

Legal Aid: A Lifeline for People In Crisis



PISGAH
LEGAL SERVICES

PISGAH LEGAL SERVICES
2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Pisgah Legal Services is a Lifeline

When having a lawyer means food, shelter, health care, and safety from abuse



In 2009, more people requested help and their problems were more urgent. Thank you for partnering with us in the day-to-day work of providing the lifeline of legal aid.

Tough economic times have forced us all to focus on the basics. As more of our neighbors need help, our priority is providing the absolute essentials — food, shelter and health care.

In times of financial crisis, Pisgah Legal Services has been a lifeline to thousands of families, helping them meet their most basic needs.

In 2009, we served 10,122 low-income people. We helped women escape abusers threatening to kill them, the seriously ill secure health care, desperate parents keep food on their families' tables, and senior citizens avoid losing their homes and becoming homeless.

We are so grateful that, as the need for legal aid increased, we had a new, larger space to expand our services. We were able to involve many more volunteers. We doubled the number of volunteer attorneys on our Pro Bono Legal Hotline, and increased the number of cases closed by volunteer attorneys by 41%.

Thank you for helping us to secure this new home. We are humbled and encouraged by your incredible generosity, and dedicated to meeting the ever increasing demand for our services.

And thank you for partnering with us in the day-to-day work of providing the lifeline of legal aid. Because of you, thousands of our neighbors receive the legal help they desperately need to get back on their feet.

Terry Van Duyn
Board President

James A. Barrett
Executive Director

PLS would like to thank the clients who graciously agreed to be photographed for this publication, Michael Muller who traveled around WNC to photograph our clients, and Terry Van Duyn who helped with graphic design. Thank You!

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Cover Photograph by Michael Muller

What Legal Aid Means to Our Clients

With your generous support, we provide legal aid to thousands of people in crisis.



Photos by Michael Muller

Protection from Abuse

A thirteen-year-old son does not have to stay up all night standing watch to protect his mother from his abusive father.

Avoiding Homelessness

A seventy-eight-year-old widow has peace of mind that she won't lose her home to foreclosure.

Safe Housing

A mother does not have to worry about her children being injured in their dilapidated and dangerous rental home.

Health Care

A terminal cancer patient has the means to pay for the health care he needs.

Employment

A mother and father will not lose their child care subsidy, so they can continue to work and support their family.

In 2009, we helped more than 10,122 people meet urgent needs – food, shelter and protection.

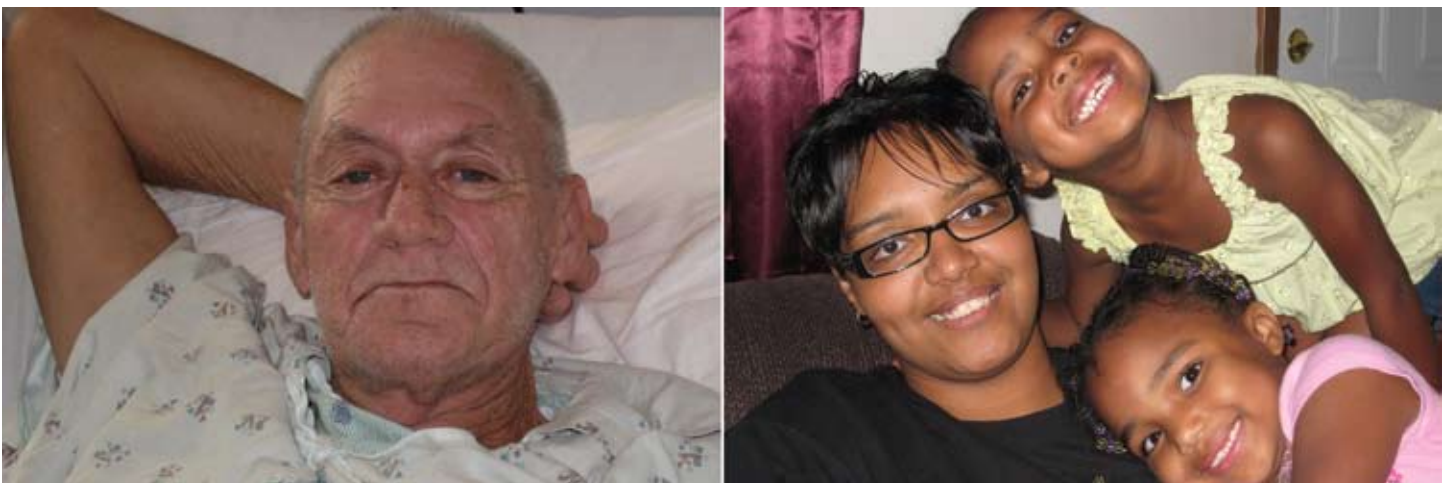


Photo by Michael Muller

Legal Aid Prevents Homelessness

With increased unemployment and the foreclosure crisis, poverty and homelessness are on the rise.



Photo by Michael Muller

A 78-year-old widow, Marie struggled to meet her basic expenses on her fixed income and faced losing her home to foreclosure.

PLS helped her secure a loan modification to reduce her monthly mortgage payments and save her home.

Marie was doing everything she could to keep up payments on her modest home with her social security income and a small pension. To make her mortgage payments she hardly bought herself any food, and was living on peanut butter crackers and soup. Then she cut out the soup to save money.

Despite all of her efforts, Marie faced home foreclosure. Pisgah Legal Services attorney Bill Whalen helped her secure a loan modification through a new federal program, reducing her monthly payments by almost half and making it possible for her to stay in her home — and to afford to eat soup again.

In 2009, Pisgah Legal Services helped 2,111 people prevent homelessness by stopping foreclosures and evictions, improving substandard housing conditions, and helping very low-income people secure subsidized housing.

Legal Aid Stops Domestic Violence

Legal aid provides domestic violence victims with safety, housing, child custody and financial security so they can leave their abusers and rebuild their lives.

After Joy's ex-boyfriend opened fraudulent credit card accounts in her mother's name, he attacked Joy and threatened to hurt her and their five-year-old son if she helped prosecute him for this crime.

PLS helped her escape the abuse and obtain sole custody of their son.



Photo by Michael Muller

Joy and her son LaOtis were doing remarkably well. LaOtis was born, weighing less than a pound, when Joy was barely six months pregnant. Raising LaOtis, who suffered serious health problems and developmental delays, had not been easy for Joy, who is deaf and struggles with cognitive disabilities herself. Under her determined care, he made it to kindergarten in 2009.

Then Joy allowed LaOtis' father, who had been in and out of jail and uninvolved in LaOtis' life, to move in, hoping he would bond with his son. Joy soon discovered he had stolen her mother's identity and opened up several fraudulent credit card accounts. He attacked Joy with a brick and threatened to break all of the bones in Joy's and LaOtis' bodies if she helped to convict him of this crime.

Staff attorney Susan Anderson helped Joy secure a court protective order against her ex-boyfriend and sole custody of LaOtis.

In 2009, Pisgah Legal Services helped 2,667 domestic violence victims and their children to escape abuse.

Legal Aid Secures Essential Resources

Many people are denied resources they are eligible for and desperately need—food stamps, health care, child care, income—because they cannot navigate bureaucratic red tape.



Pisgah Legal Services helped Mabelle and her husband recover their child care subsidy so that they could continue working.

Without this subsidy, one of them would have had to quit working to stay home with their two daughters.

Mabelle and her husband depend on child care subsidies to help them cover the high cost of child care for their two girls so they can both work. When their mail was stolen and they did not receive an important letter regarding requalifying for their subsidy, they almost lost their child care vouchers.

PLS staff attorney Robin Jacobs helped the couple appeal the termination of their child care subsidy and recover the vouchers they desperately need to stay employed. The couple can now continue to work to support their family.

Pisgah Legal Services Goes Beyond Helping Clients to Address the Root Causes of Poverty

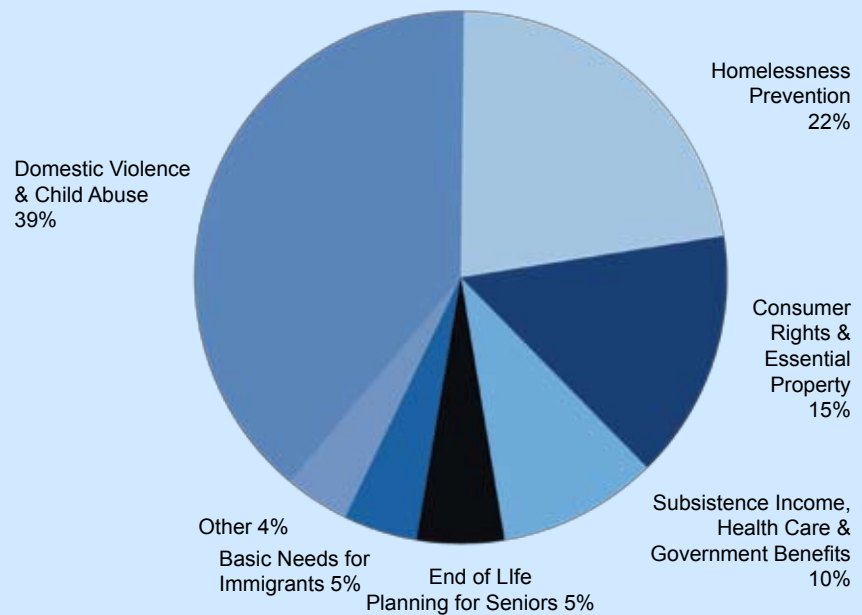
Pisgah Legal Services attorney Robin Jacobs had several cases like Mabelle's. Families faced the termination of their child care subsidy because they did not receive adequate notice to requalify for their voucher. Robin worked with the government agency providing the vouchers to improve policies and prevent the unnecessary termination of child care vouchers for other families. Child care subsidies are a critical support to enable many low-income parents to work and secure safe, enriching care for their children.

PLS attorneys often go beyond working with individual clients to address "bigger picture" problems and improve the systems serving low-income families.

We Helped More People in 2009

Demand for legal aid to the poor increased dramatically in 2009. Compared to 2008, PLS opened 17% more legal cases and achieved 415 more positive outcomes for people in crisis.

Percentage of Client Outcomes by Issue Area for Cases Closed in 2009



Pisgah Legal Services staff and volunteer attorneys provided representation and advice to:

Prevent Homelessness

- Prevent or delay eviction 484 times
- Prevent or delay foreclosure 131 times
- Improve housing conditions 144 times
- Obtain/preserve eligibility for subsidized housing 336 times

Protect Consumer Rights and Essential Property

- Protect essential property (e.g., home, car) 546 times
- Prevent illegal creditor harassment 171 times
- Help client manage limited resources 222 times
- Educate client about consumer rights/responsibilities 50 times

Help Seniors Avoid Abuse and Do End-of-Life Planning

- Prepare a will, living will or power of attorney 390 times
- Prevent financial or physical elder abuse (not domestic violence) 37 times

Prevent Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

- Obtain or enforce a civil protective order against a client's partner 627 times
- Prevent child abuse 25 times
- Obtain or maintain custody of child for a client 476 times
- Obtain or protect a client's right to child support 143 times

Help Disabled Individuals Secure Health Care and Subsistence Income

- Secure Medicare or Medicaid benefits 281 times
- Obtain or preserve eligibility for subsistence income 186 times

Help Immigrants Meet Basic Needs and Overcome Poverty

- Obtain legal work authorization to secure household income 48 times
- Secure permanent legal immigration status 66 times

PLS attorneys help most clients with more than one issue — e.g., helping a domestic violence victim secure a court protective order and also avoid eviction.

Generating \$32 Million for WNC

In 2009, Pisgah Legal Services secured more than **\$32,750,308** in quantifiable benefits to help low-income clients meet basic needs. We improved the lives of **more than 10,122 WNC residents**.

Benefits to Clients	Estimated Value
Disability Income Benefits Subsistence income benefits (Supplemental Security Income) for individuals with disabilities	\$2,726,388
Medicaid Benefits for Individuals with Disabilities Medicaid to access health care and prescription medications	\$20,211,795
Other Monetary Benefits for Clients Housing subsidies, compensation for tenants living in unsafe housing conditions, child support payments for victims of domestic violence, unemployment compensation and home equity preserved from foreclosure	\$6,191,278
Helped Clients Free Up Funds for Essential Expenses Prioritizing payment of essential expenses and avoiding payment of illegal charges	\$2,060,946
Pro-Bono Legal Services for Clients The Mountain Area Volunteer Lawyer Program's network of more than 300 volunteer attorneys provides pro bono services to PLS clients.	\$661,500
Federal Funds for Housing and Services for People Who Are Homeless	\$898,401
Total <u>Quantifiable</u> Benefits to Clients	\$32,750,308
PLS Annual Budget - 2009	\$2,097,291

Pisgah Legal Services produced a return on investment of more than 13 to 1.

And that is just the monetary value of our work ...

How do you place a value on stopping domestic violence so a child no longer witnesses abuse, preventing homelessness so children aren't displaced from their school and community, or saving a mother's car so she can get care for her disabled son?



8 Photo by Michael Muller



Photo by Michael Muller



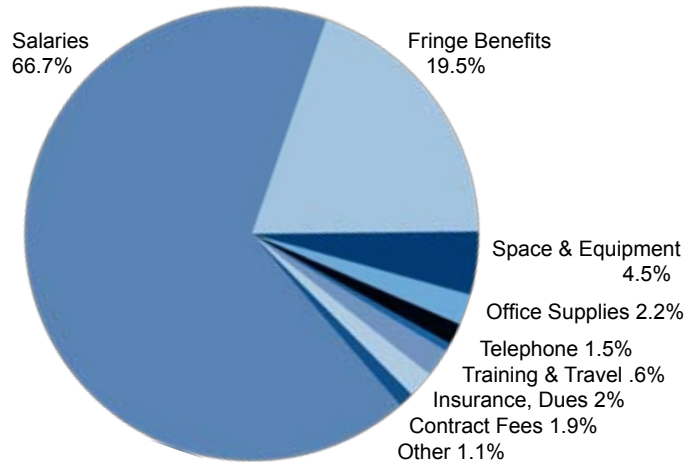
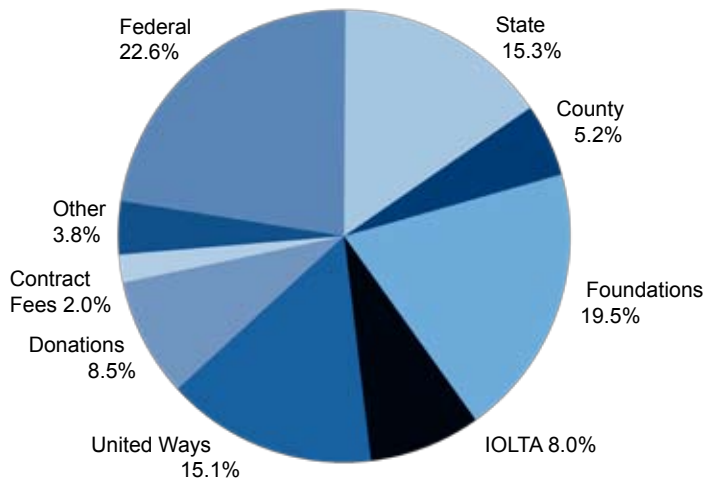
2009 Financial Report

In the midst of challenging economic times, many of Pisgah Legal Services' funders were forced to reduce their support. Though PLS cut operating expenses, including several staff positions, we had to dip into reserves set aside for such a contingency. Despite funding cuts, PLS helped 841 more people, up 9% from 2008. This was possible because of the fierce dedication of our staff, and a new facility that allowed us to utilize more volunteers.

PLS has a track record of excellent stewardship of charitable contributions. We appreciate your generosity and value your trust. We understand that going forward, PLS must continually seek innovative ways to respond to growing community needs.

Revenue: \$2,072,694

Expenses: \$2,097,291



These numbers are based on information available as of January 27, 2010. A few minor items such as depreciation are not included.

2009 Funding Sources for Programs and Operations

State

Funding from the State of North Carolina

IOLTA

NC Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts

Competitive Federal Sources

Community Development Block Grant (City of Asheville)
 HUD - Interlace
 HUD - Safe Haven
 Home and Community Care Block Grants
 Temporary Aid to Needy Families (NC Division of Social Services)
 Victims of Crime Act (NC Governor's Crime Commission)
 Violence Against Women Act (US Department of Justice)

County Governments

Buncombe County
 Henderson County

Contract Services

Buncombe County
 City of Asheville
 Mission Hospitals

Major Foundations & Other Funders

(Grants of \$10,000 or more)

Anonymous
 Community Foundation of Henderson County
 Community Foundation of Western North Carolina
 Mission Hospitals
 Sisters of Mercy Foundation
 Women for Women Fund
 Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

Donations

Includes contributions from individuals, faith-based congregations and family foundations

United Ways

United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County
 United Way of Henderson County
 United Way of Madison County
 United Way of Rutherford County
 United Way of Transylvania County

Note: Capital Campaign funding sources are listed on pages 14 to 19.

Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 888.830.4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.

People Make It Happen

2009 Board of Directors

Terry Van Duyn, President Community Volunteer	Trina G. Boyd Client Representative	Ed Loper Community Volunteer	Traci Silver Community Volunteer
F. Lachicotte Zemp, Vice President Roberts & Stevens, P.A.	Michele Cady Attorney	Alicia Martinez Community Volunteer	Jane Swafford Community Volunteer
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Joy McIver, Secretary Adams, Hendon, Carson, Crow & Saenger, P.A.	Dennis Lanahan Community Volunteer	William A. Parker Long, Parker, Warren & Jones, P.A.	Miaisha Wadsworth Client Representative

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Pablo Averza	Betsy Fedder	Bryan Klinge	Karen Thatcher
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Shelley Pew Brown	Joanne Gaylord	Tina Owen	Erin Wilson
Ana Corson	Alex Gomes	Kit Rains	Angelica Reza Wind
Laura Collins	Thalia Hoy	Carol Rogers	

2009 Volunteers

PLS volunteers interview applicants for our services, conduct legal research, assist with fundraising, and much more. Thank you!

Caroline Anders	Lyn Fozzard	Dennis Lanahan	Troy Roberts, Jr.
Irmgard H. Beck	Peggy Franc	Alice LeMaistre	Sara Russell
Karri Brantley-Ostergaard	Pete Friedt	Michael Lemon	Marvin Schrock
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Anna Dean	Caleb Horton	Michael Muller	Warwick Spencer
Nora DeBroder	Logan Stuart Howe	Vicki Nichols	Diane Terry
Jane W. DeMartini	Elizabeth Isbey	Kathy Norris	Adda Torovich
Lindsey Dennerlein	John "Will" Jamison	Carolyn Pearson	Joan B. Tuttle
Justin Dent	Leah Karpen	Leanne Marue Perez	Abby Underwood
Sue Edell	Summer Kelly	Devon Peterson	Anne Fortune Wickers
Curry First	Tom Klipp	Joyce Ramsey	Katie Williams
Paul Ford	Alex Kochanowski	Mark Reiford	Sidney Williams
Harry Fozzard	Emily Laborde	Raymond Reiser	Natanya Maria Wilson-Taylor

A very special thank you goes out to the dozens of people who helped make the Capital Campaign such an overwhelming success.

Volunteer Attorneys Improve Lives

325 volunteer attorneys donated **39% more volunteer hours** in 2009 than the previous year for a total of **4,410** hours of pro bono legal service. These hours equal more than **\$661,500** of donated professional services to PLS clients. Thank you to the volunteer attorneys of the Mountain Area Volunteer Lawyer (MAVL) Program for being a lifeline for so many!

Steven Aceto	Katherine Dare	Jason Hayes	John Mason	Susan Russo
Sharon Alexander	Charles Davis	G. Ward Hendon	David Matney	George Saenger
Cynthia Alleman	Kimball Davis	Keith Henry	Mara Mayer	Ben Scales
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William Anderson	Sara Davis	Janeen Hicks	Don McCown	K. Dean Shatley
Patricia Arcuri	Robert Deutsch	Gregory Hilderbran	Patrick McCroskey	Adam Shealy
Scott Armstrong	Emily Dezio	Aleece Hiller	Diane McDonald	Scott Sheffron
Andrew Atherton	Amrita Dhaliwal-Peltz	David Hillier	Peter McGuire	Scott Shelton
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Donald Barton	Cynthia Eller	James Hugenschmidt	Anna Mills	Philip Smith
Ervin Bazzle	James Ellis	Kenneth Hunt	T. Eugene Mitchell	Ronald Sneed
Ryan Beadle	Brian Elston	Gregory Hutchins	Amy Mody	Sean Soboleski
Amy Beasley	David English	George Hyler	S. Christopher Moore	Marvin Sparrow
Russell Becker	Mary Euler	Brandon Jaynes	George Moore	Cathie St. John-Ritzen
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W. Louis Bissette	Phillip Feagan	Stephen Jones	Paulette Mulligan	Heidi Stewart
Jason Blackwell	Robert Fedder	Cheryl Jones	Theron Mullinax	Lee Stockdale
Ron Blanchard	Johanna Finkelstein	Ronald Justice	Vijay Nathan	Jamie Stokes
Edward Bleyнат	Katherine (Katie) Fisher	Craig Justus	D. Samuel Neill	Andrew Strauss
W.O. Brazil	W. Perry Fisher	John Kelso	Roy Neill	Cynthia Strom
Annika Brock	Johanna Fowler	Barry Kempson	David Neumann	April Sutton
Leah Broker	Elizabeth Franks	Lynn Key	Patrick Newton	Daniel Talbert
Adam Bull	Robert Freeman	D. Rodney Kight	Heather Newton	Richard Tanker
Carolyn Burton	Kerry Friedman	James Kilbourne	Isaac Northup	Allan Tarleton
Jones Byrd	Ingrid Friesen	Matthew Kitchens	John Olesiuk	Douglas Tate
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Walter Carpenter	Jennefer Garrity	Kevin Kopp	James Palmer	Michael Thompson
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David Carter	Ryan Gaylord	Steven Kropelnicki	Brian Peterson	Ronald True
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Vincent Childress	Carol Goins	Benjamin Landey	Robert Pitts	Mark Upright
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Robert Christy	Kimberly Gossage	Tom Lawton	Suzannah Plemmons	John Veazey
William Christy	Tikkun Gottschalk	Trey Lee	John Poisson	Lex Veazey
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Walter Daniels	Edward Hay	Mark Martin	Edna Ruffin Walker	Jeffrey Zentner

Thank You 2009

Champions of Justice

\$4,000 or more

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Central United Methodist
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The Clannad Foundation
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Little Acorn Endowment Fund
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Broker & Hamrick, P.A.
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Deltec Homes, Inc.
Andrew and Janet Hart
Jubilee! Community
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Cary and Charles Owen, Jr.
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Betsey P. Bent

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Stone & Christy, P.A.
Cynthia Strom
Allan and Donna Tarleton
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Trinity Presbyterian Church
Trinity United Methodist
Church
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Janet Bingham
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Nick Rogowski
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Richard and Peggy Daniels
Ferikes and Bleynat, P.L.L.C.
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Robert Oast, Jr.
Raymond A. Reiser
Brad and Margo Searson
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Allies of Justice

\$100 - \$299

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Walter and Mariza Adamson
Betsy Alexander
Cynthia Alleman
Becky and Ed Anderson
John and Monica Arnold
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Elizabeth and Arthur Cleary
Stanford Clontz
Linda Alfredson and Mark Cobb
Richard Concato
Congregation Beth Ha-Tephila
Joseph Connolly
Ruth A. Croak
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Dwayne Stutzman
Timothy Deering and
Jennie Deering
Derek and Elaine Dephouse
Sean and Beverly Devereux
Cheryl Deyton and
Monty Wooten
Jacob Ehrmann
Betsy Ewing
Paul and Gloria Falkner
Betsy and Rob Fedder
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David Hurand and
Dr. Martha Salyers
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Patsy Keverer
Lynn and Bob Kieffer
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Marilyn Lalor
Gil Lampner and Suzanne Henry
Lampton Family Foundation, Inc.
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In November of 1997, Pisgah Legal Services launched its first-ever capital campaign. The Justice For All Campaign successfully raised over \$5,000,000 and allowed PLS to purchase a larger office building at 62 Charlotte Street, Asheville, and finally have functional work space for staff and volunteers for the first time in many years. We would like to thank the following donors for giving us adequate space to double the number of low-income people we serve over the next 10-15 years.

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