ACBF Legal Aid Provider Grants

2023 Grant Cycle LOI Applications - Cover Sheet

Name of Organization	Grant Request Name	Type of Support	Summary of Request	Cost	Budget
Achieva Family Trust	Income Spend Down Trusts Program	Existing Program/Project Support	Achieva Family Trust (AFT) administers Income Spend Down Trusts that enable low-income individuals with disabilities and the elderly to receive services in the community and avoid institutional care. AFT is the only organization in PA providing this service. We provide this service based on our mission. The costs for administering the trusts far exceed the $100 annual fee charged to the client.	$ 10,000.00	$ 3,417,624.00
Arise Immigration Services	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support high-quality, trauma-informed legal representation of asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and capacity expansion around the country through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model.	$ 41,025.00	$ 11,600.00
Christian Immigration Advocacy Center	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support the work of the Christian Immigration Advocacy Center so that the organization can continue to provide the highest level of legal care to clients and ensure that the organization is equipped with the resources and training necessary to meet the ever-mounting legal needs of the expanding immigrant communities of Allegheny County.	$ 10,000.00	$ 157,000.00
Education Law Center-PA	Inclusive Schools for Students with Disabilities and Students of Color	Existing Program/Project Support	To support ELC's work to strengthen legal services and advocacy addressing the disproportionate exclusion of students with disabilities and of color from Allegheny County schools. We will: support pro bono attorneys who address school pushout; provide legal services, referral, and advocacy tools to families to ensure classroom inclusion; and provide legal guidance and training to community partners to strengthen advocacy for inclusive schools.	$ 100,000.00	$ 2,711,337.00
Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support Fair Shake's public interest, pro bono, and sliding scale legal representation programs and community lawyering services in Allegheny County.	$ 10,000.00	$ 1,039,000.00
Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation	LGBTQ+ Legal Education	Existing Program/Project Support	To support the changing legal needs of LGBTQ+ and HIV+ people in Allegheny County, especially those experiencing spikes in housing insecurity, Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation will offer direct services and community clinics in the organization's service areas, which include: name changes and ID document assistance (a frequent pain point for accessing safe housing and social services), housing rights, public benefits, and expungements.	$ 100,000.00	$ 2,200,000.00
Neighborhood Legal Services Association	Preventing Evictions, Stabilizing Homes through Community Partnerships	Existing Program/Project Support	To support NLS's Eviction Prevention Advocacy and Collaborative Housing Stabilization Efforts. Funding will be used to support legal advice and representation of tenants facing eviction and/or other types of housing instability (loss of utilities, denial of housing benefits, etc.) and to provide support to volunteer attorney to foster increased pro bono involvement. The main goal for this project is to end disruptive displacements via eviction.	$ 101,587.00	$ 7,925,043.00
North Hills Community Outreach	Ask the Attorney and Legal Programs	Existing Program/Project Support	To provide free noncriminal legal advice via volunteer attorneys to low-income individuals and families within the NHCO service area. Topics of discussion include divorce, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant concerns and more. Legal consultations are meant to provide advice and direction on how to proceed with a legal matter	$ 17,750.00	$ 2,400,000.00
Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh	Complex Divorce Representation for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence	Existing Program/Project Support	To support the WC&S' Civil Law Project (CLP) in its free legal representation for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in divorce cases with alimony and/or property claims. CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts and provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services. The goal of this representation is to assist victims of IPV in obtaining safety, justice, autonomy, and restoration.	$ 1,078,665.00	$ 8,291,402.00
Women's Law Project	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support the general operating budget of the Women's Law Project. Our organization provides legal representation and support to western Pennsylvanians on issues across the gender equity spectrum, including sexual harassment in schools and workplaces, pregnancy discrimination, and reproductive health care. Most of our clients are low-resourced community members who are underserved and unable to find legal help anywhere else.	$ 1,966,117.00	$ 1,966,117.00

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Achieva Family Trust
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	23-2947828
Year Founded	1998
Mission Statement	Achieva advocates with, empowers, and supports people with disabilities and their families throughout their lives.
Executive Director	Mr. Steve Suroviec
Executive Director Email	ssuroviec@achieva.info
Preferred Pronouns	he/him/his
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Amy Strano, Esq.
Title	President, Achieva Family Trust
Email	adstrano@achieva.info
Organization Address	711 Bingham Street Pittsburgh, PA, 15203
Phone Number	(412) 995-5000
Website	achievafamilytrust.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	3,417,624
Grant Request Name	Income Spend Down Trusts Program
Summary of Request	Achieva Family Trust (AFT) administers Income Spend Down Trusts that enable low-income individuals with disabilities and the elderly to receive services in the community and avoid institutional care. AFT is the only organization in PA providing this service. We provide this service based on our mission. The costs for administering the trusts far exceed the $100 annual fee charged to the client.
Total Project Cost	10,000
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024

Overview of Grant Request

AFT is working with the PA Department of Human Services, Legal Counsel to administer a type of Pooled Special Needs Trust called an “Income Spend Down Trust”. This type of trust enables people who need Medicaid Waiver funding for home and community services to become eligible despite their income being slightly over the required income limit for waiver eligibility. The waiver funding enables the person to remain in their home instead of moving into long term institutional care. AFT currently administers 127 Income Spend Down Trusts. The AFT annual fee for this service is $100. We chose to administer these trusts, as part of our “mission” since we believe that this type of trust enables elderly and disabled individuals to receive services that are vital to their well- being in their home and community, instead of being institutionalized.

Administering these trusts is very labor intensive, that involves working with referral sources, screening the referrals for eligibility, establishing the trusts, communicating with PA DHS and distributing funds on a monthly basis per beneficiary for their medical needs, in order to maintain their eligibility for Medicaid Waiver funding. A number of AFT legal and finance staff are involved in the administration of these trusts.

More recently, AFT is collaborating with several leading PA attorneys in elder law, as well as the PA Health Law Project, PA Disability Rights, and Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, to challenge the current Medicaid statues and regulations that apply to eligibility for long term care funding in the Medicaid Waiver Program in PA. The goal of this effort is to expand the availability of Home and Community Medicaid Waiver services to individuals with disabilities and the elderly in PA, helping them to avoid institutional care. This is in keeping with the AFT's history of pursuing changes to the law and public policy changes that can benefit the people that we serve.

Context/Background Information

AFT is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1998, as the first nonprofit in the state of PA, to offer the availability of Pooled Special Needs Trusts. We recently celebrated our 25th anniversary. AFT now administers four types of Special Needs Trusts, including Pooled, Payback, Third Party and Income Spend Down Trusts. We offer our trust services for a wide range of individuals and families, since we will establish a trust for as little as $500. As a part of the Achieva family of organizations, our mission is to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and promote their full inclusion in the community. Because of our mission, in addition to being a corporate trustee for four types of Special Needs Trusts, we have been involved in litigation, such as the Lewis Decision, and other public policy initiatives that impact people with disabilities, such as the establishment of ABLE accounts as a saving tool for people with disabilities AFT is very active in PAELA and NAELA and their advocacy efforts on behalf of people with disabilities and the elderly.

Project Goals

1. Continue to offer Income Spend Down Trusts to low-income people with disabilities and the elderly to assist them in avoiding unnecessary institutionalization.
2. Explore the feasibility of expanding AFT staff dedicated to this effort.

3. Continue efforts to advocate for changes to Medicaid statues and regulations that pertain to eligibility for Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver, to make it easier to qualify for Waiver funding and divert additional individuals from nursing homes and institutional care, allowing them to receive services in their home and community.

Population to be served

Low Income Individuals with Disabilities and Elderly Requiring Long Term Care.
Services are available across the state of PA.
10-15 Referrals received per month for this type of trust.
Currently, AFT administers 127 Income Spend Down Trusts.

According to the PA Department of Aging, there are 3.4 million individuals in PA who are over 60 years old. That is 17.% of the total PA population. Pa has the 5th oldest population of the 50 states.

As of 2023, the CDC also identifies 2.7 million adults over 18, in PA, having a disability.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Name Amy Strano

Title President

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Arise Immigration Services
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	88-4084447
Year Founded	2022
Mission Statement	We have a dual mission. First, we provide high-quality, pro bono legal services to immigrants in the Pittsburgh area, focusing on asylum. Second, we provide training and mentoring to advocates around the country so that they can learn how to serve immigrants in their own communities. In other words, we are building capacity around the country so that more people can get the personalized representation that they need to navigate an increasingly complex immigration legal system.
Executive Director	Mrs. Jennifer White
Executive Director Email	jen@ariseimmigration.org
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Organization Address	PO Box 79099 Pittsburgh, PA, 15216
Phone Number	(412) 445-7604
Website	ariseimmigration.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	11,600
Grant Request Name	General Operating Support
Summary of Request	To support high-quality, trauma-informed legal representation of asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and capacity expansion around the country through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model.
Total Project Cost	41,025
Type of Support	General Operating Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024
Overview of Grant Request	We provide top-notch, free legal representation to asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and simultaneously train new advocates through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model. In other words, we serve Pittsburgh asylum-seekers in teams, pairing new advocates with

seasoned advocates so that the newer folks can "learn while doing."

Our model is responsive to the shortage of affordable immigration legal advocates, which results in widespread injustice. Success on an asylum application—one of the most sought-after immigration benefits—often hinges on access to legal representation,* which is cost-prohibitive for many.** Our Solution (our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model) produces high-quality legal advocates across the nation. We believe that people "learn best by doing," which is why we work our cases in teams, pairing seasoned advocates with mentees so that knowledge and skills are transferred and shared. Our innovative model is needed because new advocates cannot access hands-on learning opportunities due to a variety of systemic barriers. Traditional pathways to legal advocacy, like law school, are exclusionary due to cost. The legal field is individualistic, and advocates usually work their own caseloads by themselves, which closes the door to non-lawyer advocates and stunts capacity expansion across the field. Most low-cost immigration legal services are available only in large metropolitan areas. We eliminate these barriers and address the "rural void" by providing our mentorship model remotely so that advocates can learn how to serve immigrants in their own, local communities after we show them the ropes. Unlike other fields—where a professional license follows a mentorship-style training program, like in the mental health and medical professions—many lawyers receive a license without practical experience because there is no requirement for such. We think there is a better way because there is no substitute for "learning while doing." The legal field is finally warming up to alternative models for practicing law*** and the D.O.J. is prioritizing accreditation of non-lawyer professionals authorized to practice immigration law through non-profits. This is to say that now is the right time to support our mission because the demand for our services, which focus on asylum representation, has never been higher.

* Asylum-seekers are five times more likely to win when represented. https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-u-s-asylum-process/. **"[M]ore than 93% of asylum-seeking respondents have not yet found a lawyer, the top challenge for which is legal fees." https://maketheroadny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Displaced-and-Disconnected_MRNY-Report.pdf.
***https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-fellowship-immigrants-department-of-justice-accreditation-file-asylum-case-20230613-chew4f7qifec3jwxph46bxggom-story.html.

Context/Background Information

Immigration laws and policies have become more complex and restrictive over time in the U.S. All the while, there are record numbers of forcibly displaced people arriving in the U.S. in search of safety. This inverse correlation generates and normalizes injustice for immigrants. We must respond with affordable legal advocates to help immigrants navigate an exceptionally complex system.

Arise Immigration Services' dual mission provides "micro" and "macro" solutions to the injustices that immigrants

face. We provide high-quality, pro bono legal services to immigrants in Pittsburgh, an underserved area (micro). Simultaneously, we provide training and mentoring to advocates around the country—while we work on our real cases, together—so that new advocates can learn how to serve immigrants in their own, local communities (macro). Our mentoring model reflects our philosophy of learning: advocates learn best "while doing," in community with others, and with the support of a seasoned, savvy advocate.

Our innovative, dual mission is needed and effective. Our immigrant clients benefit from our approach because our cases are prepared in teams, which means that multiple perspectives strengthen the case as we all sharpen each other. Additionally, our clients enjoy the support of a team of advocates cheering for them as they navigate a difficult, often lonely transition in a new country. Our organization fills a gap for new advocates (mentees), many of whom could not otherwise access hands-on learning opportunities due to geographical limitations; the individualistic nature of legal casework; and the reality that most immigration lawyers are too busy to pencil in time to mentor new advocates, let alone work a complicated case alongside them. Our highly successful pilot in 2022 resulted in: 1) an extraordinary human rights activist from Afghanistan winning asylum; and 2) all four members of her advocacy team joining our Board of Directors. To date, we have served 28 Afghan clients and mentored 20 new advocates.

Please note that there is a great need for pro bono legal representation of asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh. Asylum cases--when compared to other immigration cases--are incredibly resource-draining, intense, and complex. In addition, affirmative asylum-seekers from Pittsburgh are required to travel to Arlington, VA for their interview, which creates additional burdens for advocates who must then coordinate travel, translators, schedules on short notice, etc. However, we are not deterred by these barriers and are determined to fight for due process for our clients, which is why we take on some of the most legally challenging asylum cases for our brave clients.

Project Goals

2024 Goals:

Programmatic Goals:
-Represent 15 asylum-seekers
-Train 20 mentees in immigration law

Organizational Goals:
-Continue Annual Fall Mental Health Training Seminar for Advocates
-Hire (at least) 1 part-time legal advocate
-Expand organizational partnerships so that other local organizations can begin taking on asylum-cases

Population to be served

We intend to represent 15 asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh in 2024. Our clients always live well below the federal poverty guidelines. Clients will likely be from Afghanistan because the federal government is prioritizing Afghan asylum applications and Afghans face unique deadlines as a result.

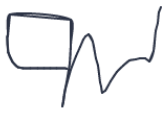
We will mentor at least 20 new advocates (across the country) as we serve our clients together.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Friday, August 4, 2023

Name Jennifer White

Title Executive Director

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Christian Immigration Advocacy Center
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	82-2880556
Year Founded	2017
Mission Statement	Provide high-quality legal services in a compassionate and culturally-appropriate way and empower churches to serve their sojourner neighbors well through collaborative partnerships.
Executive Director	Mr. Rogerio Torres
Executive Director Email	rogerio.torres@ciacpgh.org
Preferred Pronouns	he/him/his
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Mrs. Jessica Weaver
Title	Finance Director/Accredited Legal Representative
Email	jessica.weaver@ciacpgh.org
Organization Address	250 East Ohio St. Pittsburgh, PA, 15214
Phone Number	(412) 913-1393
Website	www.ciacpgh.com
Current Annual Operating Budget	157,000
Grant Request Name	General Operating Support
Summary of Request	To support the work of the Christian Immigration Advocacy Center so that the organization can continue to provide the highest level of legal care to clients and ensure that the organization is equipped with the resources and training necessary to meet the ever-mounting legal needs of the expanding immigrant communities of Allegheny County.
Total Project Cost	10,000
Type of Support	General Operating Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Overview of Grant Request

CIAC is an immigration legal service provider focused on offering high-quality, affordable assistance with an emphasis on compassionate care. They ensure accessibility for potential clients through phone, email, website, and social media, committing to responding within 24 hours. Their intake process involves collecting critical data, addressing urgent cases, and scheduling legal consultations. Intake personnel are trained to handle diverse cultural, language, socio-economic, medical, and trauma-related challenges to ensure justice isn't obstructed.

At consultations, prospective clients meet with CIAC's legal staff, which includes accredited representatives authorized by the U.S. Department of Justice. These initial consultations are free and serve to assess legal needs and devise legal strategies. CIAC specializes in cases that don't meet the criteria for larger, free immigration legal service providers, assisting clients in obtaining green cards, renewing them, family sponsorships, citizenship, work authorization, travel documents, visa extensions, and asylum. They work with clients to overcome barriers preventing progress and sign formal contracts before commencing representation. Continuous communication, interview preparation, document preparation, and evidence gathering are part of their services.

Volunteers support CIAC in administrative tasks and assist clients in document collection and data entry, allowing the legal staff to focus on representation and client care. CIAC also builds partnerships with immigrant community organizations like BCAP and the United Somali Bantu of Greater Pittsburgh, as well as resettlement agencies and immigrant support organizations to provide legal services to their clients.

Additionally, CIAC aims to raise community awareness about the unique legal challenges faced by immigrants and refugees, dispelling negative attitudes and correcting misconceptions about pathways to citizenship and legal permanent residence.

Context/Background Information

In 2013, a local church reached out to serve the Somali-Bantu refugees living on Pittsburgh's Northside. Volunteers began providing limited pro-bono legal advice under the umbrella of Christian Legal Aid (CLA). Seeing the overwhelming need for comprehensive low-cost legal representation, these volunteers pursued Recognition and Accreditation through the US Department of Justice and classification as a 501(c)3. With seed funding from its parent organization, CIAC launched in August of 2018 and began providing low-cost, comprehensive legal care not only to the Somali-Bantu community, but to clients from over 100 countries around the world. During the pandemic when many immigrant aid organizations were closing doors, CIAC's small size and agility enabled the growing legal team to pivot to virtual representation to meet the changing needs and limitations of clients. While the Center is back in-person, they continue to offer virtual appointments as well. In its first year, CIAC set a goal of serving 100 clients and exceeded that goal by 50%. That number has consistently increased each year. In 2021, the organization served 320 clients. In 2022, CIAC represented nearly 700 new clients.

We expect to exceed that number once again in 2023. As the legal need and CIAC's impact have steadily grown, the Center has remained committed to providing high quality, low-cost legal care.

Project Goals

Expand Legal Services: Increase the capacity of the Christian Immigration Advocacy Center (CIAC) to provide high-quality, low-cost legal services to marginalized immigrants and refugees in Pittsburgh.

Client Satisfaction: Measure and improve client satisfaction with the legal services offered by CIAC to ensure that clients receive effective and compassionate representation.

Client Empowerment: Empower immigrants and refugees to navigate the complex legal immigration process, ensuring they understand their rights and responsibilities.

Community Awareness: Raise awareness within the community about the unique legal challenges faced by immigrants and refugees and promote a better understanding of the immigration system.

Volunteer Engagement: Recruit and train committed, long-term volunteers to support CIAC's legal services, increasing organizational efficiency and capacity for sustainability.

Program Efficiency: Enhance the efficiency of CIAC's legal program to reduce wait times, minimize errors, and improve overall program sustainability.

Community Partnerships: Strengthen partnerships with local organizations, churches, and immigrant community groups to provide accessible and affordable legal care to a broader range of communities.

Cultural Sensitivity: Continuously address cultural sensitivities and barriers to justice faced by clients, ensuring that services are culturally appropriate and responsive.

Data Collection and Analysis: Implement robust data collection and analysis methods to track the number of clients served, successful outcomes, frequently used legal applications, and client demographics, aiding in program evaluation and improvement.

Client Resources: Identify and provide resources for clients who may not be eligible for government immigration benefits, ensuring that all individuals receive appropriate support and referrals.

Client Surveys: Utilize client surveys to gather feedback on client satisfaction, cultural sensitivity, and community needs, adapting services based on survey findings.

Immigration Immersion Program: Expand and promote the Immigration Immersion Experience program to educate individuals about the challenges faced by immigrants and refugees, fostering a more empathetic and informed community.

Population to be served

Marginalized Immigrants and Refugees: CIAC primarily

serves immigrants and refugees who are marginalized and may face significant barriers to accessing legal immigration services. This includes individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, languages, and countries of origin.

Displaced Individuals: Those who have been displaced due to catastrophic events, conflicts, or persecution in their home countries, and have sought refuge and resettlement in Pittsburgh or nearby areas.

Low-Income Individuals: CIAC focuses on providing low-cost legal services to individuals who may have limited financial resources and may not afford private legal representation.

Vulnerable Populations: Vulnerable populations within the immigrant and refugee community, such as survivors of trauma, individuals with medical conditions, and those facing mental health challenges.

Newcomers to the United States: Immigrants and refugees who are relatively new arrivals to the United States and are in need of legal assistance to navigate the complex immigration system.

Churches and Community Partners: CIAC also seeks to empower churches and community partners to serve immigrants and refugees effectively through collaborative partnerships and education.

The non-profit's mission is to provide compassionate and culturally-appropriate legal services to these populations while promoting awareness and understanding of immigration challenges within the broader community. CIAC primarily serve clients in the Pittsburgh area, while also offering virtual services to individuals worldwide. The non-profit served over 700 clients in 2022 and expects to exceed that number by the end of 2023.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name Chelsy Gevas

Title Senior Staff Attorney

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Education Law Center-PA
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	23-2581102
Year Founded	1975
Mission Statement	Education Law Center-PA's (ELC) mission is to ensure access to a quality public education for all children in Pennsylvania.
Executive Director	Ms. Deborah Gordon Klehr
Executive Director Email	dklehr@elc-pa.org
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Hetal Dhagat
Title	Senior Attorney
Email	hdhagat@elc-pa.org
Organization Address	429 Fourth Ave, Suite 1910 Pittsburgh, PA, 15219
Phone Number	(412) 258-2120
Website	https://www.elc-pa.org/
Current Annual Operating Budget	2,711,337
Grant Request Name	Inclusive Schools for Students with Disabilities and Students of Color
Summary of Request	To support ELC's work to strengthen legal services and advocacy addressing the disproportionate exclusion of students with disabilities and of color from Allegheny County schools. We will: support pro bono attorneys who address school pushout; provide legal services, referral, and advocacy tools to families to ensure classroom inclusion; and provide legal guidance and training to community partners to strengthen advocacy for inclusive schools.
Total Project Cost	100,000
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024

Project End Date

Tuesday, December 31, 2024

Overview of Grant Request

ELC requests funding to support our ongoing efforts to remove the individual and systemic educational barriers that lead to the disproportionate exclusion of students with disabilities and students of color from the classroom. Exclusionary discipline practices, other systemic barriers, and bias create conditions in schools that are unconducive for students with disabilities and Black and Brown students to learn. ELC aims for all students to access a quality education in inclusive classrooms.

At the individual level, ELC will provide fact sheets, advocacy tools, and information/advice on students' rights to support families in their self-advocacy. Families who call our Education Helpline for free legal services may also receive legal consultation and direct representation to further advocate for students who have been inappropriately excluded from school, which may result in a return to the classroom and least restrictive setting, behavioral support at school, compensatory education services for time out of the classroom, and other remedies. We recently represented an elementary school-age girl in Allegheny County who was being pushed into virtual learning for most of the school year for behavior likely related to prior trauma. We challenged the school's decision and advocated for her to receive counseling to address the root cause of her behavior. With our advocacy, the school agreed to provide counseling and reduce her virtual learning time.

We will support pro bono attorneys with information, resources, and assistance to provide legal services to students with disabilities, students of color, and students at the intersection of these identities on public education issues, such as alternatives to discipline and evaluations/re-evaluations for educational services. Additionally, we will train attorneys on the responsibilities of serving as a trustee for compensatory education trusts for children with disabilities who were denied a quality education.

ELC will provide feedback, legal guidance, and technical assistance to our partners to build our capacity to improve education outcomes for Black and Brown students and students with disabilities. We will inform and support the work of the Education Rights Network, the Pittsburgh Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF), and our partners in the Education Justice Network for Immigrants and Refugees (EJN-IR). Additionally, we will participate in two Black Girls Equity Alliance (BGEA) workgroups to strategize responses to discriminatory discipline; other legal advocacy groups, such as the Duquesne Law School Youth Advocacy Clinic, participate in these workgroups.

At the systemic level, we must continue focusing on removing subjective offenses in school codes since these often lead to disproportionality due to bias by educators. ELC will continue advising school leaders on replacing punitive consequences with mental and behavioral supports and social-emotional learning.

Context/Background Information

ELC has long been a leader in efforts that address the root causes of inequity, including racism and ableism, in

Allegheny County schools. Following are some accomplishments relevant to this project:

- Code of Conduct: ELC guides Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) on Code of Conduct revisions to reduce discriminatory discipline that disproportionately excludes students of color and students with disabilities. We have prevented new categories of subjective offenses, used disproportionately against students with disabilities and students of color, in the PPS Code of Conduct. We collaborated with PPS to modify its Code of Conduct to treat first-time minor drug offenses more progressively and closed a loophole that led to students being suspended for minor, non-violent infractions. We also guided PPS to provide school-based supports to address the root cause of students' behaviors instead of defaulting to exclusion. We continue to build on this work to make PPS schools affirming, supportive environments for all students.

- Reimagine School Safety Resolution: In response to our advocacy, PPS adopted a resolution that requires the District to report its arrest and citation data publicly. This was an important step for transparency and accountability regarding students' interaction with police and the justice system.

- COVID Compensatory Services: ELC worked with PPS, alongside local parents and advocates, including the Pittsburgh LTF, on developing a plan to effectively identify and provide COVID compensatory services (CCS) to children with disabilities who experienced deprivations of free appropriate public education (FAPE) due the pandemic. We raised the need for a comprehensive CCS plan with PPS and, through collaboration, ensured that equity and parent voice were prioritized in the plan, for example, by ensuring that graduated and transferred students were included. ELC and PPS developed a handout to help advise parents on accessing CCS for their child, and we worked with the Pittsburgh LTF on a parent checklist. Superintendent Walters created this video, https://vimeo.com/789066321, to raise awareness of the plan and next steps to identify and provide CCS to eligible students (see ELC shoutout at timestamp 4:18).

- Direct Representation: ELC represented a student who was expelled for defending himself in an altercation with numerous students. ELC reached out to the school to request the student be placed back in school, in person, because his due process rights were violated. The school agreed to reverse the expulsion, strengthen the student's IEP, and provide translation services for the student's parents.

Project Goals

Goals & Objectives:
The primary goals of this project in Allegheny County are: 1) To remove discipline policies that are subjective, leave room for bias, and result in exclusion; 2) For schools to invest in social-emotional learning and mental and behavioral health supports and offer these to students to address the underlying causes of behaviors; and 3) To connect students with consistent, appropriate special education services required for them to thrive in school.

With funding from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation, ELC will:
- Respond to requests from families who contact our Helpline for assistance with public education matters and provide them with information, advice, and resources on student rights.
- Provide legal consultation and further advocacy through direct representation to address classroom exclusion, seeking remedies, the least restrictive placement, special education evaluation/re-evaluation, educational supports and services, mental and behavioral health supports, compensatory education, etc.
- Train and support pro bono attorneys so they are equipped to provide legal services to students with disabilities on public education issues, including alternatives to school discipline, access to inclusive and appropriate educational services, and compensatory education services.
- Provide legal guidance and technical assistance to community partners in Allegheny County and participate in workgroups/coalitions where we can strategize actions for inclusive schools.
- Offer trainings and resources to child-serving professionals and advocates.

Outcomes:
ELC expects to achieve the following outcomes in Allegheny County through this project:
- Greater capacity to provide legal support to families whose children have experienced school pushout and barriers to a quality education.
- Comprehensive remedies for children with disabilities and children of color who have been excluded from the classroom, denied special education supports and services, or experienced other deprivations of quality education.
- Increased knowledge in the community of the education rights of students to help prevent educational barriers.
- More equitable dress codes that comply with protections set forth by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.
- Inclusive and affirming school spaces where children with disabilities and Black and Brown children can learn, thrive, and grow.

Ultimately, these goals will support a reduction in school pushout.

Population to be served

The outcomes of our work will benefit children with disabilities, Black and Brown children, and children at the intersection of marginalized identities who attend public schools in Allegheny County. ELC's approach involves removing educational barriers at the intersection of race, gender, and disability on individual and systemic levels, including eliminating exclusionary discipline and increasing access to behavioral and mental health supports.

In Allegheny County, there are approximately 27,000 students ages 5-21 who have been identified as having a disability (Penn Data, School District and Intermediate Unit Enrollments, 2019-20). Many of these students are routinely deprived of their right to a quality public education due to

schools' failures to ensure students with disabilities receive consistent, appropriate educational supports and services. This increased due to pandemic-related factors.

School discipline practices contribute to hostile school climates, target students with disabilities and students of color, and have a compounded disparate impact on students at the intersection of identities. In the 2021-22 school year, 15.2% of PPS students who received out-of-school suspensions had an Individualized Education Program (IEP), and students who identified as Black – and also had an IEP – constituted 19.4% of students who received an out of school suspension. When students with disabilities are facing exclusionary discipline, they are often denied their right to due process protections that would prevent them from being disciplined for behavior that is a manifestation of their disability. As a result, they are pushed out of the classroom, deprived of educational opportunities, and experience higher rates of suspension despite evidence showing that they do not misbehave at higher rates. Black and Brown children are impacted by subjectivity in school codes, race-based bias among educators, dress codes that do not clearly allow students to wear protective hairstyles and hair textures, and other discriminatory policies and practices.

Through the proposed work, we will build the community's capacity to oppose school policies that result in the disproportionate exclusion of students with disabilities and students of color from schools. Additionally, we will increase our capacity to represent these students on matters related to classroom exclusion and special education by training and supporting pro bono attorneys. Through our Helpline, we will provide information, advice, referral legal consultation, and/or direct representation to over 200 families, the majority of which will involve students with disabilities and Black and Brown children. Our work will help ensure all students can learn and thrive in supportive classrooms.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name Deborah Gordon Klehr

Title Executive Director

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	46-2642901
Year Founded	2013
Mission Statement	Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit law firm that brings decision-making and conflict resolution tools to people in place. Our mission is threefold: FOSTER EQUAL ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE Fair Shake works towards this goal by promoting the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, national origin, sexual or gender identity, or income in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies; by providing legal representation to allow equal access to the environmental decision-making process; and by promoting for all communities the health, preservation, and restoration of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment. PROVIDE TRAINING FOR A PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW PRACTICE Fair Shake advances this objective by educating young attorneys in legal services entrepreneurship to incubate start-up legal services organizations to serve the environmental legal needs of underserved low-to-moderate income clients and by providing high-quality internships to law and pre-law students. SUPPORT COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMPOWERMENT Fair Shake implements this aspect of its mission through community visioning, education, consulting, and coaching throughout the Appalachian region with specific emphasis on providing the environmental legal services and counseling to allow the underserved to actively engage in local decisions about practical and innovative solutions to complex environmental challenges across the region.
Executive Director	Mr. Michael Parker, Esq.
Executive Director Email	mparker@fairshake-els.org
Preferred Pronouns	he/him/his
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Corinne Ogrodnik, PhD
Title	Development Director

Email	cogrodnik@fairshake-els.org
Organization Address	6425 Living Place, Suite 200 Pittsburgh, PA, 15206
Phone Number	(412) 927-3874
Website	https://www.fairshake-els.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	1,039,000
Grant Request Name	General Operating Support
Summary of Request	To support Fair Shake's public interest, pro bono, and sliding scale legal representation programs and community lawyering services in Allegheny County.
Total Project Cost	10,000
Type of Support	General Operating Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024

Overview of Grant Request

Fair Shake serves and represents low-to-moderate income individuals, families, and organizations in the environmental legal services gap. We represent traditionally underserved clients who are directly affected by environmental harms and empower them to take legal action despite their economic means.

Fair Shake provides traditional legal services through four representation models:
- PRO BONO - We provide free legal services to individuals and families whose income is within 300% of the federal poverty level who are living with the impacts of petrochemical development and environmental degradation.
- SLIDING SCALE – Our services for modest means clients and nonprofit organizations are priced according to household income or an organization's annual budget, resulting in discounts ranging from 10% to 90%.
- PUBLIC INTEREST – Our public interest litigation support is for organizational clients that seek to accomplish outcomes for the public and environmental greater good.
- COMMUNITY LAWYERING – We provide technical and legal assistance to community-based coalitions seeking to implement policy and process change in their localities for environmental justice outcomes.

Since our inception in 2013, Fair Shake has represented individuals, families, and organizations in over 489 matters for their environmental needs. In those matters, Fair Shake has delivered more than 61,000 hours of free-to-reduced rate services to our clients, representing a market value of over $14,390,000. Our pro bono program accounts for 16% of our docket; our sliding scale services account for 45% of our docket; our public interest litigation accounts for 26% of our docket; and the remaining percentage accounts for fixed fee,

public interest, or contingency representation.

Fair Shake's proposal to the Allegheny County Bar Foundation is for general operating support for our Legal Services Program for targeted support, representation and programming in Allegheny County.

In addition to the Legal Services Program, Fair Shake has a Community Democracy Program, through which we provide community lawyering services to community organizations working towards environmental justice outcomes in their community. This program's goal is to empower citizens to effectively advocate for positive local policy and process change. General operating support provided to our Legal Services Program will also support the legal component of the Community Democracy Program in Allegheny County communities.

Context/Background Information

Fair Shake's Legal Services Program is designed to provide access to justice and give a voice to those who would otherwise be excluded from environmental decision making. We provide the full range of legal services to traditionally underserved clients, including litigating civil and administrative matters, negotiating conflict resolutions, and counseling on how to influence environmental decision-making processes for environmental justice outcomes.

Some of our key pro bono and sliding scale cases in Allegheny County include:
COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE PROTECTION:
- We represented a community association in dispute with their municipality for dumping fill on the trailhead of a community park, as well as for removing several acres of trees in the park for the creation of a permanent fill dumping space. On behalf of our client, we ultimately negotiated with the municipality for rehabilitation of the park stream and access back to the park for the community.
- We represented a community organization in negotiations with their Borough for identifying better solutions for stormwater management that was causing massive erosion problems in a community park. We also helped negotiate an easement dispute with a neighbor who was blocking access to the park.
- We represented a community development organization in their efforts to consolidate multiple vacant lots to build a community garden in their municipality.
- We represented a community association in options development against a proposal to site a warehouse distribution facility in their community.
- We provided counsel to and supported negotiations with a land trust organization in a contract dispute with a construction company for a regional trail system.

CLEAN AIR PROTECTION:
- We represented a community association in their efforts to increase air quality monitoring and find solutions for a recycling plant. Our work involved drafting contracts for testing equipment and cameras, reviewing air quality permits and helping with commenting, & supporting negotiations with the plant owners and discussions with the Allegheny County Health Department for increased testing and monitoring. We are also supporting this association in

their efforts to form as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
- We represent a community association in their efforts against industrial air pollution, as well as a residential association affected by a class action lawsuit for trespass from the same industry.

WATERSHED PROTECTION:
- We represented a community association on options development for opposition to expansion of a salt storage facility.
- We represented two community organizations in reviewing a consent decree requiring numerous improvements to a sewer system in Allegheny County and produced an easy to understand document on the decree.
- We represented two different community associations in opposing the siting of unconventional fracking wells in their communities.

Project Goals

With general operating support from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation, Fair Shake will support the following goals to underserved Allegheny County individuals, families, community organizations, and community coalitions through our primary programming:

1. Continue providing high-quality legal representation for low-to-moderate income clients and community associations in Allegheny County on land use, community green space protection, air quality, watershed protection, and fracking matters.

Fair Shake is seeking general operating support for our Legal Services Program to maintain the provision of high-quality legal service representation though our pro bono, sliding scale, and public interest litigation programs for underserved populations in Allegheny County.

2. Continue providing community lawyering efforts to empower Allegheny County environmental justice communities to realize their environmental and community goals.

Building on the work initiated throughout the region, Fair Shake is seeking general operating support for our Community Democracy Program to expand our community lawyering services throughout Allegheny County environmental justice communities.

Fair Shake's specific goals for this Program include:
- Continue providing technical assistance to Sto-Rox community leaders and the McKee's Rocks CDC for developing Community Benefits processes and Agreement frameworks for implementation at the municipal level.
- Support the Stowe Twp/McKee's Rocks coalition's negotiations with local municipal leaders and developers to implement key provisions of the Community Benefits Agreements.
- Continue to strengthen relationships with Allegheny County partners working on environmental justice issues, identifying opportunities to provide community lawyering in support of fostering local process and policy change.

3. Continue providing free legal clinics to underserved communities in Allegheny County to assist community

members in understanding complex issues facing their communities.

Additionally, we are seeking general operating support to implement at least two free legal clinics to Allegheny County environmental justice communities in need. Our free legal clinics are designed to assist community members and organizations in understanding complex legal issues facing their communities, such as the legal landscape facing residents impacted by major industrial operators, and to advise on matters that enhance individual and community opportunity and well-being.

Population to be served

Fair Shake's primary goal is to provide access to justice for those that do not normally have the means to secure legal services for their environmental and community needs. We serve low-to-moderate income individuals, families, neighborhood associations, and organizations in communities impacted by industrial activity and environmental degradation throughout Allegheny County and the Ohio River Valley.

Clients we serve in Allegheny County primarily reside in environmental justice communities that meet local, state, and federal Environmental Justice Index Standards for pollution, socioeconomic indicators, health disparities, and climate change impact risks.

Demographic data of the specific communities we engage with include:

Clairton, PA
Population: 6,574
Poverty rate: 21.1%
Median income: $36,830
Race & Ethnicity: 54.8% White, 42% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 3.2% Multiracial

McKee's Rocks, PA
Population: 5,892
Poverty rate: 30.4%
Median income: $31,130
Race & Ethnicity: 51.3% White, 31.2% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 4.77% Hispanic, 2.77% Multiracial, 2.29% Asian, Other 7.67%

Greater Hill District/Uptown, PA
Population: 5,882
Median income: $23,603
Race & Ethnicity: 61% White, 32% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 5% Hispanic, 2% Asian

North Braddock, PA
Population: 4,372
Poverty rate: 26.4%
Median income: $39,311
Race & Ethnicity: 45% White, 44% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 6% Multiracial, 5% Other

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name Corinne Ogrodnik

Title Development Director

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	821940719
Year Founded	2017
Mission Statement	Hugh Lane raises health with LGBTQ+ and HIV communities in Western PA by addressing social determinants of health.
Executive Director	Sarah Rosso
Executive Director Email	sarah@hughlane.org
Preferred Pronouns	they/them/theirs
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Nicky Ripley
Title	Legal Aid Attorney
Email	nicky@hughlane.org
Organization Address	925 Brighton Ave Pittsburgh, PA, 15233
Phone Number	(412) 973-5053
Website	http://www.hughlane.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	2,200,000
Grant Request Name	LGBTQ+ Legal Education
Summary of Request	To support the changing legal needs of LGBTQ+ and HIV+ people in Allegheny County, especially those experiencing spikes in housing insecurity, Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation will offer direct services and community clinics in the organization's service areas, which include: name changes and ID document assistance (a frequent pain point for accessing safe housing and social services), housing rights, public benefits, and expungements.
Total Project Cost	100,000
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024

Overview of Grant Request

Hugh Lane will innovate its current legal services to broaden its reach with marginalized and historically hard to reach groups experiencing a changing legal landscape.

When surveying clients, Hugh Lane found that a majority of clients were unaware of Allegheny County legal aid resources, were unaware of their basic legal rights, and had all struggled with legal issues, often complex, in the last 12 months. With an extensive community following, robust programming, and hundreds of clients annually, Hugh Lane is well-positioned to be a leading legal resource that educates, provides representation, and otherwise supports LGBTQ+ and HIV community members facing legal issues.

In partnership with the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund's (TLDEF) Name Change Project, Hugh Lane will update its identity documentation advocacy to expand legal recognition of clients' correct name and gender markers through individual representation, pro se assistance, and community clinics. This work will improve access to essential documentation including birth certificates, photo ID/Driver's Licenses, and social security cards. Ensuring clients (esp. houseless or housing insecure clients) have valid, up-to-date ID documents that reflect their correct name and identity improves ease of interfacing with social services, government services, health care, and insurance systems.

Hugh Lane legal services will address an additional pressing need in trans and gender-nonconforming communities: the impacts of changing state policy landscapes. It is essential to support the documentation and access needs of trans and gender-nonconforming political refugees from neighboring states with increasingly prevalent anti-translaws and regulations (as well as local residents with legal documents/relationships with these hostile jurisdictions). Hugh Lane will leverage referral relationships with entities where incoming out-of-state trans and gender-nonconforming people are likely to present, including medical providers like Central Outreach Wellness Center and Allies for Health & Wellbeing, and social service agencies like Proud Haven and Auberle.

In addition, Hugh Lane will work with these local partners to better serve clients who are low-income, disabled, and unhoused/housing insecure. Hugh Lane will work together with partners to expand housing and eviction defense; expungement; and public benefits advocacy work to address rising disparities. Hugh Lane will hold clinics and workshops with partner agencies; will educate partner agencies so they best understand when to refer clients to Hugh Lane for legal aid; and will create a set of tools for LGBTQ+ people to help community members understand their legal rights, and when to seek legal support.

Context/Background Information

Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation's services address the social determinants of health (as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) to improve health outcomes for LGBTQ+ and HIV communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The intersecting services that Hugh Lane offers improve outcomes across the board, including health condition treatment outcomes, legal case

outcomes, and financial stability outcomes. Hugh Lane services decrease isolation; improve social supports; meet food, housing, and health access needs; and more.

These services include:

- Community Services: Community Health Workers, food pantry, housing services, legal services, and emergency financial assistance.
- Mental Health Supports: Behavioral health and psychosocial support groups, isolation prevention and social network building, and chosen family programs.
- Youth & Family Services: Supportive family services for Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) Departments; Out of School Time programs for youth; Big Sibling mentorship for youth; social and behavioral health group events.
- Senior Services: Home visits, events, social groups, intergenerational groups, and service navigation support.
- Training Center of Excellence: Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) trainings for the Department of Human Services, social service and medical providers, and corporate settings.

Hugh Lane's legal services are best understood as one component of wraparound services that address individual mental health needs, social support needs, basic needs, and legal needs; all provided with the aim of improving the overall health of LGBTQ+ and HIV communities.

Legal services are offered in conjunction with this spectrum of support services, which enhances client engagement. When clients' basic needs are being addressed, their time, energy, and focus are freed up to participate in their cases, which leads to better case outcomes.

An imminent negative determinant for LGBTQ+ people is the impact of national, state, and local politicians using their public platforms as well as governmental systems to target LGBTQ+ people. This has downstream effects on legal, social, and mental health outcomes. LGBTQ+ people report feeling increased fear and isolation, and pressure to "pass" with a binary gender presentation and/or identity.

Legal services can protect LGBTQ+ people's rights in public; in part by ensuring their documentation matches their correct name and identity, allowing them to be less fearful in any situation where they are asked or required to provide identification to participate. In addition, legal services can help support LGBTQ+ clients who experience housing, healthcare, and public benefits barriers and/or discrimination.

Hugh Lane partners with local, regional, statewide, and national organizations to best serve clients, including local law firms and schools, medical and social providers, County & State DHS, CenterLink, and the National SOGIE Center.

Project Goals

Hugh Lane's LGBTQ+ Legal Education Project seeks to increase Allegheny County's LGBTQ+ and HIV communities' understanding of their legal rights and legal resources; to empower trans and gender non-conforming community members to access essential documentation that reflects

their correct names and gender identities; and to assist LGBTQ+ and HIV community members with accessing housing and public benefits through education and representation.

To increase community understanding of legal rights and resources, Hugh Lane will utilize its communications platforms such as social media, e-mail, and print publications. Hugh Lane will provide in-person education to partner providers, community members, and potential clients.

To empower community members in name change and essential documentation support, Hugh Lane will work with TLDEF to co-create how-to documents, workshops, and process instructions. Hugh Lane will hold clinics connecting interested clients one-on-one with attorneys to talk them through required documents, steps and forms. In complicated cases, Hugh Lane will provide direct representation, and where appropriate, Hugh Lane will provide pro se documents and instructions.

To assist community members with accessing housing and public benefits, Hugh Lane will use a combination of clinics, workshops, pro se support, and representation. Hugh Lane will provide workshops educating community members regarding housing, expungement, and public benefit access and discrimination. Hugh Lane will host clinics to help clients assess their issues in these areas, and will direct clients to next steps from educating them about pro se processes, to directing them to an appropriate referral, to providing representation.

Population to be served

Hugh Lane seeks to increase its legal services to serve at least 300 clients in 2024, through a mixture of representation, pro se support, and community clinics.

Hugh Lane anticipates demographics remaining similar in 2024 to last year's data.

Last year, Hugh Lane served 230 clients, 75% in Allegheny County, and 25% in surrounding and nearby counties. 36% of clients were unemployed, 48% were employed (full-time, part-time, self-employed, contract), 10% were students, 6% were under employment age or retired. 71% of clients were white, 21.5% were Black, 4.5% were Latinx/Hispanic, 2% were Native/Indigenous, and 1% were AAPI. 80% of Hugh Lane clients identify under the trans umbrella. 44% of clients identify as men, 35% as women, 21% as gender non-conforming (nonbinary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, or Two Spirit). The legal issues clients face include name change, housing, public benefits, discrimination, employment, expungement.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature	
Date	Saturday, December 25, 1982
Name	Jennifer Yoder
Title	Continuous Quality Improvement, Hugh Lane

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Neighborhood Legal Services Association
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	25-1157129
Year Founded	1966
Mission Statement	The mission of Neighborhood Legal Services Association (NLS) is to meet the civil legal needs of low-income and vulnerable individuals in our community through effective legal representation and education. We envision a just community where all people are treated fairly and have access to civil legal representation to meet their basic needs of safety, economic security, and stability.
Executive Director	Ms. I. Kristine Bergstrom, Esq.
Executive Director Email	bergstromk@nlsa.us
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Christine Kirby
Title	Director of Development
Email	kirbyc@nlsa.us
Organization Address	928 Penn Avenue Pittsburgh, PA, 15222
Phone Number	(412) 586-6137
Fax	(412) 765-3223
Website	www.nlsa.us
Current Annual Operating Budget	7,925,043
Grant Request Name	Preventing Evictions, Stabilizing Homes through Community Partnerships
Summary of Request	To support NLS's Eviction Prevention Advocacy and Collaborative Housing Stabilization Efforts. Funding will be used to support legal advice and representation of tenants facing eviction and/or other types of housing instability (loss of utilities, denial of housing benefits, etc.) and to provide support to volunteer attorney to foster increased pro bono involvement. The main goal for this project is to end disruptive displacements via eviction.

Total Project Cost	101,587
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024
Overview of Grant Request	NLS proposes to strengthen its eviction defense program and build capacity to better serve low-income tenants facing eviction and/or loss of their home in efforts to stabilize housing and prevent homelessness by: 1. Supporting mediation as an eviction alternative by providing legal aid advice and legal review of mediation agreements; 2. Increase attorney staffing for Lawyer of the Day activities in communities experiencing a high volume of landlord/tenant complaint filings. 3. Grow NLS's capacity to provide legal advice and conduct legal review of mediation agreements on an ongoing basis by building a model volunteer project to train and support private attorneys in providing these legal services pro bono. These targeted strategies for improving housing and opportunity to those who are most impacted will not only provide expanded access to legal help, these tactics will shift more power to those who have been most disadvantaged. Enforcing renters' rights and protections because Black and Brown households are more likely to be renters, and they experience housing instability, eviction and homelessness at unduly high rates. Proposed project activities include: • Work with Just Mediation Pittsburgh (JMP) and RentHelpPGH to pilot Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) in select Magisterial District Courts that have high eviction filings. NLS will give legal advice to low-income tenants prior to their mediation and reviews mediation agreements before execution, when requested, to ensure a legal agreement. NLS will perform this function using staff attorneys and via an expanded panel of volunteer lawyers. NLS will also provide mediation review to tenants through direct referrals from JMP. • Expand attorney staffing to provide legal aid to prevent evictions in our Lawyer of the Day (LOTD) program currently serving the Hill District and Homewood with planned expansion to McKeesport. The LOTD is a successful eviction prevention model that combines outreach and resource navigation conducted by RentHelpPGH and legal representation of tenants at MDJ eviction hearings. Currently, only one NLS attorney is available to cover two sites, additional attorney support will add much needed legal capacity to the project and add to NLS's efforts to diversify its legal staff. LOTD attorneys also represent tenants on meritorious appeals to Common Pleas court. • Develop a model pro bono project to increase the

availability of legal help to low-income people facing eviction and to engage more lawyers and other volunteers in pro bono service to prevent evictions. Activities include creating training materials, providing free continuing legal education (CLEs) on the landlord tenant law to prospective and current pro bono lawyers, developing an online portal to house case handling resources, and implementing technology to facilitate volunteer matching/case scheduling.

Context/Background Information

Allegheny County continues to experience an eviction crisis that disproportionally harms low-income families and people of color. Eviction filings have returned to pre-pandemic levels. Despite increased availability of mediation, rental assistance and other tenant supports, an average of 243 landlord-tenant eviction filings occur each week, resulting in nearly 13,000 filings in 2023.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic—and the resulting eviction crisis that threatened to unhouse so many families — NLS and several collaborative partners began to work together to provide legal support and other eviction diversion services such as community outreach, resource navigation, community-based mediation, and rental assistance to Allegheny County residents facing housing instability. NLS worked with the Community Justice Project, Just Mediation Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation, RentHelp Pittsburgh and others to directly support families in eviction proceedings, through targeted outreach efforts, mediation services, resource navigation, and, of course, legal advice and representation. This alliance evolved into the Eviction Prevention Ecosystem Collaborative which s a coalition of organizations in Allegheny County working in unison to design and implement the referral, service delivery, data systems and policy solutions needed to coordinate cross-sectional eviction prevention efforts into an inclusive and comprehensive system that provides services to tenants at-risk of eviction.

The proposed Preventing Evictions, Stabilizing Homes through Community Partnerships Project supports NLS's involvement in this multi-faceted solution to remedy the eviction crisis in Allegheny County.

Project Goals

NLS has a successful record of preventing homelessness. In the report, An Ounce of Prevention, the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty encouraged funding in four key areas to help prevent homelessness, one of which was specifically to make legal services and legal support services available to help combat homelessness. Access to legal representation truly makes a difference in the outcomes of individual cases, particularly in housing and utility cases. Legal representation can make the difference between the tenant’s ability to keep their housing and the loss of their housing, sometimes resulting in homelessness. NLS will continue to build on our record of eviction prevention, helping low-income families prevent homelessness, and expanding access to justice for marginalized communities. Legal aid provided by NLS will contribute to racial equity and produce the following outcomes.

NLS's outcome data for our Lawyer of the Day program shows 40% of the clients represented achieve a favorable outcome, as compared to outcomes of less than 10% in MDJ courtrooms where the program does not operate.

Program Delivery:
1. NLS will serve a minimum of 80 client via the Lawyer of the Day program.

2. NLS will provide brief advice and/or review of mediation agreements to 30 tenants at risk of eviction.

3. NLS will develop and launch an online volunteer resource portal to provide 24/7 to training and case handling resources to support volunteer attorneys providing legal representation, brief advice and/or mediation review.

4. NLS will conduct two (2) Continuing Legal Education seminars for attorneys and/or mediators in efforts to expand access to legal counsel.

5. Refer 35 eviction/mediation cases to pro bono counsel.

Population to be served

NLS intends to serve primarily low-income individuals and their families with incomes below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines which is an annual household income below $37,500 for a family of four. ACBF funding will allow NLS to serve a limited number of individuals experiencing housing instability who have incomes up to 187.5% of the federal poverty guidelines or $56,000 annually. The working poor demographic.

NLS provides civil legal aid to people who have nowhere else to turn when experiencing a critical legal problem and works to ensure equal justice. Our support takes many forms. We educate; we give advice; and, if necessary, we provide representation in court. In every case, our clients have reached a point of desperation because at least one of their basic needs of life – safety, shelter, food, warmth – is at risk.

Last year, NLS handled 10,527 cases helping over 21,300 individuals and their families resolve critical civil legal problems involving life's most basic needs: shelter, income, food, healthcare, essential benefits and personal safety. We assist a diverse demographic: 74% of our clients are female and 25% male; 47% of our clients have children under 18. In Allegheny County 49% of our clients are Black, 43% White, 3% Hispanic, 4% Multiple, 1% Asian.

This project will focus on serving low-income residents in Allegheny County who are disproportionately likely to face civil legal crises involving housing instability.

Every year, thousands of low-income individuals and victims of domestic violence in Allegheny County turn to NLS with civil legal problems that affect basic needs like housing, health, employment, and family safety. These are people who do not have the means to hire counsel to work out the civil legal problems that come their way. From protecting

battered women and children to helping a single mom collect the child support she deserves, to helping an elderly person prevent the loss of their home from a predatory loan, NLS is working closely with communities and individuals to help people protect themselves.

NLS with this project will serve 125 low-income Allegheny County residents experiencing housing instability. NLS will also serve/support 25-40 pro bono attorneys.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name Christine Kirby

Title Development Director

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	North Hills Community Outreach
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	25-1553057
Year Founded	1987
Mission Statement	North Hills Community Outreach is a community and inter-faith based organization addressing the needs of people in crisis, hardship and poverty.
Executive Director	Tom Baker
Executive Director Email	tjbaker@nhco.org
Preferred Pronouns	he/him/his
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Kerry Keegan Mulhern
Title	Finance and Development Assistant
Email	kkmulhern@nhco.org
Organization Address	1975 Ferguson Road Allison Park, PA, 15101
Phone Number	(412) 487-6316
Fax	(412) 487-9784
Website	www.nhco.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	2.4
Grant Request Name	Ask the Attorney and Legal Programs
Summary of Request	To provide free noncriminal legal advice via volunteer attorneys to low-income individuals and families within the NHCO service area. Topics of discussion include divorce, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant concerns and more. Legal consultations are meant to provide advice and direction on how to proceed with a legal matter
Total Project Cost	17,750
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024

Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024
Overview of Grant Request	The purpose of the grant is to provide direct legal assistance to low-income families and seniors who could not afford to pay for legal assistance in our communities through coordinating our Ask the Attorney program which volunteer attorneys provide free 30 minute consultations to low-income families and seniors. In addition we will provide individualized assistance and referrals to low-income and/or elderly individuals seeking assistance with legal matters and hold or refer to workshops in the area of elder law, including arranging for nursing care or funeral costs, establishing power of attorney, outlining health care directives, etc.
Context/Background Information	North Hills Community Outreach has been a recipient of financial and in-kind assistance for over a decade with the ACBF Attorneys Against Hunger Project and the Elderly Program in addition to the last 4 years receiving support for our legal services offered to low-income families and individuals within our 40 communities and 50 zip codes that we serve.
Project Goals	To provide legal resources to over 100+ low income families, individuals and seniors living within the 250% Federal Poverty Guidelines that reside within NHCO's service area. We will continue to provide free legal help through our Ask the Attorney program and provide free Legal Shield Memberships for a year so that families can take advantage of that service. We will continue to refer clients to additional legal resources such as the Pittsburgh Pro Bono, Neighborhood Legal Services and the New PMC Listens hotline for help navigating the Allegheny County courts.
Population to be served	All low-income individuals, families and seniors regardless of race, creed, gender or identities living under 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines with the communities and neighborhoods that NHCO serves including Bairdford, Bakerstown, Bradford Woods, Curtisville, Gibsonia, Warrendale, Wexford, Wildwood, Allison Park, Glenshaw, Ingomar, Ross, Valencia, Brackenridge, Cheswick, Creighton, Harwick, Indianola, Natrona Heights, Rural Ridge, Russelton, Tarentum, Springdale, Millvale, Etna, Sharpsburg, Blawnox, Baden, Freeport, Leetsdale, Sewickley, Bellevue, West View, Avalon, Ben Avon and McKnight.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name	Kerry Keegan Mulhern
Title	Finance and Development Assistant

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	25-1264376
Year Founded	1974
Mission Statement	Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) was founded in 1974 as one of the first six (6) domestic violence shelters in the United States. WC&S works to fulfill its mission to strengthen our ability to meet the individual and evolving needs of those affected by domestic violence by investing in the growth of our people, deepening community engagement, and amplifying the voices of all survivors. Over the past 48 years, WC&S has created and implemented effective programs for intervention and prevention of domestic violence, including its Civil Law Project (CLP). CLP is an incorporated law firm within WC&S and CLP has a primary purpose of providing civil legal representation to victims of intimate partner violence (IPV). CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts who provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services to help victims obtain justice, autonomy, restoration, and safety. The primary legal matters handled by CLP involve Family Law cases as well as Immigration legal advice. All clients of CLP are referred to the full range of WC&S's DV program free services that include: 24-Hour Hotline with a text/chat option; an Emergency Shelter for adults and children in immediate danger; a Children's Advocacy Program for children healing from trauma; an Empowerment Center which offers support groups and other counseling, therapy, and outreach to non-resident clients; Medical Advocacy for patients admitted to local hospitals; non-attorney Legal Advocates to provide safety planning and court accompaniment as victims access protective relief from the justice system; and a Refugee/Immigrant/Limited English Proficient Team of multilingual staff. In the most recently completed fiscal year, from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, WC&S provided services to more than 7,600 adult and child survivors of domestic violence and CLP provided legal representation for 335 new clients in 879 legal matters involving IPV.
Executive Director	Nicole Molinaro
Executive Director Email	nicolem@wcspittsburgh.org
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Organization Address	P.O. Box 9024 Pittsburgh, PA, 15224

Phone Number	(412) 894-4564
Fax	(412) 687-3315
Website	https://wcspittsburgh.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	8,291,402
Grant Request Name	Complex Divorce Representation for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence
Summary of Request	To support the WC&S' Civil Law Project (CLP) in its free legal representation for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in divorce cases with alimony and/or property claims. CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts and provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services. The goal of this representation is to assist victims of IPV in obtaining safety, justice, autonomy, and restoration.
Total Project Cost	1,078,665
Type of Support	Existing Program/Project Support
Project Start Date	Monday, January 1, 2024
Project End Date	Tuesday, December 31, 2024
Overview of Grant Request	Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) seeks funding for its Civil Law Project (CLP) to support the salary of a specialized domestic violence/family law attorney to provide free, legal representation in divorce actions with alimony and/or property claims for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV). Priority will be given to those IPV victims who need to file or respond to a divorce action to maintain a residence, spousal support, and/or limited financial assets. The requested funding would assist a CLP attorney to provide specialized divorce representation for IPV victims who have suffered abuse as defined in the Protection from Abuse (PFA) statute and whose incomes are at or below 187.5% of the federal poverty guidelines (in keeping with IOLTA funding guidelines). Ten (10) such victims would receive free legal representation in divorce actions that include alimony and/or property claims. Legal services to be provided would include the filing of appropriate divorce pleadings along with any needed alimony or equitable distribution claims, filing of required inventories/forms/agreements, and attendance at any motions, conciliations and/or hearings. Thus, WC&S requests $10,000 for CLP to provide legal representation in ten (10) complex divorce cases. WC&S has received funding from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation for such work since 2009 and has consistently found that this funding for CLP is helping to meet a significant, valuable, and ongoing client need. This can be seen in an ongoing divorce case funded by past ACBF funding. CLP is representing a Wife whose estranged husband physically attacked her at the marital residence, leading to his arrest and Wife's filing for

Protection from Abuse (PFA). CLP represented Wife in the PFA case and assisted her in filing a divorce so that Wife could retain the marital residence for her and her two children, as well as protect her pension. The case is nearing completion, and CLP has negotiated a Marriage Settlement Agreement that will enable Wife to maintain her home and her financial autonomy. Specifically, Wife will retain the residence, pay Husband less than half of the marital equity in the home, and she will retain her entire pension.
All IPV victims represented by CLP will be referred for the full range of free services available at WC&S, including crisis intervention, counseling, children's programming, emergency shelter, housing advocacy, and 24-hour hotline services. CLP clients will also receive the support of an Immediate Needs Coordinator (WC&S INC) who provides funding for safety and extensive community resources. WC&S' Refugee, Immigrant, and Limited English (RIL) team of six multilingual advocates, including an immigration attorney, will also supplement the work of the CLP Attorney. Such comprehensive support from WC&S will provide invaluable assistance to CLP clients as they work to end the violence in their lives.

Context/Background Information

WC&S, founded in 1974 and one of the leading domestic violence programs in the nation, developed a Civil Law Project (CLP) in 2001 with funding from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV). Since then, CLP has grown to be a respected provider of free, legal services in Allegheny County with a statewide reputation for high-quality legal work on behalf of IPV victims. Current funding for CLP includes continuing support from PCADV as well as grants from the PA Supreme Court's IOLTA Board and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. CLP, however, is not fully funded by such grants and the current volume of requests for legal services by victims of IPV exceeds CLP's capacity to provide requested legal representation.
When CLP was established, WC&S organized a formal advisory committee to assess legal needs. Committee members included Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS), the Allegheny County Bar Association, Family Court, the County Law Department, and DV program representatives. The committee assisted CLP with developing case priorities to target gaps in county legal services and prevent duplication. CLP continues to work with these partners (on task forces, committees, joint grants, fundraising, pro bono efforts, etc.) to maximize local legal resources and ensure that DV victims' emerging legal needs are addressed. In 2008, local providers of legal services (NLSA, YWCA, CLP, Women's Law Project) met with the Bar Association's Pro Bono leadership to identify gaps in existing services for women. In response, CLP began to handle more divorce defense which was identified as a gap area. CLP has continued meeting with the Bar Association's Pro Bono leadership and NLS, including through a formal Victims of Crime Act collaborative project, to adjust case priorities in accordance with changing attorney resources and client need. CLP uses client surveys to obtain feedback on how CLP can best meet their needs. Responsiveness to client need is at the core of the management system used by CLP and all of WC&S.
CLP currently operates with six full-time attorneys including Legal Director Brittany Conkle, Chief Legal Officer Lorraine

Bittner, four staff attorneys, two paralegals, and a legal administrative assistant. The law project is housed off-site from the main WC&S facility, in an office suite in downtown Pittsburgh that is close to the courts. As a law firm within WC&S, CLP has its own confidentiality and policies/procedures such that no other WC&S department can have access to its client information. CLP attorneys are longstanding members of PCADV's Civil Legal Representation network of providers of civil legal assistance for domestic violence victims in Pennsylvania and they receive training and support from PCADV as well as annual monitoring.
Additionally, CLP is regularly monitored by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and PCADV and receives oversight from the PA IOLTA Board's grant managers.

Project Goals

Continuing support from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation is requested to enable a WC&S Civil Law Project (CLP) attorney to provide specialized divorce representation for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) whose incomes are at or below 187.5% of the federal poverty guidelines. Ten (10) such victims would receive free legal representation by a CLP attorney in divorce actions that include alimony and/or property claims. As set forth in the proposed budget for this project, the CLP attorney would handle ten (10) divorce cases for 22 hours each (project total hours of 220) at a rate of $35.79 (plus benefits) per hour. This should enable the CLP attorney to achieve favorable legal outcomes for the ten (10) IPV victims. Legal services would include the filing of divorce pleadings with any needed alimony or equitable distribution claims, the filing of required inventories/forms/agreements, and attendance at any motions, conciliations and/or hearings. Anticipated legal outcomes would be similar to those obtained by CLP under past ACBF funding, for example: representation for an elderly client who was able to obtain a very small amount from equitable distribution but which helped her to pay outstanding debts; ensuring the proceeds of the sale of a marital residence were placed into an escrow account after Husband attempted to secretly sell the property; obtaining exclusive possession of the marital residence for a young mother while CLP continues to represent her in the divorce matter; and drafting divorce documents for a young Nepali immigrant Wife who was viciously attacked by her Husband who remains in jail.
CLP's service delivery plan includes the CLP attorneys first meeting with IPV victims in the safety and security of the WC&S's main facility or at safe locations offsite. After initial interviews and legal advice, cases would be accepted for extended representation if it is demonstrated that: client is a victim of IPV; client has suffered abuse as defined in PA's PFA Act; client meets the income guidelines; and the divorce action is related to the client's IPV situation. Priority would be given where the safety of client is at high risk, client is in a DV shelter, or client is faced with loss of housing, income, or limited assets. For all cases, the CLP attorney will connect the clients with the full range of free DV program services offered by WC&S, which include 24-hour hotline assistance for safety planning and emotional support, shelter and housing assistance (including financial relocation assistance), immediate needs coordination,

counseling for victims and their children, children's programming, and more.

Population to be served

The population to be served by the proposed project are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), developed by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reports that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men will be victims of physical violence by an intimate partner that can lead to a host of long-term consequences for physical and mental health, financial stability, housing, and employment. According to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, IPV victims are being served in large numbers in Allegheny County. Every day, there are an average of eighty-six (86) calls to 911 for domestic violence. Every month, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police administer approximately 110 Lethality Assessment Screens when responding to IPV, and more than 72% of the victims in these cases are found to be at high risk for being killed by their intimate partner and are referred to the Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) for safety planning and assistance. Every year, over 3,450 individuals file for Protection from Abuse (PFA) relief from Family Court and approximately 3,760 file for Emergency PFA relief from the Minor Judiciary (AOPC). In Allegheny County, there are over 3,500 arrests made each year for domestic violence. Annually, WC&S provides services to over 7,600 domestic violence victims in Allegheny County.

From this population of domestic violence cases, IPV victims are referred to the WC&S Civil Law Project (CLP) for legal representation. In the most recently completed fiscal year of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, CLP opened cases for 335 new clients and provided legal assistance in 879 legal cases involving IPV. The new clients included 58 victims who were refugees/immigrants and 39 with limited English proficiency, whose primary languages were reported as: Spanish (9); Nepali (9); Arabic (6); Uzbek (3); Mandarin (2); Ukrainian (2); Swahili (1); Portuguese (1); Russian (1); Polish (1); Pashto (1); Hindi (1); and Urdu (1). As confirmed by a recent PA IOLTA Board analysis, the demographic make-up of CLP clients demonstrates that CLP is delivering its services throughout the various racial and ethnic communities of Allegheny County, including traditionally underserved and marginalized communities. In fiscal year 2022-2023, there were 537 CLP clients whose legal cases were finalized by CLP and the racial/ethnic breakdown for these clients was as follows: 202 (37.62%) African American; 38 (7.08%) Asian/Pacific Islander; 11 (2.05%) Hispanic/Latino; 1 (.19%) Native American; 257 (47.86%) White (non-Hispanic); and 28 (5.21%) multiracial/other.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature	
Date	Friday, September 8, 2023
Name	Nicole Molinaro
Title	President/CEO

Allegheny County Bar Foundation Legal Aid Provider Grants

Name of Organization	Women's Law Project
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	23-7354667
Year Founded	1974
Mission Statement	WLP leverages the power of the law to eliminate gender bias and discrimination.
Executive Director	Ms. Susan Frietsche
Executive Director Email	sfrietsche@womenslawproject.org
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Brittany Green
Title	Director of Development
Email	bgreen@womenslawproject.org
Organization Address	239 Fourth Avenue, Suite 2108 Pittsburgh, PA, 15222
Phone Number	(412) 281-2787
Website	www.womenslawproject.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	1,966,117
Grant Request Name	General Operating Support
Summary of Request	To support the general operating budget of the Women's Law Project. Our organization provides legal representation and support to western Pennsylvanians on issues across the gender equity spectrum, including sexual harassment in schools and workplaces, pregnancy discrimination, and reproductive health care. Most of our clients are low-resourced community members who are underserved and unable to find legal help anywhere else.
Total Project Cost	1,966,117
Type of Support	General Operating Support
Project Start Date	Wednesday, November 1, 2023
Project End Date	Thursday, October 31, 2024

Overview of Grant Request

WLP envisions a society in which justice and equality of opportunity are not limited by sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, economic status, disability, or intersecting identities, especially race. We use litigation, advocacy, and public education to bend law and policy toward an arc of justice. We view bodily autonomy as a keystone issue in the fight for equality, and much of our work is focused on reproductive rights. Because gender bias is so deeply ingrained in our culture, our work is multi-pronged: we advance equal opportunities and equitable treatment in health care, education, athletics, employment, public benefits, insurance, and family law, and seek justice for survivors of gender-based violence.

We currently provide legal services to the freestanding abortion providers in the state, as well as to clinic escorts and volunteers. Our Pittsburgh providers are especially important as they are geographically close to several states that have banned or severely restricted abortion access. We have also brought civil actions and collaborated with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to defend doctors, patients, and clinic volunteers from violent extremists. We represent minors in need of judicial bypass, a court proceeding to permit mature minors under 18 to consent on their own to confidential abortion care. We represent low-wage workers and students in sex and pregnancy discrimination cases. We launched our Pittsburgh-based program #MeTooPA in 2018, where we provide representation to students and low-wage workers in sexual harassment cases. We recently expanded our Legal Navigator program to our western Pennsylvania office. This program provides legal advice and representation in pregnancy discrimination cases.

Context/Background Information

The political landscape has had a devastating impact on our community. On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization obliterated nearly 50 years of precedent to strip abortion rights out of the Constitution and invite the states to oppress women and birthing people. We now face the threat of a concerted campaign to take away reproductive and sexual autonomy, starting with young people. We are already seeing this campaign broaden beyond abortion to contraception, sexuality education, and fertility treatment. Legislation attacking LGBTQ youth is proliferating, particularly bills aimed at trans youth. Crisis pregnancy centers targeting young people are developing more sophisticated tactics for deceiving and tracking minors. And in a few chilling cases that illustrate how hostile the climate has become, pregnant people, usually women of color, have been investigated and criminally charged for having a miscarriage.

In countering these threats, we work closely with networks of allies. In addition to partnering with the freestanding abortion providers in the state, we also work with local, state, and national organizations who are aligned with our values and goals of advancing reproductive and bodily autonomy. For example, we have worked closely with national repro organizations on expanding judicial bypass access for minors in Pennsylvania by jointly training new volunteer attorneys for these cases. We are the de facto

legal arm of the gender justice movement in Pennsylvania, acting as a legal resource to allied organizations who need a lawyer's eye on policy statements or proposed legislation. Public education is an important part of our role as advocates. We have a vigorous public education program including original-content continuing education courses, in-person and virtual webinars and speaking engagements, earned media, an active and content-rich social media presence, and publications for lay audiences.

Project Goals

We will strategically employ impact litigation and individual representation to protect and expand the rights of women, girls, and LGBTQ+ folks in the state of Pennsylvania We are already pursuing claims based on state constitutional protections that are stronger than the federal constitution: for example, we are currently awaiting a Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling in Allegheny Reproductive Health Center v. Department of Human Services, challenging Pennsylvania's Medicaid abortion coverage ban under the Pennsylvania Equal Rights Amendment and state equal protection provisions. We hope to build upon any progress in this area to ensure that LGBTQIA people have analogous state constitutional protections, which can be invoked should their federal rights be retrenched.

Pennsylvania is important to the entire region as a source of relatively accessible reproductive health care, and this means that we have also become a larger target for anti-abortion extremists. WLP is developing legal strategies for ensuring that doctors and patients are safe and secure, and states with abortion bans are not able to enforce their bans outside their state borders.
WLP's judicial bypass representation of clients from other states has vastly increased since the 2022 Dobbs ruling. Our goal is to fully meet the increasing need for judicial bypass representation in Allegheny County. We have expanded our staff, at both the attorney and paralegal level, and we have trained volunteer attorneys in judicial bypass representation. We expect to continue to cover an increasing number of judicial bypass hearings for patients from Ohio, West Virginia, and other states.

LGBTQIA people are under attack. WLP is currently litigating two cases involving harassment, retaliation, and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and we will continue to seek out these cases.

With the passage of the Pregnant Workers' Fairness Act, all Pennsylvanians have statutory rights to pregnancy accommodations. Our goal is to publicize these rights to low-wage workers and ensure that employees working in Allegheny County have ready access to individualized legal information and advice when they are denied reasonable accommodations.

We expect that the Education Department's Title IX regulations will be promulgated in the coming months. WLP's goal is to educate the public through media and public presentations, both in person and virtual, about the strengthened protections the regulations will provide against sexual harassment and assault in educational

settings. We intend to target this educational programming to students and student-serving individuals and organizations.

WLP has always collaborated with other organizations in order to build powerful coalitions that can take on the challenges we are facing. Our goal for the coming year is to make these alliances across state lines, in recognition of the fact that we need to work regionally.

Population to be served

We represent low wage workers and students in sex and pregnancy discrimination cases. We obtain "judicial bypass" court orders permitting minors to get confidential abortion care. We represent women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ people who are not receiving equitable treatment in schools, workplaces, public accommodations, and prisons. We offer client-centered legal services prioritizing the needs of people who have no other source of legal services and who are suffering because of gender oppression and sex- and race-based stereotypes. We also represent all freestanding abortion clinics in Pennsylvania, as well as volunteer clinic escorts. We prioritize clients who would not have access to legal services without our help.

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Name Brittany Green

Title Director of Development