



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Funding Access to Justice

2020 Annual Report of President Timothy A. Diemand and Executive Director Natalie Wagner

We are pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report of the Connecticut Bar Foundation (CBF). The Covid-19 pandemic presented the world with unprecedented challenges in 2020 and the CBF responded with ingenuity and rigor.

The IOLTA/IOTA Program experienced a sharp 36% decline in revenue in 2020 due to the impact of the pandemic on interest rates. The program helps fund grants administered by the CBF for Connecticut nonprofit organizations that provide civil legal services to those who cannot afford an attorney. With the use of reserves, the CBF was able to limit the decrease in overall grant payments to under 16%, as the number of people who qualified for legal aid services grew. Unfortunately, the decline in IOLTA revenues is unlikely to improve in the near term and the legal aid community may continue to feel the impact for some time to come.

The Foundation shifted to virtual programming during the pandemic to continue advancing our mission. In July, the CBF partnered with the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA) to launch the **Constance Baker Motley Speaker Series on Racial Inequality**. The series included seven virtual events in its first 6 months with more planned in 2021. The panelists discussed and responded to questions on structural racism in the justice system, education, the electoral process, employment, polic-

ing, and zoning. The Fellows also hosted two in-person Roundtable discussions before the pandemic began and five virtual Roundtables over the remainder of the year.

During the CBF's virtual Annual Reception, the **Connecticut Veterans Legal Center** was awarded the **2nd Annual Anthony M. Fitzgerald Award for Excellence**.

The award, established by the partners of Carmody Torrance Sandak and Hennessy LLP to honor their former colleague, recognizes the dedicated service and outstanding achievements of a Connecticut nonprofit legal service provider or legal aid attorney.

Attorney David A. Pels was posthumously awarded the **2020 Legal Services Leadership Award** for his role as a pioneer of landlord-tenant law in Connecticut and decades representing low-income tenants. Attorneys and staff of Greater Hartford Legal Aid previously established the David Pels Homelessness Prevention Fund at the CBF to honor David's legacy. The program provides emergency grants to help legal aid clients avoid eviction or subsidy termination.

Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson was honored with the **2020 Distinguished Service Award** for outstanding service to the bench, bar, community, and public for his efforts to improve the legal system through leadership on programs aimed at combating the effects of

implicit biases on the administration of justice.

The **20th Annual Quintin Johnstone Statewide Essay Contest** received entries from 89 students across Connecticut responding to the topic, "Immigration Situation." 140 Fellows scored the entries, and cash prizes were awarded to one winner and two runners-up.

The inaugural class of **Singer Public Service Fellows** completed their fellowships and both 2019-2020 Fellows were invited to continue for a second year. The program increases access to justice in Connecticut by supporting the placement of talented new lawyers with CT legal aid organizations.

We thank Timothy Fisher, Larry Fox, Joseph Santos, and Daniel Schwartz for their service on the board and welcome 2020 elected directors **Joette Katz** of Shipman and Goodwin, **Anika Singh Lemar** of Yale Law School, and **Hon. Cesar Noble**. We recognize with great appreciation Quinnipiac School of Law, UConn School of Law, Yale Law School, and CBA for their continuing partnership. We especially thank the officers and members of the CBF Board, the Fellows, and the wonderful staff, including Anne Goico, Sarah Caputo, and Gina Casella, for their work on behalf of the CBF. Finally, we recognize and thank **Liz Drummond** for her nearly three decades with the CBF and offer our best wishes as she begins her retirement.

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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 • Peoples Bank
PNC Bank • Sterling National Bank • Thomaston Savings Bank
Torrington Savings Bank • Washington Trust Company • Westfield Bank

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2020 Grants Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts/Interest on Trust Accounts (IOLTA/IOTA), Court Fees Grants-in-Aid (CFGIA), Judicial Branch Grants-in-Aid (JBGIA), Bank of America Settlement Fund Grants (BOA), Singer Fellowship Awards (Singer)

Legal Services Providers	IOLTA/IOTA	CFGIA	JBGIA	BOA	Singer	TOTAL GRANTS PAID
Center for Children's Advocacy provides legal representation and systemic advocacy for children and youth at risk statewide.	\$ 107,079	\$ 326,699	\$ 45,306	\$ 100,260		\$ 579,344
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.	\$ 44,713	\$ 136,418	\$ 18,918			\$ 200,049
Connecticut Fair Housing Center represents those who have been victims of housing discrimination.	\$ 25,198	\$ 76,880	\$ 10,662	\$ 140,625		\$ 253,365
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.	\$ 119,799	\$ 365,504	\$ 50,688			\$ 535,991
Connecticut Legal Services provides general legal assistance in all areas of the state except Hartford and New Haven Counties.	\$ 1,656,975	\$ 5,055,421	\$ 701,082	\$ 230,269		\$ 7,643,747
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.	\$ 30,190	\$ 92,110	\$ 12,774		\$ 93,750	\$ 228,824
Greater Hartford Legal Aid provides general legal assistance in greater Hartford.	\$ 666,916	\$ 2,034,759	\$ 282,179		\$ 75,000	\$ 3,058,854
Lawyers for Children America provides representation to poor and at-risk children in Bridgeport, Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, Rockville, Torrington, and Waterbury Juvenile Courts.	\$ 11,317	\$ 34,527	\$ 4,788			\$ 50,632
New Haven Legal Assistance provides general legal assistance in the Greater New Haven and Lower Naugatuck Valley communities	\$ 493,782	\$ 1,506,527	\$ 208,924	\$ 107,475	\$ 75,000	\$ 2,391,708
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 referral, and community education .	\$ 53,184	\$ 162,263	\$ 22,503			\$ 237,950
Open Communities Alliance provides legal assistance to low income families facing discriminatory barriers when trying to access affordable housing in resource-rich communities.	\$ 9,430	\$ 28,769	\$ 3,990			\$ 42,189
Technology Grant for CTLawHelp Website	\$ 102,159					\$ 102,159
Legal Services Funding Total	\$ 3,320,742	\$ 9,819,877	\$ 1,361,814	\$ 578,629	\$ 243,750	\$ 15,324,812

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 2020, the CBF has made equal, annual grants totaling \$4,385,969 to Quinnipiac 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.

Lawyers for Children America is grateful for the longstanding support and funding of the Connecticut Bar Foundation (CBF). We are a leading child advocacy organization, protecting the rights of child victims of abuse, neglect, and abandonment by providing the highest level of direct pro bono legal representation. LFCA recruits and trains committed lawyers from law firms and corporate legal departments to ensure that the client's desires are known to the court and that the child receives comprehensive services. LFCA also educates lawyers about the state child protection systems to improve representation and engage the private bar in systemic improvements. The funding we have received from the CBF has been crucial to our ability to continue our work in Connecticut for 25 years and to provide vulnerable children with superior legal representation.



Priscilla Pappadia, Executive Director
Lawyers for Children America