

ac·cess noun \ˈak-,ses also ik-'ses\ *a:* permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing **jus·tice** noun \ˈjəs-təs\ The administration of law; especially: the establishment or determination of rights according to the principles of law and equity **ac·cess** noun \ˈak-,ses also ik-'ses\ *a:* permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing **jus·tice** noun \ˈjəs-təs\ The administration of law; especially: the establishment or determination of rights according to

Access to Many ... Justice for All



Legal Aid of Nebraska
Annual Report 2010

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Nebraska Commission on Public Advocacy
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Members of the Legal Aid of Nebraska Board of Directors. Seated, from left: Janice Brown; Katherine Voorhees; Board President Matthew G. Dunning; Ron Oleson; Courtney Klien-Faust. Standing, from left: Grace Pantoja; Susie Chief Bear; LaShawn Young; Kile Johnson; Larry Baumann. Not Shown: Judge Michael McGill; Michael Schleich; Kathryn Olson; Mike Burns; William Foley; Julianna Jenkins; William Tringe, Lorene M. Thomas, Mike Willet.



Dave Pantos – Executive Director

Somewhere to Turn – Legal Aid of Nebraska

Legal Aid is a law firm, a great one in my opinion, but it is also an organization with a mission.

That mission, to “promote dignity, hope, self-sufficiency and justice through quality civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn,” has guided us through decades of changes in the economy, the geography of our program after our merger; and through strategic planning and the ever-changing needs of our clients.

It gets to that simple phrase, “nowhere else to turn.” Which means, frankly, we are here to provide our state’s most disadvantaged and economically marginalized people **somewhere to turn**.

To provide them access to justice. To turn around poverty and point to progress.

A2J Self-Help Center

In 2010, we carried out that mission in a number of initiatives. In Omaha we opened, with some fanfare and significant community support, the Access to Justice Self-Help Center. We call it the “A2J” Center. The Center provides street-level access to struggling folks and gives them the tools they need to make a difference in their own lives.

Legal Aid has never been about entitlement – it’s about empowerment. When a client of our A2J Center leaves one of our clinics, or when they get their legal business done, for free, on any of the Center’s networked computers, they are empowered. They are making a difference in their own lives and walking away with the sense that life isn’t just happening to them. That they are taking control of their own lives and outcomes.

And to think, not long before, they had “nowhere else to turn.”

Now the A2J Center is the flagship of a new brand of fighting poverty. In 2011, in the Red Willow District Court in McCook, Nebraska, we will begin a project helping folks with child support modifications. People who want to pay to help their kids but, due to disability or coming out on the short end of the economic revival, they can’t. We give them the tools – some learning, a set of excellent and vetted pleadings and instructions – and send them on their way.

McCook, you ask? Well, yes, just because a community isn’t a quick stop off the interstate doesn’t mean it does not have real problems or that its citi-

zens don’t deserve a Legal Aid hand up. It means they deserve **some-where to turn** for help.

A New Approach to Poverty Law

The A2J Center and its statewide affiliates are part of our new approach to poverty law. For those cases where we can’t provide a full-time attorney to litigate the case to the finish, as we do so impressively in so many areas and arenas, we will provide “assisted *pro se* assistance.”

And we will do so not just with the people power of our great attorneys and staff, but with innovative technological tools such as “Access to Justice Author.” A2J Author was created in 2004 by Chicago-Kent College of Law’s Center for Access to Justice and Technology and the Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction (“CALI”) to act like a TurboTax® for low-income litigants. It’s a slick and user-friendly internet-based interface that sits on top of HotDocs® legal forms and instructions, guiding the user from log-on to the courthouse door and the clerk’s desk.

It’s being used throughout the country to help unrepresented litigants move their cases forward and get on with their lives to a better place. But, even though the software is free to advocates like us, and even though the “national server” that holds the legal forms is also free, it takes time and talent to code the forms. So Legal Aid, in partnership with the Nebraska Supreme Court Pro Se Committee, successfully sought a federal grant to pay for A2J Author forms in Nebraska. We received notice of the award in the fall of 2010 and we’ll be getting it done in 2011.

It’s another “**somewhere**” to turn: an online tool, created by smart people and maintained by the top legal minds in Nebraska, to give low-income people what they can’t afford on their own: access to the courts and access to justice.

In addition to using technology tools to extend the services we provide to more people in more parts of the state, we are also now using our Web site and social media tools to promote our services and the work we do. In 2010, inspired by the title of the excellent [Omaha World-Herald](#) article about our attorney Pat Ford, we started an online feature “In the Trenches.” This describes in a couple of sentences a case we resolved for any number of our clients throughout the state. Such as:

December 23 – Attorney Mark Bestul in
see page 9



Statewide Solutions For Underserved Nebraskans

Partnering with other professional organizations is one way that Legal Aid can extend its reach to low-income clients throughout the State of Nebraska. Use of technology helps us achieve even greater results.

The stories and case histories on pages 4 through 8 tell of the challenges that Legal Aid staff faced and overcame in 2010.

Street-level Hub Opens

On September 7, 2010, Legal Aid of Nebraska opened the Access to Justice Self Help Center (A2J), a street-level hub at 1904 Farnam Street in Omaha offering face-to-face legal assistance to those who cannot afford attorneys and sometimes have to represent themselves in court.

"Recent estimates show that in more than 50 percent of civil cases filed in Nebraska, at least one litigant is unrepresented," said Executive Director Dave Pantos. "Legal Aid attorneys can only represent a portion of this group. These folks need help."

The A2J Center, a stone's throw from the Douglas County Court House, helps walk-ins with everything from Social Security issues and landlord-tenant disputes to contract cases and child support. Business at the street-level center has been steadily picking up thanks to referrals from the courts and the private bar.

Muirne Heaney, managing attorney for the Omaha office of Legal Aid, supervises operations at the A2J Center that's open daily from 1-4 p.m. and is staffed with an attorney and paralegal.

Heaney says A2J serves different needs for different people, but ultimately the goal is to provide the tools and educational materials



necessary to navigate the sometimes-murky waters of the law. "We're an entry point for some clients, and for others we're both an entry and completion point," she said. "And that's the goal, to be both."

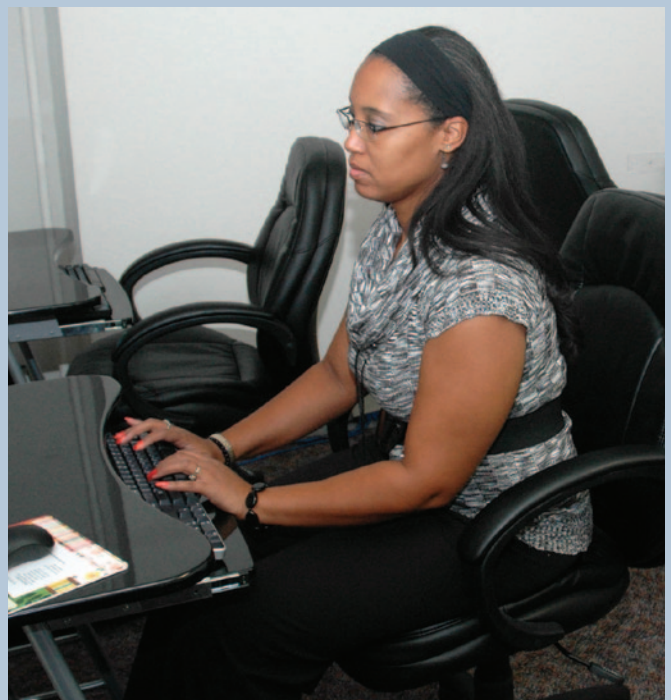
A2J offers computers with access to court-approved forms and documents to deal with divorce proceedings, rent deposit demands and tax matters. Regular clinics are also scheduled to provide assistance with such topics as name changes, bankruptcy and child support. A complete law library and many helpful brochures are also readily available to those who walk in. The clinics are part of an ongoing effort to make the court system more accessible to Nebraska's underserved population.

One recent graduate of A2J's child support clinic was an unemployed man needing to restructure his child support payments while he looked for work. He was successful thanks to two sessions at the clinic.

Another A2J success story involved a woman who came in with seven misdemeanors on her record, which were an impediment in her quest for employment. Legal Aid provided the client with a self-help packet that included information on the legal issues, instructions, legal pleadings and a script for use in court. Thanks to this help, the woman was able to file and serve everything properly, and she won all her hearings.

A2J was created in part through the revelations of Legal Aid's

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U.S. District Court Judge Joseph Bataillon, top photo, greets visitors at A2J Center. Judge Richard Sievers of The Nebraska Court of Appeals, at right in photo at left, toured the Center. Also shown are state District Court Judge Theresa Luther of Hall County and Janet Bancroft of the Court Administrators Office. Grants Manager Selina Perry, above photo, works on one of the Center's computers.

from page 5

2008 needs assessment. Through the generous efforts of local donors such as Mutual of Omaha, the Omaha Community Foundation Fund for Omaha and countless others, the center is today a reality.

"We want A2J always to be a work in progress," said Heaney. "We welcome feedback from the community about what's missing, what we might do differently and who still needs legal help. This feedback can help us improve and expand our services."

When Crime Lands on Your Doorstep

In April 2010, "Annie J." asked Legal Aid of Nebraska to help her fight an eviction notice sent to her by the Omaha Housing Authority (OHA). The notice alleged that she had participated in "criminal activity" and thus violated OHA's "one strike, you're out" policy.

The facts were that on April 1, two men had engaged in a knife fight in the hallway of Annie J's apartment building. While opening the door to investigate the noise, the two men literally fell into her apartment.



Attorney Liliana Shannon

One of the men who had been stabbed and left on the floor of the woman's apartment was taken to a hospital. But OHA used the blood left behind from the fight as evidence of her alleged involvement. OHA said she should not have let the men inside her apartment. If evicted, she stood to lose not only her home, but other benefits as well.

Attorney Liliana Shannon met with the client and sought the records of the incident from Omaha Police and OHA. The housing authority's records stated that the men had fallen into the apartment and the police report did not mention Annie J. at all.

The official reports were consistent: the men had entered the apartment without her consent. After talking to the Omaha Housing Authority and their representative, Shannon settled the case, allowing the client to keep both her home and her benefits.

Afterwards, Shannon stated that "cases like these are very upsetting," and "being able to secure her housing was very gratifying."

Trusting Didn't Work for Refugee Mother

Picture yourself scared, afraid, unable to trust anyone, and all alone in a new country with your four young children. Then imagine the relief you enjoy when walls are broken down and you begin to make friends.

This is the situation one Legal Aid client found herself in as a new resident of the USA. She had skills, found a job and made friends with a co-worker who offered her welcome rides to and from work.

But trusting the new male friend turned out to be a mistake for "Sara" who sought Legal Aid's help after he subjected her to an extended series of sexual assaults, one resulting in pregnancy.

The new friend was nice at first but eventually began forcing his way into the client's apartment and Sara eventually gave birth to a healthy baby girl.

As if the abuse wasn't enough, the male co-worker would demand to see the child and use these visits to continue the assaults. He threatened her by saying it would cost Sara large amounts of money if she called the police.

Sara was confused and unfamiliar with her rights under American law. She did not know she could dial 911 for help nor that she could obtain a protection order against her attacker. Legal Aid law clerk Jaci Wyatt stepped in with an interpreter to help Sara file a protection order against her attacker.

Working in partnership with advocates from the Victim Services and Family Justice Center, Jaci was able to get the appropriate documentation filed and the protection order entered. Now Refugee Sara has peace of mind knowing that she can always call police for help in enforcing the order.

Jaci is thrilled that Sara is now safe and that she doesn't have to suffer at the hands of her attacker any longer.

Carraher Receives Ruth Miller Award for Advocacy

Patrick Carraher, managing attorney in Legal Aid of Nebraska's Lincoln office, is this year's recipient of the Ruth Miller Award for Outstanding Advocacy.

Legal Aid Executive Director Dave Pantos and Board Chairman Matthew Dunning presented Carraher with the award during the April board meeting at the Hruska Law Center in Lincoln.



Executive Director Dave Pantos, right, presents Lincoln attorney Patrick Carraher with the Ruth Miller Award for Outstanding Advocacy.

In his remarks, Carraher said he remembered Ruth Miller, a long-time Legal Aid staff member, and her unique flair for solving the legal problems of Nebraska's low-income population.

Test Results Turn 'Positive' for Client

Losing your job is never an enjoyable experience, especially when it happens after an erroneous drug test. That's what happened to "Megan," a 13-year employee of a Columbus, Nebraska, nursing home.

On August 10, 2010, the home discovered that narcotic medications were missing from a nurse's station. This prompted the employer to conduct drug tests to identify the guilty party. As part of her duties, Megan provided medications to residents at the nursing home, and she was one of six employees required to participate in the drug test.

Two days after the test, Megan learned she had tested positive. The active ingredients darvocet, hydromorphone and oxytam were allegedly detected in her system. Megan had a valid prescription for oxytam, but the other ingredients were a mystery. She was allergic to darvocet and hadn't come into contact with hydromorphone on the job or outside the workplace. She even provided a doctor's note, validating her darvocet allergy.

The positive test had to have been made in error; but Megan's supervisor informed her that she would be suspended from work without pay until further notice. She was also informed that she could re-take the drug test at her own expense.

Following the suspension, she was notified by the nursing home that she had been fired.

With no source of income, Megan applied for and was granted unemployment benefits. The Columbus home disputed her application on the grounds that she had been fired for misconduct.

Megan sought the assistance of Legal Aid of Nebraska attorney Amanda McMahon. At stake were her unemployment wages, which Megan could be required to repay if she lost the case.

The Nebraska Appeal Tribunal found in Megan's favor during a November 1, 2010, hearing. The Tribunal was unconvinced of the drug test's results. The home's failure to provide a copy of its drug testing policy and procedures further helped Megan's case. As a result, she was allowed to continue receiving her unemployment benefits.

Client Nearly Lost Disability Benefits

American citizens are fortunate to live in a country where questioning the government is encouraged, but standing up to the federal bureaucracy alone can be a most intimidating situation.

After suffering multiple heart attacks, surviving heart bypass surgery, and having two stents put in, Legal Aid Client "Michael L." was receiving disability checks each month until a misunderstanding threatened not only to end the payments, but also force him to repay a large sum he had received.

Qualifying for disability meant that Michael was restricted from

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Lori Wilson

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performing some kinds of work, particularly demanding physical activities. He acquired a part-time job as a cashier that he believed fell within the rules of his disability limitations.

By working as a cashier for 20-to-26 hours a week and refraining from heavier work, Michael believed he was not compromising his disability status. Unfortunately, the Social Security Administration thought otherwise.

Although Michael had already been giving back \$75 each month to the Social Security Administration for a previous overpayment, he was notified in 2010 that his benefits would be discontinued and he needed to pay back an additional \$11,000 in overpayment fees.

For assistance, Michael contacted Legal Aid through the ElderAccessLine®. Attorney Lori Wilson managed to convince the Social Security Administration that Michael's cashier job fell within the category of "sheltered work," and therefore should not disqualify him.

Wilson established that the client is qualified for the benefits. She not only provided a continuation of Michael's disability checks, but the new overpayment demand was terminated and she helped him decrease the amount of his previous overpayment.

A Family Reunited

Imagine coming home from your job one afternoon and realizing that your children, along with their clothing and other personal items, had been taken. That's the situation the Legal Aid client "Miranda" walked into in September 2010.

She had recently ended a decade-long abusive relationship. After the split, her ex-boyfriend – also her children's father – left the state.

Miranda and her children though their lives had

returned to normal until the boyfriend showed up one evening and forced his way into the family's house. He returned the next day while Miranda was at work to kidnap the children.

The ex-boyfriend spoke with Miranda on the phone but wouldn't let the children talk to their mother. He threatened to leave the state several times and told Miranda to meet him at different locations to say goodbye to her children, but he never showed up. Eventually, he left the state with the children.

Afraid for her children's safety, Miranda contacted Legal Aid of Nebraska the day after the children were taken. Attorney Jonathan Seagrass and the staff of Legal Aid's Native American program in Bancroft, Nebraska, managed to locate the children and arrange for their safe return to Nebraska.

With Legal Aid's help, Miranda regained custody of her three children and the family returned to normalcy.

A Thank You

Legal Aid of Nebraska wants to recognize the considerable efforts of law firms Jackson Lewis and Stinson Morrison Hecker for their pro bono contributions to the state's largest, non-profit law firm.

Jackson Lewis helps monitor Legal Aid's Accessline® and offers employment law support. Stinson Morrison Hecker offers trademark and copyright expertise.

Communications: A New Voice

Legal Aid of Nebraska's external communications efforts received a boost this spring with the addition of Executive Director Dave Pantos' "In the Trenches" column, appearing in The Daily Record.

The bi-weekly column will focus on a variety of issues in the legal profession and the particular challenges faced on the ground by Legal Aid attorneys representing low-income Nebraskans.

"This column gives our organization another voice in and outside of the legal profession," said Pantos. "My hope is to give our organization greater visibility and keep the public apprised of the many challenges faced in our sphere of the legal field. The Daily Record is simply the perfect platform."

Since 1886, The Daily Record has served as the source for Nebraska's business and legal news. ■



Targeted Initiatives

Targeting our services to groups of Nebraskans with unique and special needs enables Legal Aid of Nebraska to stretch our reach and effectiveness.

- Legal Aid's **Farm/Ranch and Rural Response Hotline** helps rural residents get financial, legal and risk management information or referrals to other community groups. This is managed by the Bancroft office in partnership with Inter-church Ministries of Nebraska.
- 2010 saw the opening of the **Access to Justice Self-Help Center (A2J)** in downtown Omaha in the heart of the state's largest population base. The Center serves walk-in clients with a range of face-to-face services.
- The **International Center of the Heartland Project (ICH)** is a joint effort among Lutheran Family Services, Catholic Charities, One-World Community Health Center and Legal Aid. An attorney provides on-site intake, education and extended representation to ICH participants, many of which are non-English speaking immigrants and refugees.
- Information on tax rights and responsibilities is delivered throughout the state to English as a Second Language and low-income populations via our **Low-Income Tax Clinics**. Participants also get advice and representation in controversies involving the IRS.
- Most of our legal services begin with the statewide toll-free **AccessLine®** where attorneys and paralegals offer advice, brief service and referrals.
- As part of our **Elder Law Program®** attorneys travel throughout Northeast Nebraska to provide legal education, give advice, brief services and direct representation, helping with wills, durable powers of attorney and health care directives.
- For those age 60 and over, the **ElderAccessLine®** is staffed by an experienced paralegal who confers with an attorney. There is no income eligibility restriction.
- **Nebraska Migrant Action Coalition (NEMAC)** is a collaborative effort of partners, including Legal Aid, Creighton University, NAF Multicultural Human Development Corporation and Nebraska Department of Labor. Together, these entities have devoted energy to improve the level of legal education and outreach in migrant communities, particularly to migrant farm workers. NEMAC participants provide these services through immersions, wherein the participants conduct educational presentations in churches, community centers and housing units.
- The **Self-Sufficiency Project** helps both clients and communities by enabling people to achieve independence. Such clients give back to communities via productive employment, purchase of goods and many other ways.
- The **Nebraska Medical Legal Partnership for Oncology** is a partnership between The Nebraska Medical Center/University of Nebraska Medical Center and Legal Aid's Omaha office. The program is designed to address legal problems that affect the health of patients with cancer and organ transplants.
- Our **Bilingual Program** helps Nebraskans who are not proficient in English by providing educational materials in their native languages, plus translation and interpretation services.
- The **Nebraska Homeless Assistance Project** provides legal assistance to individuals with housing issues, and strives to remove any legal barriers that keep them from obtaining stable housing. Our attorneys do onsite intake and work with more than 25 homeless shelters and transitional living facilities. ■

Somewhere to Turn — Legal Aid of Nebraska

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Lincoln worked to get an eviction complaint against his client dismissed. By showing that the complaint was insufficient Bestul ensured that his client, a young woman struggling to find employment, had one less burden during these winter months.

August 10 — Lori Wilson in Grand Island made a huge difference for a Nebraska family: "I just won disability benefits for a 15-year-old boy who lives with his parents and two siblings in rural Nebraska. The family received back benefits of \$17,500 and regular monthly benefits for the child which will go a long way in moving this hard working family out of poverty."

There are scores more. And yes, in 2010, we entered the Twitter and Facebook worlds. We did so by hiring a great summer intern who jump-started our efforts — now we have an active presence. It has already led to useful collaboration and more folks finding out about our services. Finding out that there is somewhere to turn.

Looking forward to 2011, there are changes everywhere: potential federal funding cuts on the one hand and economic "green shoots" on the other. A series of explosions against tyranny in the Middle East and North Africa and a still-unfolding earthquake tragedy in Japan. Through this all we must, and will, remain focused on our mission. Focused on delivering on the dream envisioned by our founding fathers when they wrote about "justice for all."

We will remain focused on being that "**somewhere to turn**." That will never change. ■

Firm Members

BANCROFT (Farm Ranch Project)

MARR, Lori – Administrative Assistant
SOLL, Michelle – Paralegal (Office Manager)
THIN ELK, Theresa – DV Attorney

GRAND ISLAND

SCHOTT, Crystal – Paralegal
STRONG, Kay – Managing Attorney
WILSON, Lori – Attorney

LINCOLN

BERNT, Heather – Paralegal
BESTUL, Mark – Attorney
BRYANT, Zachary – Law Clerk
CARRAHER, Patrick – Managing Attorney
CEBALLOS, Kristin – Paralegal
KULWICKI, Jennifer – Attorney
KYKER, Sarah – Law Clerk
LEWIT, Brittani – Attorney
MILLIGAN, John – Attorney
PENG, Shirley – Attorney
RODRIGUEZ, Hazell – Attorney
SIDWELL, Scott – Attorney
WROBLEWSKI, Lea – Attorney

NORFOLK

LEE, Lori – Managing Attorney
McMAHON, Amanda – Attorney
WESCHE, Kathy – Paralegal

NORTH PLATTE

CARPENTER, Victoria – Paralegal
EASTMAN, Jeffrey – Managing Attorney
FARRITOR, Shawn – Attorney

OMAHA

ALLEBONE, Katie – Intake Paralegal
BEZRUTCYK, Ana – Intake Paralegal
BOSWELL, Kelly – Attorney
BRADLEY, Christina – Paralegal
BROOKS, Ed – Accounting Manager
D'AMATO, Elaine – Attorney
DUNOVAN, Kimberly – AL Attorney
EMANUEL-MOORE, Elise – NAP Coordinator
FARNAN, Annette – Deputy Director
FEELHAVER, Rod – CFO
FORD, Pat – Attorney

2010

Federal, State and County Grants

Legal Services Corp.....	\$1,781,836	Nebraska Department of Agriculture	\$182,769
Commission on Public Advocacy Legal Aid & Services Fund	\$1,389,651	West Tennessee Legal Services.....	\$24,634
Civil Legal Aid & Service Fund.....	\$360,000	Nebraska Health & Human Services.....	\$51,441
Department of Justice Tribal Civil & Criminal Legal Asst. NARF/NAALS	\$2,908	Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging	\$29,944
Violence Against Women Native American Grant.....	\$165,730	Administration on Aging – Model Approaches.....	\$105,874
Lancaster County Juvenile Contracts.....	\$283,315	IRS – Low Income Tax Center.....	\$21,710
Joint Budget Commission.....	\$15,000	NE Association Area Agencies on Aging.....	\$21,550
Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA).....	\$58,500		

2010 United Way

United Way Lancaster County.....	\$23,773
United Way Midlands.....	\$41,222

2011-2013 Bar Campaign

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Shon T. Lieske

Stan Emerson

Timothy D. Loudon

William Tringe

\$10-\$99

David Beaudoin

Forrest F. Peetz

Margaret S. Galstan

Sara Juster

W. Gerald O'Kief

Firm Members

GAUGHAN, Jennifer – Dir. of Litigation & Adv.

GROGGER, Anne – Intake Paralegal

HASTERLO, Barbara – Intake Paralegal

HEANEY, Muirne – Managing Attorney

HEER-DALE, Laurel – AL Managing Attorney

KAMMERER, Mike – Tech. Coordinator

MANGIAMELI, Ann – Attorney

MASON, Venita – Receptionist

McGILL, Jennifer – Intake Paralegal

McSHANE, Anne – Attorney

MERTZ, Scott – Attorney

NADING, Laurie – Paralegal

PANTOS, Dave – Executive Director

PERRY, Selina – HUD Coordinator/Grants Mgr.

RAMIREZ, Daniel – Law Clerk

REED, Kalisha – Paralegal

RIVERIA, Tim – Attorney

SAAVEDRA, Valentina – Paralegal

SCHAEFER, Margaret – Elder AL Attorney

SEAGRASS, Jonathon – DV AL Attorney

SHAFFER, Teresa – Paralegal

SHANNON, Liliana – Attorney

STOLARSKY, Christine – PAI Coordinator

STOLARSKY, Kathleen – Intake Paralegal

TAYLOR, Taureen – Intake Paralegal

WILLIAMS, Emma – Administrative Assistant

WYATT, Jaclyn – Law Clerk

SCOTTSBLUFF

MILLER, Casey – Attorney

PALOMO, Amanda – Paralegal

SKELCHER, Sheldon – Managing Attorney

VOLUNTEERS/INTERNS/EXTERNS

ALDRICH, Hoken – Omaha

DAVIS, Elizabeth – Omaha

GALUSHA, Sean – Omaha

GARRETT, Bernadette – Omaha

JOHNSON, Susan – Omaha

LITTELL, Abigail – Lincoln

MARTIN, Philip – Omaha

McGHEHEY, Jill – Lincoln

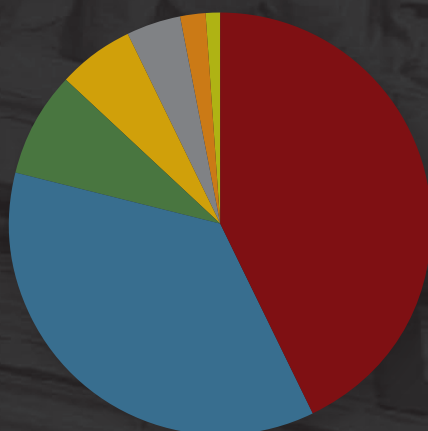
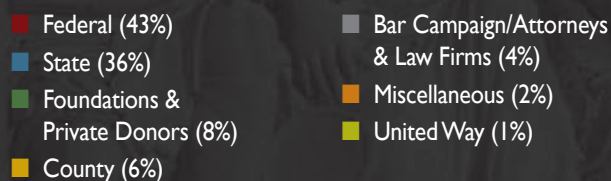
POTOS, Byndon – Omaha

SPOMER, Samuel – Omaha

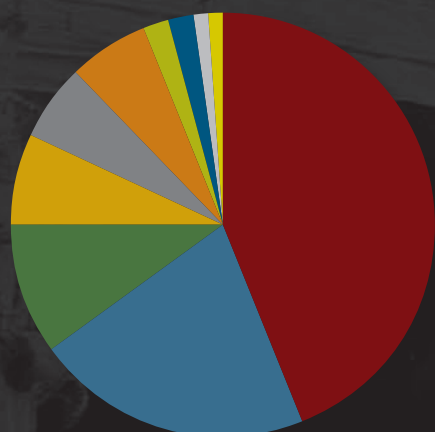
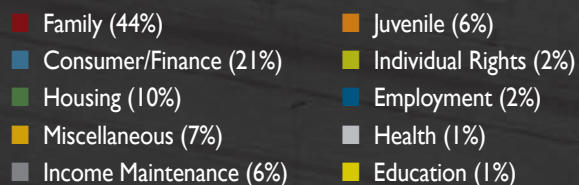
WALLACE, Joel – Omaha

WORKMAN, Taylor – Omaha

2010 Revenue



2010 Cases Closed



2010 Foundation Donors

We greatly appreciate our donors who make sure that we live up to our mission of "promoting justice, hope, dignity and self-sufficiency through quality civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn."

A.F. Jacobsen Foundation	\$1,180	Lozier	\$51,000
American National Bank.....	\$1,500	Mid NE Community Foundation	\$1,875
Anonymous Contribution	\$45,000	Midland Community Foundation	\$5,000
Carol Gendler Foundation	\$15,000	Mutual of Omaha Foundation	\$25,000
Cooper Foundation	\$10,000	Todd & Betiana Simon Foundation	\$10,000
Darlene Swanson Foundation	\$8,820	UNMC.....	\$24,964
Fund for Omaha.....	\$5,000	US Bank	\$2,000
Howard Hawks Foundation	\$35,000	Wells Fargo.....	\$6,000
Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska.....	\$62,220	William & Ruth Scott Foundation	\$25,000
Lexington Community Foundation	\$1,500	Women's Fund.....	\$5,000

2010 Donors

\$250 – \$999

Christopher Phillips
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Roger Lott
Sean Barry
Shari Grant
Suzanne Mary Lapolla
Wayne and Sarita Penka

\$100 – \$249

Blue Valley Community Action
David Pantos
David Pedersen
JA and Carol McShane
Jerrold Strasheim
John Wagner

OTHERS

Annette Farnan
Bernadette Irwin
Cheryl Hazel
Crystal Schott
David and Bonnie Linberg

PAI Attorneys Extend Legal Aid's Reach

Once in a blue moon you encounter someone like Valentine, Nebraska, attorney Rob Coupland, who recently retired from private practice.

Rob's dedication to Legal Aid of Nebraska and its clients goes back to the mid-1970s when he and his late father, the founder of



Rob Coupland

Coupland Law, contracted out of Scottsbluff to serve low-income Nebraskans through the PAI program.

PAI stands for "Private Attorney Involvement," a program under which lawyers serve Legal Aid clients at reduced rates.

Those services are free to the clients and the rate reduction is a donation of services to Legal Aid.

PAI attorneys stretch Legal Aid's reach by serving clients who live more than one hour driving time from one of our seven Nebraska offices. Since 2002 Rob has handled 42 Legal Aid cases through PAI. The complete list of Legal Aid's 2010 PAI attorneys is shown below.

Rob generously accepted every case offered to him, including some that would qualify as "difficult." Regardless of the degree of difficulty, he always provided high-quality representation and exhibited great empathy for people in difficult circumstances.

Asked about the rewards of serving low-income people, Rob said, "... people with little financial means seem to have larger problems in their custody and property cases than the more affluent cli-

ents...simply because their lack of resources creates a greater atmosphere of stress that has to be addressed during legal representation.

"Almost always, there are peripheral issues concerning finances, property, housing and health. Often, as their lawyer, I find myself simply 'holding their hands' while we navigate a difficult period in their lives.

"If, at the end, they say 'thank you,' then I know I have done all I can for them, and that is the best reward."

During his years in practice, Coupland also served the Native American community on the Rosebud Sioux reservation in south-central South Dakota. He recognizes that Native Americans face similar issues as the general population, but oftentimes approach them differently. Rob took Lakota language classes to aid in his understanding of these unique clients.

When asked why he was willing to help so many people pro bono or at a significantly reduced rate, Coupland said, "I grew up in Valentine, so I provide services to people of little means whom I have known all my life. It doesn't matter what the hourly fee is if the client can't pay it, and (in my private practice) some have paid me in other ways.

"Some of my more interesting fees have been: a horse-drawn, leaning wheel road grader; a two-hole outhouse; an air compressor; and, of course, vegetables and homemade jellies. It's a good life."

Coupland received a special award from Legal Aid's Board of Directors in 2010 for his exemplary service. ■

2010 PAI Attorneys

Mark Albin, Norfolk
Avis Andrews, Fremont
Sophia Alvarez, Kearney
Frank Barron III, Fremont
Travis Bennington, Fremont
Christina Boydston, Fremont
Ben Beethe, Tecumseh
John Begley, Omaha
Jennifer Birmingham,
Bloomfield
Michael Borders, Broken
Bow
Joe Chilen, Fairbury
Robert Coupland, Valentine
Jeff Courtney, Omaha
Bruce Dalluge, Tecumseh
Candace Dick, Sutton

Bassel El-Kasaby, Omaha
Steve Elmshaeuser, Sidney
Jeffrey Ensz, Minden
Marsha Fangmeyer, Kearney
Steve Fillman, York
Todd Flynn, Ainsworth
Leta Fornoff, Fremont
Tara Gardner, Lincoln
Scott Grafton, York
Maurice Green, McCook
Cheryl Guggenmos, Broken
Bow
Scott Hahn, Omaha
Christopher Halbert, Falls
City
Burke Harr, Omaha
Amy Hoffman, York

Jeff Hubka, Beatrice
Chris Johnson, Hastings
Gerald Johnson, Plattsmouth
Steffanie Kotik, Lincoln
Jaquelin "J" Leef, Sidney
Lucy Lewno, Yankton SD
Shon Lieske, Minden
Thomas Lieske, Minden
Randal Limbeck, Omaha
Tina Marroquin, Lincoln
Angie McClure, Lincoln
Bryan McQuay, Alma
Michael Mead, Hastings
Diane Merwin, Humboldt
Angela Slattery Minahan,
Plattsmouth

John Moeller, Sioux City IA
James Moravek, Alliance
Rebecca Nelson, Sioux
City IA
Mark Noah, Beloit KS
Timothy Noerrlinger,
Nebraska City
Michelle Oldham, Hastings
Robert Parker, Hastings
Shane Placek, Fremont
Jennifer Panko-Rahe,
Syracuse
Jerry Pollard, Yankton SD
Kathy Rockey, Norfolk
Patrick Runge, Omaha
Steve Scherr, Hastings
Nathan Schneider, McCook

Melissa Schutt, Fremont
Curtis Sikyta, Ord
Amy Skalka, Hastings
Julie Hogancamp Smith,
Tecumseh
Richard Smith, Tecumseh
Gail Steen, Lincoln
Sandy Stern, Omaha
DeAnn Stover, Lincoln
Anne Swanda, Broken Bow
Adam Tripp, Fremont
Steven Twohig, Fremont
Jon Worthman, Alliance
Lori Zeilinger, Grant
Michael Ziskey, Nebraska
City

Nebraska IOLTA Participating Financial Institutions

The Nebraska Lawyers Trust Account Foundation thanks the following financial institutions for participating in the Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) Program. Over 260 financial institutions and over 2,800 lawyers join together in this worthwhile cause. Financial institutions waiving service charges are designated with an asterisk ().*

AINSWORTH – *First National Bank of Chadron, *Union Bank & Trust
 ALBION – *Boone County Bank, *TierOne Bank
 ALLIANCE – *Bank of the West, First National Bank of North Platte, *Great Western Bank, *Wells Fargo
 ARAPAHOE – *First Central Bank
 ARLINGTON – *Two Rivers State Bank
 ASHLAND – *Centennial Bank, Omaha, *Farmers & Merchants National Bank
 AUBURN – Auburn State Bank, *Carson National Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Union Bank & Trust
 AURORA – Heritage Bank
 BASSETT – *Sandhills State Bank
 BEATRICE – Security First Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Pinnacle Bank
 BEAVER CITY – First State Bank
 BEEMER – First Community Bank
 BELLWOOD – *Bank of the Valley
 BENKELMAN – AmFirst Bank
 BERTRAND – Bank of Bertrand
 BLAIR – *Two Rivers Bank, *Washington County Bank
 BLOOMFIELD – *Great Western Bank
 BLUE HILL – *South Central State Bank
 BROKEN BOW – *Bruning State Bank, *Custer Federal Savings & Loan, *Great Western Bank, Nebraska State Bank & Trust Co.,
 BRUNING – *Bruning State Bank
 BURWELL – *Great Western Bank
 CAIRO – *Pathway Bank
 CALLAWAY – *Great Western Bank
 CAMBRIDGE – *First Central Bank, *The First National Bank, *First State Bank
 CENTRAL CITY – *Citizens Bank & Trust, *Pinnacle Bank
 CERESCO – *Ceresco Bank
 CHADRON – *First National Bank of Chadron, First National Bank of North Platte
 CHAPPELL – *Points West Community Bank
 COLERIDGE – Security National Bank
 COLUMBUS – *Columbus Bank & Trust Co., *BankFirst, *First National Bank & Trust Co., *First Nebraska Bank, *Great Western Bank, *US Bank & Trust Co.
 COOK – *Farmers Bank of Cook
 COZAD – *First Bank & Trust Co., *Security First Bank
 CRAWFORD – *Security First Bank
 CREIGHTON – *Midwest Bank NA
 CRETE – *City Bank & Trust Co., *Great Western Bank, *Pinnacle Bank, *Union Bank & Trust

CURTIS – Curtis State Bank
 DAVID CITY – *Bank of the Valley, *Union Bank & Trust
 DESHLER – *Midwest Bank NA
 DONIPHAN – Bank of Doniphan
 ELKHORN – *American Interstate Bank
 ELWOOD – *Security First Bank
 FAIRBURY – American National Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Union Bank & Trust
 FALLS CITY – First National Bank & Trust Co., *Great Western Bank, Richardson County Bank & Trust Co.
 FORT CALHOUN – *Great Southern Bank
 FRANKLIN – Franklin State Bank
 FREMONT – *American National Bank of Fremont, *First State Bank & Trust, *Fremont National Bank & Trust Co., *Great Western Bank
 FULLERTON – First National Bank & Trust
 GENEVA – Geneva State Bank
 GENOA – *Genoa National Bank
 GERING – First National Bank of North Platte, *Great Western Bank, *Valley Bank & Trust Co.
 GIBBON – *Exchange Bank
 GORDON – *The First National Bank of Gordon
 GOTHENBURG – *First State Bank, *Great Western Bank
 GRAND ISLAND – *Equitable Bank, *Five Points Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Heritage Bank, *Home Federal Savings & Loan, *Union Bank & Trust, Wells Fargo
 GRANT – *Valley Bank & Trust
 GRETNIA – *Pinnacle Bank
 HARVARD – *Cornerstone Bank
 HASTINGS – Bank of Doniphan, *Five Points Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Hastings State Bank, *Heritage Bank
 HEBRON – *Great Western Bank
 HICKMAN – *First State Bank
 HOLDREGE – Bruning State Bank, First Tier Bank, First National Bank of Holdrege, *Great Western Bank
 HOSKINS – *Elkhorn Valley Bank & Trust
 HUMBOLDT – American National Bank, *Great Western Bank
 IMPERIAL – *Pinnacle Bank
 KEARNEY – *Farmers & Merchants Bank, *First Tier Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Heritage Bank, *Nebraska National Bank, *Platte Valley State Bank & Trust Co., *Wells Fargo
 KIMBALL – First Tier Bank, First National Bank
 LAUREL – *Security National Bank
 LAVISTA – Bank of Nebraska
 LEXINGTON – *Great Western Bank, *Pinnacle Bank

LINCOLN – American National Bank, *Bank of the West, *Cornhusker Bank, First State Bank, *Frontier Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Midwest Bank, *Pinnacle Bank, *Security First Bank, *US Bank, *Union Bank & Trust Co., *Wells Fargo, *West Gate Bank
 LOUP CITY – Heritage Bank
 MCCOOK – *AmFirst Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Horizon Bank, *McCook National Bank, *Union Bank & Trust, *Wells Fargo
 MADISON – *Frontier Bank, *Madison County Bank
 MARTELL – *Security First Bank
 MILLIGAN – *Farmers & Merchants Bank
 MINDEN – *Minden Exchange Bank & Trust Co.
 MITCHELL – Pinnacle Bank-Wyoming
 MONROE – Cornerstone Bank
 NEBRASKA CITY – *Arbor Bank, *Farmers Bank & Trust Co., *Great Western Bank
 NELIGH – Heritage Bank, *Pinnacle Bank
 NELSON – Commercial Bank
 NORFOLK – *BankFirst, *Elkhorn Valley Bank & Trust, *First National Bank of Columbus, *Great Western Bank, *Midwest Bank, *US Bank, *Wells Fargo
 NORTH BEND – Platte Valley Bank
 NORTH LOUP – North Loup Valley Bank
 NORTH PLATTE – *Equitable Bank, First National Bank of North Platte, *NebraskaLand National Bank, *Great Western Bank, *NebraskaLand National Bank, *Wells Fargo
 OAKLAND – *First National Bank Northeast
 OGALLALA – Adams Bank & Trust, *Pinnacle Bank
 OMAHA – *Access Bank, American National Bank, *Bank of the West, *Centennial Bank, *Enterprise Bank, *Equitable Bank, *First Community Bank, *First National Bank of Omaha, *First Savings Bank, *First Westroads Bank, *Foundation First Bank, *Great Western Bank, Mid City Bank, *Mutual of Omaha Bank, Northwest Bank, *Omaha State Bank, *Security National Bank of Omaha, UMB Bank Omaha, *United Republic Bank, *US Bank, *Wells Fargo
 O'NEILL – *Great Western Bank, *Pinnacle Bank
 ORD – First National Bank in Ord, *Great Western Bank
 OSCEOLA – *Pinnacle Bank
 OXFORD – *South Central State Bank
 PAILLION – American National Bank, *Pinnacle Bank

PAWNEE CITY – *Union Bank & Trust
 PENDER – *Pender State Bank
 PIERCE – *Midwest Bank NA
 PILGER – *Midwest Bank NA
 PLAINVIEW – *Midwest Bank NA
 PLATTSMOUTH – *Cass County Bank, Plattsburgh State Bank
 RANDOLPH – *First State Bank
 RUSHVILLE – *Security First Bank
 ST. PAUL – *Citizens Bank & Trust Co., *Great Western Bank
 SCHUYLER – First National Bank, *Pinnacle Bank
 SCOTTSBLUFF – First National Bank of North Platte, First State Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Platte Valley Bank, *US Bank, *Valley Bank and Trust
 SEWARD – The Cattle National Bank and Trust, *Union Bank & Trust
 SHELBY – *Pinnacle Bank
 SHELTON – *First State Bank
 SIDNEY – American National Bank of Sidney, First National Bank, *Great Western Bank, *Security First Bank
 SOUTH SIOUX CITY – F & M Bank, *Great Western Bank, Iowa-Nebraska State Bank
 SPRINGFIELD – *Springfield State Bank
 STAMFORD – Community Bank
 STANTON – Stanton State Bank
 STROMSBURG – *Heritage Bank
 SUPERIOR – Central National Bank, Horizon Bank
 SUTTON – Cornerstone Bank, *Astra Bank
 SYRACUSE – *First National Bank
 TAYLOR – *Union Bank & Trust
 TECUMSEH – American National Bank, *Great Western Bank
 TEKAMAH – *Washington County Bank
 UNADILLA – *Countryside Bank
 VALENTINE – *Security First Bank, *Union Bank & Trust, *Wells Fargo
 VERDIGRE – *Pinnacle Bank
 WAHOO – *Great Western Bank, *Union Bank & Trust, Wahoo State Bank
 WAKEFIELD – *Iowa-Nebraska State Bank
 WALLACE – *Farmers State Bank
 WATERLOO – *Foundation First Bank
 WAYNE – *First National Bank, *The State National Bank & Trust Co.
 WEST POINT – *F & M Bank
 WILBER – *First State Bank
 WILCOX – *Iowa-Nebraska State Bank
 WOOD RIVER – Heritage Bank
 WYMORE – *Pinnacle Bank
 YORK – Cornerstone Bank, *Midwest Bank, *Union Bank & Trust, York State Bank & Trust Co.

2010 Audited

Operating Statement

REVENUE

Legal Services Corporation	
Basic Field	\$1,668,697
Native American.....	38,149
Migrant Worker.....	48,690
Technology Grant.....	26,300
Lancaster County Juvenile	
Court & JBC.....	298,315
Northeast Nebraska Area	
Agency on Aging.....	29,944
Nebraska Commission on	
Public Advocacy	1,389,651
Department of Housing &	
Urban Development.....	24,634
Violence Against Women Act.....	165,730
U.S. Department of Agriculture	182,769
Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska.....	62,220
Interest on Lawyers Trust Fund	58,500
United Way of the Midlands	41,222
United Way Lancaster County.....	23,773
ElderAccessLine® Grant.....	127,424
HUD Homeless Grants	51,441
Civil Legal Serv. Fund.....	360,000
University of NE Med Center.....	24,964
Internal Revenue Service/LITC.....	21,710
Investment Income	110,913
Department of Justice	2,908
Other Income.....	10,931
Contributions.....	495,912
Contributed Services	161,452
Total Revenue	5,426,249

Net Assets at 12-31-102,212,618

NOTE: Best practices for non-profit organizations indicate that the organization should have operating reserves equal to between 3 and 6 months operating expenses. At 12-31-10, Legal Aid of Nebraska had operating reserves of approximately 3.7 months, based on the 2011 budget.

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$3,160,671
Employee Benefits.....	893,772
Payroll Taxes.....	226,830
Contracted Services	148,007
Private Atty. Contracts.....	161,452
Discounted or Donated Private	
Attorney Involvement	161,452
Supplies.....	48,664
Telephone	112,188
Postage and Shipping.....	27,959
Occupancy.....	234,643
Printing.....	6,149
Recruiting	332
Transportation.....	96,640
Training	47,219
Maintenance and Repairs.....	14,287
Equipment Rental.....	31,195
Litigation Costs	24,184
Insurance.....	58,100
Dues.....	27,795
Technical Support.....	53,925
Miscellaneous	16,012
Library	33,732
Development.....	58,514
Depreciation.....	72,420
Total Expenditures	\$ 5,716,142

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

Program Services – 87.4%.....	\$5,015,775
Admin. & Fundraising – 12.6%.....	700,367
Total Expenditures.....	\$ 5,716,142

Our Mission

To promote justice, dignity, hope, and self-sufficiency through quality civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn.

Our Vision

To provide quality legal aid and access to the justice system for all persons living in Nebraska who have limited resources.

Our Values

- Equal Access to Justice
- Client Empowerment
- High Standard of Professionalism
- Efficient Use of Resources
- Collaboration
- Diversity

Legal Aid of Nebraska Office Locations

Omaha – 1904 Farnam St., Suite 500, Omaha, NE 68102

402-348-1069, 402-348-1068 fax

Lincoln – 941 “O” St., Suite 825, Lincoln, NE 68508

North Platte – 102 E. 3rd St., Suite 102, North Platte, NE 69103

Scottsbluff – 1423 1st Ave., Scottsbluff, NE 69363

Norfolk – 214 N. 7th St., Suite 10, Norfolk, NE 68701

Bancroft – 415 Main St., Bancroft, NE 68004

Grand Island – 207 W. 3rd St., Grand Island, NE 68802

Statewide AccessLine®

1-877-250-2016

(Mon-Thu, 9 am-4 pm CST) (Fri, 9 am-12 pm CST)

Spanish-speaking staff available. Translation services available.

Rural Response Hotline

1-800-464-0258 (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-4:30 pm CST)

Native American Hotline

1-800-729-9908

ElderAccessLine® (Age 60 and over)

1-800-527-7249

(Mon-Thu, 9 am-12 pm & 1 pm-3 pm CST) (Fri, 9 am-12 pm CST)

www.legalaidofnebraska.com

Special thanks to Elizabeth Davis, 2010 Annual Report Project Coordinator.

LEGAL AID OF NEBRASKA does not discriminate on the basis of religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, color, age, marital status, citizen or authorized alien status, veteran status or disability in the administration of any of its programs.



Legal Aid of Nebraska is a nonprofit 501(c) 3 organization funded in part by the Legal Services Corporation.