Coming Together

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

Demonstrated Resilience
ABLE & LAWO

Ensuring justice for all, no matter one's income...

ABLE and LAWO represent individuals and groups of people living in poverty in civil (non-criminal) legal matters. We are committed to protecting the rights of people with much at stake and nowhere else to turn. Through litigation and other advocacy, we prevent homelessness, domestic abuse, and discrimination. We improve opportunities for education, housing, employment, and access to health care and public benefits for people living in poverty in 32 counties in western Ohio, and agricultural workers throughout Ohio. ABLE also represents immigrants and refugees throughout the state. In all cases, LAWO and ABLE work to address the root causes of poverty by seeking systemic solutions.

Without legal aid, tens of thousands of people would go without legal help when they need it.
The bright hope and expectancy that ushers in a new year quickly dissipated when the world was thrust into a global health crisis in March 2020. We could not have imagined the unprecedented challenges that we all would face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic: physical distancing and mask mandates, 100% virtual work and school environments, and food and supply shortages to name a few. Amid these changing realities, our nation reckoned with an ongoing wave of unrest fueled by the resistance to systemic racism and justice inequities toward Black people in the United States.

The dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice illuminated existing income, health, and educational disparities that have disproportionately affected Black and brown communities for generations. The world was forced to adjust to a new, and constantly evolving, normal. But this was anything but normal for the staff or the clients we serve – the situation was grave. Unprecedented challenges required unprecedented responses and the ABLE and LAWO family delivered essential and new services with compassion, flexibility, proactivity, and professionalism.

The effects of the dual pandemics were far-reaching. Soaring housing instability, insufficient educational services, rising domestic violence situations, and sweeping unemployment were just some of the monumental challenges our clients faced. Yet the ABLE and LAWO staff remained fierce and effective community advocates. Staff quickly pivoted to learn new areas of law, implement new processes to meet operational needs to deliver services, and innovate new forms of community engagement to mitigate clients’ more immediate housing, safety, income, and education concerns. We offered unemployment compensation representation for the first time in years, litigated cases against school districts to ensure that children received better instruction, and hosted legal education presentations and virtual legal clinics using Facebook, Zoom, YouTube, and WhatsApp.

ABLE and LAWO, as organizations and individuals, were not immune to these effects. We faced funding losses, as one of our major revenue sources experienced immediate and sharp declines, resulting in staff reductions, shifting job responsibilities to compensate, and questions of financial stability. Our staff adjusted well, and quickly, amid uncertainty, change, and sheer exhaustion.

Despite the uncertainty of the year, we have not only remained resilient and responsive but also improved our capacity and reputation as effective legal service firms through high-quality client services and important policy advocacy. We could not have accomplished this without the intersection of tremendous staff leadership, dedicated colleagues, financial support, and humanity in need.

To our colleagues (paid and volunteer) we say thank you for serving. To our clients, we say thank you for allowing us to serve you. To our supporters, we say thank you for supporting this monumental work, at any level. Together, we did the community justice.
ABLE and LAWO utilize collective effort and synergy to improve outcomes for our clients. Internally, we have developed legal practice groups that address specific issues. Below are a few highlights from 2020.

**Agricultural Workers and Immigrant Rights**
Practice group members conducted outreach to every agricultural labor camp in Ohio and other places agricultural workers frequent and reside. In addition, outreach members purchased and compiled bags of personal protective equipment (PPE) and information for workers while complying with physical distancing safety standards. In the area of immigrant rights, ABLE practice group members protected the rights of immigrants in detention facilities who were at high risk for COVID-19.

**Housing Justice and Community Economic Development**
ABLE collaborated with LAWO on several eviction prevention projects to prevent homelessness in the wake of COVID-19, resulting in changes to policies that improved tenant protections like rental assistance programs, eviction record sealing, source of income ordinances, and "pay-to-stay" ordinances. Despite COVID, housing advocates appeared in court throughout 2020 to keep tenants safe and housed. ABLE’s community economic development advocates continued innovative work and empowering civic engagement, resulting in continued economic growth and the opening of a co-op grocery store in a Dayton food desert.

**Healthcare and Economic Stability**
When COVID-19 hit communities, this practice group shifted priorities and expanded services to handle unemployment cases. Given the urgent and substantial need, ABLE and LAWO attorneys mobilized community partners by working with pro bono lawyers through the Toledo Bar Association (TBA) and Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project to begin referring cases that required brief service representation. This allowed ABLE and LAWO staff to focus on handling the most complex cases.

**Medical-Legal Partnerships for Children**
ABLE’s MLPCs collaborated with the Community Development Legal Corps to address neighborhood conditions as a social determinant of health in neighborhoods of Toledo and Dayton.

**Safety and Stability for Domestic Violence Survivors**
LAWO supported task forces, coordinated meetings, strengthened collaborations, and provided training for community partners, including law enforcement officers, to significantly reduce or eliminate incidences of domestic violence in the community. In addition to the community-based involvement, LAWO provided holistic services to domestic violence survivors seeking to escape abusive relationships which were exacerbated by the pandemic.
Fairness in Education
Using a racial equity lens, ABLE developed new case acceptance criteria and better-facilitated community lawyering in the education legal practice. Additionally, the practice group launched a project, providing technical legal assistance to a group of home-based childcare providers in Dayton focused on changing legislative and regulatory proposals and provisions, as well as planning longer-term needs for legal assistance. As always, advocates continued representing families seeking special education services.

Access to Justice
Practice group members took the lead in developing the client side of our website – found at www.legalaidline.org. They also developed outreach and community information programs. Practice group members also coordinated with members of the Senior Project to develop and implement the Plan Ahead and Protect Yourself Series for Seniors.

Empowering Seniors
Practice group members had to reimagine outreach efforts to seniors at risk for abuse and neglect. Phone calls, virtual Zoom visits, and telephone conferences were used in place of in-person visits to senior centers and low-income senior housing complexes due to access restrictions. However, project staff continued helping homebound clients to supervise the execution of any documents, while following appropriate physical distancing and mask guidance, to ensure that the most vulnerable of the older adults were still able to access legal services.

Consumer and Economic Justice
People working paycheck to paycheck are often the most vulnerable to lending schemes, inequitable pay by employers, and unscrupulous lenders, landlords, and service providers. ABLE represents individuals and community groups in addressing these issues so they can protect against those who would take advantage of them. ABLE works with communities to build more civic engagement so that they have a voice in matters affecting their economic well-being. LAWO helps clients achieve economic justice through representation in debt collection and bankruptcy cases.
"Alice Perseveres to Gain Unemployment Benefits During COVID with ABLE's Legal Help"

Alice, a 79-year-old resident of rural northern Ohio, was employed as an activities director at a local nursing home for 21 years. She was very passionate about her job and loved creating positive and enjoyable social activities for the residents.

The facility struggled through COVID-related challenges. Residents could no longer visit with family and friends, new nursing home protocols were established, and group activities were suspended. Additionally, the management changed hands and struggled with internal communications regarding new rules and policies.

On May 5, 2020, Alice was given a written warning regarding her job performance. The warning stated that she needed to improve in several areas related to COVID-19 pandemic policies. However, rather than waiting the required 30 days for improvement, Alice was fired two weeks later for failure to perform the job.

Alice applied for unemployment compensation benefits in June 2020 and was initially denied. She appealed, but the case proceeded slowly due to the pandemic, and Alice was not scheduled for a hearing until January 2021. Alice's financial condition deteriorated. ABLE represented Alice at the hearing, where it was determined that the nursing home did not have just cause to discharge Alice because they did not show that she failed to perform the job. Alice received retroactive unemployment benefits to June 2020 and regained her financial stability and well-being.

*The names of clients have been changed to protect their privacy.*
Our 2020 Combined Record of Service
"What Did We Do?"

Requests for help
11,439

Cases Closed
4,333

In Action
Nearly 18,000 people were served by ABLE and LAWO legal staff and paralegals in 2020. Countless others received help through materials and information that appear on our website, pro bono legal assistance clinics, legal presentations, and trainings and continuing legal education presentations for lawyers. Our staff also visited homeless and domestic violence shelters, senior centers, health clinics, nursing homes and agricultural labor camps to make people aware of their legal rights.

Total monetary awards for clients
$8,349,672

Individuals helped*
17,892

*This does not include groups and organizations that received legal help.
The report is related to ABLE and LAWO’s operations budget and does not include revenue or expenses related to depreciation, the 50 Years of Fairness and Justice Campaign, the Campaign for the Center for Equal Justice, or the Legal Aid Foundation of Western Ohio.

**Support & Revenue**

- Other Grants & Contracts: $5,720,125
- Ohio Access to Justice Foundation (OAJF): $3,561,526
- Legal Services Corporation (LSC) (LAWO only): $3,442,391
- Other Income: $65,419
- Miscellaneous Income and Gain on Investments: $37,427
- Fundraising & Special Events: $33,258

**Subtotal**: $12,850,146

- Transfer to Reserves: ($306,563)

**Total**: $12,553,583

**Expenses & Expenditures**

- Compensation & Benefits: $9,712,185
- Operating Costs: $1,850,406
- Contract Services: $445,689
- Travel, Support & Training: $263,510
- Other: $281,793

**Total**: $12,553,583
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Mechelle Zarou
Attorney
Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP
Toledo
Latisha is a 46-year-old, African American single female who has a disability. She received a six-month sanction from the Ohio Works First (OWF) Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Latisha has two school-age daughters who attended school remotely due to COVID-19. Without benefits, she struggled to pay for shelter, utilities, and other household expenses.

In March 2020, LAWO advised Latisha to apply for the COVID-19 Emergency Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) Program. In April we contacted the local Department of Job & Family Services (JFS) because it had taken no action on her application. JFS sent a series of notices listing varying reasons for why Latisha was not eligible for the COVID-19 Emergency PRC Program, including she was being sanctioned; her documents were not verified; she was unemployed, and the COVID-19 Emergency PRC Personal Items Application ended in May 2020. JFS could not, however, produce a written policy concerning eligibility requirements for this COVID-19 Emergency PRC program. LAWO appealed the determination and requested a hearing. As a result of the telephone hearing, JFS determined that Latisha’s application was timely, and her application was approved. She subsequently received shelter and utility vouchers.

Opioid addiction and other forms of substance abuse are the primary reasons for the removal of children and the creation of “grandfamilies”. During COVID these situations increased dramatically. Critical needs that seniors must address include the ability to make decisions about education, healthcare, and other essential needs.

Access to legal assistance and support services for grandparents is particularly challenging in Ohio’s rural counties where there are far fewer resources available to grandparents raising grandchildren. Through the Grandfamilies Legal Assistance Project, grandfamilies received needed services to keep their families intact during the pandemic.

*The names of clients have been changed to protect their privacy.*
LAWO and ABLE depend on the support of volunteer attorneys to expand services to people in need. Volunteer attorneys provided pro bono legal assistance in 2020 through LAWO, ABLE, the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project, and the Toledo Bar Association's Pro Bono Legal Services Program. LAWO and ABLE support the GDVLP, and the TBA.

If you would like to provide your legal assistance, please contact the Private Attorney Involvement Program by visiting probono.lawolaw.org or call (419) 930-2479.

LAWO, ABLE, & GDVLP's 2020 Pro Bono Partners

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Jason N. Flower
Scott Forsman
Vincent Foulk
"Ensuring access to justice for all"
The Andersons
Support for legal services.

Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.
Support for legal services for seniors.

Ohio Access to Justice Foundation (OAJF)
Major source of funding to support our work addressing the unmet civil legal needs of low-income and underserved Ohioans.

2020 ABLE & LAWO JOINT FUNDERS

Area Agency on Aging, PSA2
Legal assistance for seniors in Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA3
Legal assistance for seniors in Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Putnam, Mercer, and Van Wert counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA5
Legal assistance to seniors in Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Richland, Seneca, and Wyandot counties.

Board of Lucas County Commissioners
Immigration legal services.

Borealis Philanthropy
Support for impact litigation addressing systemic discrimination.
2020 ABLE FUNDING PARTNERS

City of Columbus Families Together Fund
Support for immigration legal services.

City of Dayton
Support for housing and community economic development.

City of Dayton Human Relations Council - Welcome Dayton
Support for immigration legal services.

Consulate of Mexico-Detroit
Legal assistance to Mexican nationals referred by the Consulate.

Consulate of Mexico-Indianapolis
Legal assistance to Mexican nationals referred by the Consulate.

Clement O. Miniger Foundation
Support for the Toledo Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Support for legal services for reentering citizens.

Dayton Children’s Hospital Foundation
Support for the Dayton Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

The Dayton Foundation
Support for several projects benefitting the greater Dayton area.

The Dayton Foundation – Eichelberger Fund
Support for several projects benefitting the greater Dayton area.

Dayton Legal Heritage Foundation
Support for the Education Advocacy Project and community legal services.

Dayton Police Department
Support for immigration legal services.

Equal Justice Works
Support for Immigration Summer Legal Corps Fellow.

First Financial Foundation
Legal services in Dayton.

Five Rivers Health Centers of Dayton
Support for the Dayton Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

France Stone Foundation
Support for the Toledo Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

Tait Foundation

Frank M. Tait Foundation
Support for the Dayton Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

Iddings Foundation
Support for the Dayton Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.
2020 ABLE FUNDING

Justice for Migrant Women
Support for agricultural worker advocacy.

Mathile Family Foundation
Support for the Dayton Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

Mental Health Recovery Services Board (MHRSB) of Lucas County
Support for legal advocacy for mental health services consumers.

Montgomery County
Supports legal services for seniors.

NEO Philanthropy
Support for immigration legal services.

Ohio Department of Aging
Support for Ombudsman Program for seniors in long-term care facilities.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Support for COVID-19 pandemic relief.

Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Support for mental health services and stigma reduction COVID outreach.

Ohio State Bar Foundation
Support for Know Your Rights videos and outreach.

PNC Foundation
Support for eviction legal work in Dayton.

ProMedica Toledo Children’s Hospital Foundation
Support for the Toledo Medical-Legal Partnership for Children.

Supreme Court of Ohio
Support for Know Your Rights videos and translation services.

The Impact Fund
Support for impact litigation expenses.

Toledo Community Foundation – Lovell Fund
Support for study and report on the impact of evictions on people with mental health diagnoses.

United Way of Greater Toledo
Support for the Toledo Medical-Legal Partnership for Children and for immigration legal services.

U.S. Department of Labor – Toledo Goodwill Industries
Legal support for reentering citizens.
Area Agency on Aging, PSA2
Support for legal assistance to seniors in Champaign, Clark, Darke, Green, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA3
Support for legal assistance to senior citizens in Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Putnam, Mercer, and Van Wert counties.

Area Agency on Aging, PSA5
Support for legal assistance to seniors in Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Richland, Seneca, and Wyandot counties.

City of Toledo
Federal Community Development Block Grant funds supporting legal assistance in housing matters for low-income City of Toledo residents.

Dayton Legal Heritage Foundation
Support for the Education Advocacy Project and community legal services.

Internal Revenue Service
Funding for the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) to assist people with controversies on federal income tax matters.

Legal Services Corporation
Support of LAWO area-wide services, services to agricultural workers, and LAWO Disaster Relief and Recovery Project.

Lourdes University
Support for the Campus Domestic Violence Project through the U.S. Department of Justice.

Lucas County Department of Job and Family Services
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Title XX funding for legal assistance to low-income individuals and families.

Miami County Department of Job and Family Services
Support for legal assistance to residents eligible for county assistance.

Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners
Support for legal services for the frail elderly, survivors of domestic violence, and people seeking employment.

Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center
Support for legal services victims of domestic violence.

Ohio Access to Justice Foundation
Support for legal services for survivors in the Greater Lima area, individuals and families seeking assistance with the opioid crisis, and veterans and for pro bono services in several rural counties.
**Ohio Attorney General Office**
Support for legal assistance to victims of domestic violence.

**Ohio State Bar Association**

**Ohio State Bar Foundation**
Support for the Plan Ahead and Protect Yourself Series for Seniors.

**Sandusky Municipal Court**
Support for legal assistance in housing cases for Sandusky residents living on low income.

**Springfield Foundation**
Support for legal services for residents of Clark County living on low income.

**Toledo Community Foundation**
Support for LAWO’s eviction prevention project.

**Toledo Municipal Court**
Support for legal services for low-income City of Toledo residents in eviction and debt collection cases.

**United Way of Defiance County**
Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Defiance County.

**United Way of Fulton County**
Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Fulton County.

**United Way of Greater Dayton**
Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Greene and Montgomery counties.

**United Way of Greater Toledo**
Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Lucas and Wood counties.

**United Way of Williams County**
Support for legal assistance to low-income residents of Williams County.

**U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women**
Support for training and services grant to end violence against women with disabilities.

**Reaching People Where They Are**
We appreciate the generosity of individuals who give to the **Justice for All Campaign**. Your donations make it possible for us to serve thousands of people needing legal help to sustain themselves and achieve independence.

The **Justice for All Campaign** is a fundraising partnership among **LAWO**, the **TBA Pro Bono Legal Services Program**, and **ABLE**. As the sole providers of free civil legal aid to low-income residents of northwest Ohio, the Justice for All Campaign unites our fundraising efforts to ensure that vulnerable and disenfranchised members of our community have equal access to the legal system.

### JUSTICE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

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James Yavorcik
Denise Zanni
Roger Zimmerman

Friend – Up to $99
Gretchen Adams
Alfred Albright

Carl Anderson
Clare Armbruster
Brittany Asmus
Corry Baker
Jennifer Behnfeldt
Nathan Benner
Christopher Block
Laura Breyma
Ellen Brodino
Emily Brown
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Jonathan Dinan
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Denise Ford Saxon
Kara Ford
Traci Fountain
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Michael Goulding
Yolanda Gwinn-Harleston
Sandra Hamilton
Richard Heck
William Holt
Gary Horvath
Monica Hoskins
David Hudson
James Irmen
Janet Keener
Roger Klee
Bryan Lammon
Frank Landry
John Landry
Tanya Likens
Gregory Lodge
Thomas Lupica
Ann Maciejewski
Patrick Maloney
Lisa Mantel
Olivia Mata
Janelle Matuszak
Lisa Rice of the National Fair Housing Alliance was the keynote speaker at the 2020 Access to Justice Awards Dinner. The event took place virtually on September 30, 2020. A former Toledo resident, Rice has been committed to managing and leading fair housing organizations for 25 years, including the Toledo Fair Housing Center and the Northwest Ohio Development Agency. She has led teams that investigated, brought, and resolved precedent-setting fair housing cases resulting in the elimination of systemic discriminatory practices in the areas of lending, appraisals, insurance, rental, and real estate. She leads efforts by NFHA and its partners to advance fair housing principles and to preserve and broaden fair housing protections, expanding equal housing opportunities for millions of Americans. Rice played a major role in crafting sections of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and in establishing the Office of Fair Lending within the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Also, during the virtual event and dinner, ABLE, LAWO and the Toledo Bar Association’s Pro Bono Legal Services Program presented awards to three greater Toledo area individuals for their service to people living in poverty.

Dean Horrigan, Esq. received the 2020 Public Interest Law Award for his representation of the elderly, many of whom have a disability and are underserved. He has been an invaluable member of the Coalition of Organizations Protecting Elders (COPE), serving as Chair of the Advocacy Committee. His work includes addressing COPE’s concerns with legislators, tracking legislation, coordinating meetings with legislators to educate them about elder abuse issues, and participating in advocacy conferences.

The 2020 Community Advocacy Award was awarded to Veralucia Mendoza for her immigrant rights advocacy and creation of Mutual Aid Toledo. She has been a community organizer for 13 years, having served in rapid response for migrant worker justice, LGBTQ+ migrant rights, and responding to ICE raids. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic impact, Mendoza created Mutual Aid Toledo. The success of the group’s effectiveness to organize aid swiftly for thousands is well-recognized throughout the city. Mendoza also serves as Regional Field Manager at Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio.

E. James Stengle, III was honored with the 2020 Distinguished Service Award for his extensive volunteer history with ABLE, LAWO and the TBA. Additionally, he currently serves as the chair of the Toledo Cultural Arts Center, Valentine Theatre Board of Trustees and chair of the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County. Stengle is Senior Vice President, Employee Benefits at Hylant.
ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARDS

DINNER CO-CHAIRS

Heather Allred
Carasusana Wall

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARDS

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Mechelle Zarou

Keynote Speaker
Lisa Rice

2020 Awardees
E. James Stengle, III
Veralucia Mendoza
Dean Horrigan, Esq.
"Housing Instability"

ABLE represented a mother of two who applied for help after her landlord locked her out of her home during the pandemic. She and her two minor children were forced to lodge at various places separate from each other. An ABLE attorney filed a Complaint for Injunctive Relief, Damages, and Attorney Fees in the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas seeking relief from the illegal lock-out. We also filed a Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO), requesting that the court order the landlord to put the family up in an extended stay hotel until the hearing on the preliminary injunction since the landlord had already re-rented the home. The court granted the TRO and ordered that the family be permitted to retrieve their personal belongings. But the landlord had already thrown all their possessions away. ABLE negotiated a settlement of $2,000 to compensate the mother for her financial losses and to enable her to secure housing and replace personal belongings.

"Tenant Protection"

ABLE represented two tenants evicted from the same apartment complex to prevent their scheduled move-outs during the pandemic. A partner agency, the Miami Valley Fair Housing Center (MVFHC), called ABLE about the move-outs to see whether we could help. Both tenants had health issues - one was pregnant and had Graves’ disease, while the other had just been released from the hospital and was using a walker due to mobility issues. An ABLE attorney filed motions for a stay in both cases just hours before the tenants were scheduled to have their belongings removed by a bailiff in March. The Montgomery County Municipal Court granted the motions to stay and scheduled a hearing in April, which of course had to be rescheduled, until May. The tenants were able to remain in their homes and within social distance until their hearing dates. In the meantime, both tenants found other suitable housing, so the parties settled the cases. ABLE negotiated an extension of time for the tenants to move, preserving housing stability and protecting public health during the pandemic.
ABLE and LAWO are grateful for contributions to the 2020 Campaign for Equal Justice. The campaign total is comprised of donations from the legal profession, community contributions, and patronage of the Access to Justice Awards Celebration! and Justice on Tap! You make it possible for our firms to serve people in need.

**Campaign for Equal Justice Campaign Co-chairs**
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Surdyk Dowd & Turner, Co., LPA

Mary E. Lentz
Foos & Lentz, formerly Gottschlich & Fortune, LLP

**Access to Justice Awards Celebration! Co-chairs**
Zachary S. Heck
Taft Stettinius & Hollister, LLP

Jennifer A. Rulon
Frost Brown Todd Attorneys, LLC

**Justice on Tap! Co-chairs**
Rebeccah Raines
Thompson Hine, LLP

Nick Raines
Russell Total Health and Wellness

**Campaign Ambassadors**
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Auman, Mahan & Furry, LPA

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Mary E. Lentz
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Joanna L. Garcia
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Pillar of Justice
$15,000+
Thompson Hine, LLP
WilmerHale, LLP

Advocate of Justice
$10,000+
Faruki PLL
The Dayton Daily News

Gold $5,000+
Fifth Third Bank

Silver $2,500+
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Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
Barbara Duncombe
Jeff Hughes
Maureen Lynch
Todd Miller
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Byron Bonar
Bricker & Eckler LLP
College Hill Community Church
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Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority
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Kyle Murphy
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The Dayton Foundation

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Surdyk, Dowd & Turner Co., L.P.A.
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Christopher & Deborah Walker
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Lynn Reynolds
Timothy Rice
Kristina Roush
Nancy Schiffer
Jeffrey Sharkey
Arik Sherk
Michael and Jill Spurlin
James Stahler
Richard Talda
John Utsinger - (deceased)
Xavier Wattermann
Merle Wilberding
Noreen Willhelm
Sidney Williams

Up to $199
Deborah Adler
Douglas Anspach
Stephen Axtell
Adam Beiersdorfer
Roger Bora
Margaret Bowers
Chanda Brown
Jennifer Brumby
Lynn Buffington
Donald & Melinda Burton
Christopher Carrigg
Zachary Cloutier
Anthony Colussi
Jon Conhaim
Mark Conway
Caleb Cook
Claudia Cortez-Reinhardt
Christopher Cowan
Angela Daniele
Erin Davis
Steven Davis
Michael Deffet
Susan Deluca
Karen Demasi
Dorothy Dick
Brandon Dobyns
Phillip Dreety
Lauren Epperley
Meg Evans
Paula Ewers
Judith Ezekiel
Carl Fischer
Rose Fox
Carla Frame
Gary Froelich
Jeffrey Froelich
Suzanne Sumner
Barry Taylor
Mercedes Thompson
Tracy and Tracy Co. LPA
Louis Tracy
James Uphoff
Ashley Warwar
Sam Warwar
Ethel Washington-Harris
Chandler Watson
Alan Weeter
Ashley Weyenberg
Thomas Whelley
Brian Wildermuth
William Williams
David Williamson
Jeffrey Winwood
Christopher Wolcott
Marie Wolff
Lowell Woods
Sarah Worley
Fredric Young

Up to $75
Emily Anderson
Zachary Arnold
Kelli Bartlett
Jenna Beck
Christina Berger
Jason Bichsel
Shawn Blatt
Shannon Bockelman
Gwendolyn Bowers
Ashleigh Bowman
John Brehm
Laura Bulcher
Julianne Bush
Katie Cantlin
Kimberly Carter
Pamela Clark-Harris
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Becky Iverson
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Mark Johnson
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Allan Jones
Darrell Jones
Helen Jones-Kelley
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Anne Keeton
John Kendall
Jamar King
Scott King
Justine Larsen
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ABLE LAW
Contributions to our annual Campaign for Equal Justice help more than 6,000 low-income individuals gain access to quality, free legal services each year when facing barriers regarding domestic violence, elder abuse, disabilities, education, health, public benefits, veterans’ concerns, and immigration matters. The free and high-quality legal assistance provided by Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc. (LAWO), and the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project (GDVLP) is vital to ensuring that civil legal aid makes a difference in the lives of those who seek our help.
2020 Access to Justice Awards Celebration!
Honorees who have provided exceptional services to people living in poverty in the Miami Valley were recognized at the annual Access to Justice Awards Celebration! on November 5, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s event was held virtually during the lunch hour. ABLE, LAWO and the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Projects were proud to present the awards to deserving individuals for their outstanding service to community members in need.

Judith A. LaMusga, founder of LaMusga Law Office, LLC was presented with the Lloyd O’Hara Public Interest Law Award. LaMusga specializes in estate planning and guardianship. She has helped numerous individuals plan to leave a legacy of love for their family. She has been involved with prevention of abuse or neglect with vulnerable populations for most of her career as she has worked with children, individuals with disabilities, and seniors.

Gabriela Pickett, Ph.D. Director of International Education at the Lynda A. Cohen Center for Study of Child Development, received the Patricia Rousseau Community Advocacy Award. In response to the humanitarian tragedies that occur after family separation due to immigration law enforcement, Dr. Pickett was instrumental in starting the Dayton Rapid Response Network. She routinely assists immigrants with obtaining legal counsel, including assisting them with transportation, funds, evidence gathering, and even arranging for pro bono psychological and educational evaluations. Her advocacy has affected the lives of thousands of immigrants and refugees in the Dayton area.

Two individuals received the Community Impact Award: Judy Hennessey, Ph.D (Retired), from the Dayton Early College Academy and Pastor Robert E. Jones (Retired), from College Hill Presbyterian Church. Dr. Hennessey received this prestigious award for her life-long commitment to working with and advocating for at-risk students in the Dayton community. Pastor Jones, who received the award posthumously, was honored for his decades-long work in making the church a welcoming and inclusive place for all, supporting initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity, and spearheading programs that benefitted women, children, and veterans.

Each honoree’s dedication and compassion helped many people and families during difficult times. We are grateful for their service to the Dayton community.

2020 Access To Justice Awards Honorees

Judith A. LaMusga  Gabriela Pickett, Ph.D  Judy Hennessey, Ph.D  Pastor Robert E. Jones

2020 Access To Justice Awards Selection Committee
We appreciate the participation of the following community leaders who served on the 2020 Access to Justice Awards Selection Committee. They are Mark Donaghy, CEO of the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority; the Hon. Mary Katherine Huffman of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas; Claudia Cortez-Reinhardt, Executive Director of the Dayton Hispanic Chamber; Ted Vander Roest, Executive Director of the Springfield Foundation; and the Rev. Dr. Daryl Ward, Pastor Emeritus at Omega Baptist Church.
IN MEMORIAM OR HONOR OF

A dedication in honor of those who have made an impact within the ABLE and LAWO communities.

Donato J. Borrillo
In Honor of Zoll & Kranz, LLC

Hon. Vernelis K. Armstrong
In Memory of Hon. Fred McDonald

Corry Baker
In Honor of Zoll & Kranz, LLC

Jacqueline M. Boney
In Honor of Vincent and Beverly Nathan

Robert W. Cabanski
In Memory of John M. Casey

Gabrielle Davis
In Memory of Beverly and Vincent Nathan

James A. Duggan
In Memory of Ted C. Gillespie

Nicholas & Rebecca Fahim
In Memory of Ronald Langenderfer

Martin E. Goff
In Memory of Donald Goff

Stuart J. Goldberg
In Memory of David R. Goldberg

Sandra Hamilton
In Memory of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg

Hon. Nancy Miller
In Memory of Hon. Fred McDonald

Jon D. Richardson
In Memory of Merritt (Tim) Green

H. Buswell Roberts, Jr.
In Memory of Beverly Nathan

Dawn E. Sanderson
In Memory of Hon. Peter Handwork

Sarah K. Skow
In Memory of Felicia E. Skow and the Honorable William J. Skow

Charles A. Stocking
In Honor of Joseph R. Tafelski

Michael Todak
In Memory of Richard G. LaValley, Sr.

J. Michael Vassar
In Honor of Joseph R. Tafelski

David G. Wise
In Memory of Walter F. Brown

Roger K. Zimmerman
In Memory of Edward Shelling

TOLEDO

Rudolph A. Peckinpaugh Jr.
In Memory of Hon. Peter Handwork
In Memory of Fred McDonald
In Memory of James Barber
In Memory of James Jensen

Lisa E. Pizza
In Memory of Phyllis Ide

Thomas G. Pletz
In Memory of Hon. James Jensen
In Honor of Hon. James Knepp
IN MEMORIAM OR HONOR OF

A dedication in honor of those who have made an impact within the ABLE and LAWO communities.

College Hill Community Church
In Memory of Rev. Robert E. Jones

Jon Conhaim
In Memory of Rev. Richard L. Righter

Dr. Samuel N. Dorf
In Honor of Ellis Jacobs

Barbara A. Duncombe
In Honor of Mark Feur, Lance Gildner, Dave Reed, Zach Arnold and Robert Dunlevey

Rose N. Fox
In Memory of Rev. Richard L. Righter

Donald L. Hayashi
In Memory of Rev. Richard L. Righter

Jerald W. Hill
In Honor of those who have been slain and forgotten by the State who swore to protect us

Stanley A. Hirtle
In Memory of Rev. Robert E. Jones

Andrea Hirtle
In Memory of Rev. Robert E. Jones

Lisa C. Kellar
In Memory of Rev. Richard L. Righter

Dominic Leplla
In Honor of Gary J. Leplla

Karen Lindsay
In Honor of Hon. Michael R. Merz

Theodore J. Majka, Ph.D.
In Memory of Linda Majka

James F. Oneil
In Memory of Peter J. Donahue

Ashley Overman
In Honor of Judy Hennessey

Laura Rench
In Honor of Ellis Jacobs

Michael Van Ausdal
In Honor of Glenn Van Ausdal

Juanita Wehrle-Einhorn
In Memory of Robert J. Wehrle Einhorn

Thomas P. Whelley II
In Honor of Judy Hennessey

Cara J. Williams
In Memory of James and Caroline Giglia

Dayton

Jamar King
In Honor of Tina I. Pope

Marjorie A. Kuhns
In Memory of Edward Kuhns

Leaders for Equality and Action in Dayton (LEAD)
In Memory of Rev. Richard L. Righter
Together, we do the community justice.