A FULL CIRCLE OF SUPPORT
INVESTING IN JUSTICE

2017
ANNUAL REPORT
DC BAR FOUNDATION
DCBF
WE INVEST IN JUSTICE
LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

In 2017, nearly three quarters of all low-income households in the United States experienced at least one civil legal problem. Eighty-six percent of those civil legal problems received inadequate or no legal help.\(^1\)

Here in Washington, DC, a similar justice gap exists, and it disproportionately affects people and communities of color, women, immigrants, the elderly, people with disabilities and LGBTQ people, often at an alarming rate. Individuals and families are being evicted from their homes, facing their children’s unjust school suspension, or fighting predatory lenders, often without any representation to support their case. And without that representation, families and communities who are already facing the most systemic barriers to success find themselves in a constant churn with justice—all too often coming face-to-face with the inequalities of our system. These barriers not only most affects those living in poverty, but it perpetuates poverty.

This is where the DC Bar Foundation steps in.

Any one of these circumstances could have been changed with the benefit of legal advice, which can make a critical difference in the outcome of an individual’s case. And in this time of great injustice, our work—and your ongoing support—is at its most important. As the Foundation entered its 40th year of grantmaking, we welcomed our second decade of partnership with the District of Columbia and the Access to Justice grants program. With that funding—combined with our legacy of private grants—the DC Bar Foundation has successfully stewarded more than $50 million in grants to DC legal aid organizations and increased the number of experienced, skilled attorneys supporting DC residents by 63 percent. In 2017, more than 22,000 DC residents in low-income households received legal assistance through projects funded by the Foundation, and more than half of these residents live in Wards 7 and 8, the poorest, and least-resourced wards of the city.

Each year, we rely on the time, treasure, and thought partnership with so many throughout the city to help us continue to safeguard and strengthen DC’s civil legal aid network, and this year was no exception. We strive to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and reach of our programs and operations for the benefit of the entire community. I invite you to learn more about the investments we have made in Washington, DC, and thank you, always, for your support of the DC Bar Foundation.

Kirra L. Jarratt
Executive Director

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1. According to a 2017 study by the Legal Services Corporation
A FULL CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

AN OVERVIEW OF WHAT WE DO

The DC Bar Foundation works hand-in-hand with DC’s civil legal aid community to understand and address the legal issues facing people living in poverty. We are at the center of a comprehensive network of service providers for whom we provide grants, loan repayment assistance programs, recognition for commitment to civil legal aid, and training and technical assistance.

GRANTS

The most significant way we increase access to representation is by awarding funds to DC legal aid organizations that provide free legal assistance to low-income DC residents. With over $5.5M of public and private funding, we supported 26 legal aid organizations in the District. In partnership with our grantees, our funds provided much-needed legal aid to more than 30,000 DC residents.

LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

DCBF’s loan repayment assistance programs (LRAP) enables DC legal aid organizations to recruit and retain qualified staff attorneys, who may have incurred significant debt to obtain their law degree and otherwise be unable to continue their critical work. Through LRAP, attorneys can receive a forgivable, one-year loan of up to $12,000 to help pay the attorneys’ educational loans. The average LRAP participant pays $7,525 per year in student loans, and our program is able to cover 90 percent of their yearly student loan obligations.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

DCBF strengthens DC’s legal aid organizations and its attorneys by funding professional and organizational development opportunities. DCBF provides trainings, awards full scholarships for legal aid attorneys to attend legal skills trainings, funds peer evaluations and consultants, and covers the cost of hosting two important DC-focused websites: probono.net/dc (resources for pro bono attorneys) and lawhelp.org/dc/ (resources for pro se representation). In 2017, DCBF provided full scholarships to 42 legal aid attorneys to attend continuing legal education courses covering topics such as cross-examination, deposition, and advanced litigation skills.
2017 AT A GLANCE

2017 marked the 10th year of our grantmaking with Access to Justice funds from the District of Columbia, by far our largest source of funding for grants. This year we launched Lip Sync for Justice, a new fund-raising effort led by DCBF’s Young Lawyers Network Leadership Council. The first year of our three-year strategic plan found DCBF addressing our capacities in financial growth, advancing strong programs, producing effective communications, increasing our strategic alliances, and becoming a model nonprofit in the District. In addition, we continued to make concerted efforts to bring data and evidence to bear on our decision-making.

Though known as a grantmaking organization, the scope and impact of the DC Bar Foundation on this community is far greater.

An investment in the DC Bar Foundation is an investment in the individuals who need civil legal aid services most in this city—and an investment in the collective future of our community. When you give to DCBF, rather than directly to a particular organization, your gift is leveraged with other donations to make a bigger impact. Also, your gift to DCBF is coupled with a holistic approach to grantmaking that develops and strengthens the programs we support through training and technical assistance. When you invest directly in DCBF, you are also investing in smaller, often lesser-known organizations that represent innovative practice areas.
OUR IMPACT

2017, BY THE NUMBERS:

- **$5.5m**
  - Awarded over $5.5 million in grants

- **30**
  - Sponsored a free supervision skills training for 30 legal aid attorneys

- **42**
  - Provided funds for 42 legal aid attorneys to attend four continuing legal education courses

- **60%**
  - Nearly 60% of our funding assisted individuals living in the three poorest wards of the city (Wards 5, 7 and 8)

- **205**
  - Funded more than 205 Know Your Rights and other community trainings, attended by more than 4,800 individuals

- **$383k**
  - Awarded more than $383,000 to 67 legal aid attorneys through the Loan Repayment Assistance Program

- **65%**
  - Of our grantees have staff attorneys supported by the Loan Repayment Assistance Program
THOSE WHO SERVE

In April, 2017, the DC Bar Foundation was honored to award the annual Jerrold Scoutt Prize to Rochanda Hilligh-Thomas of Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc. (AJE) for her years of work bringing justice and education to low-income clients. Rochanda is one of many legal aid attorneys like her who work throughout our community.

Rochanda has worked in DC’s legal aid community for over 20 years. As Director of Legal Services and Advocacy for AJE, in addition to the many families for whom she provided direct services, she led policy initiatives for additional protections against wrongful suspensions that are now standard for DC’s public school students. She now serves as AJE’s Executive Director. The thousands of children in DC for whom she has helped access and preserve education led the DC Bar Foundation to select Rochanda as the 2017 recipient of the Jerrold Scoutt Prize.

The Jerrold Scoutt Prize Award, established by the firm of Zuckert, Scoutt & Rasenberger LLP in 1992 in honor of the public interest commitment of one of its founding partners, Jerrold Scoutt, Jr., is awarded annually to an attorney who has worked for a significant portion of his or her career at a nonprofit organization providing direct hands-on legal services to the needy in the District of Columbia. Each Prize recipient has demonstrated compassionate concern for his or her clients while exhibiting a high degree of skill on their behalf.
THOSE IN NEED

As the housing crisis continues in DC, the DC Bar Foundation is at the forefront of ensuring that millions of dollars are available for free legal aid to low-income DC residents to address complex housing issues. In 2017 alone, 34 percent of our funding went towards housing. The proportion will only grow, as the Foundation will launch a new $4.5 million program next year dedicated to fighting illegal evictions of low-income residents. Together with our grantees, we strive to make sure that every DC resident has access to legal help to address their basic needs, regardless of their income.

Nearly 7 in 10 families in the Washington area, who live at or below the poverty line, do not have access to affordable housing (National Low Income Housing Coalition [NLIHC], 2017). The definition of affordable housing assumes that no more than 30% of household income is spent on housing costs (NLIHC, 2017). Additionally, 73% of low-income residents in the Washington area have a severe housing cost burden, which means they spend 50% or more of their household income on housing costs (NLIHC, 2017).

As housing prices rise in DC, competition for the few remaining affordable units will increase, making low-income DC residents even more vulnerable to housing discrimination and homelessness. DCBF grantee Washington Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) targets the root causes of racial and economic segregation in DC by representing low-income DC residents in housing discrimination cases. One such client is Maurice, who worked his entire life helping others, as a paralegal, certified nurse, and in-home health aide. Yet Maurice ended up homeless, because he was wrongfully rejected by multiple subsidized housing properties due to overturned and old misdemeanor convictions.

Maurice’s case is moving forward in court, and an attorney are staying by his side to ensure he finds a home.

THOSE WHO GIVE

The DC Bar Foundation is driven by the goal of creating access to justice for all DC residents. Fueling its efforts are a network of individual supporters who recognize civil legal aid as an imperative and powerful service to our community. One such supporter is Daniel A. Rezneck, senior counsel in the Office of the Attorney General of the District of Columbia and one of the original founders of the DC Bar Foundation in 1977. For 40 years now, Mr. Rezneck has supported the DC Bar Foundation with both time and treasure to expand its positive impact to more and more civil legal aid providers across the District.

Beyond meeting and working with good people doing good work, supporting the DC Bar Foundation is a point of pride for Mr. Rezneck and makes him “feel useful.” Most recently, as inaugural chair of the DC Bar Foundation’s new donor recognition program, the 77 Society, Mr. Rezneck has helped to inspire other individuals to join him in championing civil legal aid services. “There’s so much more to be done, and we need more people and institutions to share their generosity,” Mr. Rezneck says.

The DC Bar Foundation is proud and grateful to acknowledge Mr. Rezneck and its many other individual supporters. Thank you.
## DONORS AND PRIME PARTNERS

The DC Bar Foundation would like to thank the following donors who contributed during fiscal year 2017. Their generous support continues to help bridge the gap between available resources and the ongoing need for civil legal aid in the District. As a result, thousands of DC residents are able to access the legal representation and resources they desperately need, regardless of their ability to afford it.

### LAW FIRMS AND CORPORATIONS

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77 Society Members
Named in honor of the year that the DC Bar Foundation was founded, the 77 Society recognizes the generosity of our donors, as well as the impact their support has on low-income District residents in need of civil legal aid. Membership in the 77 Society is extended to individuals whose gifts to the DC Bar Foundation total $1,000 or more each fiscal year.

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SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PRIME PARTNERS:
The interest gathered from the Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) Program, comprised of thousands of pooled bank accounts, is administered by DCBF and distributed within the community for legal aid. We are extremely grateful for our Prime Partners for going above and beyond by offering a higher interest on their IOLTA accounts and making civil legal aid more accessible in our community.

» City First Bank of DC
» Congressional Bank
» Industrial Bank
» Premier Bank, Inc.

THANK YOU TO OUR PRO BONO PARTNERS:
» Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP for their many hours of general counsel support.
» Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP for dedicating a team of pro bono attorneys and paralegals and with the management of our loan repayment assistance programs.
» Sidley Austin LLP for hosting a free Supervision Skills Training for 20 DC legal aid attorneys in July 2017.

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Effective management and efficient operations allow us to invest as much as possible in our programs. While our grant programs continue to grow in size, the percentage spent on administration and fund raising has remained low.

For a complete copy of our most recent audited financial statements, please visit our website at www.dcbarfoundation.org
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Gwendolyn A. Williamson

GO CASUAL FOR JUSTICE PARTICIPATING WORKPLACES

The following organizations participated in the Go Casual for Justice campaign between October 1, 2016 and September 30, 2017. Their involvement, and the generosity of their employees, continues to strengthen DC’s civil legal aid network.

$10,000 & UP
Sidley Austin LLP
Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP

$2,500 – $4,999
Arent Fox LLP
Arnold & Porter
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP

$2,500 – $4,999
Blank Rome LLP
Dechert LLP
Finnegan Henderson Farabow Garrett & Dunner LLP
Holland & Knight LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Lewis Baach PLLC
Williams & Connolly LLP

$500 – $999
American Psychological Association
Buckley Sandler LLP
Dentsons US LLP
Jennifer & Block LLP
K&L Gates
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Marriott Phelps & Phillips LLP
MoloLamken LLP
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
Touton Sanders LLP
Van Ness Feldman LLP
Venable LLP
Vogel Slade & Goldstein LLP
Wiley Rein LLP

$250 – $499
Access to Justice Commision
Banner & Witcoff Ltd
Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft LLP
D.C. Office of Disciplinary Counsel
DLA Piper
The Foundation held its annual Fall Reception on October 4, 2016. Generously hosted by Alston & Bird LLP since 2012, the event serves as an opportunity to highlight the important work of our grantees and LRAP recipients, as well as the ongoing support of our loyal donors and volunteers. Claire Blumenson, Executive Director & Co-Founder of School Justice Project, attended and spoke about the impact of DCBF funding on her organization’s ability to improve access to education for court-involved students with disabilities in the District of Columbia.

On November 3, 2016, DCBF’s Young Lawyer’s Network Leadership Council held its first-ever Lip Sync for Justice event. Held at Backroom Bar at RFD, Lip Sync for Justice brought together 125 young lawyers and professionals for an evening of karaoke, lip sync, networking, and fun. Most importantly, our event was able to raise over $10,000 for the District’s civil legal aid network.
On February 1, 2017, the District of Columbia Bar Foundation (DCBF) selected Rochanda Hiligh-Thomas, Interim Executive Director at Advocates for Justice and Education (AJE), as the recipient of the 2017 Jerrold Scoutt Prize. Hiligh-Thomas was selected for her dedication to bringing justice and education to low income clients in the District of Columbia.
GRANTS

Grants represent the core support the DC Bar Foundation provides to the District’s civil legal aid network. With the support of many, we were able to provide nearly $6 million to legal aid organizations throughout the city on every civil issue imaginable – housing, education, employment, disability, and family, to name a few. We have partnered with some of these organizations for nearly 40 years, while others are new organizations that we recently invested in because they are innovative or are addressing emerging needs in our community. We take great pride in our grantmaking process, ensuring every dollar donated is awarded to stable organizations with excellent performance.

NEARLY $6 MILLION IN GRANTS ACROSS THE DISTRICT

DCBF funds both general support and project-based grants in numerous categories. Examples of our project-based grants include medical-legal partnerships, court-based projects, and community law offices located in underserved neighborhoods. For more detailed information about our grant programs and the legal aid services that our grantees provide to DC’s poor, please visit our website at www.dcbarfoundation.org.
PERCENTAGE OF DC RESIDENTS SERVED BY DCBF GRANTS BY WARD

WARD 1 5%
WARD 4 5%
WARD 5 11%
WARD 3 1%
WARD 2 3%
WARD 6 6%
WARD 8 29%
WARD 7 19%
WARD 8 21%
WARD UNKNOWN—HOMELESS/FEDERAL INMATE

OUR COMMUNITY, OUR GRANTEES
Advocates for Justice and Education
Amara Legal Center
Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Ayuda
Bread for the City
Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition
Catholic Charities Legal Network
Children’s Law Center
Christian Legal Aid of the District of Columbia
DC Law Students in Court
DC Volunteer Lawyers Project
Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project
First Shift Justice Project
Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
Legal Counsel for the Elderly
Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project
Neighborhood Legal Services Program
Network for Victim Recovery of DC
Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities
School Justice Project
Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International
Tzedek DC
University Legal Services
Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
Whitman-Walker Health
DC BAR FOUNDATION STAFF

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