



**2016**

**Community**

**Impact Report**



**New Mexico's  
statewide  
civil legal services  
provider since 2003**

Dear Friends,

New Mexico Legal Aid has been advocating for low-income New Mexicans and victims of violence for more than 65 years. Our lawyers fight for fundamental rights to fair and affordable housing, for freedom from domestic violence, for access to employment and education, and for vitally needed basic income, food and health care benefits. Everyone deserves a chance to access justice. But it is no secret that New Mexico has one of the highest poverty rates in the country. Many thousands of New Mexicans each year would find legal help unaffordably beyond their reach if not for New Mexico Legal Aid.

Justice denied is a tragedy for an individual, and costly to the entire community. Please contribute generously to help us make sure the Pledge of Allegiance means what it says: in America there is justice for all.

Ed Marks, Executive Director



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## Housing

When the bank wrongfully foreclosed on an 83-year old blind and disabled Albuquerque widow's reverse mortgage, she turned to New Mexico Legal Aid for help. The bank claimed she had violated the contract terms by moving out of the house – but NMLA proved that she had been living there all along and the foreclosure case was dismissed.



## Family Law

A Silver City ex-husband knew no bounds when he battered his ex-spouse causing her to be hospitalized. Over the course of three months, he texted her 26,000 times. He broke into her home and defaced family photographs, taped threatening messages on her bedroom wall, and stole her clothing. This woman sought help from New Mexico Legal Aid, and won a 25-year order of protection as well as permission to relocate with her young child.



## Consumer Protection

A McKinley County Navajo woman, disabled by open heart surgery, had a loan on the car that she relied on to get to medical appointments in Gallup from her rural home 100 miles away. A representative from a debt collector agency told her she hadn't paid on her car and needed to make a payment arrangement with them in order to keep the car. Not knowing she was being scammed, she began making payments to the debt collector and stopped paying the original loan company. As a result the loan company repossessed her car, leaving her stranded in an Albuquerque homeless shelter for two weeks. She sought help from New Mexico Legal Aid. NMLA attorneys filed a complaint against the debt collector for violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, the Unfair Practices Act, and fraud. NMLA negotiated a settlement where the client was paid \$3,375 in damages and she avoided further liability of \$11,550.

Because there is  
no guaranteed  
right to counsel in  
civil cases, legal  
aid is the **ONLY**  
alternative for  
those who cannot  
afford a lawyer  
and struggle to  
represent  
themselves

2016 New Mexico Legal Aid by the Numbers:  
3,878 cases handled,  
affecting 12,123 New  
Mexicans and their  
families

450 volunteer attorneys  
handled 148 cases,  
provided advice to  
1,919 people at clinics,  
and helped with  
program activities



## Economic Stability

A disabled, elderly Pueblo woman needed assistance in her appeal when New Mexico Centennial Care, the state's Medicaid program, reduced the hours of weekly personal care assistance she relied upon. New Mexico Legal Aid's Native American Program attorneys advocated on her behalf and her benefits were restored to 38 hours, up from 25 hours.



We gratefully acknowledge the private, corporate and government funding that made our work in 2016 possible.



U.S. Department of Justice, Native American Rights Fund  
U.S. Department of the Treasury, Taxpayer Advocate Service  
Corporation for National & Community Service, AmeriCorps  
New Mexico Civil Legal Services Commission  
New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Dept.  
New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission  
New Mexico Commission for the Blind  
New Mexico Commission on Access to Justice  
New Mexico Acequia Association  
New Mexico Land Grant Council  
City of Santa Fe

*To help make the future safer and more secure for New Mexico's most vulnerable, please mail a check to NMLA today,*

Albuquerque Community  
Foundation

St. Bede's Church

Equal Access to Justice

Equal Justice Works

J.F. Maddox Foundation

McCune Foundation

Nusenda CU Foundation

Sandia Foundation

Taos Community Foundation

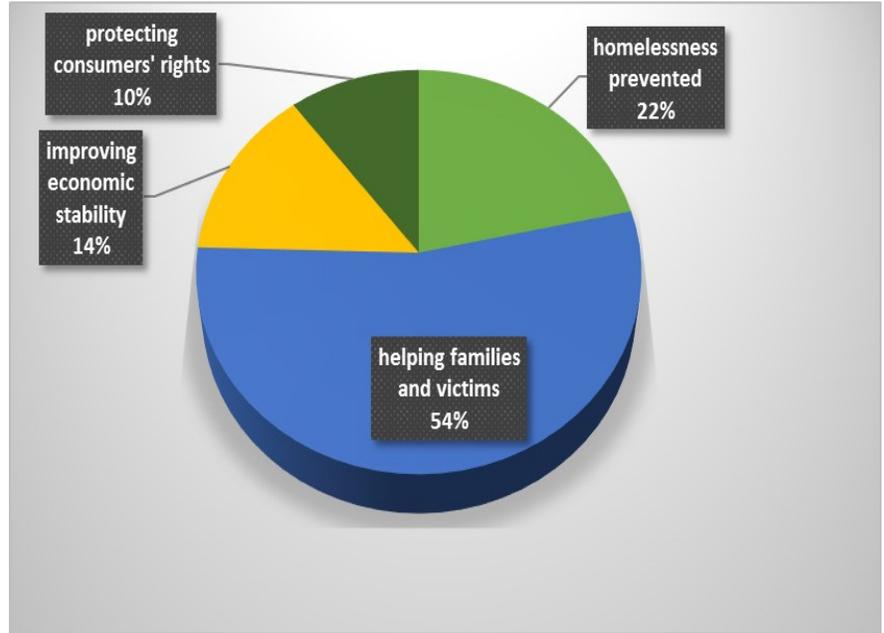
Wells Fargo Foundation

United Ways

## [ From the Audit: ]

Unrestricted Revenue	2,996,602
<u>Temp. Restricted</u>	<u>3,702,870</u>
Total	6,699,472

Program Expenses	6,169,201
Management	784,563
<u>- Change in net assets</u>	<u>254,292</u>
Total	<u>6,699,472</u>
Net Asset Carry For'd	434,742



## *New Mexico's Statewide Civil Legal Services Provider*

The mission of New Mexico Legal Aid, Inc. is to be the voice, defender and advocate for poor people who are seeking justice in all forums, particularly in the communities in which they live. New Mexico Legal Aid is committed to helping poor people in their struggle to access food, shelter, security, and to preserve their unique cultural heritages.

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**LSC** | America's Partner  
for Equal Justice

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION