

Without justice, crime echoes through generations.

Help rebuild lives with our new Advocacy & Justice Complex



Since 1958
LEGAL AID CENTER
■■■■ of Southern Nevada



Letter from the Executive Director

It was a quiet Saturday night for Arturo, his wife Yadira, and their three children. They were sleeping when, without warning, an unknown assailant broke into their home and beat Arturo nearly to death. As he clung to life, his wife and daughter were murdered. When he woke up in the hospital weeks later, he was consumed with grief and worried about the

welfare of his surviving children. Disabled and unable to work, he had no idea how he'd be able to provide for them or even if he'd survive another brain surgery.

Every 38 minutes, someone experiences a violent crime in our state, and Arturo's experience is all too typical.

Survivors frequently suffer lifelong disabilities, both mental and physical, making it difficult or impossible to work. They quickly fall behind on their mortgage and car payments, and face mounting medical bills, eviction, homelessness, bankruptcy and food insecurity. Besides grappling with their family's basic survival needs, they or other family members may also face severe emotional trauma and depression. Violent crime impacts the entire extended family, and most victims are not aware of their rights.

Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's experience advocating for survivors like Arturo is what led Clark County to reach out to us after 1 October. Working with Clark County and other agencies across Nevada, we created the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center – our community's first comprehensive, multi-agency collaborative to provide services to victims' families, survivors and first responders.

1 October fundamentally changed how our state thinks about and responds to horrific acts of violence. But the need remains great for victims of violent crime across the state. Our current facilities and staffing levels

cannot manage our increasing volume of cases, and yet, we refuse to turn away anyone who needs us.

This is why we must grow. With your help, we can complete our plans for the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada Advocacy & Justice Complex, a statewide service campus where any Nevadan who has experienced the devastating trauma of violent crime can find justice and begin to heal. Together, we can transform the landscape of victims' services in Nevada for decades to come.

Barbara Buckley
Executive Director
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada



The Need Continues to Grow

Over the last 10 years, the number of clients we serve has almost quadrupled, but there are many more Nevadans who need our help – and yours.

	CLIENTS SERVED 2012	CLIENTS SERVED 2022
Family Justice Project (Primarily serving victims of domestic violence and other victims of violence)	1,266	6,208
Guardianship Advocacy Project (Primarily serving adult victims of abuse or target of exploitation)	0	4,034
Children’s Attorneys Project (Primarily serving abused and neglected children in the foster care system)	811	7,413
Vegas Strong Resiliency Center (Serving survivors of the 1 October shooting)	0	3,992
Consumer Rights Project (Primarily serving victims of predatory scams as well as those facing eviction)	2,715	10,202
Ask-A-Lawyer (Free legal advice sessions for clients in need)	3,155	3,946
Pro Bono (Cases handled by our dedicated volunteer lawyers)	1,747	2,556
Civil Law Self-Help Center (Our legal emergency room handling urgent civil court needs)	44,341	62,328
Family Law Self-Help Center (Our legal emergency room handling urgent TPO, divorce and custody issues)	0	79,514
TOTAL	54,035	189,323



Danielle’s Story*

Danielle and her partner Eric had just welcomed their first baby and were on their way home from the hospital when they received a devastating call from their landlord. An arsonist had set fire to their apartment building, and it was engulfed in flames. **In that instant, they had lost everything – and they had no renter’s insurance. They desperately needed help.**

Danielle and Eric learned that the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center, managed by Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, could help. The landlord had an empty apartment but was refusing to allow Danielle and her family to move into it, even though their family had prepaid their rent. Our attorney contacted the landlord who quickly changed his mind. Our team also connected the family with United Way for housing assistance, Baby’s Bounty for baby supplies, and other

local agencies to help them replace their basic household needs.

But hardship struck Danielle again, with an emergency hospitalization. To expedite much needed financial assistance, we helped her to complete a Victims of Crime Program (VOCP) Compensation Application to address the arson and worked with the North Las Vegas Fire Department’s arson investigator to complete a Police Verification Form. Cutting through this bureaucracy and paperwork led to the speedy release to Danielle of VOCP lost wage funding, mental health benefits, and funding that she and her new family urgently needed. All of this helped her through her health crisis and enabled the young family to settle into a more secure future.

*Names changed to protect privacy.

The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center: Born From Tragedy

The tragedy of 1 October crystallized the need for a statewide center to help the survivors of violent crime. That night, thousands of lives were shattered with no infrastructure in place to deal with such a large-scale catastrophe.

Because of Legal Aid Center's unique experience – working closely with police, the courts, social service organizations, schools, nonprofits, and medical and mental health professions – we were able to have a positive impact within days of the incident. We joined Clark County's triage center, created for anyone who had been impacted by the shooting. In 2019, Clark County asked us to assume management of the efforts. **The triage services included:**

Free Legal Advice – On victim's rights, guidance for traumatized and grieving spouses, probate and guardianship issues, and answers and advocacy in dealing with insurance questions.

Victims of Crime Program (VOCP) – Expediting compensation forms and U-visa applications for victims of crimes.

Mental Health Navigation – State mental health experts provide navigation, finding a trauma-trained therapist to work with a survivor on a long-term basis.

Court & Government Bureaucracy – Pushing back against bureaucracy, appealing denials, and fighting for the rights of the voiceless.



A Nationwide Model

Out of this work grew the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center, our community's first comprehensive, multi-agency collaborative serving survivors of mass crime.

In 2021, the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center was honored to receive the **National Crime Victims Service Award** by the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime for its extraordinary work in serving survivors. Our center is now seen as a nationwide model in how to serve survivors of mass violence. When other communities experience mass casualty events, they seek our experience and guidance. Our director has responded to inquiries from Uvalde, Gilroy Garlic Festival, Pulse, Virginia Beach, Tree of Life – Pittsburgh synagogue, and El Paso.

A New Legacy

Recent victims of violent crime and their families continue to learn about the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center and come to us for help every day. This consistent and urgent need has led us to this decision to grow and to serve all survivors of violent crime across the state, whether the tragedy affects one family or thousands. **The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center will be renamed the Resiliency & Justice Center and will serve all future victims of crime while continuing to serve survivors of the 1 October shooting.**



Bringing Justice to More Nevadans

The new **Legal Aid Center Advocacy & Justice Complex** will house three critical projects:

1. The Family Justice Project, which represents survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.
2. The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center, being renamed the Resiliency & Justice Center.
3. The Guardianship Advocacy Project, which prevents exploitation of the elderly and children in guardianship court.

Services to be offered will include:

- Victim navigation, case management and advocacy services, including assistance with Victims of Crime compensation applications and other agency resources
- Legal services to help with loss of income, medical billing, disability payments, debt collection, eviction, and other issues resulting from violent crime



- Comprehensive legal representation for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and representation in court to prevent elder and child exploitation
- Assistance locating physical and mental health resources for survivors with post-traumatic stress
- Referrals to vetted trauma providers, therapists, and mental health resources, such as grief and trauma support groups
- Virtual and in-person support groups and wellness events to foster healthy coping skills

Joe's Story*

When we first met Joe, he was 81, recently diagnosed with dementia, and recovering in a group home after a serious injury from a fall. When he was released from the hospital, there was no contact information for his family, and the hospital staff didn't take the time and care to work with Joe to locate his daughter. They simply discharged him to a woman who worked in the group home. Taking advantage of his dementia diagnosis, the woman quickly filed a guardianship petition to get control over his estate and had Joe's Social Security benefits rerouted to her.

This was a surprise to Joe, who didn't know the woman and would never have agreed to such an arrangement. He shared with his Legal Aid Center guardianship attorney that he only trusted his daughter Jasmine. With Joe's help, we were able

to reach out and speak to Jasmine, where we learned that she wanted Joe to live with her, but that the group home was blocking her access to him.

On Joe's behalf, we filed an objection to the group home's guardianship petition to control his estate and attach his Social Security benefits. We also raised the issue of them holding him against his will. The court ordered the group home to release Joe to the care of his daughter.

He is now happily reunited with his family and the court is investigating both the woman and the group home where she works.

*Names changed to protect privacy.



Join Our Mission

With your help, the new Advocacy & Justice Complex will change the futures of countless people in Nevada – now and for years to come.

Thanks to a generous discount from U.S. Bank, we were able to purchase a property adjacent to our existing Legal Aid Center headquarters to build the new complex. The new building will feature three levels totaling 40,000 square feet with a dedicated parking garage.

First Floor – This will be the new home of the Resiliency & Justice Center serving survivors of violent crime. The first floor will include a large community response room and trauma recovery rooms and house partners who serve survivors, including a Clark County social worker; state of Nevada behavioral health coordinators; state of Nevada Victims of Crime compensation staff; and a Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department advocate.

Second Floor – This will house our Family Justice Project, providing legal representation to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.

Third Floor – This will house our Guardianship Advocacy Project, which seeks to prevent and eliminate the abuse of our elderly, people with disabilities, and children when facing guardianship.

The estimated cost for construction is \$30 million, and over half of these funds have already been raised. We hope you will be a part of this transformative resource center to aid and uplift those whose lives have been shattered by violence.



Distinguished Recognition Opportunities

Tailored recognition and naming opportunities are available for significant gifts to honor you, a family member, a corporation, or other entity.

All gifts will be gratefully acknowledged, including recognition in our facility, on our website, in our annual report, and at our annual luncheon of over 800 attendees. This luncheon includes esteemed members of the state and local judiciary, elected officials, donors, and local attorneys who are honored for their dedicated pro bono service.

With your financial generosity, we can transform our community and rebuild lives for generations to come.

**For more information, contact
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Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's ———

ADVOCACY & JUSTICE

complex