

# ***Welcome!***



**LOUISIANA BAR  
FOUNDATION**  
FUNDING CIVIL LEGAL AID

## **Bayou region POP UP**



Charles C. Bourque  
LBF Board Member

### **WHY IS THE LOUISIANA BAR FOUNDATION GOOD FOR THE PROFESSION?**

***Approved for 1 hour of Professionalism CLE***



LOUISIANA BAR  
**FOUNDATION**  
FUNDING CIVIL LEGAL AID

# Mission

*The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) exists to preserve, honor, and improve our system of justice by funding, developing or otherwise promoting efforts which enhance the legal profession, increase public understanding of the legal system and advance the reality of equal justice under the law.*

*So, what does this really mean?*

# Who We Are and What We Do

For more than 30 years, LBF has been a trusted authority and the state's largest funder of free **civil legal aid**. We serve Louisiana's poverty population.

Our goal is to make sure that all Louisianans, regardless of their background or income level, have access to free **civil legal services** that they need.

Our decades of experience as a responsible steward of funds along with our well-established partnerships across all 64 parishes has allowed us to help hundreds of thousands of Louisiana residents gain access to the legal system.



*LBF 2023-24 Executive Committee*

# What is Civil Legal Aid and Why Does it Matter?



**Civil Legal Aid** is free legal assistance provided to help people facing non-criminal, civil legal challenges.

Access to an attorney is not a fundamental right in civil matters.

**Civil Legal Aid** helps people with a range of issues, including assistance for veterans and military families, domestic violence, senior and elderly services, child welfare services, housing, and employment.

Access to **Civil Legal Aid** makes Louisiana's communities stronger by helping people to avoid foreclosure, protect themselves from domestic violence, gain custody of their loved ones, and safeguard their economic security.

# Who We Help



- WOMEN and MEN who are victims of domestic violence
- CHILDREN who need a stable home or special education
- ELDERLY whose economic security or health care is in jeopardy
- CONSUMERS impacted by improper lending practices
- FAMILIES facing loss of their homes
- WORKERS denied lawful wages and benefits
- DISABLED people denied opportunities
- VETERANS with disabilities
- COMMUNITIES devastated by natural disasters

# Eligibility for Services

Residents may be eligible for civil legal aid services if their family income is below 125% or 200% of federal poverty guidelines.

General guide for income eligibility for civil legal aid services.

Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
125% Poverty (No Assets)	\$18,225	\$24,650	\$31,075	\$37,500	\$43,925	\$50,350
200% Poverty (No Assets)	\$29,160	\$39,440	\$49,720	\$60,000	\$70,280	\$80,560

*Legal aid offices do not discriminate on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or age in the delivery of services or in its employment practices.*

Asset limits may also apply. Limits may be higher for senior citizens aged 60+. This is a chart for general income guidance.



# Why We Help

**40%** of Louisiana's population earn incomes below **200%** of the Federal Poverty Level.

Louisiana has more than **1.7 million** people who are potentially eligible for free civil legal aid.

We currently have **1** civil legal aid attorney for every **11,230** eligible people.

Source: *Justice Gap the unmet civil legal needs of low-income Americans, April 2022*



# Louisiana Census 2021



## How Louisiana Ranks Nationally

**1<sup>st</sup>**  
highest

### Poverty

The overall poverty rate in Louisiana was 19.6% in 2021 compared to 19% in 2019 making it the highest in the nation. This means 883,000 Louisianans lived at or below the federal poverty rate last year.

**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
highest

### Child Poverty

The share of children living in poverty in Louisiana remained high at 26.7% in 2021 from 26.8% in 2019. This leaves 285,000 Louisiana children to struggle, including over 146,000 in deep poverty.

**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
lowest

### Income

Household median income remained among the lowest in the nation, falling slightly to \$52,087 in 2021 from an inflation-adjusted \$54,125 in 2019. Racial disparities in household income persist.

**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
highest

### Income Inequality

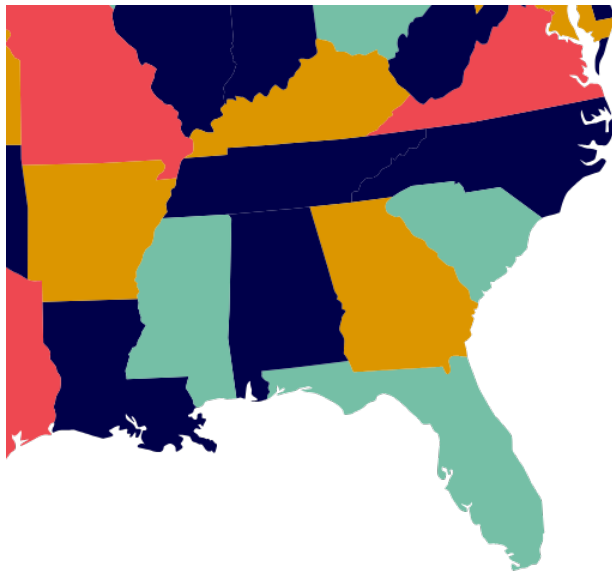
Income inequality remained high in Louisiana largely due to the high concentration of poverty - not high accumulation of wealth. The Gini Coefficient (measure of inequality) was 0.4988 in 2021.



# Southern Stats

In the South,

- Approximately **655,000** eligible problems are brought to the LSC-funded organizations annually.
- They are unable to provide any or enough legal help for **69%** of these problems.
- Low-income southerners did not receive any or sufficient legal assistance for **92% of their substantial civil legal aid problems.**



## The Prevalence of Civil Legal Problems

**75%** had 1+ problems.

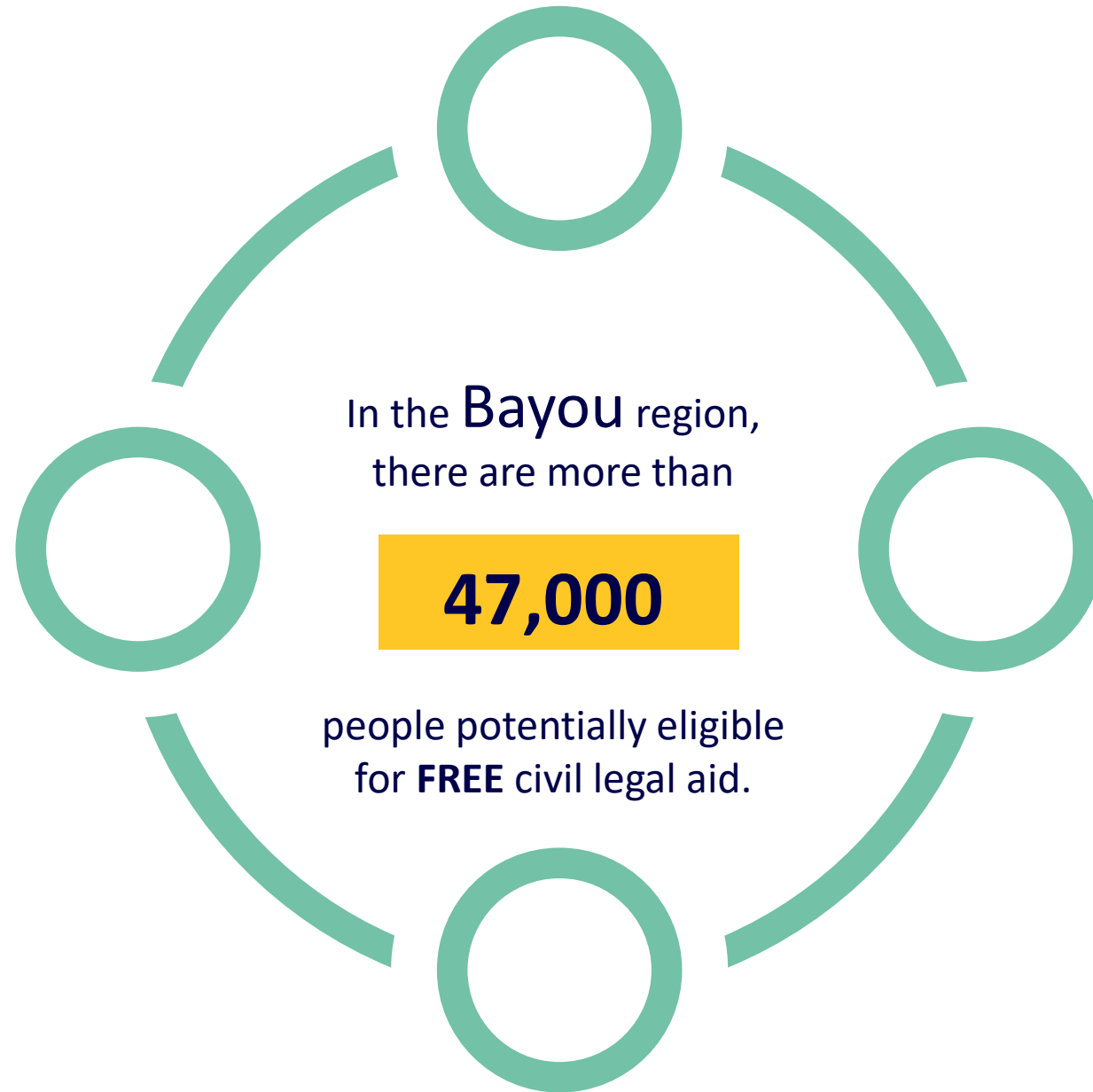
**39%** had 5+ problems.

**21%** had 10+ problems.

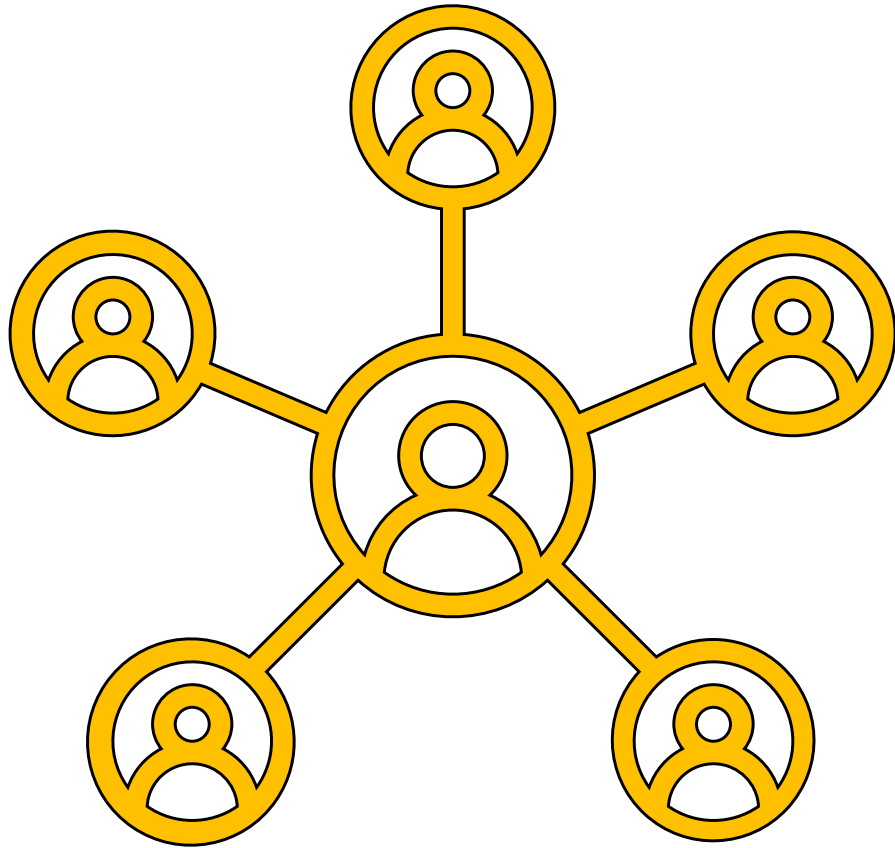
(n= 810 households)

Source: *Justice Gap the unmet civil legal needs of low-income Americans, April 2022*

# Local Stats



# Louisiana's Civil Legal Aid Network



- The responsibility for meeting the civil legal needs of Louisiana's poor falls primarily on a network of nonprofit, civil legal aid organizations.
- LBF's robust network of well-established partnerships with more than 70 grantees across the state's 64 parishes is leading community-driven efforts to help hundreds of thousands of Louisiana residents gain access to the legal system.
- In 2023-24 fiscal year we awarded \$12.7 million in grants.
- Since 1989 the LBF has provided more than **\$118.8 million** for civil justice initiatives.

# How We Help

*We award funding in the following categories:*

- Building Capital Development
- Child in Need of Care (CINC)
- Children's Legal Services
- Domestic Violence Programs
- Jock Scott Community Partnership Panel Grants
- Kids' Chance Scholarships
- Law-Related Education
- Legal Services Corporations
- Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP)
- Louisiana Housing Corporation Funding
- My Community Cares
- Other Specialized Legal Services
- Pro Bono Projects

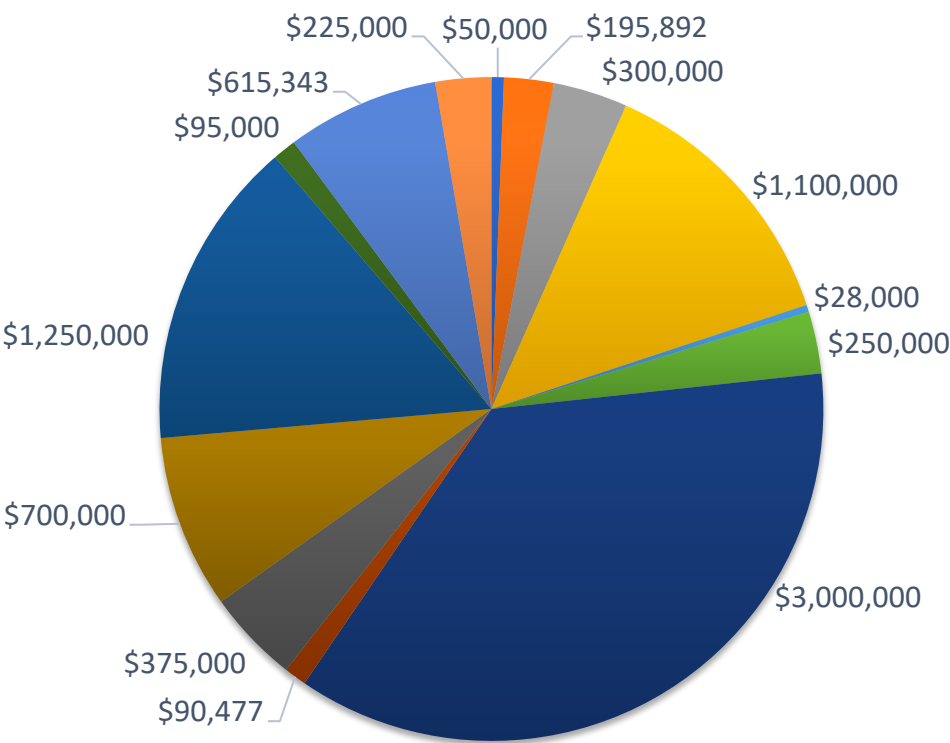


# 2023-24 Grant Funding

## \$12.7 Million

Annual Sustaining and My Community Cares applications are currently open on our website and close December 1.

LRAP and Kids' Chance Scholarship applications open December 1 and close February 2, 2024.



- Access to Justice Fund Grants
- Children's Legal Services
- Kids' Chance Scholarships
- Legal Service Corporations
- My Community Cares
- Pro Bono Projects
- Special Program and Project Funding\*
- Building Capital Development
- Domestic Violence Programs
- Law-Related Education
- Loan Repayment Assistance Program
- Other Legal Service Providers
- Pro Hac Vice
- Jock Scott Community Partnership Panel Grants



# In One Year, We Can Help

**2,498**

Domestic Violence Victims

**1,521**

Housing Matters

**8,075**

Family Law Matters

**2,414**

Children in Need of Care

**2,246**

Consumer Health & Protection Matters



# 2023-24 Statewide Grants

Innocence Project New Orleans	\$30,000
Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education	\$77,000
Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division	\$17,000
NO/AIDS Task Force dba CrescentCare	\$79,200
Disability Rights Louisiana	\$123,181
The Ella Project	\$15,000
Jock Scott Community Partnership Panel Grants	\$225,000
Kids' Chance Scholarships	\$38,000
Lagniappe Law Lab	\$484,713
Louisiana Appleseed	\$279,940
Pro Hac Vice	\$95,000
Speak Out for Justice! Focus On Civil Legal Aid	\$10,000
Access to Justice Fund Grants	\$50,000

**STATEWIDE \$1,524,034**

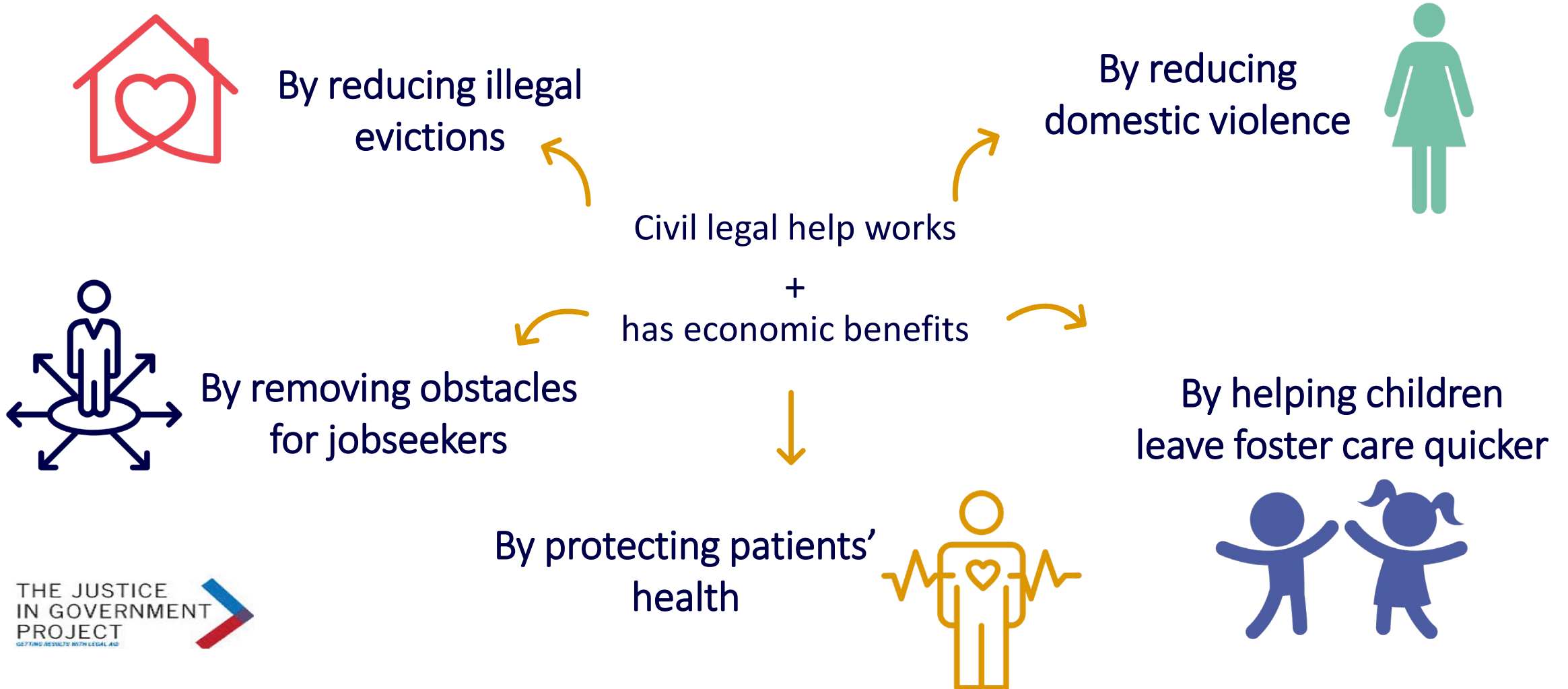
# 2023-24 Bayou Region Grants

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation (St. Mary Parish only)	\$4,284,035
Catholic Charities – Diocese of Baton Rouge	\$200,836
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans	\$65,000
Chez Hope, Inc.	\$121,137
Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes only)	\$3,028,838
The Haven, Inc.	\$118,000

**TOTAL \$7,817,846**

# How LBF Funding Helps the State

STUDIES SHOW CIVIL LEGAL AID HELPS ADVANCE STATE POLICY & SAVE MONEY



# Investing in Civil Legal Aid is Good for the State

Investing in Civil Legal Aid not only helps individuals in need, it helps everyone in Louisiana.

**\$1 = \$17.99**

For every \$1 invested in Louisiana's civil legal aid services, these programs deliver \$17.99 in immediate and long-term financial benefits.



**\$148,755,000**

The net economic impact value resulting from Louisiana civil legal activities during the 2022 fiscal year.

**100**

Types of civil legal problems





# Bayou region ROI

## MEASURING IMPACT



### ECONOMIC BENEFIT

There were **\$6,875,999.53** in direct economic benefits obtained by providing Civil Legal Aid in the Bayou Region.



### PEOPLE

In 2022, Civil Legal Aid handled **770 cases** in the Bayou Region, thereby helping **1,630 people**.

# Bayou Region Data



## LEGAL ISSUES

In 2022, the top 3 case types of Civil Legal Aid clients in the Bayou Region were **Health** (36%), **Individual Rights** (11%), & **Income Maintenance** (10%).

*Source: The Economic Impact and Social Return on Investment of Civil Legal Aid Services in the State of Louisiana 2023 by the Community Services Analysis LLC.*



# SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA LEGAL SERVICES

Free Legal Aid for Low-Income People



Laura Tuggle  
Executive Director  
Southeast Louisiana Legal Services



## Programs Projects, and Partnerships

We partner with a variety of organizations who have similar missions. We believe society benefits when everyone has equal access to justice.

**“WHEN WE SUPPORT OUR MARGINALIZED  
COMMUNITIES, WE ALL BENEFIT.  
LET'S RISE TOGETHER”**

— Deidre Robert



# Louisiana Housing Corporation

*Three-year agreement with the LBF, July 20, 2023, through June 30, 2026, to provide education, counseling, and direct representation aiding impoverished citizens in matters of title clearing, foreclosure prevention, mediation and mortgage loan modifications.*

**Client File Creation Services** provide brief services and open case files for legal representation of citizens by LHC.

**Direct Representation** and advice to citizens including but not limited to FHA borrowers, Veterans, service members and the unemployed in foreclosure defense and prevention, relief and mediation, mortgage attorneys, Know Your Rights materials for the public, case referral for legal representation, estate planning modules for the public, reporting and memos in conjunction with and for dissemination by LHC.

**Community Clinics and Outreach** for public awareness campaigns on unlawful housing issues, mortgage foreclosure mediation and modification, and heirs' property and includes education materials for attorneys, Know Your Rights materials for the public, case referral for legal representation, estate planning modules for the public, reporting and memos in conjunction with and for dissemination by LHC.

**Technology Resources** to expand statewide hotline for foreclosure and title clearing, create self-help resources with templates and court approved forms, and expand triage and content on the artificial intelligence Civil Legal Navigator access portal with these areas.

**Annual Report** of all outcomes and expenses of the work funded by the LHC.





# My Community Cares (MCC)

*A community-driven, neighborhood-based approach to strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect in Louisiana.*

Launched in four pilot parishes in 2019 to:

1. Build the capacity of local communities by providing services that support families with experience in the child welfare system.
2. Create a parish-wide organizational structure to gather information on services, make referrals and connect families with those services as well as with community members, judges, child advocates, attorneys, the Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS), schools, businesses, emergency responders, healthcare providers, churches, and nonprofit agencies.

## My Community Cares Goals

- Decrease in incidents and repeat incidents of child abuse and neglect.
- Decrease in entries into foster care.
- Decrease in placement disruptions.
- Increase in family-based placement settings; and
- Decrease time to achieve permanency.

## LBF Role

This year, LBF joined My Community Cares by awarding \$375,000 in funding for 5 full-time attorneys fully dedicated to MCC work in Caddo, Lafayette, Orleans, Ouachita, and Rapides parishes for the 2023-24 grant year. Types of cases handled by these attorneys are in the categories of domestic violence and family law, public benefits, consumer health and protection. LBF is committed to continued funding in 2024 and is currently accepting grant applications for this funding.

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION Committee

The DEI Committee works to build capacity and identify strategy through research, learning and analysis of

- (1) internal protocols and processes,
- (2) leadership and volunteer engagement practices and
- (3) client community advocacy and support of efforts.

The LBF DEI Committee hosts in-person training workshops approved for 1 hour of professionalism CLE. The sessions are led and presented by Krystal Allen of K. Allen Consulting, a global education and management consulting firm that provides customized workshops for nonprofits, specializing in the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



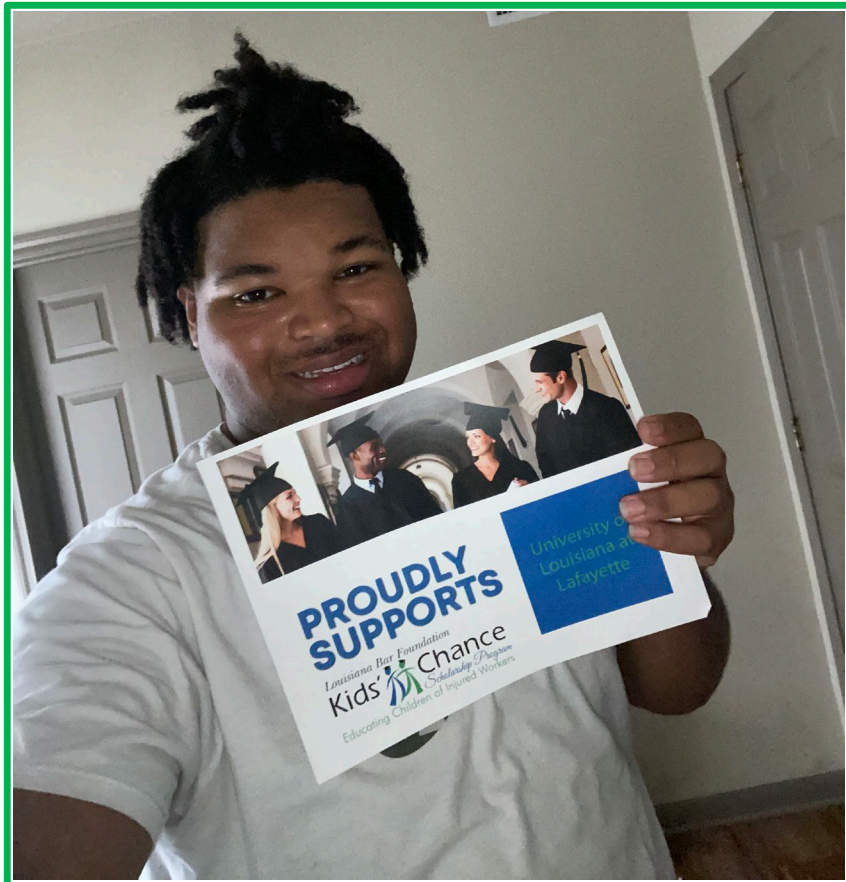


The **Louisiana Bar Foundation Kids' Chance Scholarship Program** is the state chapter of a national organization that awards scholarships to the children of Louisiana workers who have been killed or permanently and totally disabled in an accident compensable under a state or federal Workers' Compensation Act or law.

These work accidents often result in difficult challenges for the family as they struggle to overcome the financial burden of these losses.

Often a child's dream of going to college is crushed because of unexpected income loss and/or the necessity to forfeit an education for work to financially support other family members.

**Gov. John Bel Edwards has proclaimed November 13-17 Louisiana Bar Foundation Kids' Chance Awareness Week in Louisiana.**





A LOUISIANA BAR FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PARTNER

*Lagniappe Law Lab Justice Bus creates access for people living in rural areas of Louisiana using technology and mobile service*

The Justice Bus is a mobile, rolling legal resource created through our partnership with Lagniappe Law Lab to bring civil legal services to the public who need them the most. The bus is stationed in Alexandria and is “in service” each week to provide access to legal resources in underserved areas.







# *Louisiana* **APPLESEED**

Now we are going to hear from one of our partners



Adrienne Wheeler  
Executive Director  
Louisiana Appleseed

## **Louisiana Appleseed**

Louisiana Appleseed solves our state's toughest legal problems at the root cause by advocating for access to justice, opportunity, and education.



# Membership/Fellowship

The LBF is the visible public service organization of Louisiana attorneys and brings members of our profession together, maximizing our efforts to better the profession, our communities, and ourselves.

- At the LBF, our members are called “Fellows”
- LBF Fellows are leaders in their profession and demonstrate their commitment to the communities they serve through their support of the Foundation
- Professionals who become Fellows believe in the Foundation’s mission and are committed to fostering Louisiana’s legal environment to be open, accessible, and understandable for all



# Benefits of Membership

- Access to exclusive LBF networking events with other paralegals, lawyers, magistrates, and judges who are also LBF Fellows
- Participation in annual nominations for Louisiana's distinguished jurist, attorney, and professor awards
- Eligibility to participate on committees and leadership positions to steer the LBF into the future
- Complimentary invitations to our mid-year and annual Fellows luncheons (\$100 value!)
- Free opportunities for continuing legal education (CLE) credits (up to a \$400 value!)
- Free subscription to the Calm app for sleep, meditation and relaxation
- To be a driving force behind the \$12.7 million we dispersed in grants for the 2023-2024 year



# Why Should I Get Involved?

This distinguished professional network will allow you to enrich your careers through professional development and networking opportunities and apply your skill sets toward something meaningful.

Because you are driven by a firm belief that all Louisianans deserve a fair and equal justice system, regardless of income.



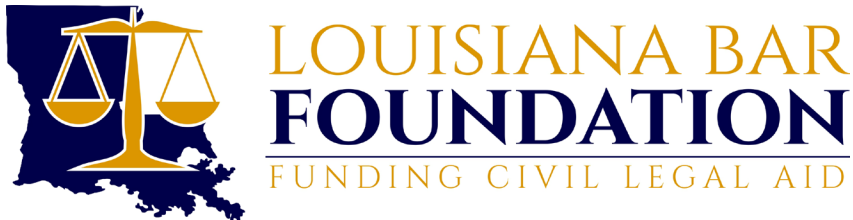
Because it is the right thing to do!

# How are the LSBA and the LBF Connected?

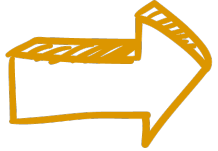
Lawyers do great service work every day by helping others.

The LBF reflects the social conscience and public responsibility of our profession and our commitment to effective action.

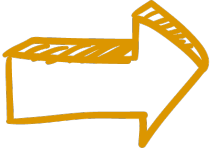
As lawyers, we swore an oath to “never reject, from any consideration personal to [ourselves], the cause of the defenseless or oppressed or delay any person’s cause for [monetary gain] or malice.”



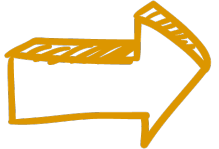
# How Do I Get Involved?



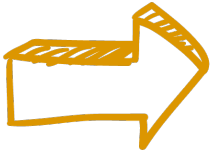
Make a donation



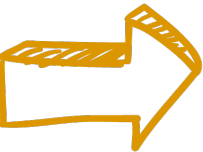
Volunteer your time on one of our projects



Join a Committee or two



Attend an event



Become a Fellow!





Now we are going to hear from  
Louisiana Supreme Court Chief  
Justice John Weimer.



# Why is the LBF Good for the Profession?

The LBF is the visible public service organization of Louisiana attorneys and brings members of our profession together, maximizing our efforts to better the profession, our communities and ourselves.

Membership in the LBF is a statement of commitment to fairness and equal access for all in the justice system.



## Board of Directors 2023

-24



**Deidre Deculus Robert**  
*President*  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



**Alan G. Brackett**  
*Immediate Past President*  
Mouledoux, Bland, Legrand &  
Brackett, LLC



**George D. Ernest III**  
Hurlburt, Monroe & Ernest



**Hon. John C. Davidson (Ret.)**  
*Vice President*



**Charles C. Bourque**  
St. Martin & Bourque



**Hon. Cynthia Clay Guillory**  
14<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court



**Edmund J. Giering IV**  
*Treasurer*  
Baton Rouge Area Foundation



**Linda Law Clark**  
DeCuir, Clark & Adams, LLP



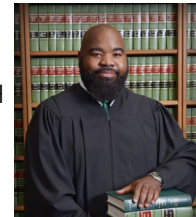
**Christopher B. Hebert**  
Louisiana Department of Justice



**Michael J. Mestayer**  
*Secretary*  
Michael J. Mestayer, APLC



**Adam G. Cossey**  
Hudson, Potts & Bernstein, LLPH



**Hon. Marcus L. Hunter**  
Court of Appeal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit State of Louisiana

## Board of Directors 2023

-24 (*continued*)



**Colleen C. Jarrott**  
Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP



**Paula E. Miles**  
Office of Attorney General  
Jeff Landry



**Anthony J. Staines**  
Staines, Eppling & Kenney, LLC



**Ashley Kelton "Kelly" Longwell**  
Longwell Riess LLC



**Sheri Morris**  
Daigle, Fisse & Kessenich



**Patrick A. Talley, Jr.**  
Phelps Dunbar, LLP



**Hon. Page McClendon**  
First Circuit Court of Appeal



**John C. Nickelson**  
Nickelson Law PLLC



**Adrienne D. White**  
The Law Offices of White & White



**Barbara Bell Melton**  
Faircloth, Melton and Sobel, LLC



**Shayna L. Sonnier**  
Veron Bice



**Zebulon M. Winstead**  
Crowell & Owens, LLC



**We want to be social with you!**

*Follow. Like. Comment!*



@raisingthebar.org



@labarfoundation



@louisiana\_bar\_foundation



LaBarFoundation