



2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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

RIGHTING WRONGS, CHANGING LIVES.



GREETINGS FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS



Barbara Buckley, *Executive Director*

"I can think of no better way to repay the benefits of legal training and success in business than to support the fine work of Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. They are the last line of defense for vulnerable residents who face the tragedies of child abuse, domestic violence and all manner of consumer fraud. Barbara Buckley and her dedicated staff change lives for the better, and by doing so, improve the future of our great city."

– Bill Boyd, *Executive Chairman, Boyd Gaming*

At the request of Aging and Disability Services, one of our attorneys visited a new client in his home. The man suffered the debilitating effects from a stroke and was being cared for by a guardian. He could only communicate by tapping his foot. Numerous concerns had been expressed to Aging and Disability Services about the situation. Our attorney told the man that we were there to see if he wanted us to represent him in the guardianship action. We told him we would advocate for what he wanted in the guardianship action. We asked if he understood, and his foot began to tap. When we asked him if he was happy with his guardian, he was silent and still. We asked him if he wanted to have a different family member become his guardian, and his foot tapped again. When we asked if he wanted to change guardians, his foot tapped repeatedly. When we told him we would represent him to have his guardian changed, tears streamed down his face. He had been trapped in an untenable position – our advocacy changed his life. This is but one case handled by our office and our new Guardianship Advocacy Project in 2016.

Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada changes lives. In 2016, we helped 133,364 individuals, more than ever before. Because of our work:

- Victims of domestic violence received legal advice at domestic violence shelters to gain the courage to reclaim a life free from violence.
- 4,965 children in foster care received an attorney to advocate for their right to achieve reunification or adoption quicker.
- Community members facing predatory practices from HOA's and unscrupulous businesses were able to forge a new path.
- A record number – 107,554 individuals – received help through our legal emergency rooms at the courthouses in areas ranging from evictions to protective orders.

- 4,488 individuals attended 495 free legal classes taught by law students from the William S. Boyd School of Law with help from our attorney supervisors.
- 3,649 clients were helped by pro bono attorneys in our community.

But the numbers don't tell the story. What our clients tell us is what remains with us. Here's one I kept on my desk for most of the year:

Kelly, 12, and Kiersten, 6, witnessed their father severely beat their mother with a vacuum cleaner. Their father kept the girls from leaving the home for 2 days. The girls were able to get help for their mother 2 days later, but she passed away from her injuries and their father was arrested for murder. He relinquished his parental rights to Kelly and Kiersten and the girls were placed with relatives in a safe home. The girls wanted to be adopted by the relatives but nine months later, the adoption had stalled. The girls, now a year older, were anxious about their future. Their CAP attorney worked to continuously keep the case in front of the court until the adoption was completed. The adoption was completed in April, and the girls are happy to begin their new lives.

I want to thank our amazing staff, our volunteers, our board, our funders, our friends, and our partners for helping us achieve what we did in 2016. But now, more than ever, lives are depending on us. There are over 700,000 people at or below 200% of poverty who qualify for legal aid services and times look worse than ever for them. If you want to become more involved in our organization, we have never needed you more than now. And to those that continue to help us, we extend to you our most sincere thanks.

With thanks from all of us,
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Buckley".

Barbara Buckley

AN OVERVIEW OF HOW WE SERVE

CHILDREN'S ATTORNEYS PROJECT

- Giving children in foster care a voice in court.
- Enforcing foster children's right and desire for visitation with their siblings.
- Assisting low-income parents struggling to ensure their special needs children receive the educational support they are entitled to under the law.
- Recruiting and training volunteer surrogate parents to advocate for the needs of disabled children with the school district.

FAMILY JUSTICE PROJECT

- Representing domestic violence victims and helping them obtain protective orders, divorce decrees, and custody of their children.
- Teaching victims in domestic violence shelters about their legal right to live a life free of violence.
- Helping elderly grandparents obtain guardianship over their grandchildren.
- Representing those unable to navigate the divorce and custody court process.
- Helping immigrant victims of crime obtain visas, work authorizations, and status adjustments.
- Representing immigrant children eligible for special visas and deferred action to help families stay together.

CONSUMER RIGHTS PROJECT

- Working against fraudulent sales practices.
- Fighting abusive debt collection activities.
- Helping people trapped in a debt cycle by payday, title, and high interest loans.
- Representing workers in bankruptcy court after a job loss and homeowners through the foreclosure process.
- Helping people with disabilities who have been denied social security benefits.
- Advocating for seniors who have been exploited by their guardians.

CIVIL LAW SELF-HELP CENTER

- Providing trustworthy information, legal forms, and assistance to people representing themselves in civil matters such as evictions, small claims court, probate, and lawsuits to recoup losses.
- Functioning as a legal emergency room for people struggling to navigate the court system and obtain accurate legal information.

FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTER

- Providing self-help information, legal forms, and instruction to those representing themselves in family court matters.
- Hosting a free Ask-A-Lawyer program every week for people needing to speak with an attorney about divorce, custody, guardianship, adoption, or child support issues.

PRO BONO PROJECT

- Recruiting private attorneys to represent clients in such areas as consumer fraud, domestic violence, child abuse, bankruptcy, and family law.
- Training and mentoring volunteer attorneys in specialties of law outside their usual practice areas.
- Offering Ask-A-Lawyer sessions where unrepresented litigants can get expert legal advice from an attorney in the following areas:
 - Family Law
 - Landlord/Tenant
 - Foreclosure
 - Small Claims
 - Veterans
 - Federal Court
 - Probate
 - Small Business Project
 - Homeless Assistance

COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION PROJECT

- Offering free weekly classes to the public in partnership with the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law in the following areas:
 - Divorce
 - Custody
 - Immigration
 - Guardianship
 - Small Claims
 - Bankruptcy
 - Foreclosure
 - Collection Proof
 - Record Sealing
 - Spanish classes are available in Family Law, Immigration, Small Claims, and Bankruptcy



In 2016,
over 6,250 clients
were helped by
volunteer attorneys

Over 25,000 pro bono hours were donated by volunteer attorneys

GENDER

57%
Female

43%
Male

ETHNICITY

29% White

24% Hispanic

26% African American

3% Asian

14% Multi-Racial

2% American Indian
Hawaiian
Pacific Islander

2% Chose Not
To Report

WHO WE SERVE

CASE TYPE

35% Consumer

44% Child Advocacy

14% Family Law

5% Immigration

2% Other

AGE

41%
Adults
(19-59)

47%
Children
(0-18)

12%
Seniors
(60+)

HOW MANY WE SERVE

OVER 133,000 INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED
THROUGH ALL OF OUR PROGRAM AREAS.

OVER **944,000** USERS ACCESSED
LEGAL INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITES

519,162

FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTER WEBSITE

328,255

CIVIL LAW SELF-HELP CENTER WEBSITE

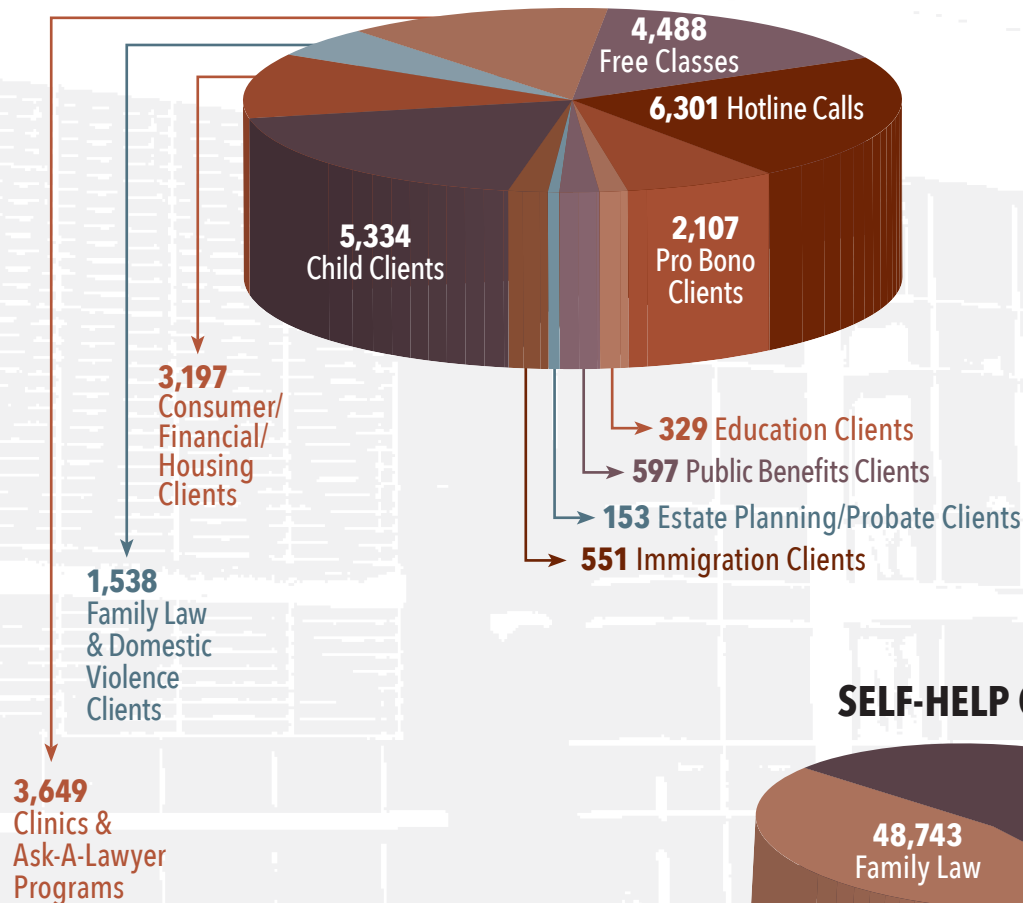
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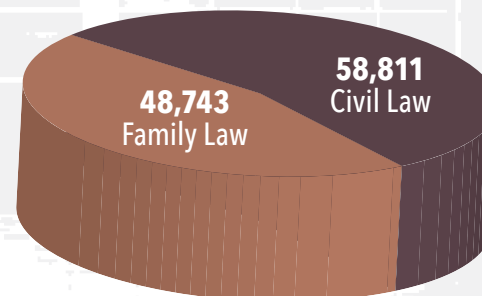
12,854

PRO BONO WEBSITE

ALL SERVICES (NOT SELF-HELP RELATED)



SELF-HELP CENTER



16TH ANNUAL PRO BONO AWARDS LUNCHEON



Corinne Price, Esq. (right) receives the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year award from Justice Michael Douglas, Nevada Supreme Court

PRO BONO ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR:

Corinne Price

LIED AWARD FOR MOST HOURS FOR LAW FIRM:

Kemp Jones & Coulthard, LLP

LIED AWARD FOR MOST CASES FOR LAW FIRM:

Kunin Law Group

LIED AWARD FOR MOST HOURS FOR ATTORNEY:

Matthew Carter

LIED AWARD FOR MOST CASES FOR ATTORNEY:

Ishi Kunin

William L. Coulthard, Esq. of Kemp Jones & Coulthard, LLP receives the Lied Award for Most Hours for Law Firm



Matthew Carter, Esq. (right) receives the Lied Award for Most Hours for Attorney from Justice Kristina Pickering, Nevada Supreme Court (left)

The continued increase in need for our services over the past several years reminds us yet again how fortunate we are to have the support of so many fine attorneys in the Southern Nevada legal community. Without their hard work and commitment to this cause, we would have to turn away thousands of our most vulnerable resident. Each year, our Annual Pro Bono Luncheon honors these local attorneys, who collectively provided over 25,000+ hours of free legal services to low-income residents of Clark County.

LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR:

Wolf Rifkin Shapiro Schulman & Rabkin, LLP

**JUSTICE NANCY BECKER PRO BONO AWARD
OF JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE:**

Honorable Joanna S. Kishner

VINCE A. CONSUL MEMORIAL PRO BONO AWARD:

Brandon Smith

LOUIS WIENER SERVICE AWARD:

James Jimmerson



*Wolf Rifkin Shapiro Schulman & Rabkin, LLP
receives the Law Firm of the Year award from
Justice James Hardesty, Nevada Supreme Court*

MYRNA WILLIAMS CHILDREN'S PRO BONO AWARD:

Bob Dickerson

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW STUDENT OF DISTINCTION:

Jonathan Chung

ASK-A-LAWYER COMMUNITY COMMITMENT AWARD:

Bill Hammer

VOLUNTEER SURROGATE AWARD:

Daniel Maul



*Ishi Kunin, Esq. receives the Lied Award
for Most Cases for Attorney*

*"I feel safe
now and protected."*

- Family Justice Project client

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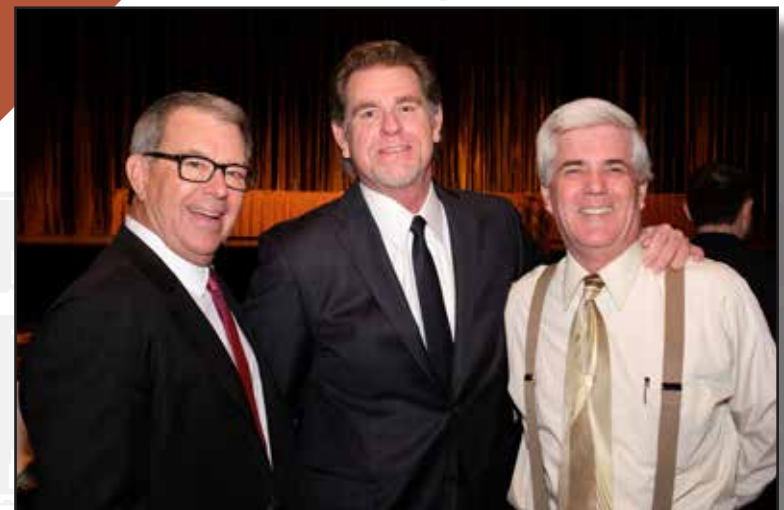
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Ishi Kunin, Esq. (left), receives the Lied Award for Most Cases for Law Firm from Justice Kristina Pickering, Nevada Supreme Court (right)



Bob Dickerson, Esq. (left) received the Myrna Williams Children's Pro Bono Award, with Chief Justice Ron Parraguirre (center) and Judge Frank Sullivan (right)



Judge Joanna S. Kishner (right) receives the Justice Nancy Becker Pro Bono Award of Judicial Excellence from The Honorable Nancy Becker (left)



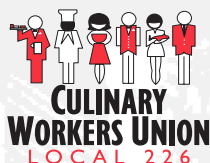
Brandon Smith, Esq. (right) receives the Vince A. Consul Memorial Pro Bono Award from Michael Consul (left)



James Jimmerson, Esq. (right) receives the Louis Wiener Service Award from Justice Mark Gibbons, Nevada Supreme Court (left)

LUNCHEON SPONSORS

JUDGE BILL HENDERSON
FAMILY COURT



"My attorney
was right there by
my side all the way."
- Consumer Rights Project client

"My attorney was the best attorney we ever had. She is a very knowledgeable person. Very nice, very accommodating and always there when you need her. We'll surely miss her."

- CAP client

"Now I can go back to work. My attorney helped me put my life back together."

- Consumer Rights Project client





"During my three years having my attorney, she has advocated on my behalf, as well as my younger sister's, when it came to us having sibling visitation and making sure that we were able to voice our concerns, whether it was about psychotropic medications or applying for high school graduation/college."

- CAP client

"The outcome of this case was extremely important to me. I was contemplating suicide until my lawyer and I spoke. Her understanding and commitment motivated me to continue."

- Family Justice Project client

"My attorney made me feel comfortable at all times. Everyone in Legal Aid Center was very courteous and polite. I will forever be grateful with everyone. This is an amazing organization that helps the community. Thank you so much."

- Family Justice Project client



"I have been fighting this case for two years and after I lost everything. I got the help I needed to win this case and it changed my life and my little girl's."

- Consumer Rights Project client

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

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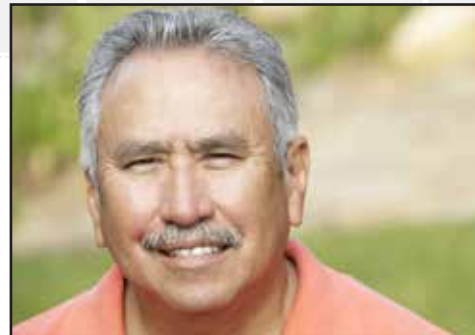
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*"Life changing."
- Consumer Rights
Project client*

LEGAL AID CENTER ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

SECURING THE FUTURE OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

Thanks to our friends, funders, and community partners, our organization has grown to a staff of 95 serving over 133,000 individuals through a combination of direct representation, legal classes, Ask-A-Lawyer Clinics, hotlines and two Self-Help Centers, not counting the over 944,000 users visiting our websites in 2016.

Our clients are the city's most vulnerable residents. They are people facing financial ruin and homelessness due to consumer fraud, foreclosure or bankruptcy; domestic violence victims trying to escape their abusers and retain custody of their children; foster children hoping to be adopted by forever families; and seniors and veterans seeking their rights and protection under the law. But our work is not done and we will not rest until we can provide every child, every senior, every person who needs us with the representation they deserve.

To ensure our sustainability, this year Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada began the second phase of our long-term growth plan; an Endowment Campaign. This future-looking financial base will allow the expansion of our existing programs, the addition of new legal specialties and the creation of a "bridge" for those years when a past funding source may sunset. The Endowment Campaign is a multi-year plan to guarantee a long-term, stable source of funding undergirding Legal Aid Center in perpetuity, diversifying our income and reducing dependency on unstable funding sources. For more information on our Endowment Campaign, please visit www.lacsn.org/Endowment.



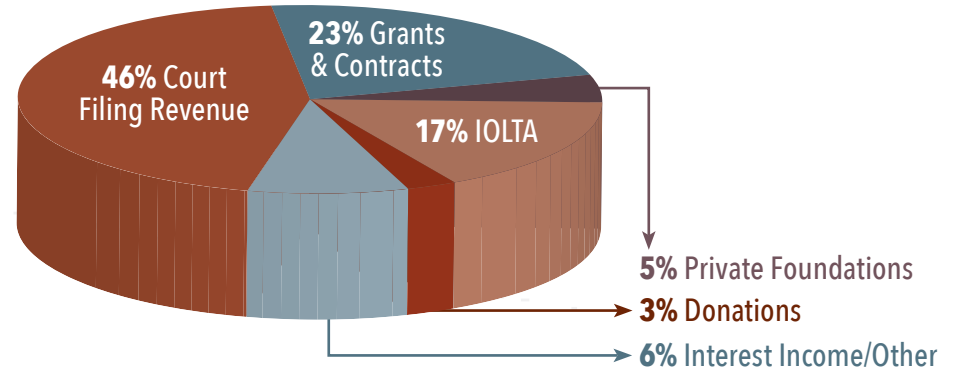
2016 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

2016

Court Filing Revenue	\$4,547,468	46%
Grants & Contracts	\$2,262,072	23%
Private Foundations	\$475,000	5%
IOLTA	\$1,634,647	17%
Donations	\$286,404	3%
Interest Income/Other	\$569,621	6%
Income Before Donated Services	\$10,782,822	100%

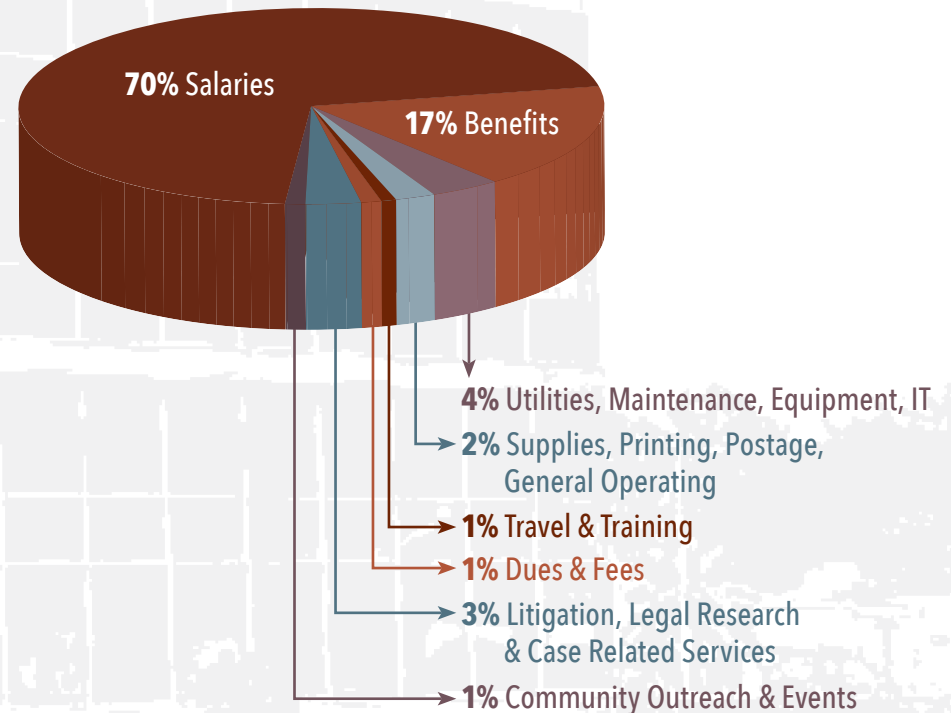
Donated Services (25,450 hrs at \$300/hr)	\$7,348,800
Endowment Contribution	\$1,007,611
Total Income, Including Donated Services & Endowment	\$18,131,622



EXPENSES

PERSONNEL		
Salaries	\$6,571,011	70%
Benefits	\$1,572,013	17%
Personnel Subtotal	\$8,143,024	87%

NON-PERSONNEL		
Utilities, Maintenance, Equipment, IT	\$392,833	4%
Supplies, Printing, Postage, General Operating	\$213,092	2%
Travel & Training	\$134,219	1%
Dues & Fees	\$67,233	1%
Litigation, Legal Research & Case Related Services	\$314,007	3%
Community Outreach & Events	\$102,878	1%
Non-Personnel Subtotal	\$1,224,264	13%



TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$9,367,287	100%
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Expenses Before Donated Services & Endowment	
Donated Services	\$7,348,800
Endowment Investment	\$1,007,611
Total Income, Including Donated Services & Endowment	\$17,723,698
NET OPERATIONS	\$407,924

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As a non-profit law firm that provides legal assistance at no cost to our clients, Legal Aid Center is in fundraising mode year round. We are so thankful to have forged strong partnerships with the following groups, who support us in a variety of ways, ranging from monetary donations to marketing and communications advice to relationship-building. We could not serve the thousands that we do without their generosity:

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Judge Bruce Beesly, Barbara Buckley,
and Chief U.S. District Court
Judge Gloria M. Navarro



**LEGAL AID CENTER WAS
AWARDED THE NINTH CIRCUIT
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SERVICE AWARD
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"My livelihood and health depended
on my case. I am now able to
concentrate on my healthcare
and well-being."
- Consumer Rights
Project client



MELANIE KUSHNIR ACCESS TO JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP

Melanie Kushnir dedicated her life to inspiring pro bono attorneys, law students, bar leaders, the judiciary, the community, and co-workers to donate their time, knowledge, and experience to those who face domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, consumer fraud or other civil legal challenges. Our clients can have their lives forever changed for the better with an attorney who will stand and fight for their rights -- and they deserve nothing less.

The Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship was created in honor of Melanie Kushnir. Melanie made an indelible imprint on the lives of so many and we wish to keep her memory and spirit alive in a way she would have loved, through support of public interest law education.

The Fellowship is awarded annually to an ABA-accredited law school student with the best proposal on improving access to justice in civil law in Southern Nevada or increasing pro bono participation in Clark County. The Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellow receives a \$10,000 stipend to develop their idea over a summer working with the Pro Bono Project at the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. The Fellow attends the State Bar of Nevada Annual Conference to present their winning idea and proposed implementation to the Board of Governors. During the Fellowship, the chosen Fellow has access to judicial mentoring organized by the Eighth Judicial District Court and will attend the fall Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission meeting to present their final work product. The Fellow will be recognized at the Annual Pro Bono Project Awards Luncheon, before the Nevada Supreme Court, the judiciary, and the attorney community, a lunch usually attended by 800 individuals.

Upon conclusion of the fellowship, the Fellow will become an ambassador for the fellowship during the following year and will serve as a mentor to the Fellow selected in the following year.

The Fellowship is funded by the donations directed to the Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship.



IN MEMORIAM MELANIE KUSHNIR, ESQ.

On May 28, 2016, Legal Aid Center and the entire Nevada legal community lost Melanie Kushnir, our beloved Pro Bono Director. Melanie was a passionate believer in justice. She was a bright light and inspiration to clients, attorneys, law students, and co-workers. Her spirit, love of life, and dedication to justice was unmistakable. In the five years Melanie spent with our office, she created a sophisticated training and mentoring system so lawyers could use their skill to represent abused and neglected children even if they were unfamiliar with this area of law. She began an Ask-A-Lawyer for veterans to help those who served their country when they had legal struggles back home. She tirelessly urged the legal community to do more to help those in need, increasing both the number of new volunteers and the number of cases accepted by existing volunteers. Melanie's passion inspires us all and we are forever changed by her absence.

The First
Melanie Kushnir
Access to Justice
Fellowship starts in 2017.

MISSION

The preservation of access to justice and the provision of quality legal counsel, advice and representation for individuals who are unable to protect their rights because they cannot afford an attorney.





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