



NLADA
National Legal Aid &
Defender Association
nlada.org



VISION TO VOICE

2017 IMPACT REPORT

NATIONAL LEGAL AID & DEFENDER ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

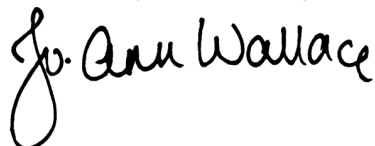
The many voices of the NLADA community are diverse, yet strikingly similar in their commitment to equal justice for all. Our members represent people from across the United States who seek legal assistance on many fronts, whether their need is related to public defense, housing, health care, veteran's benefits or the many other issues that often accompany living in poverty. NLADA members represent and champion these voices day in and day out.

In 2017, numerous challenges united our community and strengthened our resolve. When the administration proposed the elimination of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), NLADA swiftly mobilized our supporters, including our corporate partners, in a significant and vocal effort. The power of our national community not only saved LSC from elimination, it moved Congress to increase funding by \$25 million from the past year. NLADA also partnered with defender organizations to improve the administration of justice. For instance, NLADA supported the Contra Costa County (California) Office of the Public Defender in creating a simple but effective new program in collaboration with local law enforcement. In order to reduce the instances in which an individual fails to appear at their initial court date, police officers provide public defenders' contact information to all people receiving a misdemeanor citation, which opened the door for the defenders' early intervention.

This is NLADA's true strength – an action-oriented membership and community that hails from civil and defender organizations and client communities, as well as the private bar, and shares a vision for fairness and equality for all. As President and CEO of NLADA, I am privileged to meet with our partners in their home states and learn about their operational challenges and the often dire situations facing their clients. The stories are powerful; some are shocking and disturbing. Others are mediated to a positive resolution. But overall, the people represented by our member organizations or through pro bono activities, have a voice that is heard and protected.

On behalf of all of us at NLADA, I thank you for your continued support of our mission and especially for your commitment to fulfilling the promise of equal access to counsel for everyone. We cannot do it without you.

With hope and respect,



Jo-Ann Wallace
President & CEO



LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is always bittersweet to look back over one's tenure at an organization as resilient as NLADA, with its storied history of more than 100 years and strong command of current and upcoming issues of relevance to our community. Since I attended my first NLADA conference in 1991, I have witnessed the organization tackle critical issues with substantial impact on the delivery of civil and defender legal services. Moreover, as Board Chair, it has been my privilege to be part of a team of professionals demonstrating consistent leadership in advocating for equal access to justice, giving voice to those in need of representation. NLADA is the place where vision actually becomes voice, as NLADA addresses issues affecting real people in challenging situations.

This is our NLADA – visionary, strong, impactful and highly motivated. In 2017, many challenges, some unforeseen, were met head on with resolve and integrity. NLADA provided resources and support to areas of our country devastated by natural disasters; protected the Legal Services Corporation from eradication; and secured federal funding for the new AmeriCorps VISTA program that expands the capacity of public defender offices with VISTA placements. And again, we proved that NLADA, the only organization representing both the civil and defender communities, is responsive and effective.

In partnership with our members and supporters, NLADA provides not only technical and training support, but also inspiration and hope. And yes while 2017 was challenging, we persevered, our resolve ever stronger. Many thanks to the thousands of people across the country who supported us in so many ways. We are grateful for your commitment and look forward to your continued engagement.

Respectfully,



Alex Gulotta
Chair, Board of Directors

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IMPACT: CLIENT STORIES

Not having access to counsel has devastating effects on individuals, families and communities. Low-income Americans are particularly vulnerable. The NLADA community strives to protect those in need by working to secure legal representation for all who otherwise cannot afford it. To expand access to counsel, NLADA empowers our members and partners by working to increase resources and funding, through education and shared innovation, and by advocating for supportive policies, holistic legal services and system-wide changes in the use of jails. Together with our community, NLADA provides hope and justice for many thousands of people every day – people just like Carly, Mark, Sara and Tim.



CARLY

Although Carly was warned that her landlord had a reputation for taking advantage of tenants, she and her family had nowhere else to go. When she asked the landlord for a one-week extension to pay the \$75 she was behind in her rent, he agreed. Two days later, however, he was at her door demanding immediate repayment, and he subsequently filed grievances against her in two different county courts.

One case was dismissed and the second was continued because of a clerical error by the landlord. Although he had not received judgement in his favor, the landlord had Carly arrested for trespassing. Carly was put in touch with NLADA program member Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society (SVLAS). With their assistance, the trespassing charges were dropped and Carly returned home to her family. SVLAS continues to represent Carly in resolving the remaining issues.

Photo Credit: Michael Santiago

MARK

In the summer of 2017 in New York City, Mark was pulled over for a traffic infraction and charged with operating a vehicle without a license and possession of a forged document. Mark's request for release was denied, and bail was set at \$4,000 cash or \$8,000 insurance bond. Due to a disability, Mark lives on a limited income and was unable to pay bail. Consequently, he remained in jail.

As he remained incarcerated, Mark worried about his three-year old daughter. Having spent his youth in the foster care system, bouncing between eight different foster and group homes, Mark knew how important having a stable, present parental figure is to children. Mark's lawyers, with NLADA partner Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES) challenged his bail until he was released. While Mark works to resolve his case, he is able to care for his daughter.



Photo Credit: Michael Santiago

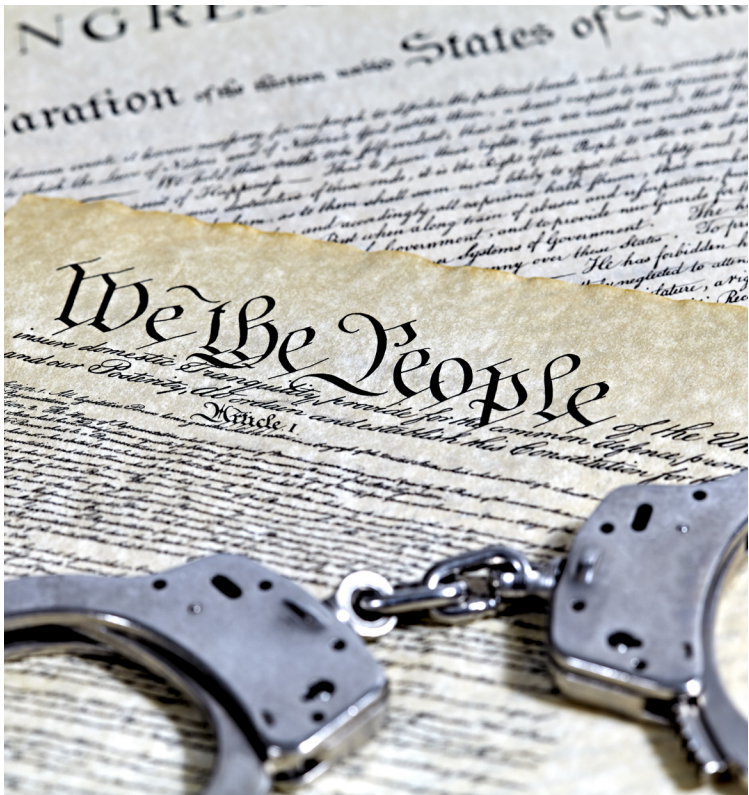
IMPACT: CLIENT STORIES

SARA

When 92-year-old “Sara’s” health declined, she moved from assisted living to a 24-hour care nursing home. During the move it was discovered that Sara’s grandson financially exploited her and that he had taken about \$96,000. Because of that transfer of assets, Sara was denied Medicaid coverage for her nursing facility services, and the nursing home issued her an involuntary discharge notice. Illinois’ Long Term Care Ombudsman referred Sara to LSC-funded Prairie State Legal Services. Funded in part by an U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Older Americans Act grant, her legal aid attorney successfully appealed and obtained a Hardship Waiver from the state’s Medicaid administrator so Sara could stay housed with the care she needed. Later when Sara became incapacitated, her legal aid attorney secured a state guardian to prevent further abuse by the grandson and cooperated with the criminal investigation.



Photo Credit: LSC



TIM

On the campus of LifeWorks, a supportive community for young adults aging out of the foster care system, “Tim” fatally shot another community member in an act of self-defense. Despite the magnitude of this case, the Austin Police Department spent only 1½ hours investigating the crime scene, hastily collecting incomplete evidence. Because this careless investigation immediately identified Tim as the villain, the prosecutors would only consider a murder conviction with a 40-year prison sentence.

Appalled at this gross injustice, Capital Area Private Defender Service curated a specialized team to represent Tim in court. This team included attorneys who had completed a felony mentorship program developed by NLADA. Armed with a professional, honed and well-prepared defense, Tim’s team of dedicated defenders successfully championed his case during a contentious six days in the court room. When the judge announced the not guilty verdict, Tim sunk into his chair, folded over onto the counsel table and quietly wept. He didn’t have family to cry with him. But that day, Tim had his defenders.

IMPACT: 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

For more than 100 years, NLADA has been impactful – we make a difference. The organization was created to scale access to justice and today, proudly, we continue to do exactly that, and beyond. As the national voice representing both the civil and defender communities, NLADA supports holistic solutions to complex problems. Our role, not just within the legal community, but in society writ large, is to eradicate the “justice gap,” the unfilled need for access to legal representation, that discriminates against low-income people in particular. If not for NLADA, and our national membership and supporters, that gap would be much larger.

How do we make a difference? By being first to recognize need and opportunity. By developing research protocols and digging into challenges. By testing and implementing solutions that are scalable and replicable. Sometimes we make a difference by helping the legal community do their work creatively or with more resources; sometimes it is our work on policy issues that make things simpler. In short, we believe that the quality of justice in America should not depend on how much money a person has. This is our passion.

Whatever the circumstance or program, NLADA provides guidance and leadership with a national scope. In 2017, our key accomplishments included:

Advancing changes in policies and practices that promoted systemic and holistic approaches to equal justice

- Promoted holistic defense representation to address client needs and reduce recidivism through the Community Oriented Defender Network, and through training and tools such as “The Interdisciplinary Defense Team: What Defenders Need to Know” that expand the use of social workers in public defense programs.
- Coordinated a national working group across civil legal aid, public defense and pro bono providers to address problems related to court debt that leads to over-incarceration, loss of rights and other problems.

Improving the effectiveness of the delivery of legal services to those who cannot afford counsel

- Trained and convened more than 3,000 equal justice advocates to ensure representation and promote innovative solutions to closing the justice gap.
- Through our Strategic Advocacy Initiative pilot project, NLADA led a team of experts to expand capacity for systemic advocacy with far-reaching results.
- Expanded access to pretrial counsel, reduced unnecessary incarceration and increased the quality of services provided by applying data science to legal representation as the technical assistance provider for the U.S. Department of Justice Innovative Solutions in Public Defense. Six jurisdictions (Alameda County, California; Contra Costa County, California; Kentucky; New York City; Texas; and Wisconsin) are now implementing innovative, evidence-based improvements to their public defense systems.
- Distributed resources and cultivated support networks for equal justice advocates in communities devastated by natural disasters including California, Florida, Puerto Rico, Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Photo Credit: Michael Santiago



Panel featuring leaders from disaster-impacted jurisdictions at 2017 Annual Conference, one of the avenues for providing special support and assistance.

Using innovative technology to empower clients

- Launched a partnership with DONAFY, a free smartphone app that connects those in need and their advocates with community based services. NLADA envisions that DONAFY will help to eliminate unnecessary incarceration, reduce homelessness, expand grassroots philanthropy and drive the efficient use of resources.

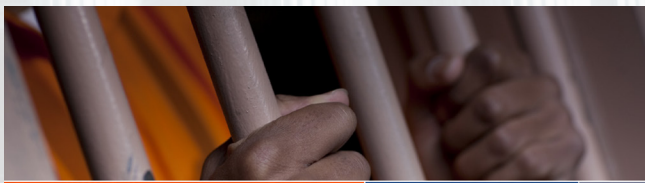
IMPACT: 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- Designed new digital platform to educate constituents about national policy proposals and connect them with their congressional representatives.

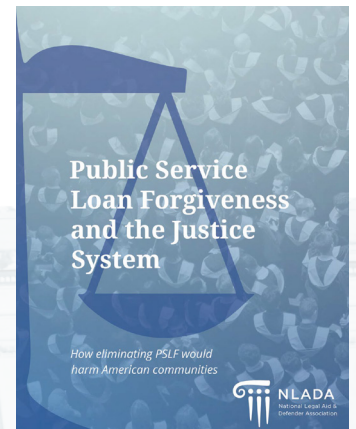
Increasing resources for legal service providers



- Increased non-LSC federal funding for civil legal aid by \$32.3 million through NLADA's Civil Legal Aid Initiative* by advancing partnerships that expand legal aid's participation in grant programs related to housing, health care, reentry, veterans' affairs, victim services and more.
- Secured federal funding for the first ever National AmeriCorps VISTA program placing VISTAs directly in public defender offices. In order to expand public defender offices' capacity, VISTA members foster community partnerships and implement data systems to create capacity and sustainability.
- Successfully mobilized unprecedented support to protect the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), the independent nonprofit established by Congress in 1974 to provide financial support for civil legal aid to low income Americans. This included expansive corporate support for LSC through the coordination of a letter to congress signed by nearly 200 general counsel and legal department leaders.
- Worked to defeat proposals to eliminate federal student loan forgiveness including release of a report providing empirical evidence that public service loan forgiveness improves the quality and availability of civil legal aid and public defense.
- Advocated successfully for the implementation of relevant provisions of the Justice for All Act, requiring the U.S. Department of Justice to provide \$10 million annually for technical assistance to expand and improve public defense.



- Provided training and information as a strategic ally in MacArthur's Safety and Justice Challenge to support public defenders as transformative leaders on teams aimed at reducing jail populations. The results are beginning to come in: Philadelphia, for example, has reduced its jail population by 31 percent; Cook County by 29 percent and Lucas County by 25 percent.



* The **NLADA Civil Legal Aid Initiative**, funded by the Kresge Foundation and Public Welfare Foundation, is stepping up to meet new urgency in advocating with federal agencies around the integration of civil legal aid into a continuum of human services. The effort substantially increased funding by:

- Featuring federal representatives and national partners in 13 training events, which reached 990 providers in the legal services community.
- Promoting 40 federal grant opportunities through LegalAidResources.org and NLADA networks.
- Supporting civil legal aid programs accessing \$2.27 million in both new and increased VOCA grants.
- Providing 586 people direct training and technical assistance on pursuing and implementing funding.

IMPACT: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT



NLADA is honored to represent our community of members working together to achieve a shared vision of equal justice excellence throughout the United States. They represent the wide range of programs and institutions devoted to equal justice – from state-wide institutions, to local pro bono programs, to public defender offices – and are the advocates giving voice to those in need.

NLADA's program members include more than 2,000 offices representing thousands of civil legal aid attorneys, public defenders, client advocates and private practitioners in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

NLADA serves our membership through programming, advocacy, networking groups, training and resources that improve and support their work. In 2017, this included:

- Hosting a Partnerships in Federal Funding webinar series, which showcased successful federally-funded civil legal aid, public defense and community collaborations.
- Continuing our popular Advancing Your Work through Federal Funding Training Series to showcase and scale best practices in federally-funded partnerships and programs.
- Creating collaboration and education opportunities for chief public defenders, social workers and mitigation specialists at our Holistic Defense and Leadership Conferences.
- Gathering more than 750 client community advocates, civil legal aid attorneys and public defenders at our Annual Conference to learn, network and address cross-cutting issues in equal justice.
- Creating numerous publications, reports and webinars that addressed current equal justice challenges and promoted best practices in civil legal aid and public defense.
- Featuring NLADA's popular "Bring-Your-Own-Case" method of training appellate advocates.



For more information on NLADA memberships, please contact **membership@nlada.org** or visit **NLADA.org/become-a-member**.



THANK YOU

The following contributors, sponsors and partners generously supported NLADA initiatives in 2017. We are grateful for their leadership and commitment to our mission.

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NATIONAL LEGAL AID & DEFENDER ASSOCIATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

DECEMBER 31, 2017

ASSETS	2017	2016
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,639,834	\$ 1,460,418
Investments	2,147	2,147
Grants receivable	394,907	292,139
Accounts receivable	894,717	1,349,475
Prepaid expenses	83,376	86,123
Deferred tax asset	9,584	2,496
Total Current Assets	3,024,565	3,192,798
Net property and equipment	543,772	646,380
Deposit	31,563	31,563
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 3,599,900	\$ 3,870,741
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	439,281	389,728
Accrued vacation	213,051	183,115
Deferred membership dues	1,115,294	1,176,016
Accrued income taxes and other liabilities	45,077	228,157
Capital lease obligations	14,035	12,992
Deferred rent and construction allowance	84,049	94,184
Total Current Liabilities	1,910,787	2,084,192
Deferred rent and lease incentive liability, net of current portion	757,323	770,654
Capital lease obligation, net of current portion	40,218	51,039
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,708,328	2,905,885
Net Assets		
Unrestricted		
Undesignated	363,799	687,753
Total Unrestricted	363,799	687,753
Temporarily restricted	527,773	277,103
TOTAL NET ASSETS	891,572	964,856
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 3,599,900	\$ 3,870,741

NATIONAL LEGAL AID & DEFENDER ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER 31, 2017

	2017 Total	2016 Total
OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT		
Membership dues	\$ 1,717,369	\$ 1,668,504
Insurance commissions	789,870	797,486
Training and Conference	583,429	555,991
Annual dinner	498,340	493,100
Royalties	197,404	187,644
Publications and other revenue	56,532	86,718
Contracts	40,000	20,000
Grants	1,177,591	526,925
Investment income	1,853	769
Contributions	37,102	38,640
Profit sharing	842,173	1,289,787
Other	255	814
Net assets related from restrictions:		
Satisfaction of program restrictions	-	-
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE AND SUPPORT	5,941,918	5,666,378
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Program Services:		
Special projects	936,859	994,944
NLADA Service Corporation	1,450,886	1,299,167
Training and conference division	494,503	487,924
Defender division	161,740	149,989
Civil division	668,059	642,577
Communications	340,258	275,779
Government relations	159,643	36,120
Annual conference	193,284	155,837
Total Program Services	4,405,232	4,042,337
Supporting Services:		
Development and membership	871,691	808,030
Management, administration and finance	766,088	712,113
Total Supporting Services	1,637,779	1,520,143
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	6,043,011	5,562,480
Change in Net Assets From Operations Before Income Tax Provision	(101,093)	103,898
Income Tax (Expense) Benefit	27,809	(195,822)
Change In Net Assets	(73,284)	(91,924)
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	964,856	1,056,780
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 891,572	\$ 964,856



NLADA
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The background of the page is a photograph of a classical building facade, likely a courthouse. The words 'EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW' are carved in large, capital letters across the upper part of the facade. Below the text are several large, fluted columns and ornate sculptures. A teal-colored rectangular box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing the mission statement text.

MISSION STATEMENT

Because the quality of justice in America should not depend on how much money a person has, NLADA leads a broad network of advocates on the frontlines to advance justice and expand opportunity for all by promoting excellence in the delivery of legal services for people who cannot afford counsel.