WHO YOU HELPED IN 2015

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, ILS was able to provide representation to more than 10,000 clients across the state, including:

- 327 American veterans
- 860 Victims of domestic violence
- 66% of clients were female
- 34% of clients were male
- 32% of clients were African American
- 4% of clients were Hispanic

Cases involved:

- FAMILY LAW
- HOUSING
- CONSUMER ISSUES
- INCOME
- POST-INCARCERATION RE-ENTRY
DEAR FRIENDS OF
INDIANA LEGAL SERVICES,

It was a year of new directions for ILS. In April of 2015 I joined the organization as executive director, after Norman Metzger concluded his remarkable 45-year tenure. His work here has set a high standard and encourages us to think bigger, act boldly, and find new ways to serve our clients. Since then I have truly enjoyed meeting the exceptional staff, learning about our great programs, and mapping out new ways that ILS can improve the lives of our clients.

It was a year marked also by expanding horizons, with milestones that included:

• The continued growth of our programs, including expanding our medical-legal partnerships and placing staff in the HIV-ravaged community of Austin in Scott County.

• An improved focus on impacting poverty by developing an Issue Docket of common, significant legal problems we are working on.

• The welcoming of the first Cohen & Malad Fellow, a law student working on consumer issues placed with our Consumer Advocacy Project at the John Boner Center in Indianapolis.

• A significant improvement in fundraising, including contributions to the Norman P. Metzger Fund and our annual fund, major annual giving support from the Faegre Baker Daniels Foundation, and new grants from the Bank of America national mortgage settlement and the Indiana Attorney General.

• Our participation as a key player in laying the groundwork for a Supreme Court sponsored commission (created in 2016) aimed at improving the civil justice system for low-income Hoosiers and coordinating planning among all the entities that deliver these services.

As we pursue these ventures, our core values remain intact as our staff delivers even more assistance to low-income Hoosiers, providing help to more than 10,000 clients. And, as always, we offer our heartfelt gratitude for your help and support as we continue to forge our way ahead.

Jon Laramore,
Executive Director
From locations all across our state, Indiana Legal Services offers an extensive reach that allows us to serve Hoosiers everywhere.

South Bend
ILS staff continues to be a key element in the St. Joseph County Family Justice Center, a holistic resource for victims of domestic violence.

Merrillville
Adding the Merrillville office to ILS's centralized intake system increased the number of clients receiving advice by almost 300%, to 1,010, without decreasing the number of clients receiving court or administrative representation.

Fort Wayne
ILS staff were key partners, along with District C Pro Bono, Ivy Tech, and others, in offering several clinics for individuals seeking expungements of criminal convictions. ILS provided direct service to several clinic participants and assisted pro bono lawyers in representing others.

Lafayette
ILS's nursing home ombudsman has teamed with an elder law attorney in Lafayette to reduce the number of involuntary transfers and discharges from nursing homes in an eight-county area by helping residents who have exhausted their resources to navigate the complex Medicaid eligibility system.

Indianapolis
ILS's medical-legal partnership with Midtown Community Mental Health Center won the 2015 Outstanding Medical-Legal Partnership Award from the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership.

Bloomington
ILS's Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic in Bloomington obtained more than $50,000 in refunds and more than $500,000 in reduced tax liability for clients in 2015.

New Albany
Our consumer project, headquartered in New Albany, is developing proposed court rule changes to tighten notice requirements for service of process and to strengthen proof requirements in debt collection cases.

Evansville
The ILS Evansville office is a model for cooperation with its Pro Bono District, conducting joint intake meetings and working closely with the district to obtain pro bono counsel for eligible clients.
As we head in new directions, Indiana Legal Services considers where we are and how we got here.

Indiana Legal Services is a nonprofit law firm that provides free civil legal assistance to eligible low-income people throughout Indiana. We help clients facing legal problems that harm their ability to have such basics as food, shelter, income, medical care, or personal safety. Most of the cases we handle are cases like family law pertaining to domestic violence, housing, consumer law, access to health care, and access to government benefits. ILS does not handle criminal matters.

Nearly one million people in Indiana live below the poverty level, and ILS is the largest agency in Indiana that works to meet the legal needs of the poor. We also recognize and support other agencies around the state that share our mission, and we partner with organizations outside Indiana, such as the Mid-American Pension Rights Project. But it is still difficult to meet all the legal needs of the poor in our state.

We were established in 1966, and today our team of more than 50 attorneys and other staff work in offices around the state to serve clients in every county in Indiana. Some of our specialized projects include the Senior Law Project, Homeless Legal Project, Immigrants and Language Rights Center, Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, Consumer Law Center, and the Housing Law Center.

Taxpayer Clinic, Consumer Law Center, and the Housing Law Center.

We’re governed by a Board of Directors which includes private attorneys as well as low-income people eligible for our services.

Our funding comes from many sources, including Legal Services Corporation, United Way, Indiana Civil Legal Aid Fund, and other agencies around the state. We also accept private donations.

Our cases include full representation cases, where an ILS attorney represents the client in court or agency action, and we provide advice for clients about their legal rights and what actions they can take. All told, in 2015, we served more than 10,000 low-income people.
A NEW BEGINNING FOR A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR

Indiana Legal Services helps a survivor of brutal domestic violence divorce her husband and begin a new life.

When an Indiana Legal Services attorney first met “Ava,” she’d been in a hospital’s burn unit for nearly a year. That was because Ava’s husband had, in the midst of the argument, splashed her body with lighter fluid that was then ignited. Ava received burns on 70% of her body, lost vision in her left eye, and was forced to undergo a bilateral amputation of her hands just below her elbows. She also contracted pneumonia several times while hospitalized, and her social worker expressed concerns about her body’s ability to fight off infection.

Ava had immigrated to the United States and did not speak English, so her conversations with her ILS attorney required a telephone interpreter. She was surprised to learn that a woman had the right to divorce her husband, something not possible in her native country. Her ILS attorney explained her rights, and Ava agreed to seek a divorce.

Over the course of 18 months, ILS represented Ava in her divorce case. We also assisted Ava in other legal matters, including accessing her bank account after her husband had disposed of her belongings. We also worked with the attorney appointed to represent Ava in the Children In Need of Services case in juvenile court that involved her three children, who were placed in foster care while Ava was hospitalized and their father awaited trial.

When Ava was moved to a rehabilitation facility, ILS assisted her in applying for and receiving Medicaid Disability and Social Security disability benefits. Once eligible for Medicaid, Ava received prosthetic hands to improve her dexterity and to prepare her to live as independently as possible.

After Ava’s divorce was finalized, she received money from the sale of her marital home that her husband had attempted to hide. ILS created a special needs trust with the ARC of Indiana so Ava could maintain her much-needed Medicaid Disability benefits while still having access to the funds she was awarded in the divorce.

Today, with our help, Ava has applied for naturalization that will allow her access to other public benefits and community resources. She looks forward to moving into her own apartment soon and being reunited with her children.
A NEW PATH
TOWARD HEALING

Denied benefits by Veterans Affairs, a survivor of Military Sexual Trauma turns to Indiana Legal Services.

As a young gay man in the Navy, “John” was sexually preyed upon by his commanding officer as well as a civilian Navy employee who used power and blackmail to elicit sexual favors. Later, he was forced under threat by NIS (now NCIS, Naval Criminal Investigative Service) to participate in a “gay sting” which resulted in the dismissal of his commanding officer. John was honorably discharged in 1972.

Since his discharge, John has never held a steady job. His military experience left him psychologically and spiritually wounded causing intense anxiety and depression. He survived with the support of family and friends.

John did seek treatment at the VA and was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of the Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Despite that diagnosis, when he applied for service-connected disability the VA denied him benefits. John tried working with a number of advocates to change this decision, but believes they were ineffective because of their own bias against him.

Eventually, John was referred to ILS’s Military Assistance Program. On John’s behalf, ILS filed a Notice of Disagreement to the VA’s decision and provided additional documentation/evidence to support his claim. We also worked with the decision review officer at the VA’s Indy Regional Office.

John’s case is not an isolated event. It’s believed that MST is under-reported in the military, and some estimates suggest as many as 1 in 5 women and 1 in 100 men have informed their VA healthcare provider that they experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military. Being denied service-connected disability can trigger a veteran’s sense of helplessness and betrayal.

After a lengthy review, John was notified by the VA that he was awarded 100% service-connected disability and would receive $2,907 per month, tax-free. ILS continues to work with the VA on the number of months of back payments he may qualify for disability benefits. While receiving disability benefits improves his finances, more importantly, it has given John a sense of justice that in time might help him heal.
A NEW PLACE TO CALL HOME

Threatened with eviction and subsequent homelessness, a woman and her grandchildren seek help from Indiana Legal Services.

When her landlord threatened her with eviction, “Joyce,” a 60-year-old woman and legal guardian of two young granddaughters, faced homelessness.

Joyce’s sole income came through Social Security disability benefits, which qualified her for Section 8 subsidized housing. But as a result of a periodic inspection conducted by the local housing authority, Joyce’s apartment was cited for having more than 30 problems that needed to be repaired in order for it to meet Section 8 program standards.

When the landlord refused to make the repairs, the housing authority stopped its Section 8 payments. Joyce offered to continue paying her portion of the rent, but the landlord refused to accept her payment and instead filed an eviction notice for failure to pay rent. An eviction hearing was scheduled in small claims court.

Joyce applied to rent five different apartments that were eligible for Section 8 assistance but was rejected by each one. These landlords were afraid that Joyce might be disqualified for future Section 8 subsidies due to the upcoming eviction hearing. Under the Section 8 program rules, if a tenant is evicted from an apartment that tenant will become ineligible for Section 8 assistance for the next five years.

Joyce feared she and her granddaughters might become homeless. Fortunately, her case came to ILS through our medical-legal partnership with Eskenazi Health. North Arlington, an Eskenazi Health clinic, helped connect Joyce with the ILS attorney that represented her in small claims court.

The attorney explained that Joyce was in this predicament through no fault of her own, and described how the landlord’s failure to make necessary repairs caused the Section 8 payments to stop. The attorney further argued that Joyce and her granddaughters would be unfairly punished if the eviction was ordered.

The court did not order the eviction. Instead, it allowed Joyce and her two granddaughters to remain in the apartment for another 30 days while she searched for another suitable place to live. Without an eviction on her record, Joyce and her granddaughters retained their eligibility for Section 8 housing, and found a qualifying, habitable place to live.
A NEW DIRECTION FOR SENIOR HEALTHCARE

Indiana Legal Services’ Senior Law Project director Dennis Frick advocates for clients struggling with changes to Medicaid.

Through years of advocacy, Senior Law Project director Dennis Frick has built a reputation as an expert on Indiana’s Medicaid program. In fact, he wrote the manual on the subject—literally.

This has become especially relevant in recent years as Indiana has made significant changes to its programs in response to healthcare reform. As the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration enacted rule changes, Dennis had been instrumental in helping clarify these new policies for the people they affect the most.

Because of his expertise and collegiality, Dennis has maintained an open channel of communication with the agency workers administering the Medicaid program. Among other things, Dennis’ advocacy has led to the creation of simple template forms to allow individuals with a certain income to maintain Medicaid and nursing home eligibility.

We’re proud to have his talents, and look forward to seeing the new directions he’ll take our services for seniors.
INDIANA LEGAL SERVICES
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
Year Ended December 31, 2014 and 2015

Revenue

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<td>LSC Support</td>
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<td>Federal Support</td>
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<td>State Support</td>
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<td>Unrealized Loss on Investment</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
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Expenses

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<td>Program Services</td>
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<td>Management and General</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,624,185</strong></td>
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Indiana Legal Services thanks its many donors and sponsors for their generous gifts of support in 2015.

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