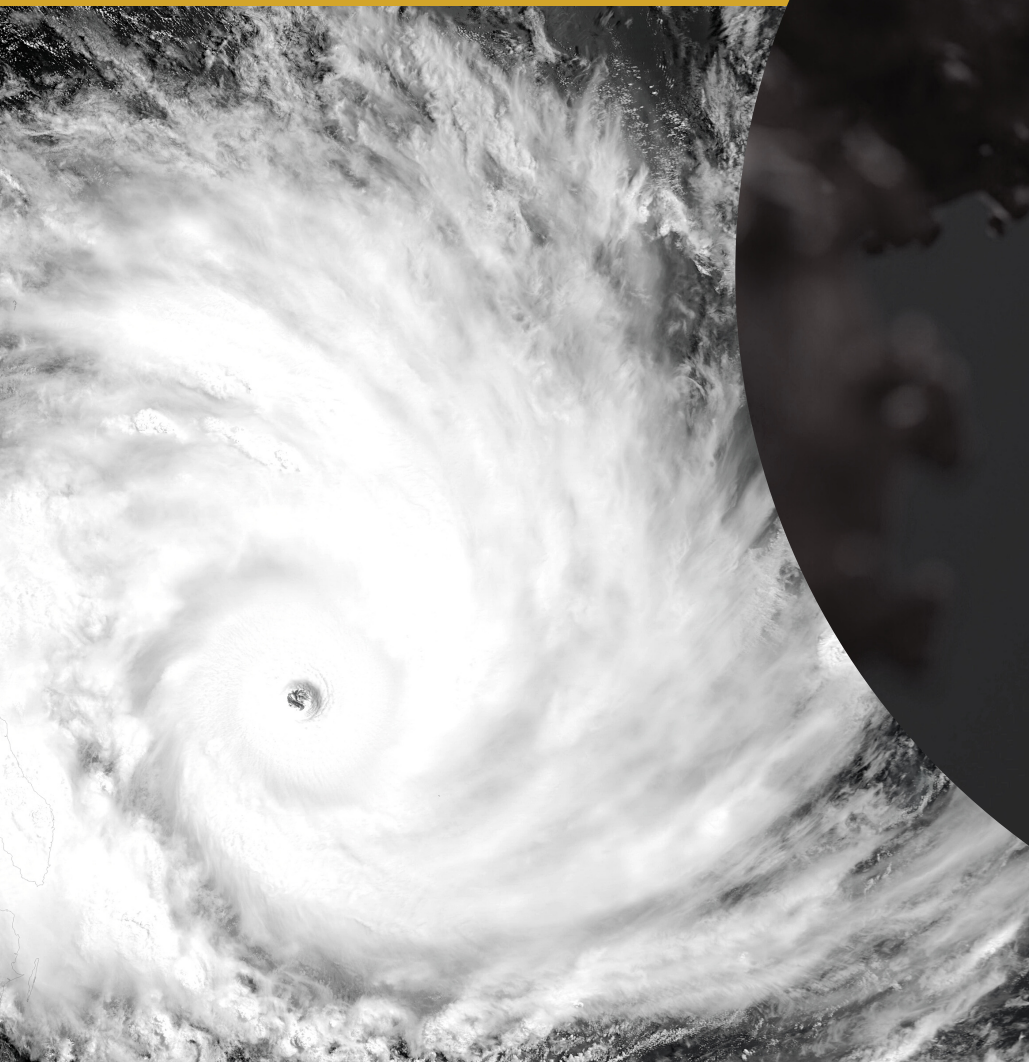


ACADIANA LEGAL SERVICE CORPORATION



**ANNUAL REPORT
2021**



MESSAGE FROM ALSC LEADERSHIP

2021 was a year of change and challenges for our firm. We continued to adjust, evolve, and expand our operations, making changes to serve more of those in need of our assistance while presented with both old and new challenges from natural disasters and growing pains.

Pursuing the goals set forth in our Strategic Plan, we:

- secured almost \$5 million in additional funding. At the start of 2021, we anticipated an annual budget of \$4.5 million while our year-end audit showed we had a total of \$9.2 million in revenue;
- opened a new office in Franklin. Budget cutbacks years ago had forced us to close our office there. We were happy to reopen in a new location, onsite with the local Community Action Agency, and in time to serve survivors of Hurricane Ida;
- surveyed client needs in under-served rural parts of our service area. For too long, those living distant from one of our six offices and without internet access, had unnecessary difficulty in accessing our services. Identifying community resources like libraries, where new remote access resources can be located, will address this pressing need;
- began revamping our delivery of free legal services by private attorneys. For years we had relied on contracts with local bar associations under which they would help us handle some of the huge demand for our services. But there are too few bar associations to meet that need, so we greatly expanded our contracts with individual private lawyers under which they accept a reduced fee, which we pay, to help those in need;
- helped connect disaster survivors to rental assistance. To help ease the suffering of those impacted by back-to-back natural disasters, the federal government provided funding to help people pay their rent and utility bills. We set up procedures to help callers connect to those resources in their communities;
- continued developing new training materials to improve our staff's proficiencies. With an influx of new talent came the need to be able to quickly and efficiently train them on the substantive legal work they handle. Investing in a complete Learning Management System, experienced advocates produced new modules to make training both uniform and available on demand;
- laid the groundwork for even more funding in 2022. In addition to the new funding received in 2021, applications were submitted to pay for additional work in 2022. While some are still pending as of this writing, others have already been funded.

While handling over 15,000 calls for our help, our staff overcame significant challenges. These included:

- the COVID-19 continuing plague, with a 2021 death count exceeding that of 2020. While we lost no staff, many lost loved ones and even more were temporarily unable to serve clients until they recovered;
- a winter storm which hit our northern parishes, breaking pipes and flooding parts of our Shreveport office;
- Spring tornadoes hitting our northern and central parishes;
- Spring floods sweeping the south and southwest parishes, damaging our new Lake Charles office and forcing our temporary re-location to a smaller, rental space;

- Hurricane Ida's hit to our southeastern-most parishes in August added to the ongoing workload of helping survivors of the 2020 Hurricanes Laura, Delta, and Zeta;
- facing unprecedented difficulty in attracting new staff to fill vacant positions;
- re-adjustment to remote work as a more normal part of our staffing pattern;
- increased reliance on technology to serve clients we could not meet with in person;
- absorbing all the new funding and incorporating it into our work planning.

Through all of these challenges, the dedication of our staff ensured that we remained focused on our mission and vision and continued to provide quality services to those most in need of our services. With the ALSC Board's support and encouragement during this trying time we celebrated many successes!



Greg Landry
Retired Executive Director



Susan K. Jones
Board President



Sachida R. Raman
Interim Executive Director

OUR VISION

We envision a state where low-income, disadvantaged and other eligible residents have access to services and resources to meet their basic needs and where they can vindicate their legal rights and be treated fairly throughout the civil justice system. We will expand our visibility and influence in the community by identifying partnerships and developing alliances to deliver services which will enhance the lives and effectively address the needs of low-income and disadvantaged people. The community will recognize us for our excellence, courage, and compassion.



OUR MISSION

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation makes hope, dignity, and justice available primarily to low-income, disadvantaged, and other eligible residents through high-quality and aggressive civil legal assistance and education.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Susan K. Jones, President
George D. Ernest III, Vice-President
Anna Simmons, Secretary
Julhelene Jackson, Treasurer

MEMBERS

Cynthia Cobb
Stacy Guice
Sylvia Hill
Karen C. McLellan
Brannon Menard
Ann Poole
Santrica Pope
Theresa Richard
Chantell M. Smith
Melody Trout
Mary Winchell
Lindsay Meador Young



ABOUT ALSC

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation (ALSC) is a non-profit organization, funded primarily by the Legal Service Corporation (LSC), to provide free legal aid in civil matters to economically disadvantaged persons living in forty-two parishes throughout Louisiana.

ALSC began operations in 1978 serving a six parish area. Since then, we have expanded to our current forty-two parish service area providing services in central and north Louisiana.

Our main office is located in Lafayette with branch offices in Alexandria, Franklin, Lake Charles, Monroe, Natchitoches and Shreveport. We provide civil legal aid services through three regional divisions: Acadiana Legal Service Corporation (ALSC); Legal Aid of North Louisiana (LANL); and Legal Services of Central Louisiana (LSCL). The organization utilizes a specialized approach to delivery of services with separate law units handling specific substantive legal areas.

Our services include, but are not limited to, matters ranging from simple counsel and advice; brief services; representation in administrative proceedings; negotiations; and representation in one hundred and forty justice of the peace courts, thirty-four city courts, twenty-eight state district courts, three state appellate courts, the five U.S. District Courts for the Western District of Louisiana, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Unlike criminal defendants, persons facing civil legal problems have no right to appointed counsel. We help ordinary people, like a veteran denied rightfully earned benefits, an elderly person denied Medicaid benefits, a family fighting wrongful evictions or foreclosure, people trying to rebuild their lives in the wake of natural disasters, or a woman trapped in an abusive relationship.

For a family facing eviction, civil legal aid can be the difference between keeping their home or being forced out onto the street. For a survivor of domestic violence, civil legal aid can enable her/him to achieve safety and independence.

Providing civil legal aid is a good investment that benefits all. Civil legal aid helps people of all backgrounds and ages, saving taxpayers money while ensuring justice for all.



OUR PRIORITIES



Preservation of the Home

Landlord/Tenant Issues; Fair Housing Rights,
Foreclosures

Preservation & Maintenance of the Family

Divorce, Custody, Domestic Abuse



Preservation of Individual Rights

Disability Rights, Elder Rights, Disaster Survivors

Maintenance of Economic Stability

Employment Law, Public Benefits, Consumer
Rights



Maintenance of Safety and Health

Children in Need of Care, Domestic Violence, Medicaid,
Medicare, Disability

PARISHES SERVED



OUR PRACTICE AREAS

We work with clients to remove legal obstacles that trap families in cycles of poverty, violence and instability. Our practice areas help clients fulfill their basic needs, support their economic security, and ensure their safety and stability.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW UNIT

The Administrative Law Unit handles cases involving TANF, Social Security, SSI, disability, food stamps, unemployment compensation, veteran's benefits, Medicaid, Medicare and more.

CHILD IN NEED OF CARE UNIT (CINC)

The CINC Unit handles court appointed cases involving abuse and/or neglect of children.

DISASTER UNIT

The Disaster Unit handles cases for disaster survivors involving landlord-tenant problems, public benefits denials, contractor fraud, insurance disputes and more.

HOUSING UNIT

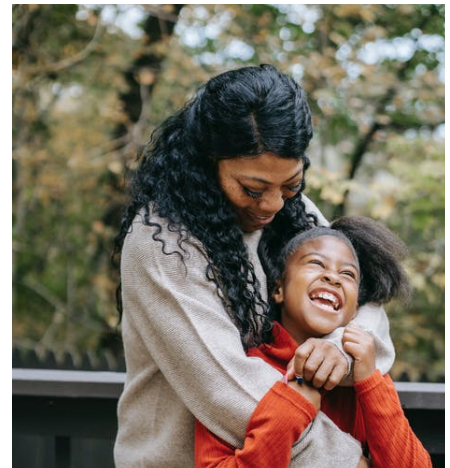
The Housing Unit handles cases involving landlord/tenant issues to avoid eviction and provides other non-legal support to at-risk tenants.

FAMILY LAW UNIT

The Family Law Unit handles cases involving divorce, child support, intra-family adoptions, visitation, domestic violence, name change and more.

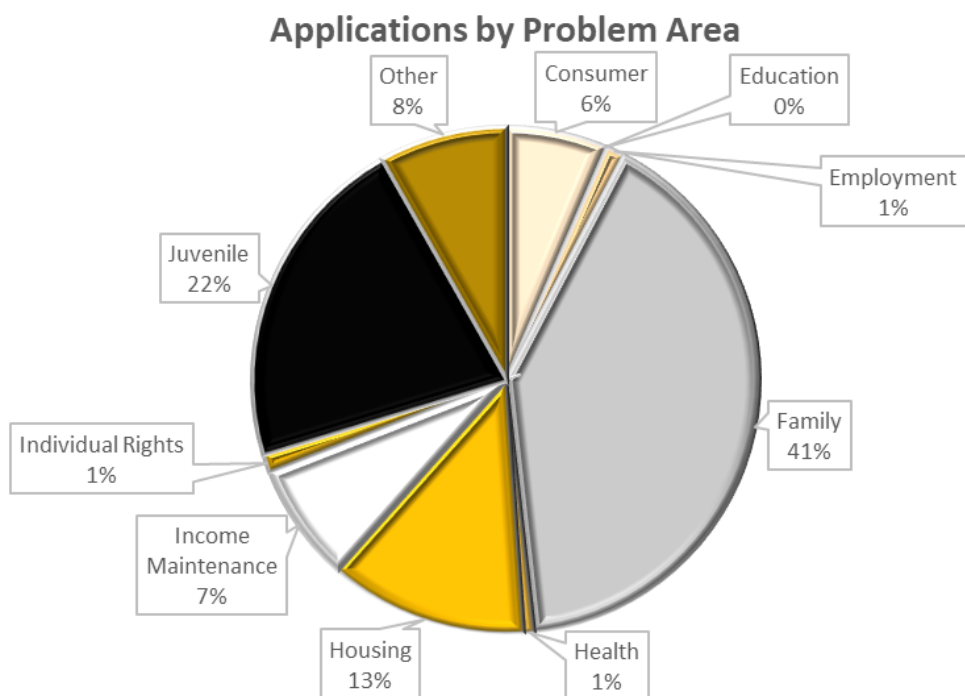
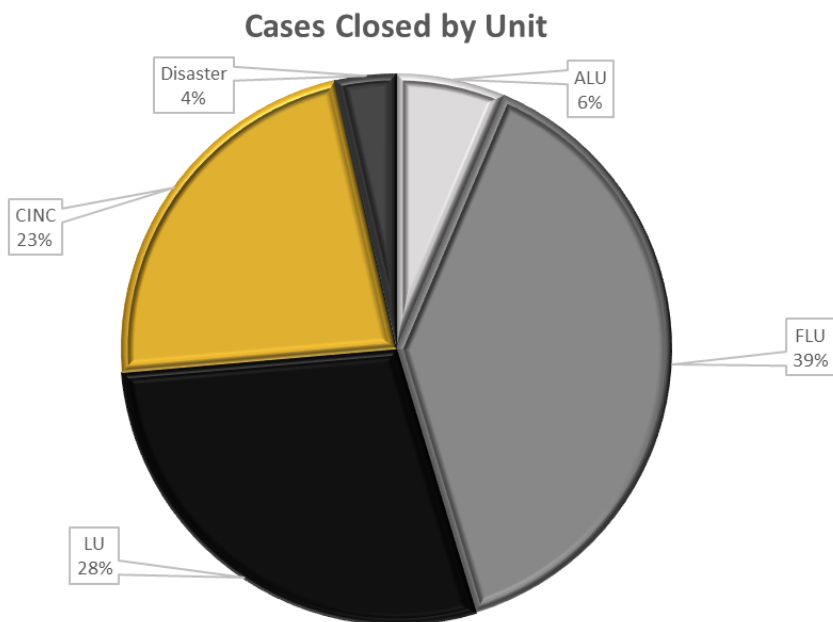
LITIGATION UNIT

The Litigation Unit handles cases involving bankruptcy/debtor relief, collection, contracts, unfair/deceptive sales and practices, discrimination, predatory lending, wage claims, wills, estates or successions and more.



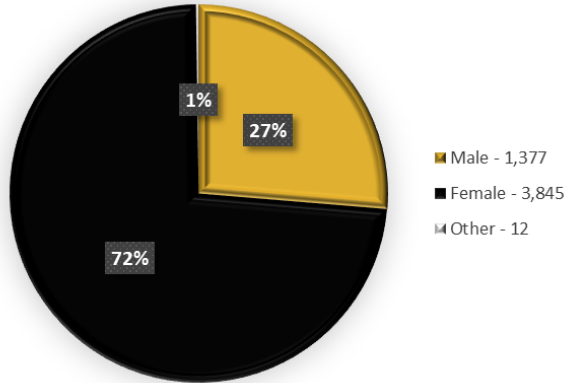
2021 BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL CASES CLOSED IN 2021: 7,194

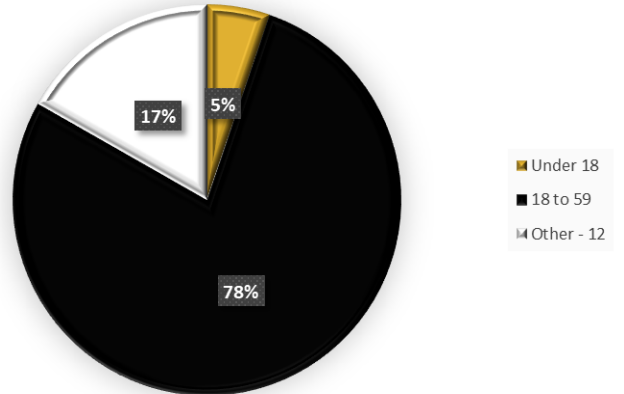


OUR CLIENTS

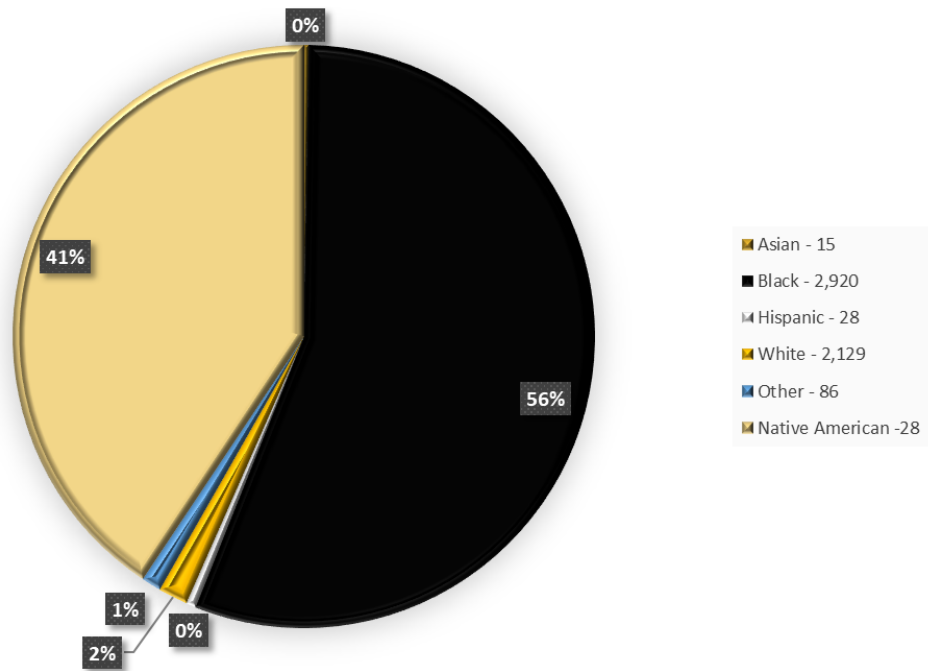
GENDER



AGE



RACE



2021 IMPACT

The direct economic impact of ALSC's work for our clients in 2021 exceeded \$1.9 million. This represents income secured; financial security; access to benefits such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, SSI, SSD and more; relief on contracts; disaster aid or benefits and more.



8,187

PEOPLE RECEIVED
LEGAL INFORMATION
THROUGH COMMUNITY
EDUCATION



264

PEOPLE REFERRED TO
OTHER PROVIDERS AND
SERVICES



33,067

UNIQUE VISITORS TO
ALSC WEBSITE



105,426

PEOPLE REACHED
THROUGH ALL SOCIAL
MEDIA PLATFORMS



\$1.9 Million

DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ALSC'S
WORK FOR OUR CLIENTS

For every **\$1** invested in civil legal aid in Louisiana,
there is a **\$9.18 Social Return on Investment (ROI)**

2021 DEVELOPMENTS



WE OPENED our seventh office in Franklin, expanding services to residents living in Iberia, St. Mary and St. Martin Parishes.

WE INCREASED our direct economic impact to \$1.9M.

WE SECURED nearly \$5M in additional funding to provide legal aid services to those most in need.

WE PARTICIPATED in the Access to Justice, Justice for All listening tours to learn about community civil legal needs in the Northeastern parishes of Louisiana.



PRO BONO ENGAGEMENT

The number of people eligible for free legal aid in our service area is staggering. With so many individuals not having access to the justice system, Pro Bono Attorneys play a vital role in ensuring equal justice for all.

WE
PRO
BONO 

ALSC works closely with private attorneys through partnerships with **Central Louisiana Pro Bono Project, Lafayette Volunteer Lawyer Program, Shreveport Bar Foundation Pro Bono Project** and **The Southwest Louisiana Law Center** to provide legal assistance to low-income and vulnerable individuals.

The Pro Bono Benefits in 2021 include:

221 - # of cases

548 - hours of service

\$41,100 in Legal Services Provided

Legal
Online
Resources

We offer a new way of providing individuals legal information and advice from anywhere through interactive modules located on our website (www.la-law.org). By answering a few simple questions, individuals are able to gain information regarding Unemployment Benefits, Bankruptcy, Housing Grievance, Uncontested Divorce, Small Succession, and Child Custody.

In 2021, over 3,700 individuals completed online interviews, with 1,100 documents/assemblies downloaded.

Jacob is reunited with his parents!

Jacob, age 12, entered ALSC's services through the Child in Need of Care (CINC) Unit. Having a severe form of autism with considerable aggression and sensitivity to touch, his condition called for the use of medical restraints for his own protection, which caused some physical abrasions and led to agency involvement in his removal from his parents and home.

ALSC's attorney worked with the state and located a facility that would help Jacob, who went from being confined in a bed at home to learning new things, sleeping in a traditional bed, walking, feeding himself, and returning to live with his parents.



Alice can now provide for her grandchildren in her care.



Alice was faced with raising her two grandchildren after the unexpected death of her daughter. The children's father was incarcerated and could not provide for his children. With limited income and not having legal custody of her grandchildren, she faced numerous obstacles in their education and obtaining medical and other benefits for the children. Alice called ALSC.

With the help of her ALSC attorney, she was awarded full custody of her grandchildren providing her the ability to properly care for her grandchildren.

Mary no longer lives in fear!

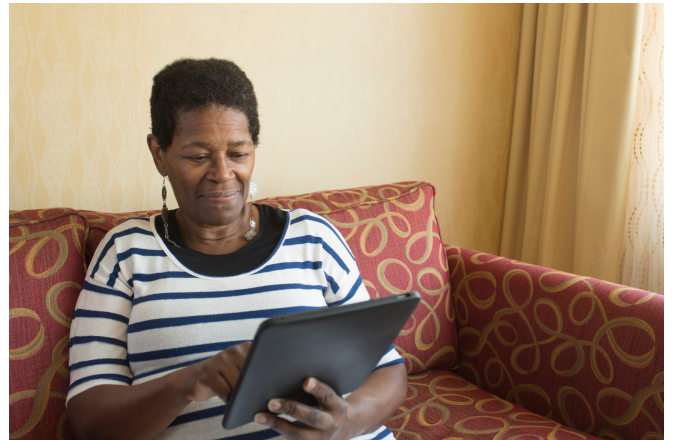


Mary, a victim of years of domestic violence, had a protective order issued against her abusive husband. She had no income and had been borrowing money from friends and relatives to purchase needed items for her children. With the help of her ALSC attorney, she filed for and obtained a divorce, custody, and child and spousal support.

Her attorney further assisted in obtaining arrearages in child and spousal support. She can now support her children and all are living, without fear, in a safe environment.

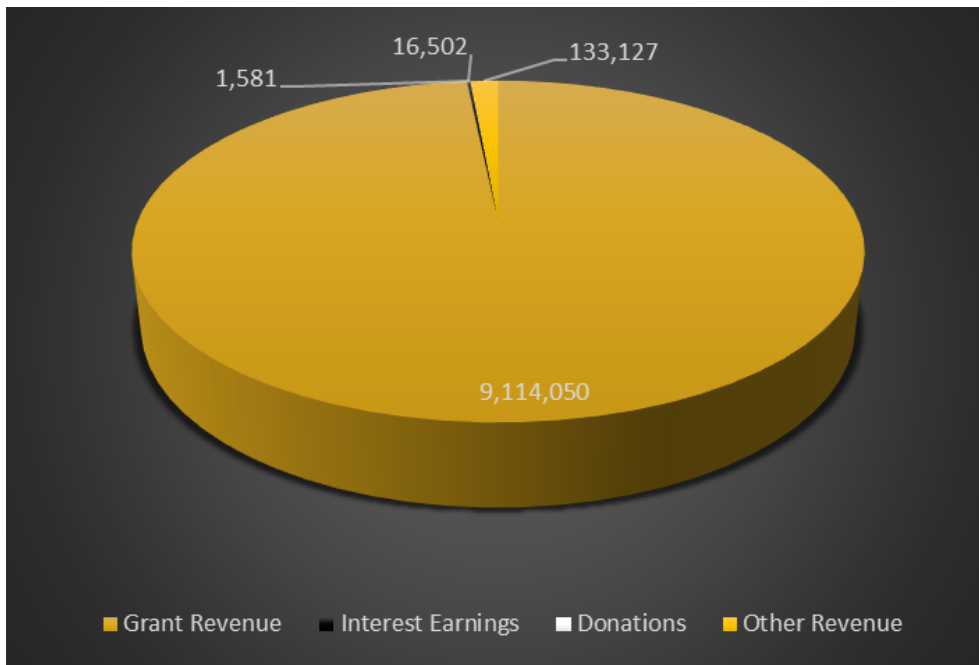
Jane receives disability benefits!

Jane, a 64-year old woman, suffers from COPD and PTSD, among other debilitating ailments, but was unable to receive disability benefits after several attempts. Jane noticed an ALSC flyer in the local library and reached out to us. With the assistance of her ALSC attorney, Jane received a fully favorable decision to start receiving monthly disability benefits, plus over \$54,000 in past due benefits.

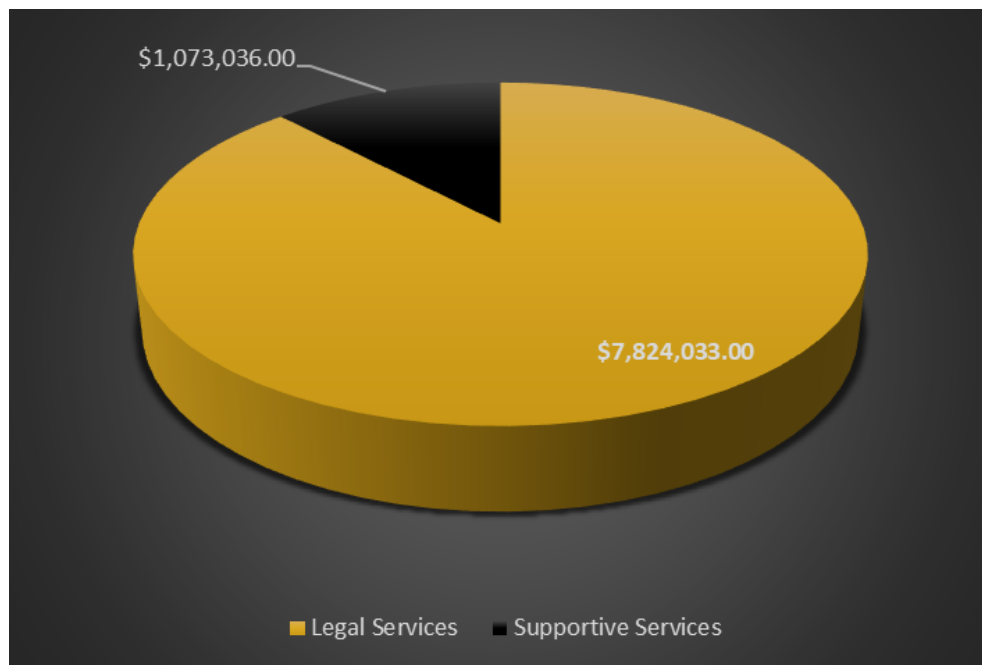


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2021 TOTAL REVENUE



2021 TOTAL EXPENSES



[View our 2021 Annual Report](#)

SUPPORTERS

ALSC is grateful for the many donors, local and national government entities, agencies and grantors who have embraced our mission by supporting our work. On behalf of all we serve, we **THANK** all our supporters!

AARP

Melanie Addy

AmazonSmile

Hailey Barnette

Beauregard Council on Aging

Tammy Bertrand

Bienville Council on Aging

Bossier Council on Aging

Caddo Council on Aging

Caddo Parish Commission

Cajun Area Agency on Aging

Calcasieu Council on Aging

Caldwell Council on Aging

Cameron Council on Aging

CENLA Area Agency on Aging

Mariah Chatman

Claiborne Council on Aging

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Charli Derouen

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Louisiana Bar Foundation

Morehouse Council on Aging

Vicky & Harold Murray

MyWalgreens Program

Natchitoches Council on Aging

Network for Good

Ouachita Council on Aging

Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting

Red River Council on Aging

Sabine Council on Aging

Target Circle Program

The GoodCoin Foundation

ThredPartners

United Way of Southwest Louisiana

Vernon Council on Aging

Webster Council on Aging

West Carroll Council on Aging

Shannin West

Rebecca Whatley





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www.la-law.org

