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“Getting the eviction notice was a real hit to my self-esteem,” said Carrie, a Pisgah Legal client whose landlord evicted her after her ex-husband became violent at her new apartment. “It was the first place I ever had on my own with my kids,” she remembers. (Photo and name changed to protect client)

Struggling to Avoid an Unfair Eviction

LAST YEAR, PISGAH LEGAL SERVICES HELPED ALMOST 3,000 SENIORS, INDIVIDUALS, VETERANS AND FAMILIES WHO WERE ON THE VERGE OF BEING HOMELESSNESS.

The word *eviction* has a very straightforward definition: “The removal of a tenant from rental property by the landlord.” But circumstances surrounding an eviction are often anything but simple, and the effects of an eviction can send a person or family spiraling into poverty.

Pisgah Legal volunteers and attorneys work every day with people in Western North Carolina who struggle to avoid eviction, foreclosure and other housing crises. All of these clients faced evictions:

- Robert, a retired veteran whose complained to his landlord that sewage was backing up into his basement.
- Carrie, a domestic violence survivor and mom of three whose ex husband became violent when he dropped the kids off at her new apartment.
- A family of four who learned their rental house was being condemned by the City; they had only 30 minutes to pack and leave.

Join us at our annual Poverty Forum on September 28 at UNCA to find out more.

(Continued on page 2)



Michael Kientz photo

Matthew Desmond,
Pulitzer Prize
Winning Author
of *Evicted: Poverty*
and *Profit in the*
American City
headlines the
Poverty Forum on
September 28.

See page 2.



Pisgah Legal's 7th Annual Poverty Forum

Pisgah Legal Services, together with Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity, Homeward Bound, and Mountain Housing Opportunities, welcomes

Matthew Desmond, PhD

Professor of Sociology at Princeton and Pulitzer Prize Winning Author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*.

Thursday, September 28, 2017

The Kimmel Arena, UNCA • 5:30 pm Reception/ 7:00 pm Forum

Forum Tickets: \$15/person.

Due to a limited supply of forum+reception tickets (\$50/person), please contact Brent McKnight to inquire about availability.

Purchase tickets online at www.pisgahlegal.org, use the enclosed envelope, or call Brent McKnight: 210.3405.

Don't Miss "EVICTED: Housing Crisis in WNC"

Please join us on **September 28** for an evening with Matthew Desmond, the keynote speaker for Pisgah Legal's 7th Annual Poverty Forum.

A Focus on Housing

At this year's forum, Desmond and local housing leaders will discuss the urgent issues of eviction and decent, affordable housing in our mountains.

Desmond will also speak on Sept. 29 at a free **Affordable Housing Summit** for developers, planners, advocates and government leaders to discuss strategies needed to provide better housing in the region.

About Matthew Desmond

Matthew Desmond is a professor of sociology at Princeton University. His primary teaching and research interests include urban sociology, poverty, race and ethnicity, organizations and work, social theory, and ethnography.

His book, *Evicted*, won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction, among many other awards.

In 2015, he was awarded a MacArthur "Genius Grant" for revealing the impact of eviction on the lives of the urban poor and its role in perpetuating racial and economic inequality.

The Scope of the Problem in WNC

- The median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Asheville is \$1,180 a month, the highest in the state.
- \$15,080 = the annual salary for a full-time minimum-wage job.
- In 2015, 15.4 percent of the Asheville metro region population was living below the federal poverty threshold; that's \$25,257 for a family of four.
- Almost half the people in Buncombe County pay 30 percent or more of their income for housing.
- The average income of a Pisgah Legal client is \$11,719 per year.
- Vacancy rates for apartments in WNC have been as low as 1% in recent years.
- Some parts of WNC have a waitlist of five or more years for public or subsidized housing. In 2016, 1,187 families were on the waitlist in Buncombe County.

Studies show as many as 57 percent of homeless women in the U.S. report domestic violence as the immediate cause.

• In 2016, Pisgah Legal prevented homelessness and stabilized housing for 2,967 people in WNC.

We hope you will join us for this important community conversation about housing and poverty.

"Evicted is astonishing —a masterpiece of writing and research that fills a tremendous gap in our understanding of poverty."

—*Rebecca Skloot,*
Author of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

Pisgah Fights to Replace \$500k+

STATE CUTS CRITICAL LEGAL SERVICES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Pisgah Legal Services is experiencing extraordinary funding challenges.

This summer, Pisgah Legal Services lost \$535,000 in state funding that was previously designated to provide legal aid to people in need.

On July 1, the N.C. General Assembly eliminated more than \$1 million for legal aid funding across the state. To make matters worse, funds that once allowed us to assist people with mental health care, disability benefits and housing needs have also been lost due to state cuts.

With a loss of more than half a million dollars, we must do more to replace funds and preserve vital services. Otherwise, more than 2,800 local people could lose access to legal help in the coming year!

Our clients need us more than ever. We need your help.

What can you do?



1. Please support Pisgah Legal Services with a tax-deductible gift and consider increasing your support. Give online at www.pisgahlegal.org or use the enclosed envelope. For stock gifts or if you have other giving questions, please contact Director of Philanthropy Betsy Ellis at (828) 210-3444.



2. Help us build an endowment that will provide stable, dependable funding in the future. Contact Executive Director Jim Barrett at (828) 210-3408 to learn more.



3. Tell your friends and spread the word about the importance of Pisgah Legal's free legal aid to more than 15,000 local people each year.

Thank You for Your Support. Together we will continue these important services for our most vulnerable neighbors.



More than half a million dollars in funding to help low-income people desperate for legal aid has been eliminated. Thanks to Rep. Chuck McGrady and Sen. Chuck Edwards, PLS did retain state funds to provide legal aid to veterans like Dennis (above right), shown here with attorney Justin Sigmon.

Local Attorneys Honored



In May the 28th Judicial District Bar and Pisgah Legal Services recognized four local attorneys for exemplary pro bono service to help Pisgah Legal clients.

They are Johanna Fowler, (shown above with Pro Bono Committee Chair Garrett Artz); David Hillier, Ben Scales, and Zephyr Jost Sullivan.

PLS attorneys Bill Whalen and Jaclyn Kiger (below) were also honored in June for their outstanding work by the Bar.

Congratulations to all, and thank you for your exemplary work to help others!





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“What we need most is a housing program for the unlucky majority – the millions of poor families struggling... that promotes the values most of us support: security, fairness and equal opportunity.”

– Matthew Desmond

Your Gift Is Powerful

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMPASSION AND GENEROSITY!



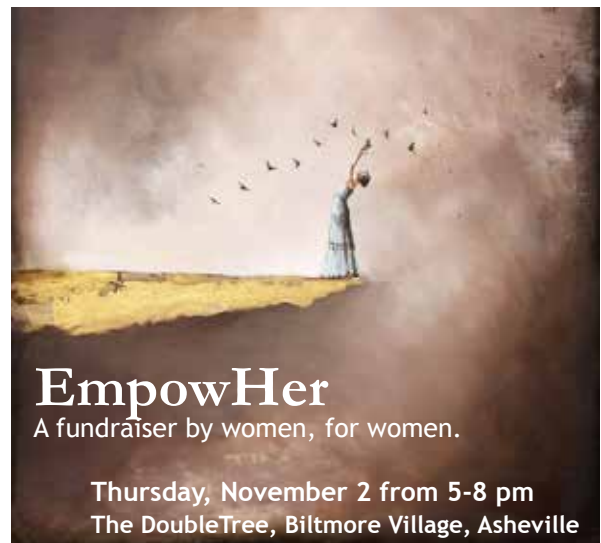
This summer Wicked Weed Brewing and the Guthy Family made a generous \$50,000 gift, especially wonderful news

in light of recent state cuts. We wish to thank them for their long-time support and this amazing donation.

More good news: Earlier this year we told you about the dramatic increase in requests for immigration services, a more than 250 percent increase in calls, and only one Pisgah Legal immigration attorney to serve 17 WNC counties. In response, your generous gifts made it possible to hire a second immigration attorney who is now working out of our Henderson County office.

Each gift, large or small, is greatly appreciated. In the words of one client, “I want you to know how fast you changed my life. I will always remember your help.”

Nov. 2nd: Please Save the Date



Did you know that 75% of Pisgah Legal Services clients are **women** struggling in poverty?

Please join us for a special night for women to come together and support the most vulnerable among us.

MORE DETAILS TO COME...