



THE POWER TO END HOMELESSNESS

2017 ANNUAL REPORT
NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY



OUR MISSION

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is the only national legal advocacy organization dedicated solely to using the power of the law to prevent and end homelessness.

We carry out work in communities across the country to serve America's more than 3.5 million homeless people. With the support of an extensive network of pro bono lawyers, we use our legal expertise to help pass, implement, and enforce laws addressing the immediate and long-term needs of those who are homeless or at risk. In partnership with state and local advocates, we work toward strengthening the social safety net through advocacy and advocacy training, public education, and impact litigation.

OUR HISTORY

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty was founded in 1989 by Maria Foscarinis, who recognized how the power of the law could be brought to bear to prevent and end homelessness.

Early in her legal career while at the law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, Foscarinis and her colleagues won a federal court class action suit on behalf of homeless families. Moved by the increasing number of homeless individuals and families—and motivated by the difference that access to justice can make—Foscarinis devoted herself full-time in 1985 to the fight to end homelessness. This fight won a historic victory in 1987 with the enactment of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the first major federal legislation to address the crisis of homelessness, as a result of advocacy led by Foscarinis and others.

In 1989, Foscarinis founded the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty to catalyze efforts of homelessness advocates and allies at the national, state, and local levels.

Message from the Executive Director & Board of Directors Chair

Every day, millions of Americans—families, veterans, seniors, and youth—live without a stable home. For 28 years, the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty has used the power of the law to help people without homes get the support they need to survive—and thrive.

As we look back at 2017, we are proud of the progress we made to strengthen legal protections for people experiencing homelessness, as well as those at risk of homelessness. Together with advocates, pro bono law firms, and supporters across the country, our team at the Law Center worked tirelessly to fight policies that aimed to reduce support for our most vulnerable population.

The Law Center and its staff have built a reputation as strong advocates and reliable experts on homelessness, housing, and human rights. The Law Center worked tirelessly in 2017 to craft policy proposals, train thousands of advocates, and supported advocacy for laws such as a Right to Rest Act and a Homeless Bill of Rights in states and cities across the country.

It *shouldn't* be a crime to be homeless, yet cities are increasingly using criminal justice tactics to punish people for trying to survive—creating barriers to housing and jobs and making it nearly impossible for people to escape the cycle of homelessness. But through litigation and advocacy, we helped strike down 24 laws that criminalize people experiencing homelessness in cities across the country and encouraged efforts to redirect resources toward supportive, permanent housing instead.



Maria Foscarinis
Maria Foscarinis
Founder & Executive Director

As you'll see throughout this report, our impact reached far and wide, and we couldn't have done it without the widespread and diverse support from our many partners and friends— allied national and local advocates; federal, state and local agencies; grassroots groups; people formerly and currently experiencing homelessness; law firms and legal experts; philanthropic funders—and you.

You helped Juanita Rocha keep her son in school, helped domestic violence survivor Maya Johnson* avoid eviction from her home, and helped Tammy Kohr and hundreds of people in Houston from being arrested merely for sheltering themselves in tents.

We're grateful to everyone who helps the Law Center succeed. Our Board of Directors provides vision and commitment to make our organization extraordinarily effective. Our staff's dedication, energy, and optimism make the Law Center a meaningful place to work. Our partners and volunteers across the country give us hope and strength.

Together, we have the power to end homelessness. Thank you for helping to make a difference in millions of lives.

**name changed to protect privacy*



Edward R. McNicholas
Ed McNicholas
Chair, Board of Directors

3.5 MILLION

Homeless Americans Impacted by Our Work

600+ Endorsements of
Housing Not Handcuffs
Campaign

*from public officials, national/
regional/state/local organizations,
and grassroots activists*

**1,303 Attorneys and Activists
Trained in all 50 States**

*to use the law to advocate for and with
homeless people in their communities*

**Legal and Legislative Impact in 21 states and 41 cities
including California, Colorado, D.C., Florida, New
York, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Washington State**

**10,571 Pro Bono Hours Donated,
Valued at over \$6.2 Million**

150+ Media Mentions

*New York Times, Washington Post, Fox News, Los
Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post,
Chicago Tribune, Politico, The Hill, ATTN, The Economist,
The Progressive, Business Insider, and more*

10,000+ Followers on Facebook (up from
6,000 last year) and **11,000+** Followers on
Twitter

THE POWER OF THE LAW

Pursuing Justice Through the Courts

The Law Center is proud to pursue justice for people experiencing homelessness through the courts. We partner with global law firms and local advocacy organizations to co-counsel on litigation and submit amicus briefs on cases that defend the civil and human rights of homeless people.

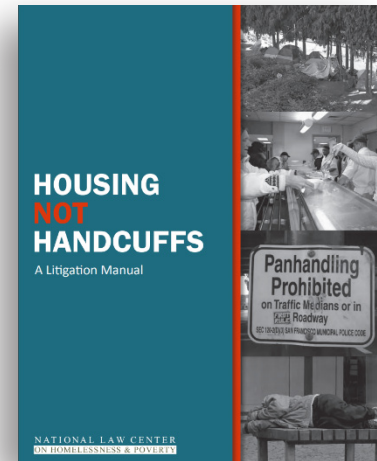
Martin v. City of Boise: With co-counsel Idaho Legal Aid Services and with pro bono support from Latham & Watkins LLP, the Law Center presented oral arguments in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in July, a case challenging Boise's ordinances that prohibit sleeping in public.

Kohr v. City of Houston: In August, the Law Center, with the ACLU of Texas and the law firm of Dechert LLP, won a temporary restraining order prohibiting Houston from enforcing an anti-camping ordinance against homeless people living in an encampment when emergency shelter was unavailable.

Bloom v. City of San Diego: In November, the Law Center, with Disability Rights California and the law firm of Fish & Richardson PC, filed a class-action lawsuit challenging the City of San Diego's ban on sleeping in vehicles that unfairly targets homeless people.

With the assistance of the law firm of Latham & Watkins LLP, the Law Center filed an amicus brief in an appeal to the Fourth Circuit in a case challenging a law used to target homeless persons with alcoholism.

The Law Center also provided legal assistance to combat criminalization in Baltimore, Maryland, and Lacie, Washington, and provided support to Mountain State Justice to pass a new ordinance protecting encampments and providing storage for personal belongings in Charleston, West Virginia.



As a companion piece to the *Housing Not Handcuffs* report published in 2016, the Law Center published ***Housing Not Handcuffs: A Litigation Manual***, a how-to guide to help other legal advocates protect the civil rights of homeless people.

TAMMY'S STORY

"I learned from other homeless people that the shelters were usually full...seeking out shelter would have meant losing many of my things. Plus, with my cancer diagnosis, it felt like it was a health risk for me to go inside. It was cleaner on the street than it was in any of those shelters. Rather than sacrificing my health and my dignity, I focused on moving on and making do with what was stable: a tent."

The Law Center is representing Tammy Kohr and two other homeless Houstonians to stop the City of Houston from arresting people living tents, the only shelter they had available when city shelters were full.



© Mark Armes, Free Press Houston Photographer

THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

Changing Laws to Prevent and End Homelessness

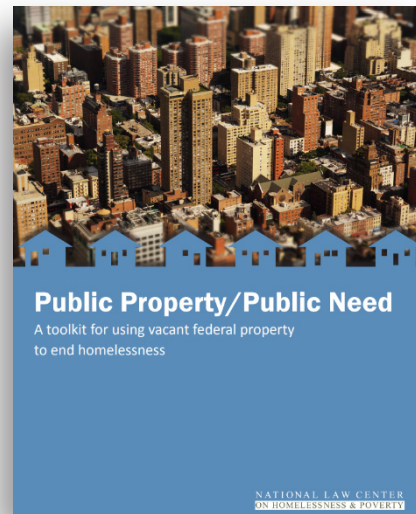
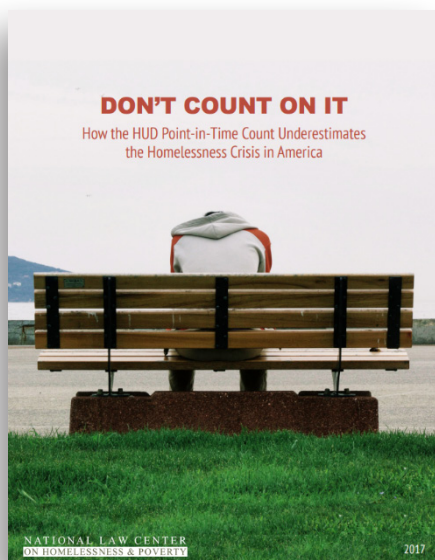
Advocating for the rights of people experiencing homelessness at the federal, state, and local levels is critical to our work. The Law Center began the new year voicing **strong opposition to the Trump Administration's proposed cuts to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) budget**, which would reduce the department by 15 percent overall.

Federal Advocacy

To protect the rights of low-income renters, the Law Center advocated in Congress for a permanent extension of the **Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA)** with Congressman Keith Ellison and Senator Richard Blumenthal. In December, the Senate Banking Committee approved the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act, which would restore PTFA and make it permanent.

Protecting the Violence Against Women Act

In implementing President Trump's executive order to reduce regulatory burdens, HUD invited the public to comment on any regulations that should be repealed, replaced, or modified and what factors HUD should consider when implementing the deregulation executive order. The Law Center, with support from Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, took the lead to submit comments in June that highlight the importance of and need for preserving regulations implementing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The VAWA housing protections ensure the safety of domestic violence victims and their children and protect their right to access and maintain federally subsidized housing, helping women like Maya (read her story on page 8).



Securing Free Public Property to Create Housing

The Law Center released the **Public Property/Public Need toolkit** in April to assist nonprofit housing and homeless service organizations and local governments in accessing free federal property to provide housing and services to people experiencing homelessness under Title V of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. To date, over 2 million people are served each year in approximately 500 buildings and nearly 900 acres of land that have been transferred to under Title V. The Law Center helped draft the law, defends it in Congress, enforces it in court, and provides additional legal and technical assistance to help applicants take advantage of this program.

Thanks to our advocacy, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) **Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)** application retained a question on whether communities are enforcing criminalization laws (worth two points, or potentially millions of dollars in funding) for the 2017 application year.

In response to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) December release of its 2017 point-in-time (PIT) count of the homeless population in the United States, the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (the Law Center) released **Don't Count on It: How the HUD Point-in-Time Count Underestimates the Homelessness Crisis in America**, detailing problems with HUD's methodology that result in a significant undercount of homeless Americans.



MAYA'S STORY

Maya and her husband were refugees who came to the United States to flee a war. She spoke limited English, and her husband used this as a way to control and isolate her. When they were evicted from their home due to lack of payment, she landed in a homeless shelter. She was soon able to get support from a domestic violence program, leave her abusive husband, and successfully receive a Section 8 voucher thanks to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the regulations protecting victims of economic abuse. The Law Center, in partnership with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, worked to strengthen VAWA regulations and help thousands of domestic violence survivors like Maya.

State & Local Advocacy

The Law Center helped hundreds of state and local advocates fight city laws criminalizing homelessness and private vigilantism targeting homeless people in cities including in Fresno, Santa Cruz, Southern Humboldt County, Solano County, and Sacramento, California; Olympia and Seattle, Washington; and Volusia County, Florida.

Homeless Bills of Rights and Right to Rest Acts: The Law Center supported advocates working to pass laws to protect homeless people from criminalization and discrimination, to help them out of homelessness, including submitting testimony on behalf of a proposed Homeless Bill of Rights (HBOR) in Delaware and advocating with state representatives to promote an HBOR in Pennsylvania. The Law Center also helped introduce a Right to Rest Act in Colorado, to decriminalize life-sustaining activities such as sleeping and eating that unfairly target people experiencing homelessness.

International Advocacy

The Law Center submitted a report to Dr. Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty & Human Rights, in anticipation of a visit to the United States in October, on “Violations of the Human Rights of Persons Experiencing Homelessness in the United States.” The report helped inform his visit and his report on it, and Dr. Alston gave particular attention to the criminalization of poverty in his final report.



Tent City, USA: The Growth of America's Homeless Encampments and How Communities Are Responding

In December, the Law Center released a report reviewing the rapid growth of homeless people living in tents across the United States over the past decade, as measured by documentation in media reports. Our research showed a 1,372 percent increase in homeless encampments reported between 2007 and 2017, with at least one encampment reported in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. The report details how cities often use criminal justice tactics to arrest people living in tents or “sweep” away tent communities without providing adequate housing alternatives, and lays out both principles and practical strategies for more constructive approaches.

THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Keeping Homeless Children and Youth in School

Over 1.3 million schoolchildren experienced homelessness in the 2015-2016 school year. Education is critical to ensuring the well-being of homeless children and youth, as well as to offering a chance for a better future that breaks the cycle of homelessness and poverty. The Law Center ensures compliance and proper implementation of the Education Program under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to keep homeless students in school.

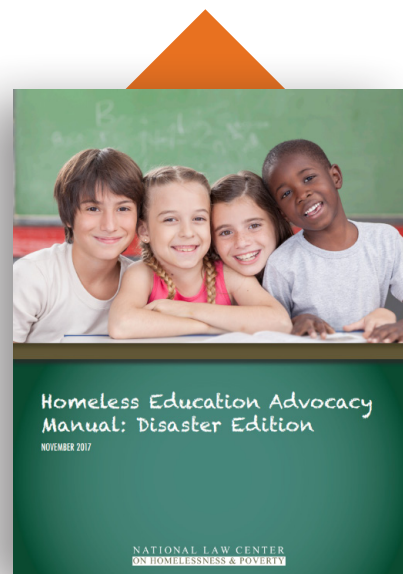
Project LEARN

In response to the increased demand for assistance for families and students experiencing homelessness, the Law Center formed Project LEARN. Under Project LEARN, volunteer attorneys and paralegals work with the Law Center to provide guidance to homeless liaisons, service providers, advocates and homeless parents and students to protect and enforce homeless children's right to free public education.

Project LEARN attorneys assist advocates, homeless children, and families on a range of McKinney-Vento compliance issues including determining whether a youth is homeless; developing outreach materials and toolkits; providing guidance on transportation issues; advising on best practices in the reassessment of homeless youth; and conducting know-your-rights trainings or informational sessions in your community. The Law Center currently has Project LEARN partners in 27 states.

Homeless Education Advocacy Manual: Disaster Edition

In the aftermath of three major hurricanes impacting Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico, and wildfires impacting California and the Pacific Northwest, many students were displaced, and their education was disrupted. Through its manual, trainings, webinars and direct assistance, the Law Center equipped attorneys and advocates to protect the rights of thousands of displaced students to attend school.



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 Columbia Legal Services (WA)
 Disability Rights Tennessee
 Education Law Center—New Jersey
 Education Law Center—Pennsylvania
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 Florida Legal Services, Inc.
 Greater Hartford Legal Aid (CT)
 Indiana Legal Services, Inc.
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 Legal Services of Eastern Missouri
 Legal Services of Miami
 Long Island Advocacy Center (NY)
 Massachusetts Appleseed
 Massachusetts Advocates for Children
 Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid
 National Center for Youth Law
 National Network for Youth

New Mexico Appleseed
 Nebraska Appleseed
 Oregon Law Center
 Pegasus – Legal Service for Children (NM)
 Public Justice Center (MD)
 The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
 SchoolHouse Connection (National)
 Southeast Louisiana Legal Services
 Team Child (WA)
 Texas Southern University—Earl Carl Institute for Legal and Social Policy at Thurgood Marshall School of Law

JUANITA'S STORY

With perseverance and assistance from the Law Center, Texas resident Juanita Rocha fought and succeeded in ensuring her son's access to school through the McKinney-Vento Act. The school district Juanita's son attended continuously attempted to prevent his attendance because they argued he did not have residency in the district. However, Juanita learned her rights and viciously advocated on behalf of her son. Now, not only is her son able to attend school, but Juanita's advocacy has impacted countless other students in the Laredo School District who face the same struggles and the school district is better informed and equipped to ensure education for all.



Juanita Rocha (left) receives a special award from Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-Tx). Also pictured: Cassandra Patlan (daughter of Ms. Rocha) and Michael Santos (attorney at NLCHP)

THE POWER OF ORGANIZING

Strength in Numbers to Leverage Impact

Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign

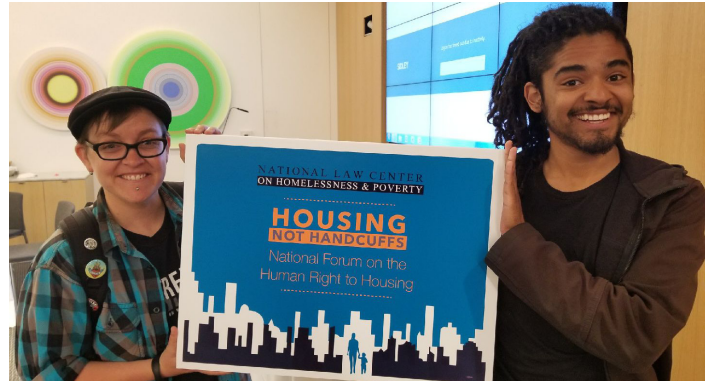
With over 600 endorsers at the end of 2017, including national and local public officials, criminal justice professionals, national, state, regional, and local organizations, the Housing Not Handcuffs campaign has grown into a national movement demanding civil rights for those without homes and pushing for housing as a solution to homelessness. In 2017, the HNH Campaign capitalized on momentum from the 2017 Right to Housing Forum in June, to host regular convenings, planning calls, and an active listserv, bringing together advocates from across the country who are fighting against criminalization and for housing to share information and coordinate strategy nationally.

National Forum on Human Right to Housing

In June 2017, over 150 social justice advocates from across the nation gathered at the Law Center's National Forum on the Human Right to Housing. The 2017 Forum focused on the Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign, energizing the movement to fight for housing and against the criminalization of homelessness. In addition to hosting grassroots activists, policymakers, and others, the Forum intentionally elevated the voices of those who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness. Keynote speakers Catherine Lhamon, chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and Peter Edelman, professor of law at Georgetown University, inspired participants with reminders of the good that government can do in protecting civil rights and emphasized the importance of our advocacy.

Discussion included critical topics such as intersectional forms of discrimination, successful models of advocacy, and strategies under the new Administration. The Forum was also dedicated to in-depth strategy sessions for the Campaign's four working groups: litigation, organizing, policy advocacy, and campaign communications.

HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS



"Thank YOU @NLCHPhomeless for amazing #Right2HousingForum. Thrilled to be part of this & can't wait to see what we accomplish #together!" -@mihomeless



THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

Honoring Leaders Committed to Ending Homelessness

McKinney-Vento Awards

The 2017 McKinney-Vento Awards Reception in Washington, D.C., was an outstanding tribute to the impactful work of policymakers, celebrities with platforms, grass-roots advocates, law firms, and nonprofits to end homelessness. Awardees included Juanita Rocha of Laredo Texas for the Personal Achievement Award, Simpson Thacher and Bartlett for the Pro Bono Firm Award, Vernon Davis of the NFL for the Stewart B. McKinney Award, and U.S. Senator Cory Booker for the Bruce F. Vento Award. With the help of Law Center supporters, the event raised over \$250,000 for our critical work.



Bruce Rosenblum (The Carlyle Group) and Rajib Chanda (Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP)



NFL player Vernon Davis



Juanita Rocha and Michael Santos

Annual LEAP Luncheon

The Law Center was delighted to partner with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP in hosting the 2017 Lawyers' Executive Advocacy Partners (LEAP) Luncheon in May where the Honorable Donald B. Verrilli gave the keynote address. Verrilli highlighted the intersection between healthcare and homelessness and advocated to focus debates on how we want our society to treat our neighbors. The event also featured stories from LEAP members discussing the important and engaging work offered to law firms who join the LEAP program.



The Honorable Donald Verrilli with Executive Director Maria Foscarinis

“Every American should have economic security, access to healthcare, and a stable, safe, decent home.”

- U.S. Senator Cory Booker



Vernon Davis, Maria Foscarinis, Cory Booker, and Dwight Fettig (Porterfield, Fettig & Sears LLP)

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

Building Networks to Expand Capacity and Leverage Resources

Attorneys are critical to the pursuit of justice and ending homelessness. The Law Center is proud to partner with top global law firms and corporate legal departments to fulfill high-quality pro bono projects that make an impact on preventing and ending homelessness in America.

In 2017, the Law Center surpassed the number of pro bono projects conducted in previous years, working with 32 law firms on a record 59 projects, valued at over \$5.7 million in donated legal services!

LEAP (Lawyers' Executive Advisory Partners) is a national legal community effort to serve and protect homeless Americans and those at risk of becoming homeless. LEAP members have participated in the fight to end homelessness through litigating educational rights for children, challenging anti-camping laws, researching the impact of criminalization, and more.

Here are just a few of our pro bono projects in 2017:

- LEAP Champion Latham & Watkins LLP and LEAP Member Microsoft Corporation are developing a privacy toolkit for the Data-Driven Justice Initiative, a program started

by the White House in 2016 that uses and shares data to divert people away from jail and emergency care and into effective treatment and housing.

- With LEAP Champion Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, the Law Center submitted comments to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development to safeguard important housing protections for domestic violence survivors under the Violence Against Women Act.
- LEAP Member Goldman Sachs supported the Law Center's advocacy to defend the civil rights and dignity of homeless people by tracking state-level Homeless Bills of Rights.

Homeless Advocates Group

The Law Center convenes the Homeless Advocates Group (HAG) to bring together a coalition of national organizations working across numerous issues—including housing, health care, and education—that share the common goal of reducing and ending homelessness.



- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| American Bar Association | National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth |
| American Psychological Association | National Coalition for Homeless Veterans |
| Catholic Charities USA | National Coalition for the Homeless |
| Center for American Progress | National Health Care for the Homeless Council |
| Center for Social Innovation | National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty |
| Community Solutions | National Low Income Housing Coalition |
| Corporation for Supportive Housing | National Network for Youth |
| Family Homelessness | National Network to End Domestic Violence |
| Family Promise | Partnering for Change |
| Feed the Children | The Raben Group |
| First Focus | True Colors Fund |
| Full Frame Initiative | United States Conference of Catholic Bishops |
| Healthcare for the Homeless-Baltimore | University of Massachusetts Boston |
| Horizons for Homeless Children | Western Center on Law & Poverty |
| National Aids Housing Coalition | Western Regional Advocacy Project |
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| National Alliance to End Homelessness | |

MAKING A DIFFERENCE | 2017 Supporters

Special thanks to the following individuals, law firms, corporations, and foundations for supporting our work and making possible our many accomplishments in 2017!

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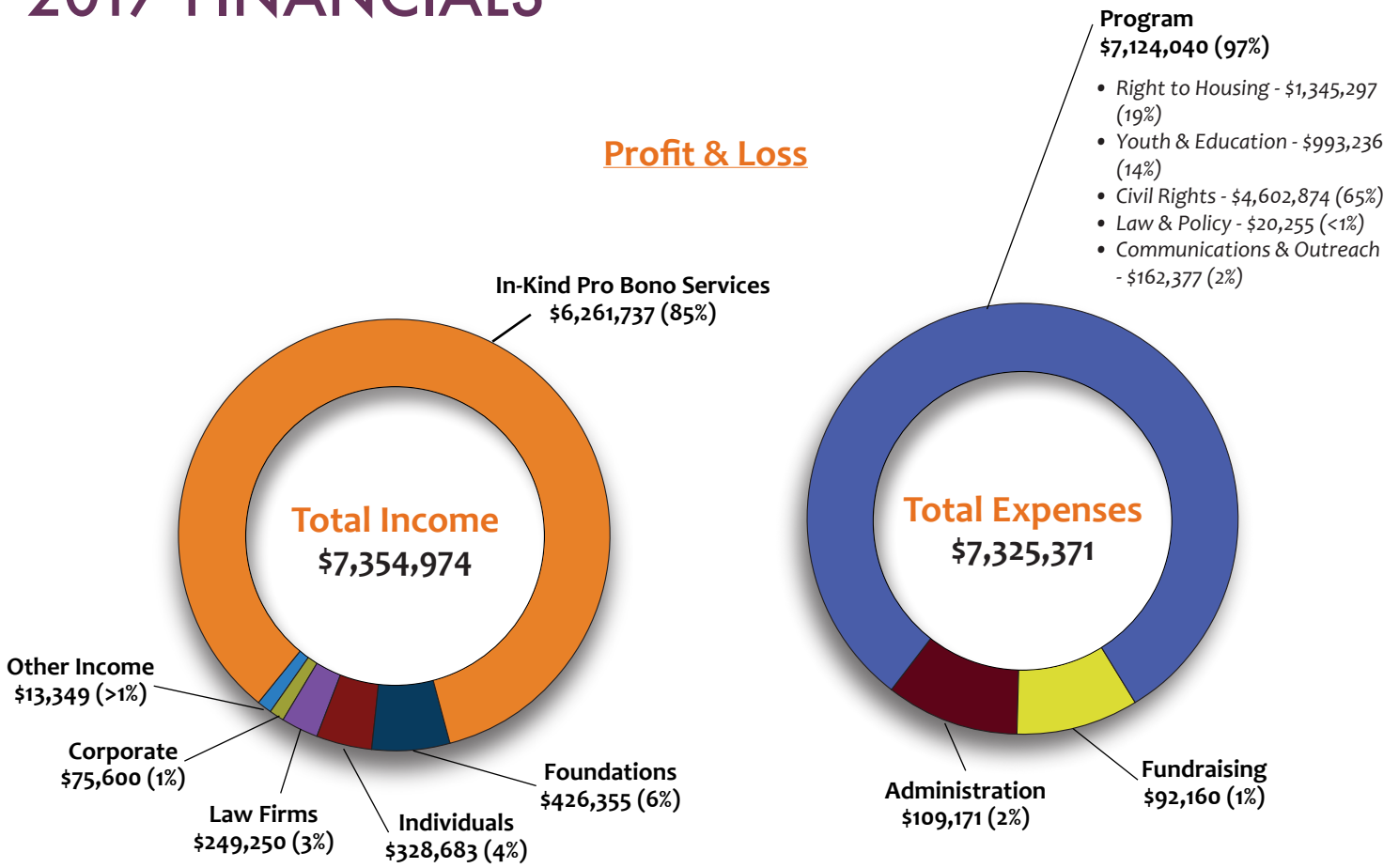
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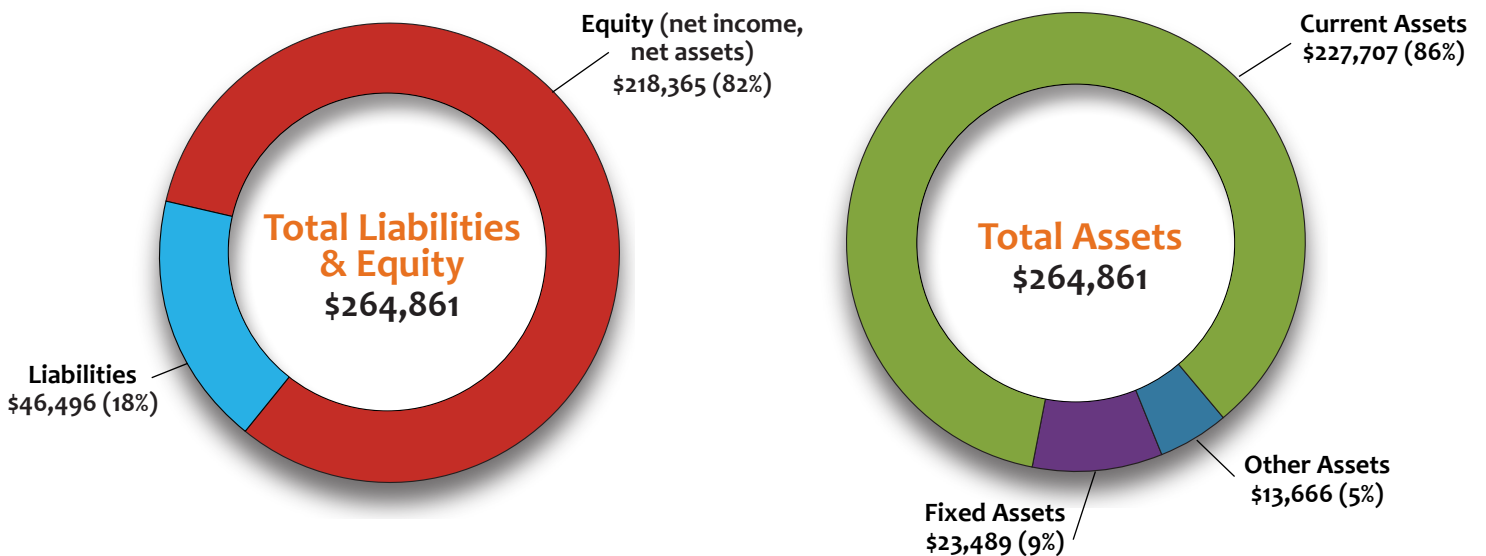
The support of all our donors enables the work we do, and we regret that due to space limitations we could not publish them all. If your name is missing or in error, or if you prefer not to be listed, please write to email@nlchp.org.

2017 FINANCIALS

Profit & Loss



Balance Sheet



For the most updated financial information, visit nlchp.org or view our financial and accountability ratings at Charity Navigator and GuideStar.

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE LAW CENTER

Our successes in 2017 would be impossible without the generosity of our supporters. There are many ways you can support our work to end homelessness:

Donate: The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty relies on the support of individuals across the country, as we do not receive government funding. Gifts of any amount make a difference in our work—and **every dollar you give allows us to leverage more donated legal support, multiplying your gift many times over.** Consider making a monthly gift to help provide a stable foundation throughout the year.

Law Firm and Corporate Giving: We're grateful to our partnering law firms and corporate legal departments committed to ending homelessness. If you work in a law firm or corporation and would like to explore partnering opportunities, contact us.

Planned Giving: Contact us for more information about how you can ensure the future of the Law Center's critical work by including the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty in your will or other estate plan.

Other Ways to Give

- Government employees can give through **Combined Federal Campaign** (CFC #11947).
- Shop online through **AmazonSmile** and list the Law Center as a beneficiary of a percentage of your everyday purchases.
- Launch a personal fundraiser through **Facebook Causes** and raise money from your friends and family.

Connect to the Law Center


- **In Just Times**, the Law Center's monthly e-newsletter, provides updates on current issues and news from the organization.
- **Homelessness Law**, the Law Center's official blog, offers unique commentary on the movement to end homelessness. We invite you to engage in this conversation by leaving your comments.

- Follow The Law Center on social media for daily updates on our work:

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Our vision is for 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.

NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

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