



Resist

**2016 Report to Members
Legal Aid Association of California**

"Resist."

That word is on everyone's lips as we close out 2016. Nonprofits aren't political - we don't campaign for one candidate or the other, and our work continues no matter who is in office. But we all know that our work can be easier or harder.

Our community remembers all the times the Legal Services Corporation has been threatened with zero-funding, the times when reorganization forced many organizations to close their doors and merge with others, when restrictions were added, when funding for national support centers stopped.

But with the bad memories are good ones, like when the first round of "Reggie" fellows started working at legal aid offices in the 1960s, when Skadden decided to fund a corps of legal aid fellows in the late 1980s, when, time after time, LSC survived, and when Hilary Rodham was appointed to the LSC board of directors in 1977 and managed to triple the budget for a brief period of time.

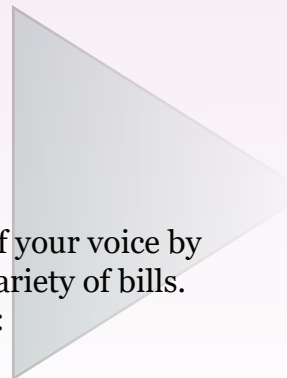
So, as I hear in every conversation with attorneys who've been doing this much longer than I have - we'll get through this. We just have to look out for our clients and make sure that they make it, too.

As the saying on my faded punk t-shirt says, "Your heart is a muscle the size of your fist." We are strong because our hearts are strong - let's use them.

Salena Copeland
Executive Director

Supporting You In Sacramento

LAAC is your voice in Sacramento. We increase the impact of your voice by closely monitoring and advocating legal aid's position on a variety of bills. Some highlights of LAAC's legislative efforts in 2016 include:



SB 846/AB 2878

State Bar Dues Bill

As we have every year, LAAC monitored the State Bar Dues bill closely. Unlike years past, the bill was the subject of a contentious battle, ultimately failing to pass. The decision of if and how to collect State Bar dues was left to the California Supreme Court. Throughout this process, LAAC raised legal aid's voice and made sure access to justice concerns were not forgotten during the fight. We successfully ensured that voluntary contributions to the Justice Gap Fund remained a part of the State Bar dues collection process, protecting that important source of funding for legal aid.

AB 2192

Extending the Transcript Reimbursement Fund

LAAC met with legislative committee staff about this issue and supported a bill that extended the sunset of the Transcript Reimbursement Fund program. The Fund allows for the reimbursement of court transcript costs, both to low-income and self-represented litigants and to legal aid organizations representing low-income clients. The bill, which extends the program to January 2020, was signed into law.

SB 1257

Encouraging Pro Bono

While we supported the goal of this bill, to encourage pro bono service, we had some concerns about how it proposed to do so. This bill would require law students to complete pro bono hours in order to be admitted to practice. We heard your concerns about ensuring clients receive high quality services and about the potential burden on legal aid organizations, and we communicated them. While this bill passed, it was ultimately vetoed by the Governor.

AB 2819

Masking Unlawful Detainers

LAAC enthusiastically supported this bill, sponsored by our member organization, Western Center on Law & Poverty. This bill helps low-income tenants by reforming the process for release of records in unlawful detainer proceedings. The new law helps low-income families find stable housing by only allowing public access to the records in most cases if the landlord prevails. The bill was signed into law.

Amicus Efforts

LAAC voices the interests of the legal aid community in litigation by getting involved as *amicus curiae*. When deemed appropriate pursuant to LAAC's Advocacy Policy, LAAC drafts or signs on to amicus briefs on issues that impact the provision of legal services and our members, sometimes coordinating the sign-on of many members.

Covarrubias v. Cohen

LAAC filed an amicus letter to the California Supreme Court in support of review. This cases addresses whether cities may use property tax revenues to meet affordable housing requirements. Not allowing these tax revenues, essentially eliminating the duty of redevelopment successor agencies to use pledged tax revenue pledged, puts billions of affordable house dollars at risk. The decision on review is still pending.

York v. Superior Court (City of Fullerton)

Here a California Court of Appeal and the California Supreme Court looked at whether cities can invoke governmental privileges to withhold material that could reveal discriminatory intent. LAAC signed on to an amicus letter to the Supreme Court by member program, Public Counsel, in support of review and later to an amicus filing in a follow-up Court of Appeal proceeding. The case is still pending.

Lafitte v. Robert Half, Int'l

The California Supreme Court took up the issue of calculation of reasonable attorneys' fees awards in class action cases. LAAC signed on to an amicus effort led by our member organization, the Impact Fund. The effort was a success, and the Court affirmed that attorneys' fees may be calculated as a percentage of the common fund created by a settlement or judgment. This is important in cases that involve non-monetary benefits, often litigated by legal aid organizations.

The Civil Rights Education and Enforcement Center et al. v. Hospitality Properties Trust

The Ninth Circuit addressed the commonality requirement for class certification. LAAC signed onto another amicus effort led by the Impact Fund. The brief argued that inaction, as opposed to an affirmative common policy, for example, can raise a common issue of law suitable for class treatment. The case is still pending.

Training and Coordination

Through webinars and in-person trainings, LAAC offered advocates over 40 hours of free and low-cost MCLE in 2016.

LAAC held 25 webinar trainings, including:

- Disability Civil Rights Law Series, co-sponsored by Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund;
- Community Development Series, featuring six legal aid organizations
- Post-Family Law and Self-Help Conference Series,
- Post-Traveling Training Series

Below: Attendees engage in discussion at LAAC's Annual Traveling Training, held this year in Riverside.



Introducing

www.LAAConline.org

LAAC unveiled its new website, www.LAAConline.org. The site streamlines training videos, materials, and news. A new interactive map allows users to find legal aid organizations in different parts of California.

LAAC
Legal Aid Association
of California

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WELCOME TO LAAC ONLINE!

The Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC) is the statewide membership organization for almost 100 legal nonprofits. LAAC advocates for more funding and better laws for legal nonprofits, facilitates communication and coordination between organizations, trains in core substantive areas, analyzes best practices, and works to increase access to justice for all Californians.

Want to help support access to justice and increased funding for legal aid in California? [Donate to LAAC!](#)

UPCOMING TRAININGS AND EVENTS

Legal Aid Trainings and Events

Today ← → Tuesday, December 12 ▼ [View](#)

Showing events after 12/12.
[Look for earlier events](#)

Tuesday, December 12

5:30pm **MCLE: Asylum Claims for LGBTQ a**

Wednesday, December 13

2:00pm **JUSTICE IN AGING: Legal Basics-**

Monday, December 18

HOME / TRAINING / TRAINING: SEARCH AND FILTER

Training: Search and Filter

Welcome to our Archived Online Trainings! Use the menus to the right to filter the list. You can watch these recorded webinars for **self-study MCLE credit** by completing the **evaluation form**. Please complete this form, and submit it to trainings@laaconline.org in order to receive certification for your **self-study** records. If you would like to support LAAC's videos and keep this service free for the community, please **donate!**

Results

SEARCH & FILTER TRAININGS

START OVER

Optional: Keywords

Search

Celebrations



LAAC's **Awards of Merit** honor those who represent excellence in the legal aid community. Pictured left: 2016 Awards of Merit Recipients Gloria Ho, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – LA, Fernando Gaytan, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, and Rita H. Smith, Inland Empire Latino Lawyers' Association, Inc. Not Pictured: Lollie Roberts, Sacramento Superior Court, recipient of the Joint Award of Merit with California Commission on Access to Justice.

The **Family Law Awards** recognize family law advocates for their outstanding dedication and commitment to legal services for low-income Californians. Pictured Bottom Left: Salvador Reynoso, Superior Court of Orange County Self-Help Centers, with presenter Daniel Bors, Orange County Superior Court. Not Pictured: Family Law Awards Recipients Commissioner Richard G. Vogl (Ret.), Legal Aid Society of Orange County, and Lucia Reyes, Levitt & Quinn Family Law Center.

Financials

Year at a Glance: FY 2015-2016



Revenue

Contract Revenue	\$253,341
Membership Dues	\$140,586
Training/	\$16,585
Donations	\$2,816
Interest Income	\$22
Other Income	\$2,795
TOTAL:	\$416,145

Expenses

Personnel	\$276,979
Program and Operating Expenses	\$100,751
Training/Conference Expenses	\$12,281
Dan Bradley Fellowships	\$3,000
TOTAL:	\$393,011

Reserves as of June 30, 2016: \$215,051

Click [here](#) for additional financial information.

LAAC Staff

Salena Copeland, Executive Director

Lorin Kline, Program Attorney

Anna Katz, Communications and Training Coordinator

Tim Ng, LawHelpCA Program Associate

Jasmine Schwab-Doyle, Communications and Training Associate

Denise Watt, Senior Program Coordinator

Work-Study Interns

Leslie Gutierrez, Sandra Guzman, David Latt, Reann Pacheco

Right: The Honorable Thomas E. Perez and Salena Copeland, Executive Director.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Salena's recognition!



Photo by Christine Baker-Parrish

LAAC Board

Kent Qian, Chair, National Housing Law Project

Jimena Vasquez, Vice-Chair, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

Lauren Hansen, Secretary, Public Interest Law Project

Nancy Bigelow, Treasurer, Inland Counties Legal Services

Julie Aguilar Rogado, Immediate Past Chair,

Legal Services of Northern California

Marisol Barrientos, Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association, Inc.

Connie Chu, Disability Rights California

Jeffrey Clason, Central California Legal Services

Amy Fitzpatrick, San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, Inc.

Kirsten Hill, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

Nick Levenhagen, Bet Tzedek Legal Services

Henry Martin, Watsonville Law Center

Jith Meganathan, Western Center on Law & Poverty

Kellie Morgantini, Legal Services for Seniors

Jennifer Phan, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County

Sarah Reisman, Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice

Marcela Ruiz, California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.

Dara L. Schur, Disability Rights California

Victoria Snyder, Contra Costa Senior Legal Services

Marcus Tang, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

THANK YOU
to our members!

LAAC is honored to serve as your membership organization. We thank you, our members, for your continued support.

We wish to thank the State Bar of California and the Judicial Council. The generous support which both provide helps make LAAC's work possible, and their partnership is invaluable as we work to increase access to justice for all Californians.

Thank you.