities for residents of New Hanover county.

Last year, we closed over 1,000 cases involving expunctions and driver’s license issues.

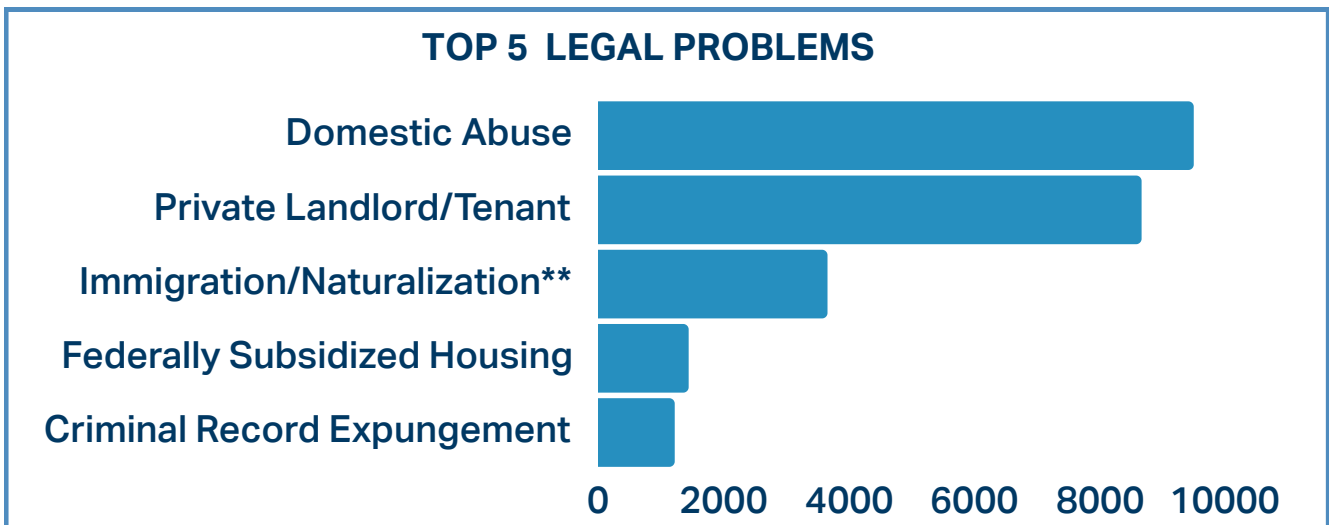
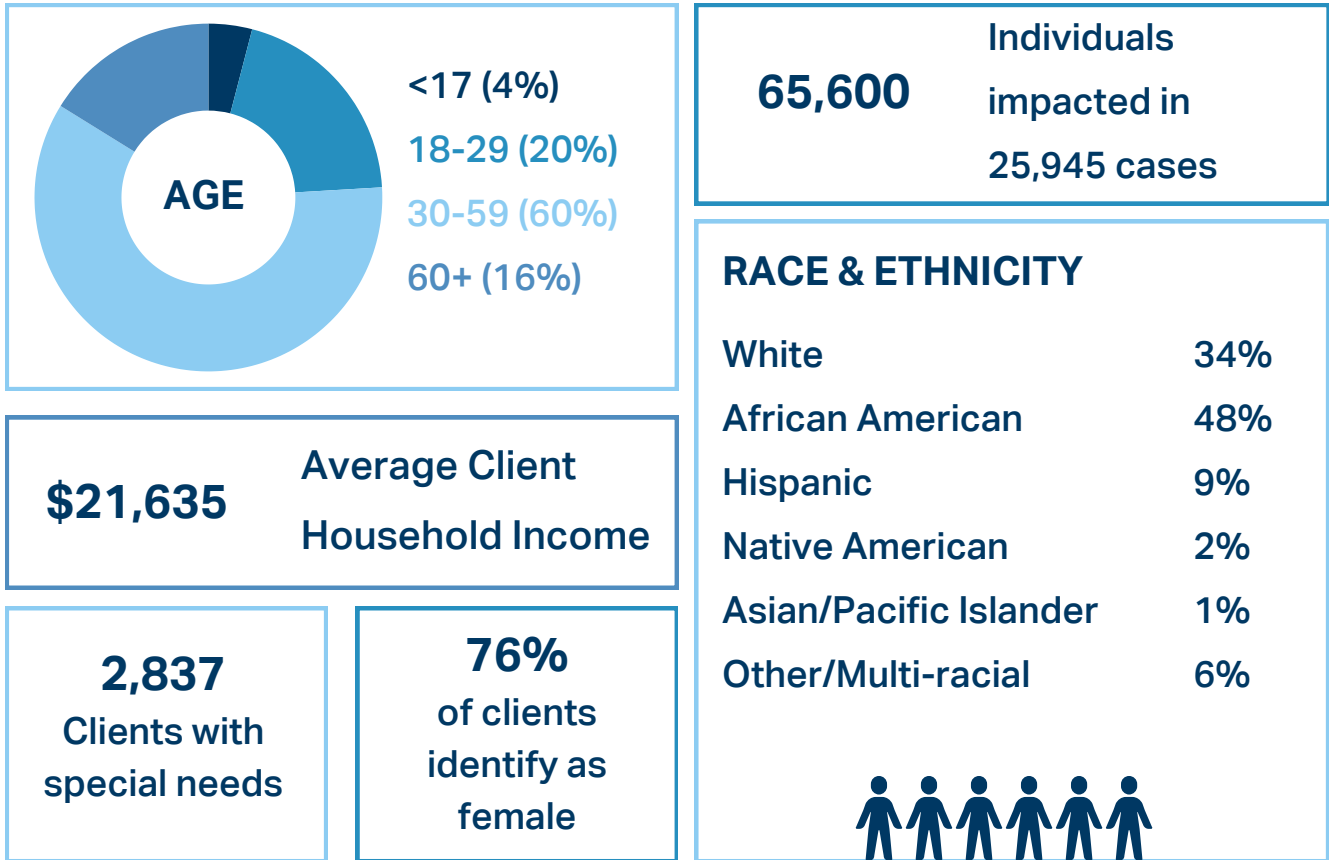


Last year, the Battered Immigrant Project and our Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative were both renamed. We believe their new names, Immigration Pathways for Victims (IMMPAV) and The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Project (DVSA) respect the experiences of our clients and better describe the role our advocates play in securing safety and stability for survivors.

In 2023, Our IMMPAV team closed 484 cases. Across the state, we closed over 6,000 cases involving domestic violence.

# 2023 SNAPSHOT

In 2023, we handled over 25,000 cases generating more than \$23 million in benefits, awards, and savings for our clients.



\*Of the 99 legal problem codes that make up our nine legal problem categories.

\*\*Specifically, immigrant survivors of sexual assault, human trafficking, and domestic violence.



# CONNECTING

## WITH EACH OTHER

We believe we are at our best when we connect with each other and other legal services professionals across the state and country to develop our skills as advocates and learn more about the legal problems facing those in poverty. This year, our staff attended multiple professional conferences, including the Fair Housing Leadership Conference, Southern States Victims Assistance Conference, National Organization of Social Security Claimant's Representatives annual conference, and the Disaster Resilience Symposium at Stetson University College of Law.

In November, we hosted Statewide Summit, our biennial gathering of legal and non-legal professionals from our offices and other public interest and legal service organizations.

This 2 day event hosted over 300 individuals and featured 30 presentations and panels.





# WITH PARTNERS

In 2023, our community engagement team began renewing relationships with community partners throughout the state that were impacted by the COVID pandemic.

In addition to hosting their monthly virtual Listen & Learn information clinics, the team participated in and connected local offices and special projects to seven community engagement opportunities, including one joint housing community education event.

In partnership with our Wilson office, they participated in a community family day. Featuring social service providers, a clothing giveaway, food giveaway, and activities for children, this event brought community resources to one of our state's rural communities with limited access to services. During the day, our team formed a new relationship with the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, a historically Black service organization, and connected with the core event organizers who were raised in the area which helped to strengthen their rapport with community members and attendees.

In May, we welcomed our inaugural Chief Community Engagement Officer, Niya Fonville Swint.

As a former LANC attorney, Niya is able to use her experience to build rapport across stakeholder groups through board service, bar association leadership, management, direct client representation, and public speaking.



**Niya Fonville Swint**  
Chief Community  
Engagement Officer

## Martin Luther King, Jr. Summer Internship Program

This 10-week paid summer internship gives talented law students the opportunity to experience the world of legal aid advocacy first hand. Supervised by LANC attorneys, interns engage directly with low-wealth North Carolinians as they work on real cases for LANC clients.

**Last year's cohort of 23 students represented 7 different law schools and worked across 21 of our offices and projects.**



# WITH VOLUNTEERS

With almost 2 million North Carolinians qualifying for our services, our current resources simply cannot meet the growing need for civil legal aid. Year after year, our incredible volunteers lend us their time and talent to ensure thousands of our neighbors in need can access critical legal services. We are immensely grateful for their service and for the opportunity to work alongside them in bridging the justice gap.

Last year, our volunteers helped us close 945 cases impacting more than 2,200 individuals. Diverse service from attorneys, professionals, law firms, and legal departments both privately and across our 55 clinics met the needs of clients across our consumer, education, family, housing, individual rights and other legal problem categories.

In October, we partnered with the North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center, Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, and Pisgah Legal Services to launch Pro Bono Go, a statewide collection of pro bono opportunities. Connecting attorneys interested in pro bono service with public interest and civil legal aid organizations will help us all reach more North Carolinians in need.

Last year, we welcomed a new Director of Pro Bono Programs, Allison Constance. As former Director of Pro Bono Initiatives at UNC School of Law and staff attorney at North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services, Allison brings a dual perspective to pro bono service that strengthens our partnerships and programs.



**587**  
**PRO BONO**  
**VOLUNTEERS IN**  
**2023**

*THANK YOU!*



# OUR SUPPORTERS

We express our deepest gratitude to each of our partners and donors in 2023! Your support made it possible for us to impact over 65,000 North Carolinians. The listing below includes supporters who gave \$25,000 or more in 2023. We send our sincere gratitude to all Legal Aid NC supporters.

## **\$500,000+**

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

## **\$250,000+**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
UNCG Guilford County TEAM  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

## **\$100,000+**

Cone Health Foundation  
The LANC Fund at the North Carolina Bar Foundation  
New Hanover Community Endowment, Inc.  
United Way of Greensboro  
Wake County Bar Association and Foundation  
Wells Fargo

## **Municipal, State, and Federal Grants**

City of Durham  
City of Raleigh  
City of Winston Salem  
Chatham County  
Forsyth County  
Governor's Crime Commission  
Legal Services Corporation  
Mecklenburg County  
New Hanover County  
North Carolina Division of Aging (Title III)

## **\$50,000+**

Equal Justice Works  
Legal Services of North Carolina  
NHeLP/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
United Way of Forsyth County  
Womble Bond Dickinson

## **\$25,000+**

North Carolina Bar Association and  
Foundation  
Skadden Fellowship  
Timothy S. Goettel  
United Way of the Greater Triangle  
Winston Salem Foundation

NC Council for Women and Youth  
Involvement  
NC Housing Finance Agency  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services (DHHS)  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
Development (HUD)  
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)

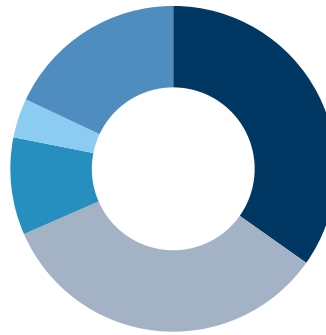
*If you believe there is an error or omission in this list, please accept our apologies  
and contact Missy Hatley at [missyh@legalaidnc.org](mailto:missyh@legalaidnc.org).*

# 2023 FINANCIALS

In 2023, administrative costs made up only 10% of our expenses and \$0.89 of every dollar went directly to our programs.

## Revenue \$53,068,912 M

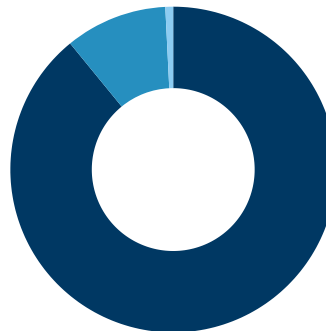
LSC Grants.....	\$18,464,336
Other Gov. Grants.....	\$17,857,996
Community Grants.....	\$5,125,765
Other Income.....	\$2,070,861
Contributions.....	\$8,195,139
Donated Services.....	\$1,354,815



- LSC Grants (35%)
- Other Gov. Grants (33%)
- Community Grants (9%)
- Other Income (4%)
- Contributions & Donated Services (19%)

## Expenses \$47,514,022 M

Programming.....	\$42,330,161
Administrative.....	\$4,814,470
Fundraising.....	\$369,391



- Programming (89%)
- Administrative (10%)
- Fundraising (1%)

**\$23.1 M**

**Generated in client benefits, awards, and savings**

**\$5.5 M**

**One-time grant from MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving**

**\$3.7 M**

**Pass-through funding distributed to 6 nonprofits**

\*Based on 2023 Audited Financials. Legal Aid NC will provide financials upon request.



## Get Help

Call Toll-Free: 1.866.219.LANC (5262)

Apply Online: [legalaidnc.org/apply](http://legalaidnc.org/apply)

### Administrative Office

Legal Aid NC

PO Box 28741

Raleigh, NC 27611

(P) 919-828-4647

(F) 919-839-8370

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