

Measuring Impact in Lives Changed

By Edmund J. Giering IV, 2025-26 LBF President



It is a profound honor to serve as President of the Louisiana Bar Foundation. I am filled with pride and gratitude for the work we do together in advancing access to justice and strengthening the legal profession's commitment to service. At the heart of our mission is the belief that justice should never be a privilege—it must be a right. Through the generous support of our Fellows, donors, and community partners, the Foundation has continued to provide essential funding for civil legal aid and other services that support the most vulnerable members of our society.

We do this through a network of organizations leading community-based efforts to support individuals and families navigating non-criminal civil legal challenges such as:

- ▶ **Housing**—fighting unlawful evictions and unsafe living conditions
- ▶ **Family law**—helping with custody, protective orders, and divorce in domestic violence situations
- ▶ **Public benefits**—ensuring people get access to food stamps, Medicaid, or Social Security
- ▶ **Consumer protection**—combating fraud and unfair debt collection
- ▶ **Education rights**—accessing rights for children with disabilities
- ▶ **Employment rights**—protecting low-wage workers from wrongful termination, wage theft, discrimination, and unsafe working conditions

The truth is, it isn't just about legal problems, it's about people:

- ▶ Seniors trying to stay in their homes.
- ▶ Veterans struggling to access their benefits.
- ▶ Parents escaping abuse.
- ▶ Children needing stable custody arrangements.
- ▶ Families in rural parishes where no lawyers are available.
- ▶ People with disabilities trying to live with dignity.

Our grant funding directly supports services that protect the health, safety, and stability of Louisiana's most vulnerable residents. Our impact is measured not only in the grants awarded, but in lives changed.

Here are a few stories that show the impact of civil legal aid successfully resolving life-altering legal issues:

Maria worked full-time but struggled to keep up with rent after a medical emergency drained her savings. One day, she came home to an eviction notice on her door—her landlord claimed nonpayment and wanted her out within days.

Maria contacted her local civil legal aid office. An attorney quickly determined the landlord hadn't followed proper legal procedures

and had failed to repair unsafe conditions that violated housing codes. The attorney represented Maria in court, got the eviction dismissed, and negotiated a payment plan while the landlord was required to fix the apartment. Maria and her children stayed in their home, repairs were made, and they avoided becoming unhoused.

Tanisha had endured years of abuse from her partner. She was terrified to leave but feared for her children's safety. A civil legal aid attorney helped her secure a protective order, accompanied her to court, and assisted with filing for custody of her children.

The court granted full custody and a permanent protective order. Tanisha and her children moved into a shelter and began rebuilding their lives free from violence.

After serving in the military, James developed a service-connected disability that prevented him from working. When his disability benefits were denied, James didn't know how to appeal or what evidence was needed.

A civil legal aid attorney specializing in veterans' benefits helped him file an appeal with supporting medical documentation. The attorney also coordinated with medical experts to testify on James's behalf.

James won his appeal, received full backpay, and now has access to regular benefits and healthcare.

An elderly man named Henry noticed large sums of money missing from his bank account. His caregiver had been writing checks to herself. A civil legal aid attorney helped file for a restraining order, connected Henry with Adult Protective Services, and worked with the bank to recover funds.

The caregiver was removed, funds were recovered, and a guardian was appointed to help manage Henry's finances safely.

Civil legal aid offices are often the first and only lifeline for people facing legal problems that threaten their homes, safety, health, or income.

When you support the Louisiana Bar Foundation, you're not just funding legal aid, you're funding fairness, justice, and stability in communities.

You're helping a mother safeguard housing for her children, protecting the rights of domestic violence survivors, empowering veterans to stand up for their rights, and accessing services seniors need.

You're investing in justice—for everyone! Contact the Louisiana Bar Foundation for more information on how you can get involved at info@raisingthebar.org or (504) 450-1874.