

2024

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

LEGAL SERVICES
of
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

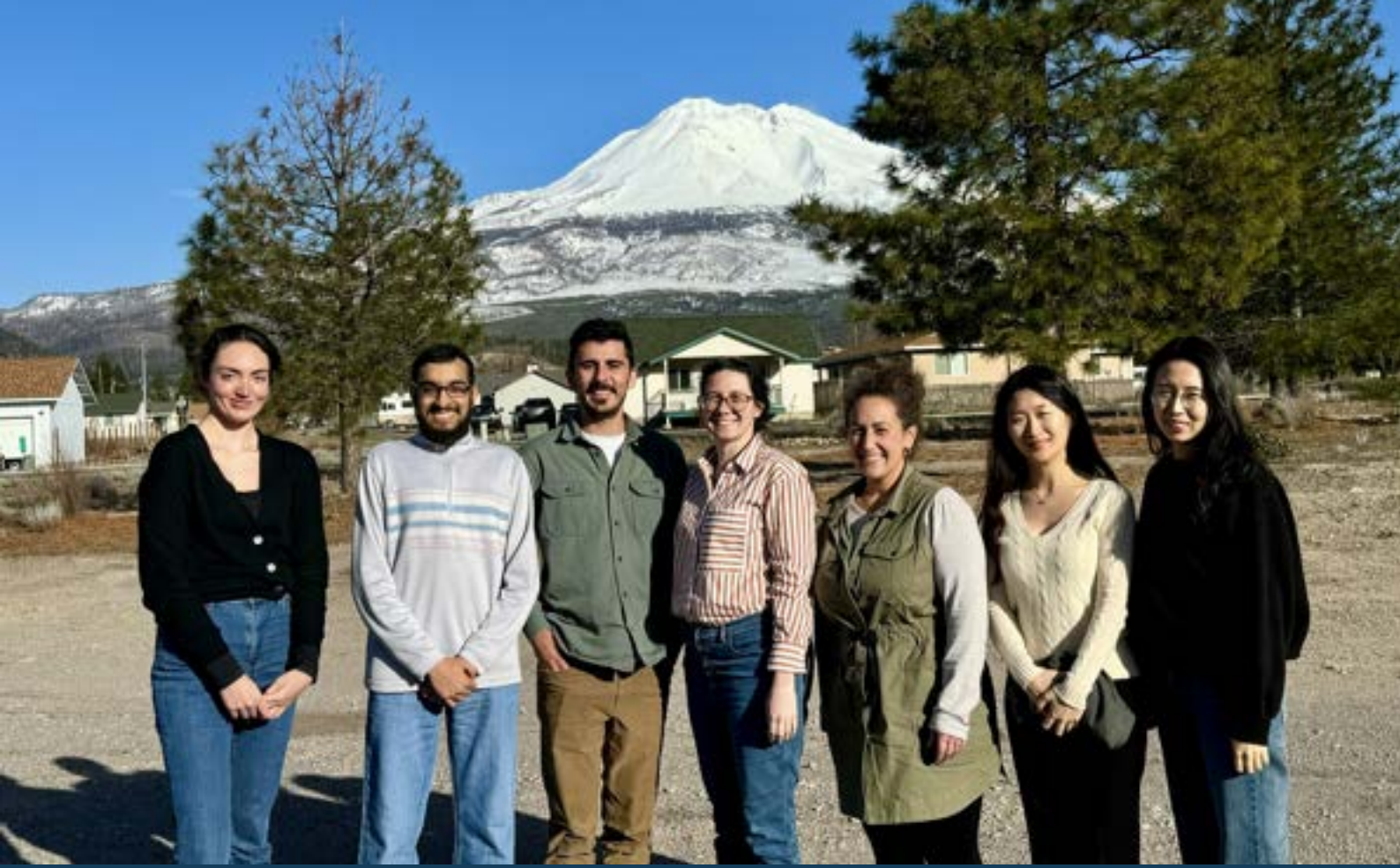


Photo: Alternative Spring Break
Law Students with LSNC's Staff
from the Shasta Regional Office

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Photo: Leon Dixon, LSNC's former Regional Counsel for Civil Rights, receives the Most Valuable Board Member award from the Wiley Manuel Bar Association. Judge Dixon was appointed to the bench in Placer County in July 2024.

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION



Gary Smith, Executive Director



Bob Stalker, Board President

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

During 2024, Legal Services of Northern California continued to rise to the challenges facing our communities with commitment, compassion, and strategic advocacy. I am proud to report that LSNC staff and volunteers served 10,999 individual clients last year—an increase over both 2023 and 2022. This year-over-year growth in case numbers tells part of the story of LSNC's expanding reach across its 23-county service area, but it does not capture the full breadth or depth of LSNC's work.

Behind each number is a person, a family, a neigh-

bor—and often, a life-altering moment in which LSNC made a meaningful difference. And beyond these individual cases, LSNC continues to engage in complex legal advocacy that shapes policies, protects rights, and advances justice for client communities.

In 2024, LSNC staff fought against the erosion of tenant protections, worked to uphold and expand access to health care for low-income individuals, and defended public benefits access for seniors, people with disabilities, and families facing bureaucratic barriers. A major highlight this year was LSNC's continued success, initiated during the

pandemic, partnering with local governments and community-based organizations to design, fund, and deliver rental assistance programs that prevented homelessness for at-risk tenants. By helping clients access these resources before or immediately after an eviction is filed, LSNC has helped thousands of families avoid the trauma of court and the devastating consequences of housing loss.

LSNC's legal teams also engaged in vital outreach to rural communities, where access to legal help is often limited or nonexistent, and continued to respond to the needs of clients affected by wildfires and other disasters. Whether helping someone keep their home,

secure medical treatment, protect their income, or stand up against discrimination, LSNC remained steadfast in its mission to ensure fairness and justice for poor and vulnerable community members.

As we move onward into 2025, once again there are ominous storm clouds on the political horizon that may threaten LSNC's core source of federal funding. As in prior times of upheaval in the history of the national legal aid community, LSNC will not be deterred from its work and mission: LSNC will keep calm, and carry on.

We are deeply grateful to the partners, donors, volunteers, and advocates who make this work possible. Your support empowers LSNC to go beyond the case numbers—to tackle root causes, shape lasting solutions, and strengthen the safety net for the most vulnerable among us.

On behalf of the staff, Board of Directors, and the many thousands of clients we proudly serve, thank you for standing with LSNC in 2024.



Gary F. Smith
Executive Director



Bob Stalker
Board President

“We are proud to report that LSNC staff and volunteers served 10,999 individual clients last year—an increase over both 2023 and 2022.”

ABOUT US

Our Mission

The mission of Legal Services of Northern California is to provide quality legal services that empower the poor to identify and defeat the causes and effects of poverty within their communities, efficiently utilizing all available resources.

Our Work

Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) fights for the civil rights of its clients. LSNC is the strong voice that continues to speak out on behalf of clients living in our communities, even as the state and local “safety nets” for the poor continue to crumble.

Most of the local offices that make up Legal Services of Northern California began as an offshoot of a volunteer program or a special grant project. The oldest program began in Sacramento County in 1956. For a number of years the Sacramento, Auburn, Woodland, Solano, Chico, Redding, Eureka and Ukiah offices were independent organizations created solely to benefit the low-income residents in their particular communities. Today, all these disparate legal aid programs are now integrated into one organization. Our services are provided to consumers in 23 northern California counties, with our largest office and administrative offices located in Sacramento.

LSC
America's Partner
for Equal Justice

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

LAAC
Legal Aid Association
of California



United Way of the
Greater Capital Region



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

Robert Stalker
President
Attorney
Solano County

Jane B. Kroesche
Vice President
Attorney
Mendocino County

Annette Smith
Secretary
Community Member
Placer County

John F. Davis
Treasurer
Attorney
Sacramento County

Josie Porras Corporon
Executive Member
Attorney
Butte County

Devera Ayers
Executive Member
Community Member
Shasta County

Claudia Covarrubias
Community Member
Yolo County

Mary K. DuBose
Attorney
Sacramento County

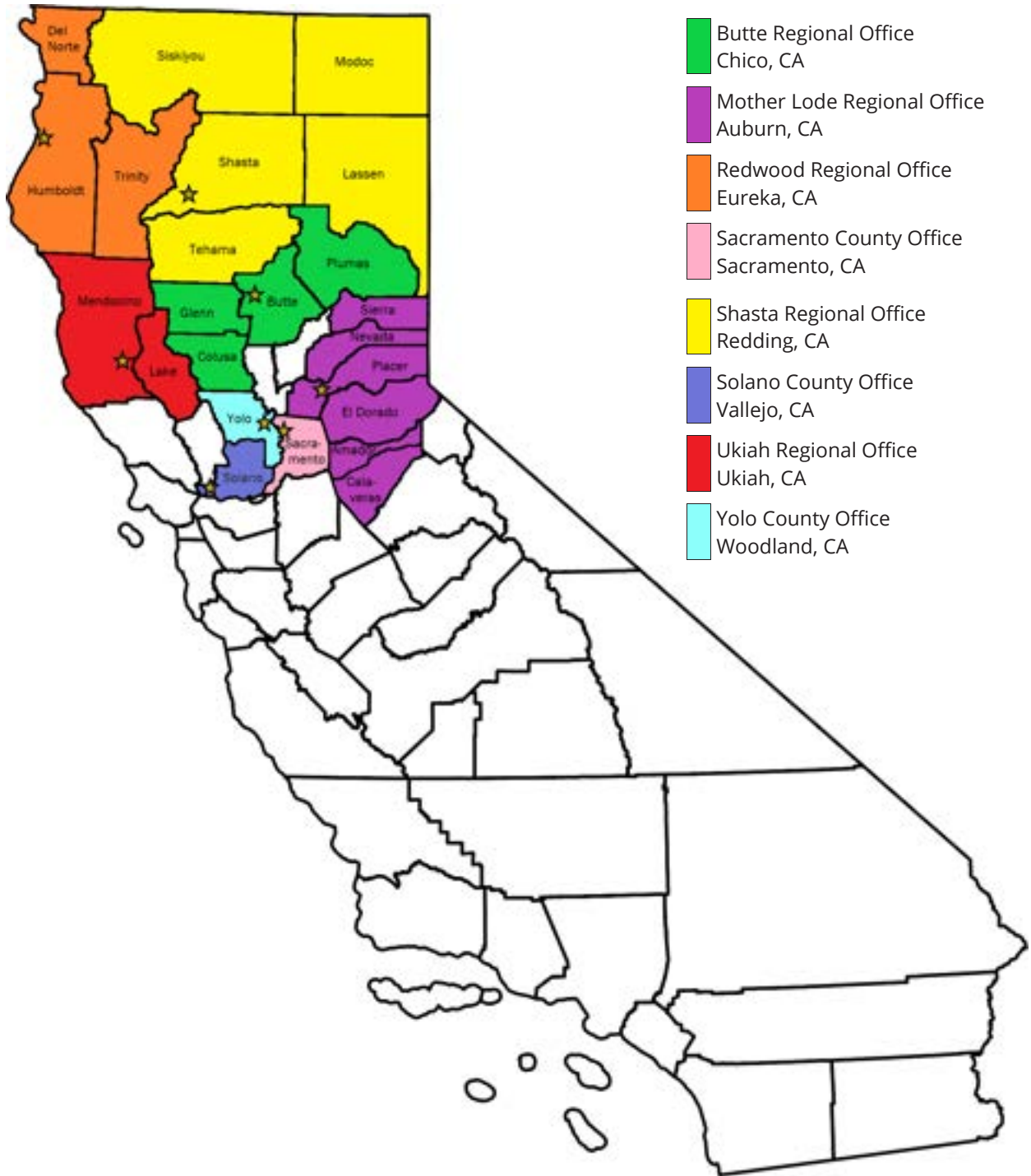
Mary U. Akens
Attorney
Sacramento County

“I firmly believe in LSNC’s mission to provide quality legal services to empower the poor to identify and defeat the causes and effects of poverty in our community and am fortunate to be a part of the Board of Directors to continue to move the organization forward in support of its mission.”

Mary U. Akens
Board Member



OFFICE LOCATIONS



OFFICES

LSNC Executive Office
517 12th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-551-2150

Sacramento County Office
515 12th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-551-2150

Solano County Office
1810 Capitol Street
Vallejo, CA 94590
707-643-0054

Ukiah Regional Office
421 North Oak Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
877-529-7700
Serving Lake and
Mendocino counties.

Butte Regional Office
541 Normal Avenue
Chico, CA 95928
530-345-9491
Serving Butte, Colusa,
Glenn, and Plumas
counties.

Shasta Regional Office
1370 West Street
Redding, CA 96001
530-241-3565
Serving Lassen, Modoc,
Shasta, Siskiyou, and
Tehama counties.

Yolo County Office
619 North Street
Woodland, CA 95695
530-662-1065

Mother Lode Regional
Office
190 Reamer Street
Auburn, CA 95603
530-823-7560
Serving Amador, Calaveras,
El Dorado, Nevada, Placer,
and Sierra counties.

Redwood Regional Office
123 Third Street
Eureka, CA 95501
707-445-0866
Serving Del Norte,
Humboldt, and Trinity
counties.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

LSNC Health
501 12th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
888-354-4474

Health Insurance
Counseling & Advocacy
Program (HICAP)
505 12th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-376-8915
Information and
counseling services for
Medicare beneficiaries.

Western States Pension
Assistance Program
505 12th Street,
Sacramento, CA 95814
866-413-4911

Free pension counseling
to anyone, regardless
of age or income, who
live(d) or work(ed) in
Arizona, California,
Hawaii, and/or Nevada.

Capital Pro Bono
1860 Howe Ave #130
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-551-2102

Expanded Access Project
(EAP)
517 12th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-551-2194
After-hours legal
assistance.

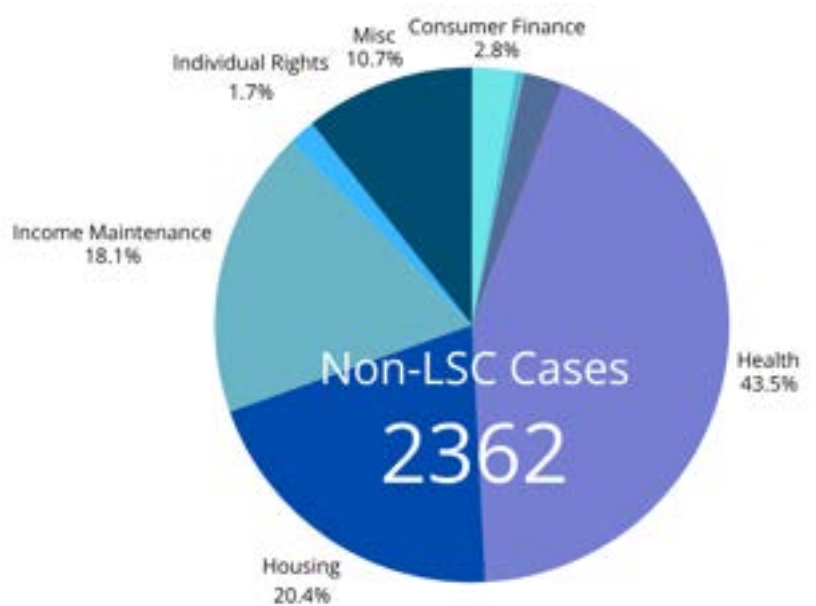
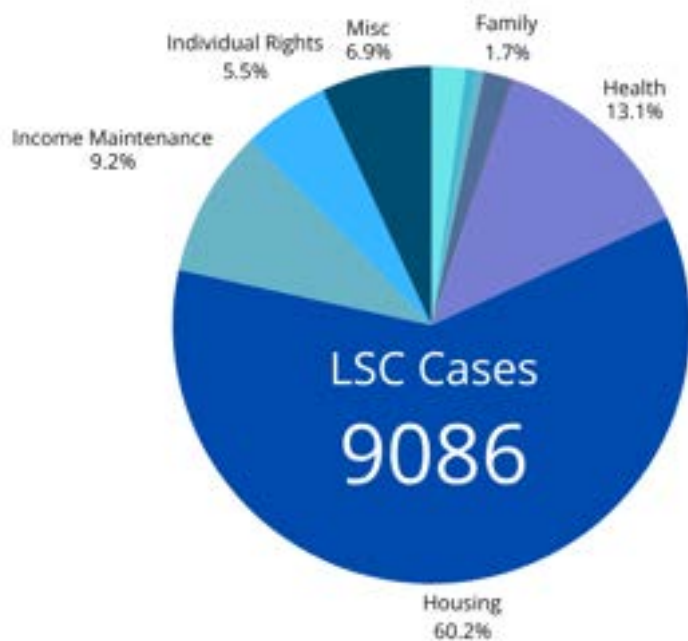


Photo: Amy Williams, Deputy Director,
with a client.

CASE INFORMATION

CASE STATISTICS

| | LSC Funded | Non-LSC Cases | 2024 Total |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Consumer | 193 | 67 | 260 |
| Education | 59 | 8 | 67 |
| Employment | 45 | 4 | 49 |
| Family | 154 | 54 | 208 |
| Juvenile | 14 | 6 | 20 |
| Health | 1,187 | 1,057 | 2,204 |
| Housing | 5,474 | 495 | 6,007 |
| Income Maintenance | 837 | 439 | 1,280 |
| Individual Rights | 497 | 42 | 527 |
| Misc | 217 | 220 | 377 |
| LSNC Total | 8,677 | 2,322 | 10,999 |
| Capitol Pro Bono | 409 | 40 | 449 |
| TOTAL CASES | 9,086 | 2,362 | 11,448 |



TOP ISSUES



Housing

Healthcare
Access



Income
Maintenance

Consumer/
Financial



Individual
Rights

TOTAL CASES

10,999

Total cases closed in 2024

SERVICE AREA

23

LSNC has a service area that spans 23 counties

OFFICES

8

LSNC serves clients from 8 field office and several special projects

LEGAL EDUCATION

13,112

Number of people reached through education and outreach efforts

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

732

Households that experienced domestic violence

SENIORS

4,836

Cases involving older adults (age 60+)

CHILDREN

6,152

Cases with children in the household

VETERANS

702

Number of veterans in the household

DISABILITIES

5,978

Clients with disabilities

DISASTER RESPONSE

190

Number of contacts with individuals impacted by the 2024 Park Fire



Photo: LSNC 2024 Legal Graduates

JUSTICE IN ACTION

PUBLIC BENEFITS

LSNC advocates represented clients at administrative hearings in a variety of public benefit programs, including CalWORKs, CalFresh, In-Home Supportive Services, and Supplemental Security Income, winning decisions that allowed clients to get and keep the subsistence benefits they rely upon. Advocates participated in state program workgroups that proactively identified and resolved issues that arose in benefit programs, avoiding the need for appeals and litigation.

LSNC provided assistance in more than 1,280 cases involving non-health public benefits in 2024.

HEALTH

In 2024, advocates opened 2,217 new health cases. Around health care eligibility, advocates educated clients, counties, and health care plans on Medicare, Medi-Cal, and private insurance rules as well as community supports and care management services available through the CalAIM initiative. Due to the continued inaccessibility of county offices, the health team provided a higher level of service on average in eligibility cases, going beyond advice and counsel and requesting administrative hearings and negotiating settlements to ensure that clients maintained their insurance.

Restoring What's Right: Laura's Fight for Her SSI Benefits



Laura* has received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for nearly 25 years due to several disabilities. Her parents, who are in their 80's, added her to their checking account as a precaution in case something happened to them. Her mother intended to list her as a beneficiary, not an account holder. Laura had no access to the account and was added without her knowledge. When she found out, she had her name removed and notified the Social Security Administration. Unfortunately, this caused her SSI benefits to be suspended, and she received an overpayment notice for more than \$20,000, stating she was over the asset limit for two years. Devastated, Laura sought help from LSNC.

After more than a year of advocacy, the Social Security Administration restored her benefits. Laura received backpay and did not owe the overpayment. During this time, her mother passed away, and it was a great relief to Laura and her father that the issue was resolved and she received the benefits to which she was entitled.

CIVIL RIGHTS

In 2024, LSNC's civil rights work focused on education and record mitigation. LSNC advocates represented 66 students in education cases, including 34 students with disabilities that significantly affect their ability to learn and make progress in school without special education services. LSNC's education work ensured that these students received individualized education plans, speech therapy, occupational therapy, specialized academic instruction, and transportation to access and benefit from education and to prepare them for future success. LSNC advocates also assisted nearly 200 people with post-conviction remedies to improve their job and housing prospects after probation.

HOUSING

In early 2024, LSNC helped secure the development of more than 200 affordable homes in Eureka by successfully intervening in a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lawsuit brought by a group of business owners that sought to block the development of multiple affordable apartment complexes. The City's housing program allows developers to build affordable housing on underutilized city-owned property. LSNC's clients joined the City in opposing a preliminary injunction, with support from the California Attorney General. The injunction was withdrawn, and construction is moving forward. Throughout 2024, LSNC also preserved tenancies by representing tenants in eviction cases and enforcing the Tenant Protection Act.

Home Secured: Surviving Domestic Violence and Eviction Threat



Christine* is a survivor of domestic violence. She received a 3-day notice to pay rent or quit after falling behind on rent because her ex-partner moved out and refused to pay child support. Additionally, Christine had been counting on a tax refund that would pay the rent she owed, but that refund was withheld by IRS to pay her ex-partner's government debt. Christine could not move her severely disabled child. She contacted LSNC because she wanted more time to catch up on her rent and stay in her home. The advocate assigned

to Christine's case wrote a letter to the property owner stating that California law prohibits a landlord from evicting a tenant based on domestic violence, the reason she was unable to pay rent, and requested more time for Christine to pay her rent. The property owner was open to negotiating a repayment plan and Christine was allowed to stay in her home.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Project (HICAP)

LSNC's nine-county Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Project (HICAP) counseled nearly 3,800 Medicare beneficiaries during 2024. HICAP's 34 highly trained volunteers and nine staff members provided advice on issues ranging from prescription drug plan selections to ambulance bill payment denials, providing services locally at senior centers and other service providers in our clients' neighborhoods. HICAP provided services both over the phone and virtually post-pandemic, slowly reentering community sites throughout the service area in 2024. During the year, this resulted in savings of \$900,423 for Medicare beneficiaries.

Senior Legal Services

In 2024, LSNC provided legal aid to more than 4,836 older adults on an array of legal problems. Some matters were brief yet valuable advice cases, while others included extensive representation in Social Security or subsidized housing matters. LSNC advocates also assisted with a variety of elder abuse cases, from fraud and scams to physical and financial abuse. LSNC advocates utilized various legal tools and remedies to secure and assert clients' rights and maximize housing and income stability.

Disaster Relief

Over the past several years, historically destructive wildfires have swept through millions of acres and leveled tens of thousands of homes in LSNC's service area. The role of legal aid before, during, and after a natural disaster can make a critical difference in the ultimate long-term recovery for survivors. From understanding housing rights during an evacuation, to navigating the maze of available disaster funds, a lawyer can help and advocate on behalf of impacted individuals to access and preserve valuable rights and benefits.

Standing Up for Seniors: LSNC Prevails for Disabled Veteran

Barbara*, a senior veteran with disabilities who owns her mobilehome contacted Legal Services of Northern California after receiving a notice significantly increasing her space rent. Barbara lives on a fixed income and worried about losing her housing security if the space rent continued to increase. LSNC reviewed the notice and determined that the park's actions violated the Mobilehome Residency Law. LSNC filed a lawsuit to enforce Barbara's protections under the MRL, and ultimately reached a settlement stabilizing her space rent.



SPECIAL PROJECTS CONT.

Expanded Access Project (EAP)

To better reach people who cannot access LSNC services during regular business hours, the Expanded Access Project (EAP) offers evening intake and expanded clinic services. EAP strives to reach those who have barriers – such as work, school, or disabilities – to accessing services during LSNC’s traditional client intake hours. In 2024, EAP served 349 clients through individual cases and many more through outreach, clinics and community legal education events.

Eviction Defense Project (EDP)

LSNC’s Eviction Defense Project assisted more than 360 clients facing eviction in 2024. The project began in late 2021 and prioritized representing clients in court eviction cases in LSNC’s more remote and rural communities, where there are no other tenant attorneys and fewer resources to help low-income families move and find new housing when they are evicted.

Eviction Defense Project attorneys enforced renters’ rights to “just cause” eviction under the Tenant Protection Act and other laws in multiple courts. This project concluded at the end of 2024.

Shriver Project

Since February 2012, LSNC has collaborated with Yolo County and the Yolo County Superior Court to provide full representation and unbundled legal services to eligible litigants in unlawful detainer cases. LSNC also provides self-help assistance and mediation at the courthouse.

Western States Pension Assistance Project

Since 2007, LSNC’s Western States Pension Assistance Project has recovered more than \$38 million in retirement benefits for LSNC clients, including more than \$3,419,734.27 million in 2024 alone. Project attorneys and volunteers provide vital legal advice and assistance to hundreds of clients each year, many of whom tried but were unable to resolve their pension issue on their own. The pension project prevents poverty by ensuring the availability, access and accuracy of hard-earned retirement benefits for employees, retirees, and surviving spouses.

Reclaiming a Survivor’s Pension and Peace of Mind

Bill and Susan Johnson* were married in the 1960s. Mr. Johnson worked for a local company for nearly 60 years and began receiving his pension upon retirement. He elected a 50% Joint & Survivor Annuity, and Mrs. Johnson did not waive her right to a benefit. They remained married until Mr. Johnson passed away more than five years ago, making Mrs. Johnson eligible for nearly six years of survivor benefits. After struggling to contact the company, she reached out to LSNC’s Western States Pension Assistance Project. An advocate submitted a claim on her behalf, which was granted. She now receives monthly payments after a lump sum of nearly \$10,000.





FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|
| <u>ASSETS</u> | | |
| <u>CURRENT ASSETS</u> | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 600,855 | \$ 2,588,907 |
| Client Trust Funds | 5,239 | 19,032 |
| Grants Receivables | 1,526,636 | 1,603,187 |
| Other Receivables | 15,961 | 21,171 |
| Prepaid Expenses | 264,633 | 242,376 |
| Investments | <u>6,524,341</u> | <u>2,439,719</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | 8,937,665 | 6,914,392 |
| <u>NONCURRENT ASSETS</u> | | |
| Right-of-use asset | 669,022 | 585,897 |
| Property, plant & equipment, net | <u>2,191,921</u> | <u>2,138,733</u> |
| TOTAL NONCURRENT ASSETS | <u>2,860,943</u> | <u>2,724,630</u> |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>\$ 11,798,608</u> | <u>\$ 9,639,022</u> |
| <u>LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS</u> | | |
| <u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u> | | |
| Accounts payable | \$ 188,015 | \$ 165,112 |
| Accrued payroll liabilities and related liabilities | 987,622 | 732,406 |
| Other accrued liabilities | 117,875 | 269,313 |
| Client trust deposits | 5,239 | 19,032 |
| Deferred revenue, LSC | 2,279,888 | 3,424,231 |
| Deferred revenue | 2,661,100 | 1,523,229 |
| Lease liability, current portion | <u>248,563</u> | <u>206,837</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES | <u>6,488,302</u> | <u>6,340,160</u> |
| <u>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</u> | <u>443,845</u> | <u>385,380</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | <u>6,932,147</u> | <u>6,725,540</u> |
| <u>NET ASSETS</u> | | |
| Without donor restrictions | 3,186,412 | 1,215,321 |
| With donor restrictions | <u>1,680,049</u> | <u>1,698,161</u> |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | <u>4,866,461</u> | <u>2,913,482</u> |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS | <u>\$ 11,798,608</u> | <u>\$ 9,639,022</u> |

ACTIVITIES REPORT

| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</u> | | |
| Grants & contracts | \$ 15,647,581 | \$ 13,454,520 |
| Donated goods & services | 357,704 | 344,483 |
| Contributions | 2,678,059 | 220,705 |
| Attorney fee awards | 133,180 | 48,084 |
| Other income | 521,961 | 515,696 |
| Interest income | 286,059 | 129,026 |
| Investment income | <u>86,783</u> | <u>46,413</u> |
| | | |
| TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT | <u>\$ 19,711,327</u> | <u>\$ 14,758,927</u> |
| <u>EXPENSES</u> | | |
| Program services | \$ 14,405,969 | \$ 11,892,873 |
| Management & general | 3,095,762 | 2,685,961 |
| Fundraising | <u>256,617</u> | <u>239,179</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | <u>17,758,348</u> | <u>14,818,013</u> |
| | | |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | 1,952,979 | (59,086) |
| | | |
| NET ASSETS, BEGINNING | <u>2,913,482</u> | <u>2,972,568</u> |
| | | |
| NET ASSETS, ENDING | <u>\$ 4,866,461</u> | <u>\$ 2,913,482</u> |

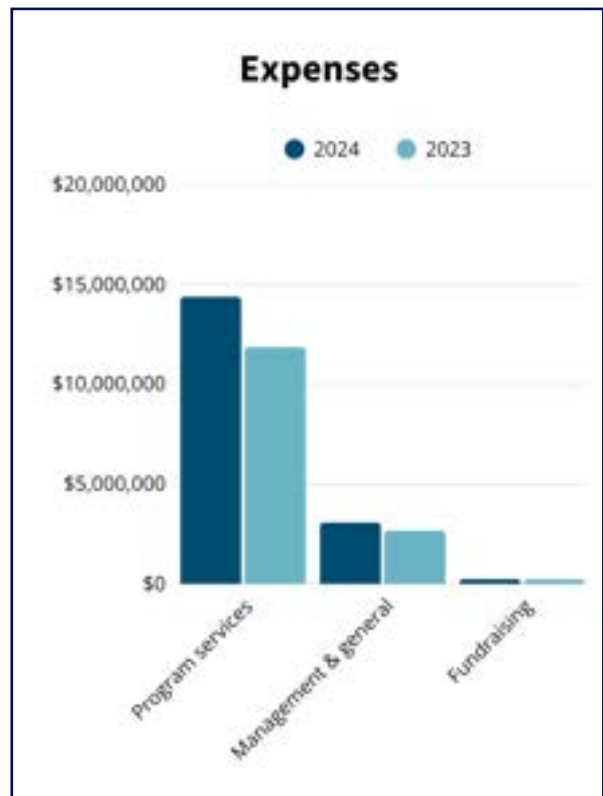
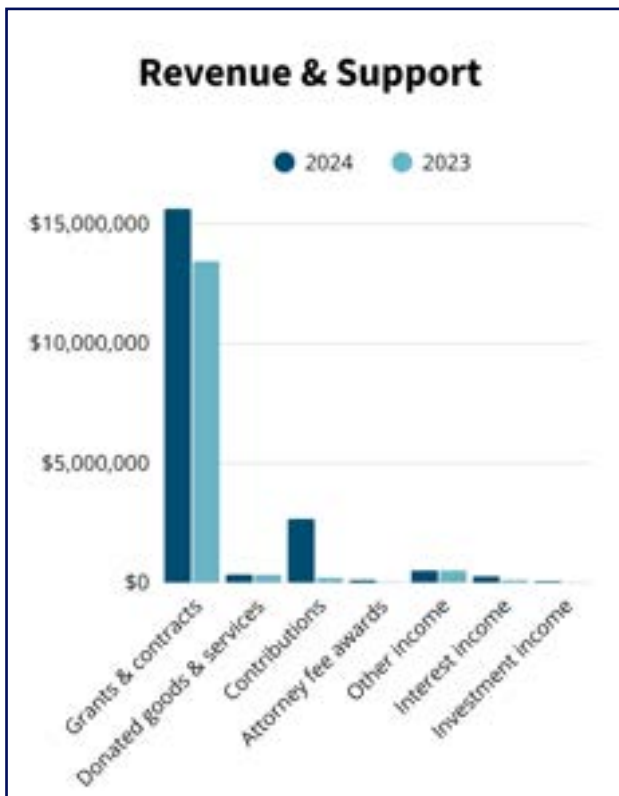




Photo: Jennifer Anders Gable, LSNC's Regional Council for Disaster and Older Adults, with her family at the 2024 Valentine Run/Walk

21st Annual Valentine Run/Walk

LSNC's Largest Annual Fundraiser



LEGAL SERVICES
of
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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517 12th St.
Sacramento, CA 95814
www.lsnc.net