

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Funding Access to Justice



2021 Annual Report of President Timothy A. Diemand and Executive Director Natalie S. Wagner

We are pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report of the Connecticut Bar Foundation (CBF). The Covid-19 pandemic continued to present both significant challenges and new opportunities throughout the year.

Funding to support operating grants to Connecticut civil legal aid organizations that provide legal services to those who cannot afford an attorney rose a modest 4.5% in 2021 after steep declines in 2020.

The IOLTA/IOTA Program, which had experienced a revenue decline of 36% in 2020, saw an additional decline of 4% in 2021. This was countered by moderate growth in the other sources of revenue for these grants, including the Court Fees Grants-in-Aid and the Judicial Branch Grants-in-Aid. Even with these increases, total general operating grants for legal aid organizations were down 15% in 2021 compared to pre-pandemic levels.

On a positive note, the Connecticut General Assembly created two new programs in 2021 to increase the availability of legal aid services in Connecticut beginning in 2022. The first is a Right to Counsel Program for residential tenants facing eviction and the second increases access to counsel for low-income residents seeking to apply for a temporary restraining order.

Throughout 2021, the Foundation maintained the robust virtual programming it began at the start of the pandemic. We continued to partner with the Connecticut

Bar Association (CBA) to present new webinars in the Constance Baker Motley Speaker Series on Racial Inequality. The series included eight virtual events during 2021 that remain available for viewing on the CBF website, with more planned in 2022.

The Fellows also hosted six virtual Roundtables over the course of the year, where small groups engaged in thoughtful discussion of timely legal issues.

The 4th Hon. Mark R. Kravitz Symposium was held virtually in 2021, bringing together distinguished panelists to discuss "The Arc of the Rule of Law." The Kravitz Symposium Series on the Administration of Justice was established to enhance the public's understanding of the role of law in society.

The 21st Annual Quintin Johnstone Statewide High School Essay Contest received another record-breaking number of entries in 2021, engaging students across Connecticut on legal issues that are relevant to them.

The Foundation continued its partnership with the Herbert and Nell Singer Foundation to administer the Singer Connecticut Public Service Fellowship Program. Both 2020-2021 Fellows were invited to continue for a second year, with two new Singer Fellows starting in the fall. This program funds the placement of talented new lawyers with legal aid organizations in our state.

During the CBF's virtual Annual Reception in October, New Haven Legal Assistance Association

was awarded the 3rd Annual Anthony M. Fitzgerald Award for Excellence. The award recognizes the dedicated service and outstanding achievements of a Connecticut nonprofit legal service organization or legal aid attorney.

Attorney Ralph Monaco was posthumously awarded the Connecticut Bar Foundation Special Recognition Award to honor his commitment and dedication to the mission of the Foundation and the Connecticut legal community.

The staff and judges of the Connecticut Judicial Branch were honored with the 2021 Distinguished Service Award for outstanding service to the bench, bar, community, and public, for their efforts to improve the legal system during the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We thank the Hon. William Bright, Hon. Janet Hall, Krista Hess, Tim Shearin, and Denise Zamore for their years of dedicated service on the CBF Board. We welcome new board members Art Corey of the Connecticut Bankers Association, Karen DeMeola of UConn School of Law, Sonia Pedraza of Travelers, and the Hon. Robert Richardson. We recognize Quinnipiac University School of Law, UConn School of Law, Yale Law School, and the CBA for their continuing support of the CBF and its mission. We especially thank the officers and members of the CBF Board, the Fellows, and the wonderful staff for their ongoing work on behalf of the CBF.

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Who do you bank with?



The CBF is grateful for the generosity of our Leadership Banks!

The following institutions pay higher interest rates on IOLTA/IOTA accounts to increase access to justice for Connecticut residents who cannot afford an attorney.

The Bank of New York Mellon • NBT Bank • New Haven Bank
PeoplesBank • Sterling National Bank • Thomaston Savings Bank
Torrington Savings Bank • Washington Trust Company • Westfield Bank

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2021 Grants Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts/Interest on Trust Accounts (IOLTA/IOTA), Court Fees Grants-in-Aid (CFGIA), Judicial Branch Grants-in-Aid (JBGIA), Pro Bono Management Grant (Pro Bono), Singer Fellowship Awards (Singer)

Legal Services Providers	IOLTA/IOTA	CFGIA	JBGIA	Pro Bono	Singer	TOTAL GRANTS PAID
Center for Children's Advocacy provides legal representation and systemic advocacy for children and youth at risk statewide.	\$ 78,079	\$ 350,818	\$ 47,002	\$ 33,399	\$ 37,500	\$ 546,798
Children's Law Center of Connecticut provides representation, as Guardians ad litem or Attorneys for the Minor Child, to children of indigent families who are embroiled in bitter custody disputes in Family Courts statewide.	\$ 32,542	\$ 146,543	\$ 19,632			\$ 198,717
Connecticut Fair Housing Center represents those who have been victims of housing discrimination.	\$ 18,329	\$ 82,597	\$ 11,066			\$ 111,992
Connecticut Legal Rights Project represents low-income people with mental health conditions to protect their legal rights in the community and in state-operated hospitals.	\$ 87,303	\$ 392,536	\$ 52,590			\$ 532,429
Connecticut Legal Services provides general legal assistance in all areas of the state except Hartford and New Haven Counties.	\$ 1,207,437	\$ 5,429,355	\$ 727,412			\$ 7,364,204
Connecticut Veterans Legal Center's mission is to lower the legal barriers to housing, healthcare, and income for veterans recovering from mental illness and homelessness.	\$ 25,395	\$ 113,567	\$ 15,216		\$ 75,000	\$ 229,178
Greater Hartford Legal Aid provides general legal assistance in greater Hartford.	\$ 485,949	\$ 2,185,290	\$ 292,780		\$ 71,577	\$ 3,035,596
Lawyers for Children America provides representation to poor and at-risk children in Bridgeport, Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, Rockville, Torrington, and Waterbury Juvenile Courts.	\$ 8,243	\$ 37,083	\$ 4,968			\$ 50,294
New Haven Legal Assistance provides general legal assistance in the Greater New Haven and Lower Naugatuck Valley communities.	\$ 359,800	\$ 1,617,978	\$ 216,772		\$ 45,628	\$ 2,240,178
Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut provides legal services to low-income people, including advice, brief services, self-help, referrals to legal aid providers, pro bono referrals, and community education.	\$ 33,038	\$ 148,439	\$ 19,888			\$ 201,365
Open Communities Alliance provides legal assistance to low-income families facing discriminatory barriers when trying to access affordable housing in resource-rich communities.	\$ 6,909	\$ 30,868	\$ 4,138			\$ 41,915
Technology Grant for CTLawHelp Website	\$ 79,637					\$ 79,637
Legal Services Funding Total	\$ 2,422,661	\$ 10,535,074	\$ 1,411,464	\$ 33,399	\$ 229,705	\$ 14,632,303

CBF Law School Scholarships

The law school scholarship program, which is based on financial need, began in 1989 when the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 89-196 that authorized the administrator of the IOLTA program, the Connecticut Bar Foundation, to provide funding for these scholarships. The CBF developed plans to implement the program and started funding scholarships in 1990. From 1990 to 2021, the CBF has made equal, annual grants totaling \$4,415,939 to Quinnipiac University School of Law (formerly the University of Bridgeport School of Law), UConn School of Law, and Yale Law School. The CBF is proud of its role of providing financial assistance to hundreds of law school students and helping them to achieve a legal education and become attorneys.



Ashleigh M. Backman
Interim Executive Director
Connecticut Veterans Legal Center

Connecticut Veterans Legal Center (CVLC) is grateful to the Connecticut Bar Foundation for its longstanding support and funding. The CBF makes it possible for CVLC to remove legal barriers to housing, healthcare, and income on behalf of veterans diagnosed with mental illness and facing homelessness. The funding received from the CBF has been crucial to our ability to continue to provide free legal services and advocacy on behalf of all low-income veterans.