

LOOK at the difference

IMPACT **REPORT** 2021





I mostly liked how driven and direct my attorney was with my case. They treated my case as if it was their own and that made me feel like they genuinely cared and wanted success. The job was phenomenal.

– Barbara May
Client Survey



A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Henry David Thoreau wrote

“It is not what you look at that matters, It is what you see.”

We live in a time where information and images from our local communities and around the world are immediately accessible. We hear on the news or through social media what at times seems like a never-ending amount of tragedy, but also of hope. At Legal Aid of Nebraska, we see the struggles our fellow Nebraskans face. We hear the stress in clients' voices, and we see the pain in their eyes as they work to make ends meet while dealing with a burdensome civil legal issue. And we strive to carry out our mission to promote justice, dignity, hope, and self-sufficiency through quality civil legal aid for those who have nowhere else to turn.

While you read our 2021 Impact Report, we hope you can see and feel the impact of our work across the state, providing essential legal services that have helped our friends and neighbors endure the past year full of fear and worry.

We have seen many successes throughout this past year, thanks to our exceptional staff and brave clients. We have assisted individuals trying to escape their abusers, helped hardworking families gain relief from eviction and homelessness, ensured struggling folks kept their rightfully deserved public benefits, and protected our elderly from predatory lenders.

These remarkable victories happen because Legal Aid staff and volunteers strive every day to make the law do what it is supposed to do: deliver justice despite someone's background and wealth. And by doing so, we help thousands of our most vulnerable neighbors see and experience true hope, opportunity, and a better future.

On behalf of our staff and the clients we serve, please know how grateful we are for your support. Because of you, more low-wage, hardworking Nebraskans know what equal justice looks like.

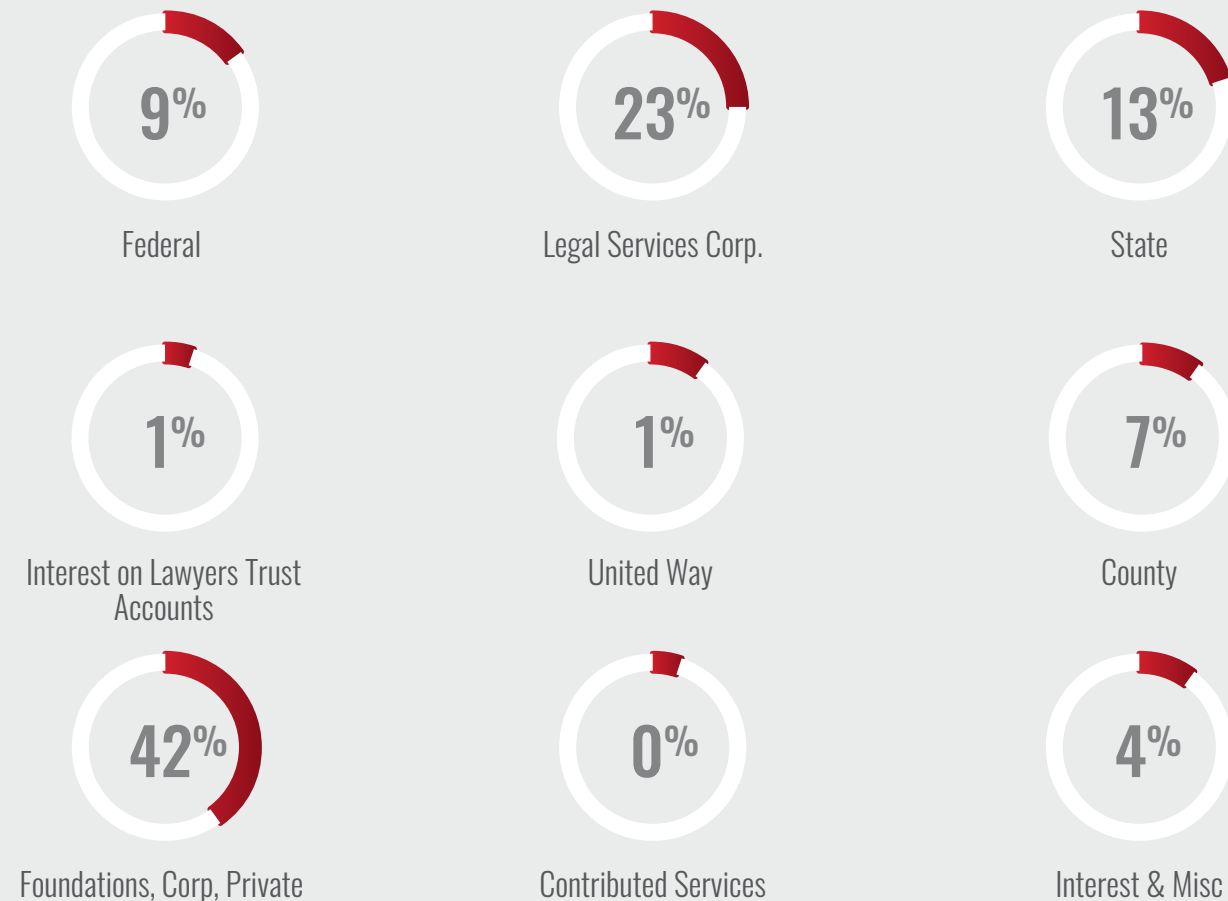
In partnership,

Jennifer Gaughan – Interim Executive Director/Chief of Legal/Strategy



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2021 Revenue Percentages \$10,959,654



2021 Expense Percentages \$10,186,508



Year ended December 31, 2021

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Friends,

I feel grateful to be able to serve as the President of the Legal Aid of Nebraska Board of Directors. These past two years have tested all of us as we navigated COVID-19 and so much more. I am inspired by the dedication of our Legal Aid Staff. They ensure vulnerable Nebraskans have access to civil legal services. These services are vital to our state's well-being and prosperity.

That is evident by the number of individuals we serve, the success rate of our efforts, and our economic impact.

Remember that behind each statistic is a fellow Nebraskan who was brave enough to reach out for assistance as they tried to navigate our complex and sometimes intimidating civil justice system. As a friend and donor, you helped ensure that we could provide services ranging from basic legal consultation to full legal representation to thousands of our friends and neighbors.

As you read through this year's Impact Report, I hope that you will realize that the stories and statistics provide a brief look at what hope and gratitude look like on behalf of our almost ten thousand clients, nearly one hundred employees, and my fellow Board members. We are honored you chose to partner with Legal Aid of Nebraska to help make equal justice happen.

Gratefully,

Amy Van Horne
President, Board of Directors,
Legal Aid of Nebraska

We
make
equal
justice
happen

GIVING DIGNITY

Legal Aid Helps Man Obtain Guardianship for Distant Relative

When David received a call from a social worker at Bryan East Hospital, the last thing he expected to hear was the social worker asking him to take over guardianship for a relative he did not know.

David reached out to his family and discovered the relative in question was, in fact, his distant cousin, "Craig"*. Selflessly, David took on the intimidating task of pursuing guardianship of his cousin - but he wasn't alone. The social worker had also contacted Legal Aid of Nebraska, who was there to help from the beginning.

Craig needed serious medical care and was admitted to the hospital. After a psychological evaluation, the hospital recommended guardianship after Craig was deemed incapable of making his own decisions.

David worked with Legal Aid Health, Education & Law Project (H.E.L.P.) attorney Zach Anderson, and together they reviewed the considerations of

I was... able to provide health care decisions for Craig that were the right balance of care that met his wishes and care that was necessary under the circumstances.

— David

guardianship. They decided it was best to obtain temporary guardianship because Craig had been diagnosed with colon cancer and health care decisions needed to be made. David said his only concern was "getting Craig the care that Craig wanted," which meant no aggressive treatments and making sure Craig was as comfortable as possible.

Since the guardianship was temporary, it was necessary to revisit the case when the order expired. Craig had been put in hospice and remained in need of guardianship. Over the course of a year, Zach helped David reapply for temporary guardianship four times. Zach contacted David to check in on Craig's condition with each impending expiration date.

In February of 2022, David informed Legal Aid that Craig had "passed away peacefully and with dignity." David credited Legal Aid of Nebraska with allowing Craig to pass on his own terms.

David said, "Through the help of Zach Anderson and Legal Aid, I was... able to provide health care decisions for Craig that were the right balance of care that met his wishes and care that was necessary under the circumstances". Though all of Craig's close family had already passed, David is sure that they would have been so thankful for Legal Aid's help.

"All of this was possible through the expert and dedicated legal services provided by Zach and Legal Aid of Nebraska. I want you to know that your support for Legal Aid of Nebraska has real-world benefits that deserve recognition."

*The name has been changed to protect privacy



WHO WE SERVE



16,151 requests for assistance

STATEWIDE CASES BY THE NUMBERS



5,885 families striving for stability through protection orders against domestic violence, child custody, divorce and guardianships



1,273 individuals with consumer needs, including medical debt, bankruptcy and utility shut-offs



2,145 households facing unfair evictions, unsafe residences and other housing issues

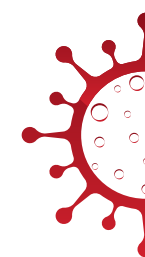


2,259 families in need of income supports such as social security, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), health insurance, taxes, veteran benefits and unpaid wages

total economic impact on behalf of clients

\$10,952,493

\$1,583,543 Total Increased Assets \$3,750,054 Total Increased Income \$5,618,896 Total Decreased Debt



COVID DATA

cases by the numbers

23% of all requests for assistance were cases related to COVID-19

40%
People of color

69%
Female

27%
People Over 60 years+

18%
Children and Families

22%
Debt and Finance

44%
Housing

17%
Income and Benefits

OFFICE LOCATIONS

OMAHA

209 S. 19th St., Suite 200
Omaha, NE 68102-1709

Phone: 402-348-1069

Toll Free: 1-888-991-9921

LINCOLN

947 "O" Street, Suite 301
Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: 402-435-2161

Toll Free: 1-800-742-7555

NORFOLK

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

Phone: 402-644-4761

Toll Free: 1-800-672-8319

GRAND ISLAND

1811 W. 2nd St., Suite 440
Grand Island, NE 68803

Phone: 308-381-0517

Toll Free: 1-877-250-2018

BANCROFT

415 Main St., P.O. Box 325
Bancroft, NE 68004

Phone: 402-948-7015

Toll Free: 1-800-464-0258

NORTH PLATTE

102 E. 3rd St., Suite 102
North Platte, NE 69101

Phone: 308-532-5793

Toll Free: 1-877-669-9080

SCOTTSBLUFF

1423 1st Ave., P.O. Box 1365
Scottsbluff, NE 69363-1365

Phone: 308-632-4734

Toll Free: 1-877-669-8898



Legal Aid of Nebraska acknowledges that its statewide locations are currently on the homelands of Indigenous Peoples. Twenty-seven tribes have a connection to the land in what is currently known as Nebraska. We respect and are grateful for the stewardship and conservation of the land that these tribes have managed since time immemorial, and which continues today. Legal Aid recognizes that it is our responsibility as an organization to establish and maintain relationships with tribal citizens of these tribes and members of other tribes currently residing in Nebraska. Through our Native American Program, which serves enrolled or enrollment eligible Native Americans with legal matters in state, federal, and tribal courts in Nebraska, we work to support Native Americans and tribal communities through legal assistance and representation. We appreciate the partnerships we have with tribal nations in Nebraska, and recognize the responsibility we have to continue to listen to, engage with, and support Tribal Governments, Indigenous Peoples, and their inherent sovereignty.

WHAT DOES justice LOOK LIKE?



LegalaidthOfNebraska.org



402.348.1069
1.877.250.2016



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Omaha, NE 68102

Follow Legal Aid of Nebraska on:



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