Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County

2019 IMPACT REPORT

Together. Such a small but powerful word. And you understand its importance more than most.

Over the past year you chose to stand together with your neighbors to protect the legal rights of everyone in your community. When you saw injustice, you decided to act. When forces tried to divide communities into “us” and “them”, you stood together to fight for the rights of everyone. Thank you for choosing to fight social injustice. For standing up for the rights of your neighbors. For giving a voice to those who are struggling to be heard.

Your gift to Legal Aid, together with the gifts of other dedicated members of your community, ensured that thousands of people received help from a lawyer this year. By connecting them to a lawyer, you helped families understand their legal rights. You guided them through complex and changing government systems. You empowered your neighbors to fight for their housing, health care, education, safety and stability.

This year, we celebrated Legal Aid’s 60th anniversary. Thanks to you, the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County is now one of the oldest non-profit law firms in the United States. As I look back over my years here, I’ve seen the change that can come when people come together to fight for what’s right. I’m so grateful that Legal Aid has supporters like you. Thank you for choosing to stand together with Legal Aid to fight injustice here in our own community.

You’ve changed so many lives in so many ways. The stories that we share in this Impact Report are just a glimpse into the impact you’ve had on your community. Enjoy your Impact Report. We couldn’t have made such strides without you.

Thank you for your support.

M. Stacey Hawver
Executive Director
Helping People.
Solving Problems.
Building Community.

CASES OPENED
2,109

*between 7/1/18 & 6/30/2019

1,146
HOUSING

313
HEALTH

197
IMMIGRATION

134
INCOME

114
FAMILY LAW

86
EDUCATION

66
OTHER

53
CONSUMER
$21,072
MEDIAN INCOME OF LEGAL AID CLIENTS

$105,667
MEDIAN INCOME OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

Households including a person with a disability
739

Households including a child
901

Households headed by a senior
635

Households with a survivor of domestic violence
214

$1,348,160
Amount of $ saved for clients

$418,747
Amount of $ recovered for clients
Solving Problems

Duc’s young son Hanh has severe disabilities. The family relies on SSI to help care for Hanh. When Duc received a letter from Social Security telling him that Hanh’s SSI benefits were being terminated, Duc was shocked. His social worker referred him to Legal Aid.

Because of you, Duc was connected to an attorney who understands the complex Social Security bureaucracy. After a bit of digging, the attorney discovered that the used van that Duc had recently purchased to transport Hanh and his wheelchair put the family over the program’s resource limit. The attorney appealed, arguing that Social Security had overvalued both the van and the family’s old truck. It took a year to work through the system, but the attorney’s persistence paid off: the hearing judge fully restored Hanh’s SSI, and the family’s income has stabilized.

Your gift to Legal Aid ensured that Duc and his family had somewhere to turn. You helped Duc care for his son.

Helping People

Luna, a single mom, was living with her four children in an affordable, subsidized apartment when she lost her job and began to fall behind in her rent. Her landlord filed an eviction lawsuit to get Luna and her children out. Luna came to one of Legal Aid’s weekly housing clinics to ask for help.

Thanks to you, Legal Aid can offer three weekly housing clinics in different locations to help families like Luna’s deal with emergency housing issues. At the clinic, Luna met with an attorney who helped her with paperwork and later represented her in court. The attorney negotiated a settlement with Luna’s landlord that allowed her to stay. Luna found another job and things are back on track.

When Luna faced the threat of losing her home, you made sure she wasn’t alone. You saved Luna’s home.
The impact of your gift to Legal Aid reaches far beyond San Mateo County. The direct legal services Legal Aid provides to low-income families often exposes gaps and issues in the complex systems designed to help. Your gift to Legal Aid ensured that Legal Aid attorneys—armed with real, local data—can advocate for changes to these systems to help even more people. This spring, thanks to you, Legal Aid’s Health Consumer Center attorneys and staff were able to do just that.

The attorneys had seen how the differences in income limits between two health programs had left many low-income seniors with a big Share of Cost. Share of Cost is like a monthly deductible that can be hundreds or even thousands of dollars. The attorneys traveled to Sacramento this spring and advocated to close this gap in program income limits. The bill was passed! Thanks to you, low-income seniors across the state will have access to affordable health care. You’re changing systems for the better.
With thanks for your generous support

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Revenue
- 36% Government Grants & Contracts
- 38% Private Foundations & Institutions
- 26% Individual & Firm Contributions

Expenses
- 59% Salaries
- 24% Core Mission Support
- 17% Benefits

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