



LOUISIANA BAR
FOUNDATION
FUNDING CIVIL LEGAL AID

LBF: Strengthening Families, Communities, and the Legal Profession

Northeast Pop Up



Approved for 1 hour of Professionalism CLE



LOUISIANA BAR
FOUNDATION
FUNDING CIVIL LEGAL AID



EDMUND J. GIERING IV
LBF PRESIDENT 2025-26

Who We Are

Why We Help

How We Help

Our Impact

- A grants-making organization that funds **free civil legal aid** across the state
- Largest state funder of civil legal aid, serving 64 parishes

The LBF is designated by the IRS as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3).

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.



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SINCE
1989

LBF has funded more than **\$147.6 Million**
for **free civil legal aid** initiatives.

1969: LBF Charter

1985: Reactivation of the Organization

IOLTA Program, Fellows Program Established

1989: First IOLTA Grants Awarded - \$153,057 to 18 organizations

1990: Mandatory IOLTA Program Order by LA Supreme Court

In 2025, we will award **\$14.4 Million**



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What is Civil Legal Aid?

A Powerful Tool!

Civil legal aid is free legal assistance provided to people who cannot afford an attorney for non-criminal legal issues.

It helps ensure that everyone—regardless of income—has access to justice when facing legal problems that impact their basic needs.



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Poverty

- Louisiana's overall poverty rate is approximately 18.9%, which places it among the **highest in the nation**.
- 829,565 individuals live below the federal poverty line.

Child Poverty

- **24.4% of children** in Louisiana are living in poverty.
- **255,159 children** are growing up in poverty in Louisiana.

Income

- Louisiana's median **household income** indicates a figure around **\$55,416** among the nation's lowest.

Income Inequality

- Inequality remains high in Louisiana largely due to the **high concentration of poverty—not high accumulation of wealth**.

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How Louisiana Ranks Nationally

2nd
highest

Poverty

3rd
highest

**Child
Poverty**

3rd
lowest

Income

6th
highest

**Income
Inequality**

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Grants

Annual Sustaining Grants

Primarily fund salaries for direct civil legal representation for 501(c)(3) organizations.



Children's Legal Services (CLS)

Helps to provide legal assistance to needy children in areas of law which affect their safety, well-being, and future development focusing on statewide or regional services.



Domestic Violence Programs (DVP)

These agencies enable people to leave abusive relationships and seek safety for themselves and their children. Essential services provided by these agencies are legal services, education of domestic/dating violence, and establishing collaborative relationships with law enforcement, judges, clerks of court, and prosecutors.

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Law-Related Education (LRE)

Grants are awarded for law-related educational programs benefiting children and/or the public. Law-related education is the teaching of legal rights, responsibilities, and the role of the citizen by bringing together teachers, community leaders, and legal professionals.



Legal Services Corporations (LSC)

Provides civil legal services to the indigent in each parish of the state. Attorneys and paralegals, provide free legal services in many areas of the law.

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My Community Cares (MCC)

A community-driven, neighborhood-based approach to strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect in the State of Louisiana. Services are provided to promote child and family well-being and prevent children from entering foster care. Funding is for full-time attorney positions fully dedicated to MCC work.



Other Legal Services (OLS)

Through staff attorneys and paralegals, these programs provide legal services of a special nature such as mental health and child advocacy mediation.

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Pro Bono Projects (PBP)

These programs are often operated by the local bar association. These projects utilize the local private bar to handle cases for the poor pro bono in many legal areas.



Building Capital Development (BCD)

Current LBF Grantees may apply for grants up to \$50,000, on a 50% to 50% ratio matching basis, with the purpose of assisting in the acquisition or renovation of an office building and/or property.

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Northeast Annual Grants 2025-26

Agencies that serve the Northeast Region

Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation	\$124,000
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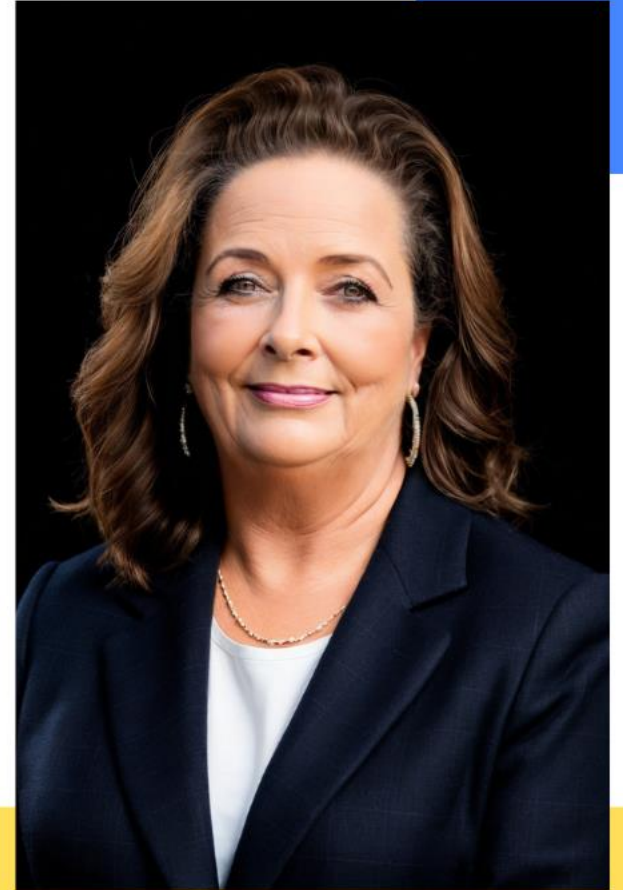
Agencies that serve statewide or more than one geographic region of Louisiana

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation	\$2,035,624
Catholic Charities – Diocese of Baton Rouge	\$236,155
Catholic Charities of North Louisiana	\$125,000
D.A.R.T. (Domestic Abuse Resistance Team)	\$71,467
Frontline Legal Services, Inc.	\$75,000
T.E.A.M.S. Training, Education and Mediation for Students	\$45,000
The Wellspring Alliance for Families	\$298,460
Workplace Justice Project	\$31,872

TOTAL: \$3,042,578

Juanita Gooding

**Executive Director
NELA Bar Foundation**

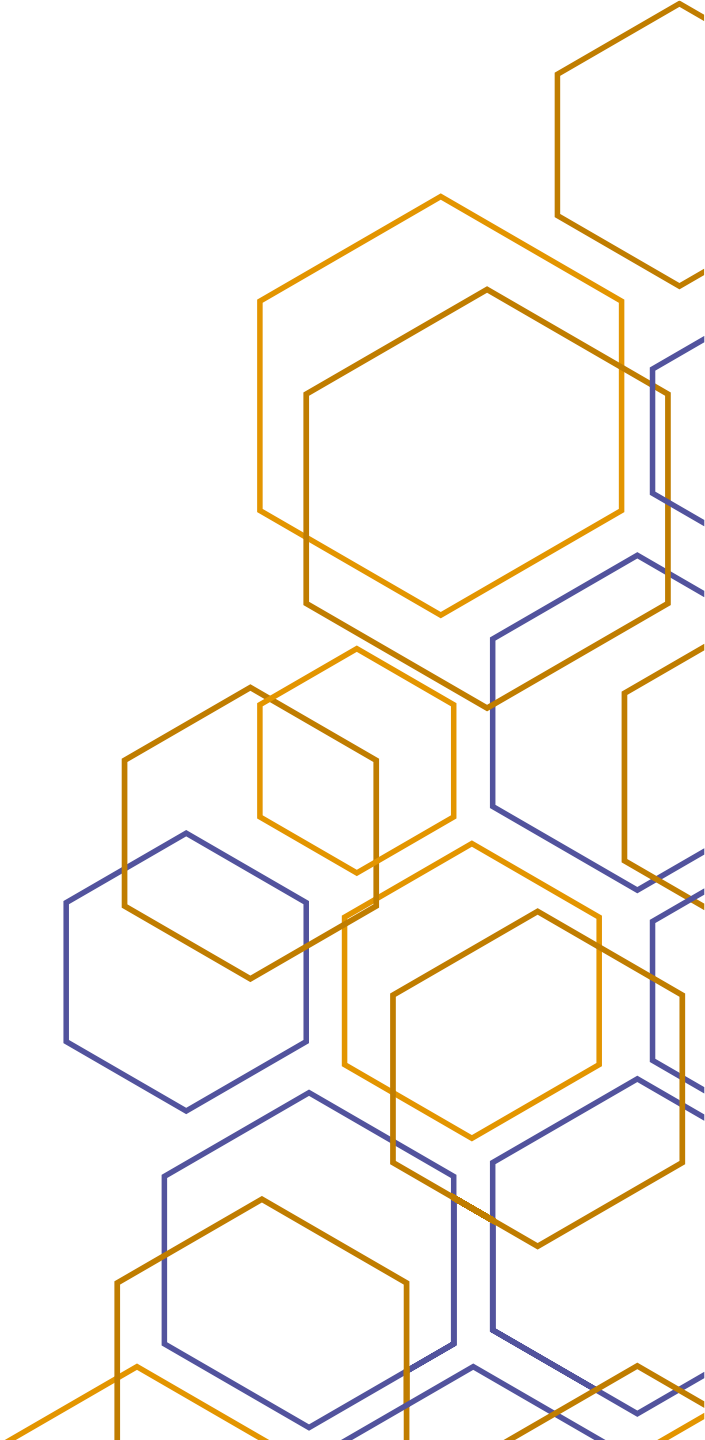




Background

After being inactive since 2013, the NELABF was revitalized in 2022 to create northeast Louisiana's first pro bono project.

As most of you know, the majority of Northeast Louisiana is rural. The Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation serves a 14-parish area. (Bienville, Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, and West Carroll.)





Project Goals

✦ “Expanding justice through pro bono service.”

Our goal is to expand access to justice by connecting attorneys with underserved communities, building strong partnerships, encouraging volunteerism, and providing reliable legal resources that empower those in need.



ASK A LAWYER

Third Tuesday of each month we host an Ask A Lawyer event here in Ouachita Parish. Since January 2025 we have helped 132 individuals with the help of volunteer attorneys.

This year we have held AAL's in Madison, Lincoln, and Morehouse Parish.

We will host our first Ask A Lawyer event in Union Parish on October 16, 2025.





HEIRSHIP PROJECT

In partnership with United Way of NELA and Wesley Johnson, we help sponsor the Heirship Project twice a year, with separate events for attorneys (CLE credit) and the community.

Another Heirship Project is planned for November 2025, offering CLE hours for attorneys and a community presentation.






FAMILY LAW COMMUNITY CLINIC

We held our 2nd Family Law Community Clinic on July 24, 2025

EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC

We had an expungement clinic on September 11, 2025.
13 individuals came seeking advice on expungements and our volunteer attorney began the process for them.



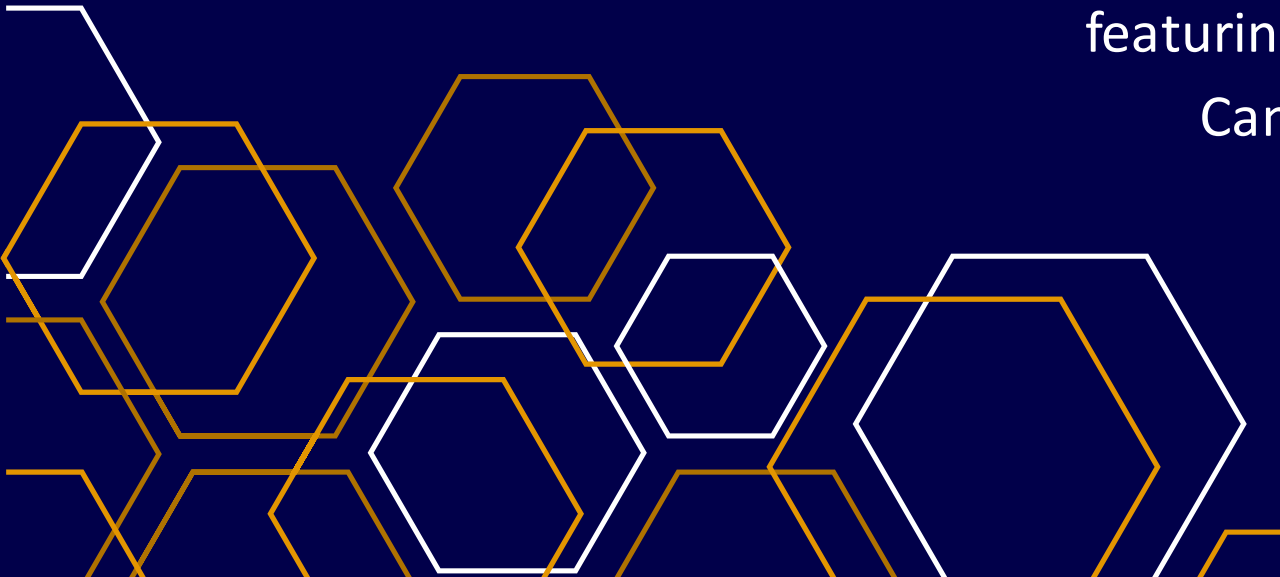


FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We have a Last Chance CLE scheduled for December 12, 2025 at the Bayou Desiard Country Club.
We will be offering 8.5 hours of CLE credit.


We've revived the annual Race Judicata event, bringing back this important tradition to celebrate and engage the legal community each year.

Our annual Blue Dog Raffle returns —
featuring George Rodrigue's "You
Can't Drown the Blues".





Conclusion

- This funding changes lives. For example, a young lady named Ashton came to an Ask-A-Lawyer session over a landlord-tenant dispute. After losing in justice court, she appealed. With guidance from a volunteer attorney, she presented her case in state court and reduced her debt from \$3,500 to \$700.
 - That's the power of access to legal help.
- 





Thank you

Stories like Ashton's show why LBF funding matters. With growing needs in housing and family law, resources are limited. The Foundation's support helps us bridge the gap—one clinic, one session, one client at a time.

We are deeply grateful for your patience and encouragement as our young program grows.

Sophia Dixon Brown

**Managing Attorney
Family Justice Center of Ouachita
The Wellspring Alliance for Families**



Stacy Guice

**Chair, Northeast
Community Partnership Panel**

**Senior Attorney
Office of E. Eugene Hastings Chapter 13 Trustee**



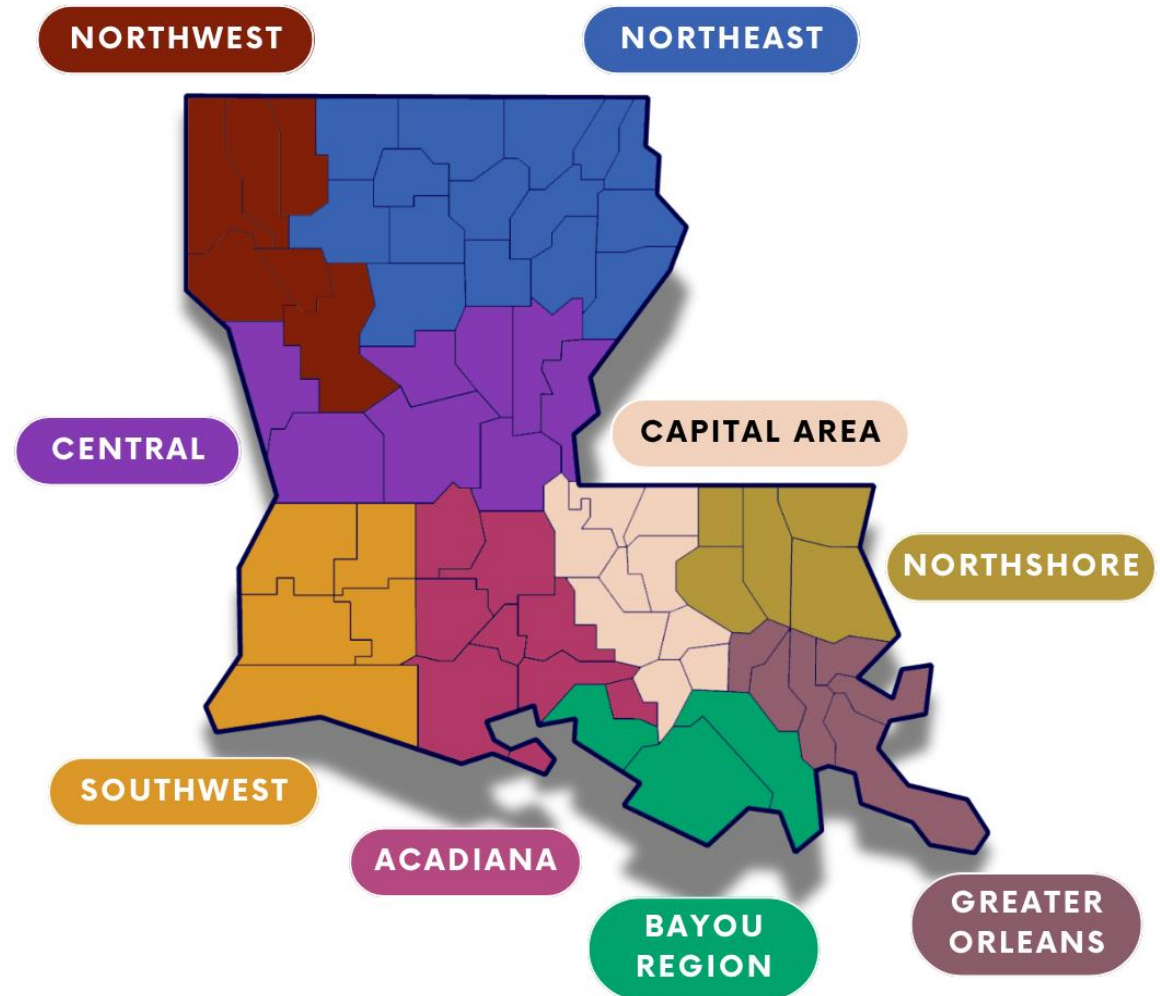
Community Partnership Panels

The **Community Partnership Panels** work to:

- identify areas of need for LBF funding
- foster collaboration
- respond to arising community needs
- encourage local involvement in the designation of grant funds

NORTHEAST Community Partnership Panel

Stacy Guice, *Chair*
Wendy E. Giovingo
Ashley Herring
Benjamin D. Jones
Pamela A. Stewart
Leah Sumrall



Who We Are

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Grants

Jock Scott Community Partnership Panel Grants

Eligible nonprofits or current LBF grantees may apply for CPP funding for new services or expansion of an existing service.

CPP grant applications are accepted on a flexible, rolling period.

Fund 501(c)(3) organizations to initiate or expand an activity that meets at least 1 of 3 criteria:

1. Provides direct legal services to the poor;
2. Provides law-related education; and/or
3. Provides for the administration of justice.

\$55,000

**to be awarded for
fiscal year 2025-26**

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Grants

Northeast Community Partnership Panel 2024-25 Grants

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation

\$8,150

Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation

\$20,250

Pine Hills Advocacy Center

\$22,850

Oral History Projects

\$1,600

TOTAL: \$52,850

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Grants

Special Programs & Grants

**Nearly \$5 million awarded
for fiscal year 2025-26**

- Access to Justice Grants
- Kids' Chance Scholarships
- Lagniappe Law Lab
- Louisiana Appleseed
- Loan Repayment Assistance Program
- State of Louisiana Child in Need of Care Grants

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Special Programs & Grants



Kids' Chance Scholarship (KCS)

Provides 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.



Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP)

Provides forgivable loans of up to \$5,000 per year to attorneys working in a public interest position.



Louisiana Appleseed

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



Bria Williams
Justice Bus Program Manager

Our Mission

Lagniappe Law Lab's purpose is to narrow the Access to Justice Gap by ensuring the Louisiana Civil Justice System is operating at its full potential.

Legal Help, Simplified.

Find reliable legal information, self-help forms, and professionals across Louisiana to guide your next step with confidence.

GET STARTED 



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Inform

Empower

Connect

Court Kiosks



1

Tablet computer & lockable freestanding case with internal cord management

2

Wireless black & white laserjet printer

3

3-tier printer stand with charging station & adjustable shelf

The Justice Bus



Justice Bus Events

Community Events



Lagniappe Events

Networking Events



Recent Event Highlights



Justice Bus Impact Since April 2024

**123
Events**

**19
parishes**

**6,769
impressions**

**1,798
directly
served**

**11,291
handouts
distributed**

Please Consider Joining us on the Journey!



Sign up for our monthly newsletter by scanning the QR Code

Who We Are

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Our Impact

For every **\$1**

invested in Louisiana Legal Aid,
the citizens of Louisiana received

\$13.28

of immediate and long-term
financial benefits.

Social Return on Investment

Total net value: \$162,988,000

- **37,399** civil legal aid cases completed
- **\$12,277,000** total tax-based funding for civil legal aid operations
- **\$59,219,000** immediate gross direct value of services
- **\$119,621,000** long-term gross consequential value
- **1,328%** social impact return on investment

Who We Are

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Access to basic needs

By providing civil legal aid, individuals navigate complex legal processes to secure essential needs such as **housing, food assistance, and healthcare**, which are critical for overall well-being.



Economic stability

Preventing **eviction, wage theft, and improper benefit deductions** through legal intervention can help individuals maintain stable employment and income, contributing to economic security.



Family stability

Civil legal aid helps families facing **domestic violence or child custody issues** access protection and stability within their households.



Community impact

When individuals resolve legal issues impacting their daily lives, it leads to a **more cohesive and functioning community**.



Reduced government costs

By proactively addressing legal issues, civil legal aid can potentially **reduce the need for costly social services later**, such as emergency housing or healthcare.

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Measuring Impact Locally: **NORTHEAST**

People Helped

775 cases
1,952 people

Direct Economic Benefits

\$675,440

Top Legal Issues

Family (59%), **Housing** (12%), and **Juvenile** (7%)

Source: Louisiana Appleseed "Civil Legal Aid Supports Louisiana"

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Strategic Partners

Organizations with
similar missions



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Strategic Partners

- **Louisiana Supreme Court**
LBF administers the **Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA)** on behalf of the Court and reports annually on activities and progress.
- **Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA)**
LBF partners with the LSBA in many areas including access to justice efforts to improve the delivery of legal representation across the state.
- **Local and Specialty Bars**
LBF partners with local and specialty bar on speaking and educational opportunities.
- **State of Louisiana**
Through a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Office of the Louisiana State Treasurer, LBF administers funds for the representation of children in need of care and adult civil legal aid.
- **Louisiana Law Schools**
We work with the Louisiana law schools to create a pipeline for public interest attorneys.
- **Louisiana Department of Child & Family Services (DCFS)**
LBF works with DCFS to pull down federal Title IV-E dollars and reimburse the Louisiana legal service corporations for Child in Need of Care cases.
- **Louisiana Division of Administration**
LBF works with the Office of the Commissioner on funding for Child in Need of Care and adult civil legal aid.
- **Louisiana Workers' Compensation Corporation (LWCC)**
Long standing partner and fundraiser for the Kids' Chance Scholarship Program.
- **Access to Justice Commission**
LBF partners with the Commission to "assure continuity of policy and purpose in the collaboration between the private bar, the courts, and the civil justice community to further the goal of assuring that Louisianans, regardless of their economic circumstance, have access to equal justice under the law."

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Louisiana Law School Partnerships



The **Child Welfare & Domestic Violence Clinic** is fully operational this academic school year and is led by Professor Tim McEvoy.



The **Clinical Legal Education Program** will enhance the quality of legal educational training and expand services to the community.

Next Steps:

LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, 2025-26

Tulane University School of Law, 2026-27

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Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts Program

The LBF IOLTA Program was **established by the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1985.**

LBF administers IOLTA on behalf of the Court.

The IOLTA Program **requires** lawyers and law firms to establish interest bearing accounts for client deposits which are nominal in amount or expected to be short-term.

Because **IOLTA is tied to interest rates** paid by the banks holding IOLTA deposits, IOLTA income **fluctuates** as rates change in response to rates set by the Federal Reserve and other factors.

- ✓ LBF provides technical assistance to participating financial institutions and attorneys
- ✓ LBF handles establishment of IOLTA accounts, program compliance, and rate negotiation
- ✓ LBF maintains a list of eligible banks

Resources for banks and attorneys are available on the LBF website.

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Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts Program

Increasing and **sustaining** IOLTA revenues through periods of economic recession or stress remains an imperative for IOLTA programs contending with the persistently high level of unmet legal need among persons living in poverty.

Unclaimed Funds are client or third person funds on deposit in an IOLTA account for **at least two years** that after reasonable due diligence the owner cannot be located or the owner refused to accept the funds. *A lawyer who either remits funds in error or later ascertains the ownership of remitted funds, or the owner thereof, may make a claim to the Louisiana Bar Foundation, which after verification of the claim will return the funds to the lawyer or owner, as appropriate.*

Unidentified Funds are funds on deposit in an IOLTA account for **at least one year** that after reasonable due diligence cannot be documented as belonging to a client, a third person, or the lawyer or law firm. A lawyer who learns of Unidentified Funds in an IOLTA account must remit the funds to the Louisiana Bar Foundation.

Resources for banks and attorneys are available on the LBF website.

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Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts Program

Prime Partners are institutions that pay 60% of the Fed Funds Target Rate and are committed to ensuring the success of the IOLTA program and increased funding for legal aid.

Statewide Prime Partner Banks:

Chase
First Horizon
Hancock Whitney
Regions

Northeast Region Prime Partner Banks:

Bank of Oakridge
Caldwell Bank & Trust
Century Next Bank
Citizen Progressive Bank
Commercial Capital Bank
Cross Keys Bank

Franklin State Bank
GBT Bank
Hodge Bank & Trust
Marion State Bank
Origin Bank
Tensas State Bank
Winnsboro Bank

As of October 1, 2025, the Benchmark (Safe Harbor) Rate is 2.40% as set forth in the Louisiana Supreme Court Rule 1.15 3(C).

Local Board Members



G. Adam Cossey
Hudson, Potts, & Bernstein, LLP

Membership

- **New Bar Admit (Free)**

We invite newly admitted attorneys to learn more about civil legal aid and how to get involved with LBF without any obligation to donate for their first year of practice.

- **General Fellow**

The General Fellowship level is for working lawyers interested in promoting access and equity throughout the local justice system.

- **Community Supporter Fellow**

This Fellowship option is for the general public, attorneys working for non-profit organizations or public service, retired legal professionals, and young lawyers getting started in the industry (first 5 years of practice).

- **Judicial Fellow**

The Judicial Fellowship is for a full-time federal or state judge, magistrate, commissioner, administrative law judge, or hearing officer.*

*The Louisiana Supreme Court clarified in 2015 that Judicial Fellow dues may be paid through a judge's judicial expense fund. If you have questions regarding dues payments, please contact us at 504-561-1046.



LBF 40th Anniversary Gala!

Friday, April 17, 2026
Four Seasons Hotel New Orleans

The Gala is our flagship event, drawing 300+ attendees to celebrate and honor our Distinguished Jurist, Attorney, Professor, and Calogero Justice Award recipients.

Along with the award recipients, the 2026 Gala will commemorate the Foundation's legacy and enduring impact on civil legal aid over the past four decades!

**Individual Tickets and Sponsorships
range from \$350 - \$7,500**

Co-Chairs: Brooke Tigchelaar & Jonathan Johnson



LBF Strengthens Families, Communities, and the Legal Profession

Louisiana Bar Foundation is the state's **largest funder** of **free civil legal aid**.

Civil Legal Aid makes **Louisiana communities stronger** by helping people avoid foreclosure, gain custody of their loved ones, and safeguard their economic security.

When families are stable, housed, and safe, **communities thrive**.

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.



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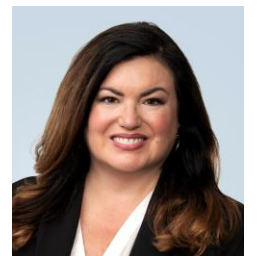
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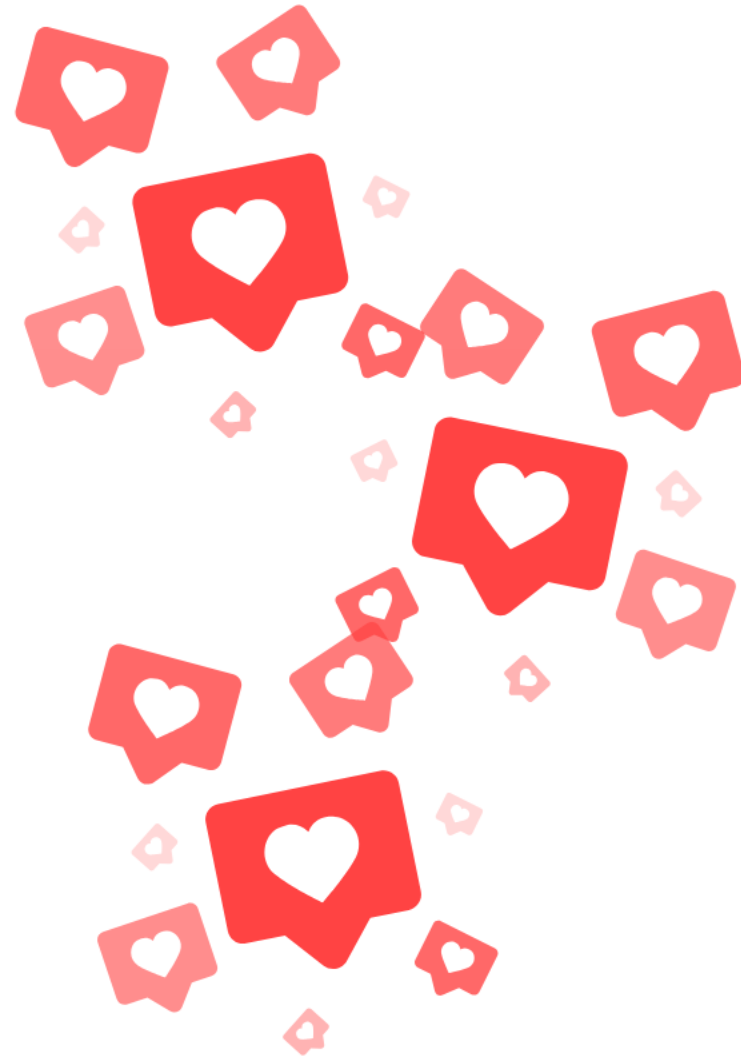
Facebook:

raisingthebar.org

YouTube:

labarfoundation

www.RaisingtheBar.org



We're Moving!

LBF is moving to the Pan Am Building

601 Poydras Street, Suite 1777
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

effective November 3, 2025.



Thanks for joining us!

This presentation is approved for
1 hour of Professionalism CLE.

You must register for the CLE at
the registration table to receive
the credit.

