

We the People of the United States
do hereby adopt this Constitution to form a more perfect Union, to insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the
general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

2014 - 2015

ANNUAL



REPORT

North Penn LEGAL SERVICES

CLOSING THE
JUSTICE
GAP



CLOSING THE JUSTICE GAP

Sixty-one million Americans — nearly one in five people — qualify for civil legal assistance. This is true in Pennsylvania as well. North Penn Legal Services helps people who live in households with annual incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines. In 2014, that amounts to a mere \$14,588 per year for an individual, or \$29,813 for a family of four.

Our clients come from every ethnicity and age group. They include the working poor, families with children, veterans, homeowners and renters, people with disabilities and the elderly. Some 70% are women with children. **Of those who qualify, 50% are turned away due to lack of resources.**

In NPLS' service area there are 326,439 people who qualify for low-income legal services. With only 30 lawyers on staff, one out of every two clients is turned away because of inadequate staffing and resources.

Our Mission

The mission of North Penn Legal Services is to provide civil legal representation to low-income people and ensure equal access to justice for all.

What We Do

As a regional provider of civil legal aid for 51 years, North Penn Legal Services helps low-income people throughout 20 counties in Northeast Pennsylvania. NPLS has nine offices with a staff of 69, including 30 attorneys and 13 paralegals. Staff's main goal is to provide access to the justice system. Services include individual representation, information and advice, community legal education, and support for those clients who take direct responsibility for handling some or all aspects of their legal problem.



*Message from
the Executive Director*

The focus on providing quality services to low-income people in Northeast Pennsylvania is rooted in the numbers. There are 326,439 people living in poverty within our 20-county area who are eligible for services. Last year, 17,645 of those people living at or below the poverty level contacted North Penn Legal Services for help.

Closing the justice gap is a daunting task when the number of potential clients far outweighs the resources of NPLS. When government funding is stagnant – as it has been for the last four years – our ability to hire additional staff is impossible. We developed a plan to reach those clients who were turned away and otherwise eligible for services by incorporating technology and maximizing outreach activities with new and existing community organizations. We redesigned our website to feature an accessible resource center and the option for users to apply for services online. As a result, our advocates increased their case handling and outreach activity by 10%. Advocates who are funded by the Lehigh Valley Fair Housing Project presented information to 670 people. By enlisting the help of attorneys in the private bar, whose time was valued at \$203,700, we could reach 358 additional applicants.

We invite you to read NPLS's 2014-2015 Annual Report that highlights our clients' most pressing needs through the stories they shared with us this year. Browse our website to learn about the services clients like the ones featured in our annual report received. You can help us to close the justice gap for low-income people in Northeast Pennsylvania by making a donation to NPLS and supporting the work that we do.

Remember to stay connected with us through our Facebook page.



Victoria A. Coyle
Executive Director



Legal Aid Works IN NORTHEAST PA



HOUSING

William's Story

William—a father of two daughters initially contacted NPLS because he received an eviction notice from the housing authority. The housing authority cited the fact that his two daughters were not U.S. citizens. William explained to an NPLS Advocate that his daughters were born in the U.S., but did not have Social Security numbers. NPLS reached out to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). HIAS provides legal and supportive services to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from all backgrounds. NPLS also involved a pro bono attorney to help with the citizenship work. During the three years it took to obtain citizenship for our client's two daughters, NPLS advocated successfully to keep the family in public housing. The daughters were in fact children of a U.S. citizen which enabled our advocates to negotiate their stay in public housing by communicating with the housing authority every six months on the status of their citizenship.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Donna's Story

Donna—a disabled woman in her early 50's contacted NPLS after she was denied surgery. She was terminated from the Medical Assistance Benefits for Workers With Disabilities (MAWD) program for nonpayment. However, Donna mailed her payment on time to MAWD. Our advocate discovered that during this time period MAWD was experiencing problems throughout the state of Pennsylvania with payments not being recorded properly. The Pennsylvania Health Law Project became involved to resolve the nonpayment issue on a statewide level, so that Donna and many other low-income Pennsylvanians could get the health care they needed.



EMPLOYMENT

Michael's Story

Michael lost his job as a result of health issues. Before contacting NPLS, he successfully appealed, but failed to follow the new work registration regulations and sign up for the job gateway program within the mandatory 30-day window. Michael has chronic reading and comprehension challenges which require him to seek assistance from a job coach through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). Both Michael and his job coach thought they were following the new work regulations. Despite a handbook that Michael received which explained the waiver process, his reading and comprehension issues prevented him from filing the waiver on time. The handbook was complicated and difficult for Michael to understand. Two months passed until NPLS was able to appeal to the Unemployment Compensation Board Referee. Michael was issued a favorable decision and was told that he did not have to file a waiver since unemployment compensation benefits were allowed. Our client's case was one of the first successful appeals after the new work registration regulations took effect.

CLOSING THE

Justice Gap

THE CHALLENGE OF PROVIDING BASIC LEGAL SERVICES TO THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION

IN 2015, NPLS CONTINUED TO MAXIMIZE RESOURCES TO BRIDGE THE GAP.

Partnering with other organizations like local domestic violence agencies to offer legal services through special grants.

Connecting with funders to offer innovate services through projects such as the Lehigh Valley Fair Housing project, housing helpline, and services to domestic violence victims.

Offering online intake for people to apply for services at their convenience – **1,189 people** applied online last year.

Over **100,000 people** visited NPLS's website last year. Visitors to northpennlegal.org accessed helpful information such as our Family Law Handbook, Landlord-Tenant Handbook, and custody videos.

Outreach events at area assisted living centers and nursing homes gave seniors some peace of mind as our advocates created living wills and power of attorney documents.

One of our attorneys in Williamsport served as the liaison to Lycoming County's Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion project.

211 private attorneys accepted **358 pro bono cases.**

The value of their time is \$203,700.

Raise A Glass To Justice, an annual event to raise funds for legal aid, linked attorneys and members of the community to crown the "Lawyer Idol" in 2014 and raise \$15,000.

The Lehigh Valley Fair Housing Summit was a sellout in 2015 thanks to a partnership with Accessibility First. Participants learned the seven design requirements for accessible housing, along with training on reasonable accommodation and modification requests by persons with disabilities to allow equal enjoyment of housing opportunities.



Financial Position

Year ended June 30, 2015 (with comparative totals for the year ended June 30, 2014)

	2015	2014
ASSETS		
Cash & cash equivalents	\$956,903	\$1,420,238
Client escrow funds	699	4,707
Accounts receivable:		
PLAN	119,195	261,844
Other	360,671	276,454
Prepaid expenses	91,778	118,115
Property & equipment, net	132,499	135,339
Total Assets	\$1,661,745	\$2,216,697

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Liabilities:		
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$92,717	\$310,421
Accrued compensated absences	109,922	111,281
Client trust deposits	699	4,707
Total Liabilities	203,338	426,409
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	926,801	1,020,300
Temporarily	531,606	769,988
Total Net Assets	1,458,407	1,790,288
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$1,661,745	\$2,216,697

	Unrestricted 2015	Temporarily Restricted 2015	TOTAL 2015	TOTAL 2014
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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Revenues & Other Support:

Contracts & grants	\$5,503,692	\$1,541	\$5,505,233	\$5,339,155
Contributions:				
In-kind	187,830	—	187,830	186,503
Other	42,830	—	42,830	257,051
DAP equitable payments	—	—	—	1,386
Interest income	1,245	—	1,245	1,639
Other income	19,510	—	19,510	509
Net assets released from restrictions	239,923	(239,923)	—	—
Total revenues & other support	5,995,001	(238,382)	5,756,619	5,786,243

Expenses:

Program services	5,423,753	—	5,423,753	5,035,792
Management & general	643,466	—	643,466	737,569
Fundraising	21,281	—	21,281	38,736
Total expenses	6,088,500	—	6,088,500	5,812,097
Change in Net Assets	(93,499)	(238,382)	(331,881)	(25,854)

Net Assets:

Beginning of year	1,020,300	769,988	1,790,288	1,816,142
End of year	\$926,801	\$531,606	\$1,458,407	\$1,790,288

	2015	2014
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS		
<i>Cash Flows From Operating Activities:</i>		
Change in net assets	(\$331,881)	(\$25,854)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash & cash equivalents provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Depreciation & amortization	90,953	81,780
(Increase) decrease in:		
Accounts receivable	58,432	3,751
Prepaid expenses	26,337	51,602
(Increase) decrease in:		
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	(217,704)	193,424
Accrued compensated absences	(1,359)	4,512
Net cash & cash equivalents provided by (used in) operating activities	(375,222)	309,215
<i>Cash Flows From Investing Activities:</i>		
Purchases of equipment	(88,113)	(67,304)
Net cash & cash equivalents used in investing activities	(88,113)	(88,113)
<i>Cash Flows From Financing Activities:</i>		
Principal payments on line of credit	—	(100,000)
Net cash & cash equivalents used in financing activities	—	(100,000)
Net increase (Decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(463,335)	141,911
Cash & cash equivalents:		
Beginning of year	1,420,238	1,278,327
End of year	\$956,903	\$1,420,238

	Program Services 2015	Management & General 2015	Fundraising 2015	TOTAL 2015	TOTAL 2014
STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES					
Salaries	\$3,041,858	\$385,911	\$11,589	\$3,439,358	\$3,331,987
Fringe benefits	1,227,084	157,668	2,028	1,386,780	1,227,988
Consultants & contractors	138,521	5,077	18	143,616	61,826
Travel	41,247	17,790	—	59,037	50,637
Space costs	381,552	24,585	363	406,500	447,451
Consumable supplies	109,977	13,762	46	123,785	133,653
Equipment repairs and maintenance	71,773	5,261	—	77,034	95,149
Other	327,155	27,045	7,237	361,437	381,626
Depreciation & amortization	84,586	6,367	—	90,953	81,780
Total expenses	\$5,423,753	\$643,466	\$21,281	\$6,088,500	\$5,812,097



Getting Results

NPLS staff organized **43 clinics** on topics including custody, consumer, and housing issues. **122 people** attended these clinics.

In an attempt to reach the **12,525 applicants** we were otherwise unable to serve, we developed self-help materials, distributed **4,074 pamphlets** and conducted outreach events to **2,593 people**. Materials were also made available on our website and the website itself received **100,882 page views**.

Special projects in 2015 included Homes Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives (HAFA) Program, OVW: A Safe Place Project, Special IOLTA Helpline, and the Lehigh Valley Fair Housing Project.



\$7.8 Million

AWARDED TO OUR CLIENTS,
PRIMARILY IN DISABILITY CASES IN 2014-2015

17,645

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH DIRECT SERVICES

11,962

CASES HANDLED

8,710

CASES CLOSED

4,899

CLIENTS PROVIDED COUNSEL
AND ADVICE OR LIMITED ACTION

3,234

PEOPLE WITH HOUSING ISSUES
HELPED BY NPLS'S STAFF

2,725

CASES LITIGATED IN COURT

644

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE ORDERS OBTAINED

472

CUSTODY AND VISITATION ORDERS OBTAINED

293

CASES LITIGATED IN ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNALS



THE POWER OF

*Pro Bono and Judicare**

Total number of attorneys who provided case services:
211 PRO BONO AND 32 JUDICARE

Total number of cases accepted:
358 PRO BONO AND 95 JUDICARE

Top three main benefits for 465 cases:
**PROVIDED INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATION,
OBTAINED PROTECTIVE ORDERS FOR VICTIMS
OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND OBTAINED
ASSISTANCE ON A FAMILY MATTER.**

Total number of hours of services provided:
1,358 PRO BONO AND 493 JUDICARE

Dollar value of pro bono services provided (valued at \$150/hour):
\$203,700

Dollar value of judicare services provided (valued at \$75/hour):
\$36,975

**Cases referred to private lawyers where conflicts of interest with NPLS exist,
or additional help is needed. Lawyers are paid by NPLS.*





Excerpt from

**CHRISTOPHER L. NOCK'S ESSAY,
"THE DRUM MAJOR,"**

AS PART OF
THE PENNSYLVANIA LEGAL AID NETWORK'S
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SUMMER
INTERNSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

One of the most meaningful moments of my summer may have been one of my quietest. Early in the summer, my managing attorney handed me the file of an elderly man living in an assisted living facility. After assisting this client with a bankruptcy, we traveled to his facility to meet him in person to help him with a power of attorney. It was then that I saw the man for the first time and began to realize how important our work was in the world. This man, who was reaching the end of his life and who had outlived most of his loved ones, would likely never leave this facility. He was, quite literally, one of the most vulnerable people in our community. With no place else to turn, he was able to turn to us and that speaks to the necessity of legal aid work.



LOCATIONS

BRADFORD AND SUSQUEHANNA COUNTIES

Towanda Office

213 Main Street, Suite 1, Towanda, PA 18848
P: 877-515-7732
F: 570-534-0976

CARBON AND LUZERNE COUNTIES

Hazleton Office

101 West Broad Street, Suite 513, Hazleton, PA 18201
P: 570-455-9512
Toll Free: 877-515-7628
F: 570-455-3625

CLINTON, LYCOMING AND TIOGA COUNTIES

Williamsport Office

329 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701
P: 570-323-8741
Toll Free: 800-326-7436
F: 570-323-5256

COLUMBIA AND MONTOUR COUNTIES

Bloomsburg Office

168 East Fifth Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815-2206
P: 570-784-8760
Toll Free: 877-515-7079
F: 570-784-4840

LACKAWANNA, LUZERNE, SULLIVAN AND WYOMING COUNTIES

Services Provided by Pittston office

33 North Main Street, Suite 200, Pittston, PA 18640
P: 570-299-4100
Toll Free: 855-236-6405
F: 570-824-0001

LEHIGH AND NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

Bethlehem Office

559 Main Street, Suite 200, Bethlehem, PA 18018
P: 610-317-8757
F: 610-317-8778

MONROE AND PIKE COUNTIES

Stroudsburg Office

10 North Tenth Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
P: 570-424-5338
Toll Free: 800-532-8282
F: 570-754-8508

NORTHUMBERLAND, SNYDER AND UNION COUNTIES

Sunbury Office

133 North Second Street, Sunbury, PA 17801
P: 570-286-5687
Toll Free: 877-515-7730
F: 570-286-2203

WAYNE COUNTY

Honesdale Office

Wayne County Courthouse
925 Court Street, Honesdale, PA 18431
P: 877-515-7465
F: 570-754-8510

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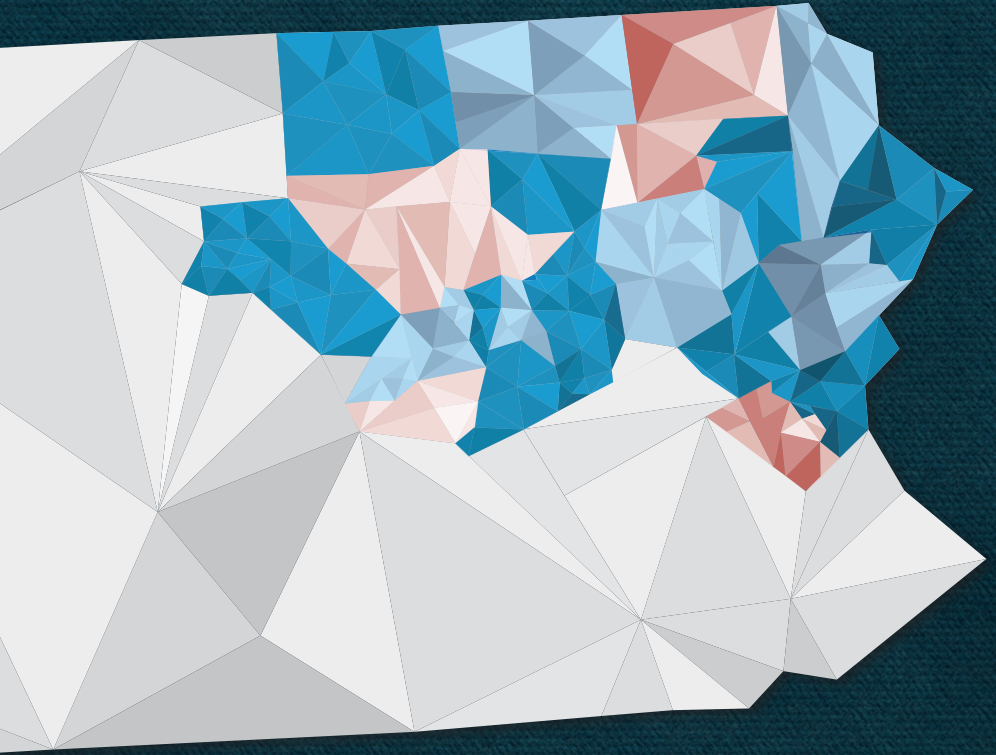
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SERVING 20 COUNTIES

in Northeast Pennsylvania

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