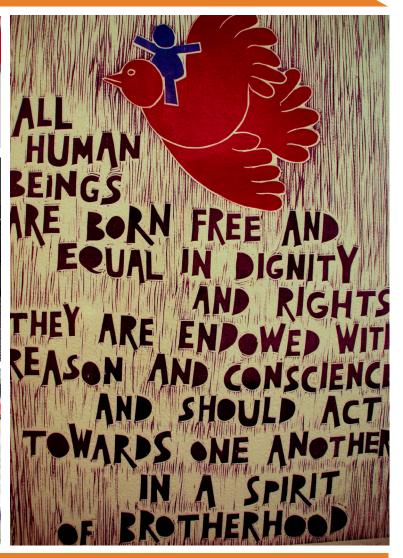
25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE









NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

OUR **VISION**



We envision an end to homelessness in America. A home for every family and individual will be the norm and not the exception—a right and not a privilege.

OUR **MISSION**



The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is the only national organization dedicated solely to using the power of the law to prevent and end homelessness in America. With the support of an extensive network of pro bono lawyers, we address the immediate and long-term needs of people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk through outreach and training, advocacy, impact litigation, and public education.

OUR **HISTORY**



Cities Accused of Hiding the Homeless

Advocates Say New Laws Try to Eliminate People, Not Problems

By Nancy Lewis

citing as an example what she said was Dallas's rigorous enforcement desperation by people doing any-

The Law Center's Founder and Executive Director Maria Foscarinis began her legal career at Sullivan & Cromwell. During her time there, she volunteered to take a pro bono case representing homeless families in a federal court class action suit. She witnessed first-hand both the growing national crisis and the impact first rate legal advocacy can make. In 1985, Maria left Sullivan & Cromwell to fully devote herself to the fight to end homelessness.

In 1987, Maria led the campaign to pass the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the first major federal legislation to address the problem.

In 1989, she founded the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty to use the power of the law to end and prevent homelessness.



MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2014, the Law Center celebrated our 25th Anniversary with major victories and strengthened partnerships. Contained in this special anniversary edition of our 2014 Annual Report you will find a timeline documenting the incredible progress our organization, and our cause, has made over the past 25 years.

You will also find highlights from last year. Through our litigation, we were able to prevent Boise, Idaho from enforcing an anti-solicitation law that would have prevented people experiencing homelessness or poverty from asking their fellow citizens for financial help on the street. We were fortunate to have the passionate and committed support of the ACLU of Idaho in filing and winning the case. The Law Center also achieved victory in Wisconsin, thereby preventing the disenfranchisement of homeless and low income people in the 2014 elections and beyond. We were joined by a remarkable legal team from Dechert LLP, contributing pro bono support to secure this victory.

Internationally, the Law Center's human rights work resulted in three United Nations human rights reviews of the criminalization of homelessness in the U.S. and reports adopting our recommendations, giving us greater leverage in our federal, state and local advocacy.

Notably, the Law Center's federal agency outreach bore fruit with strengthened partnerships with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to help fight criminalization and promote human rights strategies such as housing and services.

Through eight new reports and two resource manuals, the Law Center offered critical legal and policy tools to advocates, providers and policy makers across the country. All told, Law Center reports and other resource materials were downloaded 81,930 times. The No Safe Place: The Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities report broke any previous records with over 20,000 downloads since its July 2014 release. Through our webinar series, we hosted six trainings for over 1,259 advocates.

Throughout all of the 2014 reports and outreach, we galvanized record media attention for the Law Center with 129 media mentions - including a New York Times editorial quoting Law Center attorneys and supporting our position, and an op-ed in USA Today - bringing greater public attention to homelessness.

These victories, along with our many others, go to the heart of the Law Center's mission: to use the power of the law to protect the rights and dignity of homeless people and to advance solutions to homelessness. We could not have accomplished these victories without our many supporters. This year's victories belong to all of us, and most of all, to the men, women, and children who experience homelessness in our country.

We thank you, our stalwart supporters, for being a key part of our journey and for sharing our vision of a future in which all families and individuals enjoy the safety, stability and dignity of home.

Sincerely,

Maria Foscarinis
Executive Director & Founder

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It is my privilege to share with you in this annual report the Law Center's 2014 progress to end and prevent homelessness and to advocate on behalf of our most vulnerable citizens.

While homelessness has many faces – families, children, working men and women, domestic violence survivors, veterans, people who are mentally or physically disabled, and people who are struggling with addiction – so, too, does the Law Center have many strategies to bring about change:

- Advocating for housing rights and the human right to housing
- Countering the criminalization of homelessness by promoting positive solutions
- Protecting the educational rights of homeless youth
- Strengthening partnerships within the community of advocates for homeless persons

The Law Center's 2014 activities are impressive on their own; but even more significantly, they represent a leading edge of the movement to end homelessness.

This past year witnessed particularly significant headway with international human rights bodies to pressure the U.S. federal government to discourage the criminalization of homelessness through its funding processes. Concurrently, our local-level work in cities such as Boise, Indianapolis, Denver, Duluth, Eugene, and Seattle is leveraging systemic and policy changes that will support an end to this national crisis.

Children in particular have been a focus of the Law Center's efforts, as have domestic violence victims. Through training advocates and service providers as well as disseminating its leading reports, the Law Center helped to ensure that homeless children can stay in school and access the services to which they are entitled under the McKinney-Vento Act. For those who have fled abuse to keep themselves and their children safe, the Law Center has worked with federal agencies and nonprofit allies on how best to implement the new housing protections guaranteed in the 2013 Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. Amidst the turmoil of relationship violence and homelessness, the daily stability provided by housing cannot be underestimated as fundamental to mental health and being able to forge a way forward to a better future.

What the Law Center accomplished in 2014 has set the bar for 2015 and beyond even higher. Growing income inequality, increasing homelessness, and continued criminalization of homelessness is making our work more urgent.

Thankfully, we do not work alone. I am humbled by the dedication of my fellow Board members, the Law Center's talented staff, our law firm and attorney volunteers, our corporate supporters, and our allies in the nonprofit world and at government agencies. Together, and with friends like you by our side, we will persevere until homelessness is eradicated.

I offer my most sincere thanks to all who share our values, concerns, and priorities and whose support will undoubtedly make a difference as we move forward.

Edward McNicholas Chair of the Board of Directors

Edward & Me Nickston

1

RIGHT TO HOUSING

Bringing the Human Right to Housing Home

Although housing is a human right recognized under international law, domestic U.S. law is still far from fully recognizing it.

In 2014, the Law Center successfully raised awareness and demonstrated to international human rights bodies, federal agencies, as well as state and local government that homelessness in the U.S. is a human rights issue and is not adequately being addressed.

On December 10, 2014, International Human Rights Day, the Law Center published its annual *Report Card on the Human Right to Housing*, which assessed U.S. compliance with the seven elements of the human right to housing defined in international law. **The U.S. received an overall grade of D**, reflecting the lack of priority and resources devoted to meeting the human right to housing. The report serves as a key framework for advocacy to make the human right to housing real for all Americans.

On the same day, the Law Center published Human Rights to Human Reality: A Ten-Step Guide to Strategic Human Rights Advocacy, discussing the steps we have taken to bring international attention to the criminalization of homelessness—and to turn protections against it into domestic policy. This user-friendly guide, produced in conjunction with the Human Rights at Home Campaign, is aimed at helping advocates use human rights standards and mechanisms as part of their own advocacy strategies.

Using the Power of Law to House Domestic Violence Survivors

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness, especially for women and their children. In 2014, the Law Center worked on implementation of the 2013 Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, legislation that included a major expansion of housing rights for survivors, extending protections to over 4 million additional households. The Law Center focused efforts on the three responsible federal agencies, resulting in the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture releasing interim guidance adopting many of our recommendations. We also trained over 400 advocates on housing and other protections for survivors of domestic violence and their families, giving them the information necessary to support thousands of survivors and families who would otherwise risk becoming homeless. The Law Center also disseminated nearly 900 copies of our There's No Place Like Home report on state laws that protect housing rights for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Strengthening Housing Rights for Renters at Foreclosure

Enacted with Law Center advocacy in 2009, the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA) gave tenants living in foreclosed properties the right to stay in their homes for the duration of their lease, or for a minimum of 90 days. In 2014, the Law Center continued to work with the National Association of Realtors® (NAR) to promote compliance with the PTFA; as a result, NAR posted materials on its website to educate realtors (typically sent by lenders to vacate foreclosed properties) across the nation about renters' rights under federal law. Despite the Law Center's and allies' efforts to educate Congress about the importance of the PTFA, the law expired at the end of 2014. In 2015, the Law Center will focus on protecting tenants at the state and local levels.

STORY of IMPACT

Lawrence Lee Smith became homeless after degenerative joint disease prematurely ended his employment in construction and sprinkler installation. With disability payments insufficient for housing, he slept outside in the woods. After being arrested under a Boise "anti-camping" ordinance and jailed for 90 days, he lost his tent, his stove, and his fishing equipment, which helped sustain him in the absence of shelter. Smith's story has been an essential component of the Law Center's ongoing federal court challenge to the law.

Housing for Homeless People in Unused Government Properties

Under federal law (Title V of the McKinney-Vento Act), nonprofit groups may acquire vacant federal properties at no charge to house and serve homeless people. During 2014, the Law Center trained and worked successfully with a coalition of Seattle-area homeless service providers to get a former Federal Reserve building (properly screened by HUD) made available for homeless use, and provided technical assistance to three groups that submitted a joint application for the property. The application was ultimately denied, but for reasons that raise concerns about the federal government's compliance with the law. The Law Center is evaluating whether that decision is representative of a larger pattern and practice of non-compliance with federal law.

CIVIL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Fighting Criminalization

Some activities are so fundamental to human existence that it defies common sense that they might be treated as crimes. While activities such as falling asleep, standing still, and sitting down are unquestionably legal when performed indoors, more and more communities across the country are treating these life-sustaining behaviors as criminal acts when performed in public places by people with nowhere else to go. The Law Center's 2014 publications, advocacy, and litigation shed light on the issue and promoted constructive alternatives to the criminalization of homelessness.

The Law Center's groundbreaking report No Safe Place: The Criminalization of Homelessness in the United States, surveyed 187 cities across the country and documented a 60% increase in city-wide bans on camping, 43% increase in city-wide bans on sitting or lying down, and a 119% increase in bans on sleeping in vehicles since 2011. Of the 187 cities surveyed, 17 have ordinances that restrict individuals & private organizations from sharing food with homeless people. The report garnered major national, international, regional and local media attention, including an editorial in the New York Times supporting our position. A companion Advocacy Manual reviewed relevant litigation and trends, and offered advocacy tips for lawyers and other advocates.



In 2014, the Law Center won important victories in the fight to end the criminalization of homelessness:

Following a major federal court victory against the City
of Dallas, TX striking down the city's efforts to stop
charitable groups from offering food to poor people in
public places, the Law Center negotiated a favorable
settlement rewriting the law.

In early 2014, we won an important victory in a case challenging an anti-solicitation law targeting homeless and poor people in Boise, ID; as a result, the city has now repealed the law.

- We continued our federal court challenge to Boise's "anti-camping" law. Since the case returned from the 9th Circuit, the Law Center achieved a partial victory in that the city amended its ordinances acknowledging the need to comply with the constitutional rights of homeless persons. However, we continue to disagree with the city that their revised ordinance is fully compliant.
- We turned back an aggressive effort by Columbia, South Carolina to force homeless people to leave town or face arrest; stopped an effort by Honolulu to forcibly remove homeless people to an old Japanese internment facility; and put an end to a proposed park curfew in Eugene, Oregon intended to keep out homeless people.
- The Law Center persuaded three key United Nations Human Rights Committees that were reviewing the U.S.'s compliance with treaty commitments to question the government about the criminalization of homelessness; two of the committees also adopted our recommendations condemning such laws and supporting constructive alternatives, such as housing and services. Reports and shorter advocacy documents helped to make the Law Center's points and to encourage the federal government to disfavor federal funding applications from states and cities that have criminalization policies.

The Law Center's report, Welcome Home: The Rise of Tent Cities in the United States, documents the rise of homeless encampments and "tent cities" across the United States, and legal and policy responses. In eight of the surveyed camps, municipalities legalized the camps and allowed occupants to build more permanent structures in place of tents, with another three moving in that direction. Ten camps had at least a semi-sanctioned status, meaning that

although not formally recognized, public officials were aware of the encampments and were not taking active steps to have them evicted. In most cases, however, municipalities have chosen to shut down camps without providing alternative housing or shelter, often arresting residents and destroying their property in the process. In documenting government response to tent cities, the Law Center hopes to spur positive solutions to address the root causes rather than trying to deny their existence.

Partnering with States in Support of Homeless Bill of Rights

Homeless Bills of Rights (HBoRs) prohibit discrimination against homeless people in public places as well as in employment, housing and public benefits, thus laying a legal foundation to end homelessness.

Building on successful HBoR bills passed in Rhode Island, Illinois and Connecticut, the Law Center's report, From Wrongs to Rights: The Case for Homeless Bill of Rights Legislation, provided data and supportive arguments for groups to advance similar bills in additional jurisdictions, most notably in Duluth (MN), California, Indianapolis (IN), Denver (CO), Seattle (WA) and Eugene (OR). The Law Center also supported advocates in Rhode Island and Illinois on implementation of their HBoRs.

Partnering with the Federal Government in Support of Human Rights

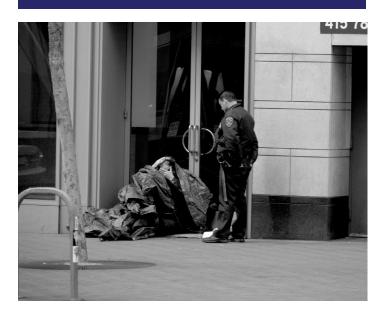
On a national level, the Law Center partnered with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), leading USICH to take important positive steps in promoting the human rights of homeless people and advocating against criminalization. In 2014, USICH created an entire resource page dedicated to human rights and alternatives to criminalization of homelessness, and teamed up with Law Center to publish a joint blog on human rights.

Protecting the Right to Vote

In Frank v. Walker, the Law Center won a major federal district court victory in a challenge to Wisconsin's voter identification requirement, which would have prevented some 200,000 low income people, many of them homeless, from voting in the November elections. However, the final resolution is still in question. Following a reversal of the victory by the 7th Circuit, we won a temporary stay of the reversal from the U.S. Supreme Court, ensuring that elections could proceed without the voter ID requirements.

STORY of IMPACT

Victoria McNair, a Senior Attorney at Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc. in Jacksonville, Florida participated in the Law Center *No Safe Place* webinar. Victoria was able to share what she had learned from the webinar with legal aid attorneys, consumer attorneys, and housing attorneys throughout Florida. The Law Center continues to work alongside and share information with local advocates across the country about how to end and prevent the criminalization of homelessness. The Law Center also empowers its allies to do the same in their communities.



STORY of IMPACT

Wes Goodwin moved to a tent community in Charleston, West Virginia after his house was evacuated following a large chemical spill nearby. Police officers threatened to cite, to arrest, and even to dismantle the community. Wes reached out to the Law Center after participating in one of its webinars. The Law Center then connected Wes with a local attorney who referred to the No Safe Place report and the Criminalizing Crisis Advocacy Manual when she contacted the police chief. The local attorney learned that there were no orders to evict the tent community and that the officers involved would be investigated. With the support of the Law Center, Wes was able to remain in his community without the fear of being arrested.

YOUTH & EDUCATION RIGHTS

Staying in school not only offers homeless children stability and a path toward academic and lifetime achievement, it is also guaranteed by the Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The Act also ensures that homeless children and families can access needed services such as free school meals and basic health care. But many parents, service providers, advocates, and government agencies are unaware of its provisions, and the law is regularly violated.

In 2014, at national and statewide conferences (in New Jersey and Pennsylvania), the Law Center trained hundreds of school liaisons, state coordinators and school administrators on how to comply with the law and how best to support thousands of homeless or at-risk children and families.

Trainings and other outreach were supported by the Law Center's reports, fact sheets, and training materials. New publications during 2014 included *McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Procedures*, a step-by-step guide for 49 states and the District of Columbia outlining procedures for dispute resolution and appeal for children and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

The Law Center also co-authored the 4th edition of the American Bar Association's *Educating Children Without Housing*, a primer for educators, children's advocates, and policymakers on effectively implementing Title VII's educational mandates related to homeless students.

STORY of IMPACT

It was our honor to present the 2014 McKinney-Vento Personal Achievement Award to Aleah Green. Aleah and her son, Shiloh, became homeless and were living "doubled up." When Aleah tried to enroll her son at a neighborhood school, the request was denied. This is a direct contravention of the McKinney-Vento Act, which states that schools must enroll students who present themselves as homeless even if students cannot provide proof of residency. After Aleah reached out to the Law Center, we resolved the matter by contacting the school and advocating on behalf of Shiloh under the McKinney-Vento Act. Within a week, Shiloh was enrolled in kindergarten. Aleah is a true hero; she has shown strength and persistence in overcoming barriers to her son's school access. Her story exemplifies the power of the law to change lives.

LEADERSHIP & PARTNERSHIP

Monthly, the Law Center convened the Homeless Advocates Group, a coalition of 32 national level organizations working on homelessness and poverty related issues, to coordinate policy initiatives and strategy. During 2014, the group jointly advocated for the National Housing Trust Fund, the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and increased budget allocations for homelessness and housing programs. Collectively, these programs create affordable housing and protect the rights of those most vulnerable who are either homeless or who are at risk.

Pro Bono Partnerships

Pro bono legal partnerships are critical to the Law Center's work. Lawyers Executive Advisory Partners (LEAP), the Law Center's premier pro bono network of law firms and corporate legal departments, provides crucial support through in-kind legal services and financial support.

In 2014, 19 law firms and corporate legal departments worked with the Law Center on 46 pro bono matters; of these firms, 12 were LEAP members. Their in-kind contributions amounted to nearly \$3.4 million in donated legal services, which greatly augmented the capacity of the Law Center's small staff and the impact of our modest budget.

1989



A number of careerists have left high-paying, highpowered jobs to work full time at helping the poor.





25TH ANNIVERSARY TIMELINE OF LAW CENTER IMPACT





NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

1989

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is founded by Maria Foscarinis

Produces report on the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, the first national legislation on homelessness which Maria Foscarinis helped establish



1992

Spearheads "Beyond McKinney," a nationwide effort to establish a long-term advocacy agenda to end homelessness. Groups convened to work on four areas moving forward: affordable housing, adequate income, social services, and civil rights

1996

Builds coalitions and participates in the historic United Nations Habitat II Conference in Istanbul. Human rights language regarding a right to housing is included in the internal document produced by the Conference





1990

Publishes *Go Directly to Jail*, the first national report documenting the criminalization of homelessness in 9 cities

Law Center et al. v. Veteran Affairs Administration et al: Title IV court order requires federal agencies comply with Title IV of McKinney-Vento

Files a federal lawsuit against the Social Security Administration, citing failure to reach out to disabled homeless people, 50% of whom were potentially eligible for benefits. As a result, the SSA launched an outreach program educating disabled homeless people about their benefits



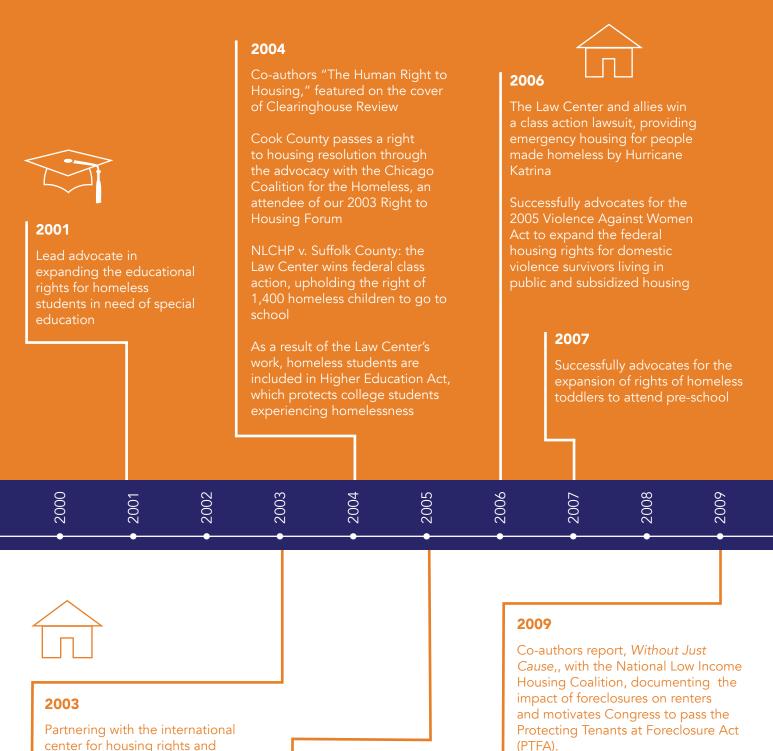
1994

Lampkin v. D.C.: the Law Center wins a federal appeals court ruling establishing that homeless children have an enforceable right to education

1998

The Law Center co-organizes "Meeting America's Housing Needs," an initiative to promote the right to housing in the U.S., with support from HUD

Helps to secure an additional \$152 million in HUD funding for HUD-McKinney Act programs providing more shelter, permanent housing, and supportive services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness



Partnering with the international center for housing rights and evictions, the Law Center holds the first National Forum on the Human Right to Housing

Advocates for the Homeless Outreach Act, under which \$8 million is appropriated for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits

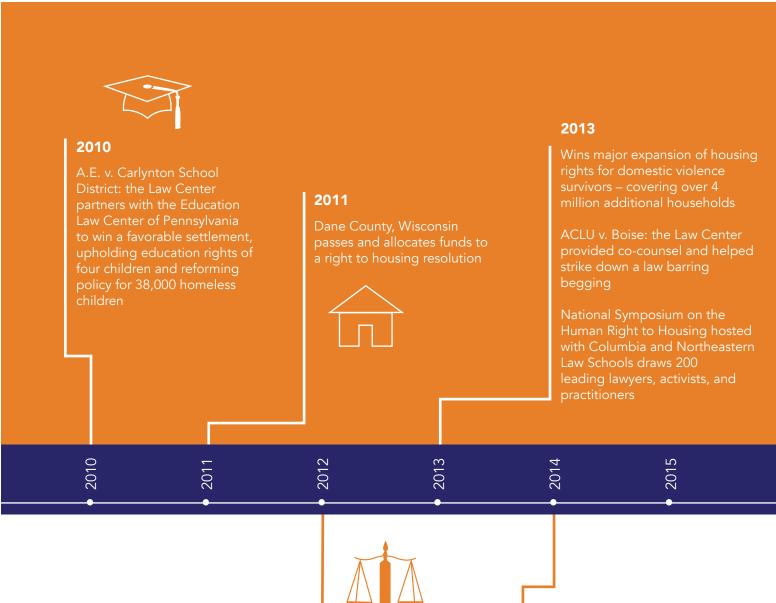
2005

Ensures education rights for children made homeless by Hurricane Katrina



Wins a congressional mandate, in the form of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, that the USICH must make a federal plan to address criminalization

Hosts the official U.N. visit of Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Raquel Rolnik



2012

The Law Center's "Disaster Edition" manual of education rights helps children displaced by Hurricane Sandy to stay in their schools and receive meals and basic health care

Big Hart v. Dallas: The Law Center, in co-counsel with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, successfully strikes down a law preventing faith-based groups from offering food to homeless people Searching Out Solutions, a report which includes Law Center recommendations, is produced by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Department of Justice in response to the 2009 congressional mandate requiring a response to criminalization

With the support of the Law Center, the Rhode Island Homeless Bill of Rights passes, the first law of its kind

2014

Publishes *No Safe Place*, our 11th report on the criminalization of homelessness, examining 187 cities with over 20,500 downloads downloads from its publication in July to the end of the year

The U.N. Human Rights Committee and Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination condemns the criminalization of homelessness and calls for U.S. action

Federal agencies, USICH and the Department of HUD, work with the Law Center to discourage criminalization



LAWYERS' EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PARTNERS TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

The Lawyers Executive Advisory Partners (LEAP) program is a national philanthropic effort of the legal community to help homeless and poor Americans achieve self-sufficiency. LEAP members work to end and prevent homelessness by providing financial support and pro bono legal services to the Law Center. The members comprise a network of key influential leaders that realize positive social change.

"Partnering with the Law Center has not only been a great experience, but more importantly has been instrumental to our success in blocking the Wisconsin voter ID law and protecting the fundamental right to vote for hundreds of thousands of low income and homeless people."

Neil Steiner, Dechert LLP

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Microsoft

Paul Caron, Chief of Staff at Microsoft's Government Affairs Office, at a 2014 event honoring LEAP members.

Through membership in LEAP, the Law Center offers law firms, offices of corporate counsel, and individual practitioners opportunities to leverage pro bono legal services throughout each year, including:

- Carrying out high-impact and broad spectrum litigation throughout the country to protect the rights of homeless individuals.
- Protecting the right of homeless children to a free public education by breaking down barriers to school enrollment and by training local advocates.
- Representing homeless people prosecuted for violating public ordinances against life-sustaining activities such as eating or sleeping in public spaces.
- Protecting survivors of domestic violence from eviction or loss of their housing due to the violence perpetrated against them.



Event Host Committee Chair **Dwight Fettig** and Executive Director **Maria Foscarinis** begin the event with a 25th Anniversary toast.



Baltimore Raven **Steve Smith Sr.** accepts the Stewart B. McKinney Award from **Jeff Pash**, General Counsel for the National Football League.



Sarah Bolton accepts the Bruce F. Vento Award on behalf of Senator Patty Murray, presented by **Dwight Fettiq**.



McKINNEY-VENTO AWARDS

The 2014 Annual McKinney-Vento Awards event was the most successful yet, raising \$318,884 toward the Law Center's work on behalf of homeless and vulnerable Americans.



ABC7/News Channel 8 Senior Political Reporter anchor **Scott Thuman** served as Event Emcee.



Board Chair **Edward McNicholas** presents the Personal Achievement Award to **Aleah Green**.



Becky Troth accepts the Pro Bono Counsel Award for Sidley Austin LLP presented by **Paul Caron** of Microsoft.



A signed helmet donated by the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA) given away at the end of the night.

THANK YOU 2014 DONORS!

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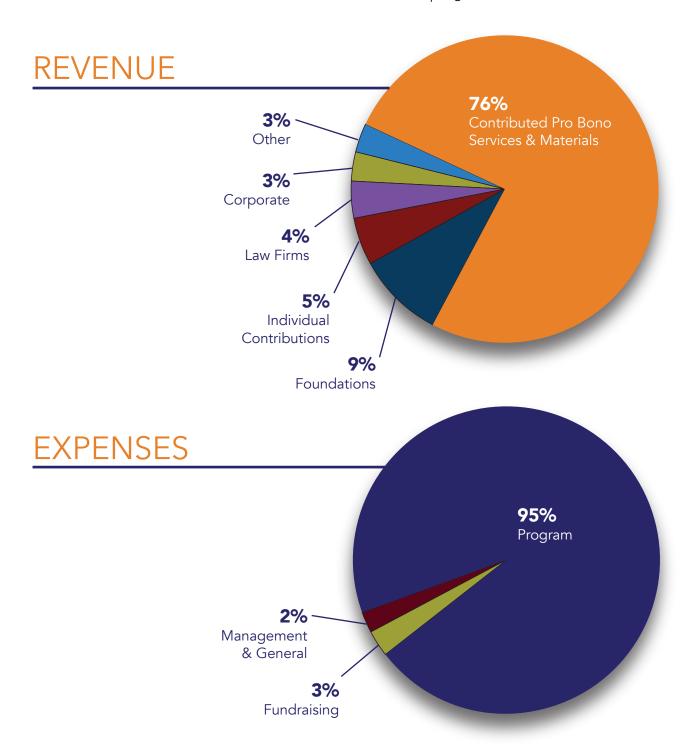
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