



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

FORWARD FOR JUSTICE

JUSTICE

was 2018's word of the year, an ideal that we at Pisgah Legal Services aspire to every day and every year, for people living in poverty in Western North Carolina.





Photo by Lynne Harty courtesy of The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina.

Gene Nichol, professor of law and guest speaker at Pisgah Legal's 40th Anniversary Celebration, said it best: **"We don't just mouth phrases like 'justice for all.' We mean to demand them, to live 'em out."**

Although we honored our 40-year milestone in 2018, our attention was focused on moving forward. In the next 40 years how can we best serve those who depend on Pisgah Legal to escape domestic violence, avoid homelessness, keep their children safe from abuse and secure the health care they desperately need?

If the past year is any indication of the future, we're off to a great start:

- Serving 16,800+ people in our mountains, more than ever before.
- Expanding our immigration services to 18 Western North Carolina (WNC) counties and providing comprehensive legal aid to eight counties, adding Mitchell and Yancey to our core group in 2019.
- Enrolling people in Affordable Care Act health insurance, thanks to funding from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, and sharing knowledge of this successful program with other organizations throughout North Carolina.

- Helping people who are facing homelessness by stationing staff and volunteer attorneys inside the Buncombe County Courthouse, right outside eviction court.

- Collaborating with local governments and agencies to bring resources to WNC, including a \$631,000 grant to improve low-income housing in Rutherford County.

- Embracing the contributions of our dedicated volunteers who gave more than 15,000 hours of their time and talent last year alone. That's the equivalent of nine full-time staff members.

Thank you for believing in this work. We hope you continue to stand with us as we move forward for people who need us most in Western North Carolina. Together, we can improve lives and make our mountain communities stronger.



James A. Barrett
Executive Director

Lee Anne Mangone
Board President

FORWARD

FOR FAMILIES...

"I feel like I can breathe. I finally have control over my life."

Marcy* was leaving home to take her kids to school early one morning when her estranged ex, high on meth, jumped onto the hood of her car, forcing her to stop. He got in and demanded she drive him around for hours. Marcy finally managed to escape and contact Pisgah Legal Services.

After 12 years and three kids, Marcy could no longer endure his abuse, threats and controlling behavior, behavior worsened by drug abuse. She had recently left him, but he wasn't taking "no" for an answer.

Pisgah Legal Attorney James Gorsuch secured a protective order and full custody of the children for Marcy, ensuring their future safety.

*Name changed at client's request.



Last year more than 6,400 people, primarily women and children, turned to Pisgah Legal for help escaping domestic violence.



AND OUR MOST VULNERABLE NEIGHBORS

“It wasn’t just the legal help – it was the caring and concern she had for me, from the heart.”

When Sonja's grandson was killed in a car accident, she and her daughter needed each other more than ever. Plus, Sonja's knees were causing her so much pain that she had trouble caring for herself. Sonja's landlord allowed her daughter to move in with her for six weeks; after that she stayed no more than three nights per month with her mother, as stated in the lease.

But Sonja's landlord still served her with a lease termination and notice to vacate. Sonja contacted Pisgah Legal. Attorney Nikki Mitchell stopped the action and secured the medical forms to prove Sonja needed the help of a live-in aide, which she designated to be her daughter.

Just as things were improving, Nikki and Sonja discovered the landlord had been blocking Sonja's rent payments; Sonja owed more than \$800 in back rent. The landlord demanded the money, issuing another threat to end her lease if payment wasn't made immediately.

Nikki and Sonja (shown left) contacted nonprofits that generously paid the back rent. Soon after, Sonja underwent knee surgery. Relieved now that she is no longer on the verge of losing her home, Sonja calls Nikki “one of God’s angels.”

Pisgah Legal Services is 93 percent successful in representing clients facing eviction and producing positive outcomes in these cases.

FORWARD

FOR BETTER HEALTH



Pisgah Legal secured more than \$2.5 million last year in Medicaid and Medicare benefits, payable to WNC medical providers.

“It’s hard for your body to heal when you are constantly cold.”

Charles had been homeless for five years, staying with friends and sleeping in his car.

Complications from a chronic condition resulted in the removal of Charles’ toes on his left foot. His doctor at Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) told Charles his wounds would not heal unless he found stable housing that allowed him rest and warmth. Charles’ doctor connected him to Pisgah Legal Attorney Anne Salter who works out of MAHEC.

Through a partnership between Pisgah Legal and MAHEC, Pisgah Legal attorneys work closely with patients to improve health by increasing access to housing, health care, benefits and helping survivors escape domestic abuse. Lawyers can be powerful allies in addressing these “social determinants of health,” or conditions in everyday lives that impact overall health.

Within days, Anne was working with Charles (both shown left) to expedite his application for housing. Charles is now out of the cold and living in his new apartment. He is recovering from recent surgery, and he and his doctor are pleased with his improving health.

Opioid overdoses and deaths continue to rise in North Carolina. Here in WNC, after a seven-year battle with drugs and alcohol, Leslie (shown far right) overdosed on fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 100 times stronger than morphine. She was taken to Mission Hospital.

Leslie was left with brain damage from the overdose. She was in the hospital for months, but no longer needed acute care. Leslie's mother, Beth (above left), hoped to move her to a residential brain rehabilitation facility, but Leslie's insurance company refused to pay.

Mission referred the family to Pisgah Legal Services where Attorney Alicia Merrill secured Leslie's disability benefits in nine days – a process that usually takes months or even years – and also got Leslie covered by Medicaid.

Beth says the rehabilitation facilities wouldn't even speak to her until they knew Leslie had coverage. "Once we had that referral to Pisgah Legal, I thought, 'Lord God, now we have hope,'" says Beth. "Pisgah Legal coordinated all the paperwork and pieces of the puzzle."

Today Leslie is making progress at the new facility, and she and Beth are both hopeful that she will continue to improve.



Josh worked as a window cleaner until he fell off a 30-foot ladder, shattering his vertebrae and damaging his spinal cord. When he began receiving disability income, Josh lost Medicaid coverage and had to purchase his own health insurance.

Pisgah Legal Services helped Josh sign up for Affordable Care Act health insurance that costs only \$5/month. Josh says, "I don't know what I would do without it."

Pisgah Legal Services works in medical-legal partnerships with:



*Thank you
for your support!*

FORWARD

FOR A BETTER LIFE



Generous donors issued a \$40,000 challenge in 2018 to raise funds for Pisgah Legal to assist immigrants in crisis. We are happy to report that the challenge was met thanks to donations from caring individuals, churches, foundations and businesses. Thank you!

“Sometimes it feels like a dream.”

Sofia* is a mom and an immigrant who is working hard to make a better life for her family.

Sofia first came to the U.S. when her sons were 12 and 8 years old. Leaving them with her mother in Guatemala was heartbreaking, but there she only earned enough money to keep them from starving. Working in America, she could earn more and send money home to her sons.

Once in the U.S., Sofia began working at a convenience store. One night, while she worked, the store was robbed. Her cooperation with the police investigation gave Sofia a path to citizenship.

After five years of working her immigration case, at first in private practice then as a Pisgah Legal Services Attorney, Shoshana Fried successfully secured Sofia's U-VISA in 2018 and brought Sofia's sons to the United States as well.

In May of 2018, the boys were reunited with their mother after seven long years apart. They also met their little sister for the first time. Sofia said it was the best Mother's Day present she ever received. "I never imagined my life could be like this."

**Name changed at client's request.*

FORWARD

FOR A STRONGER COMMUNITY



Last year, Pisgah Legal assisted immigrants across WNC by helping young people renew protections under DACA, securing legal status for low-income immigrants and holding clinics for parents in need of legal documents to ensure the care of their children should they be separated.



PLS Attorneys are now working inside the Buncombe County Courthouse to assist people who are on the verge of homelessness. **Our staff and volunteer attorneys are stationed just outside the eviction courtroom providing legal help.** Above, PLS Attorney Thomas Lodwick (right) has kept David and his family from being evicted for more than a year. "All I want is to keep a roof over my grandbabies' heads," says David.



Pisgah Legal's **Community Economic Development Project** increases economic and housing security. In 2018, we helped secure a \$631,000 grant to provide housing repairs for low-income homeowners in Rutherford County, partnered with Green Opportunities (left) to develop a for-profit funding arm and helped establish a Community Land Trust in Buncombe County to increase the supply of affordable housing.

LEGAL AID PROGRAMS

PROVIDED BY PISGAH LEGAL SERVICES



Children's Law Project Protects children from abuse, homelessness and other adverse effects of poverty.

Consumer Law Project Defends consumer rights, addresses fraud and stops predatory lending practices by protecting clients' limited income and resources from unfair collection.



Health Justice & Disability Assistance Project Helps people access medical care and subsistence income.

Elder Law Project Helps seniors live independently in their homes for as long as possible. Protects seniors from financial or physical abuse or harassment. Assists with end-of-life planning.



Homelessness Prevention Project Prevents families and individuals from losing their homes to eviction or foreclosure and improves existing housing conditions.

Justice for All Project Enables eligible immigrants to work legally and secure legal status. Provides legal documents to protect children and assets in case of family separation.



Mountain Violence Prevention Project Helps survivors of domestic violence take legal action to escape abuse and rebuild their lives and financial stability.

Veterans Law Project Assists military veterans to secure stable housing, escape domestic violence, obtain disability income and access quality health care and health insurance.

Community Economic Development Provides advocacy and legal support to promote the development of affordable housing and remove barriers to economic opportunity.

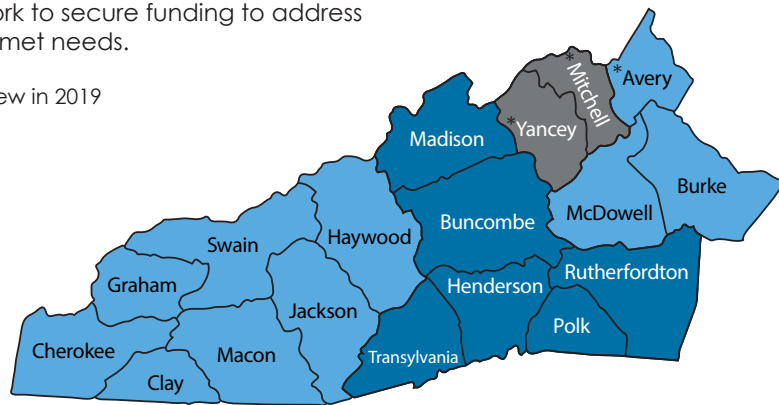
Expunction Project Helps clear criminal records for minor offenses and remove barriers to employment, housing, education, and benefits.

Pisgah Legal Services' Impact on Mountain Communities

Pisgah Legal Services provides comprehensive, free, civil legal aid in eight counties: Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, *Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania and *Yancey.

We provide specialized free legal help in an additional 10 WNC counties and work to secure funding to address unmet needs.

*New in 2019



16,800+

**PEOPLE ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS
WERE SERVED BY PISGAH LEGAL IN 2018**

\$18.2 MILLION

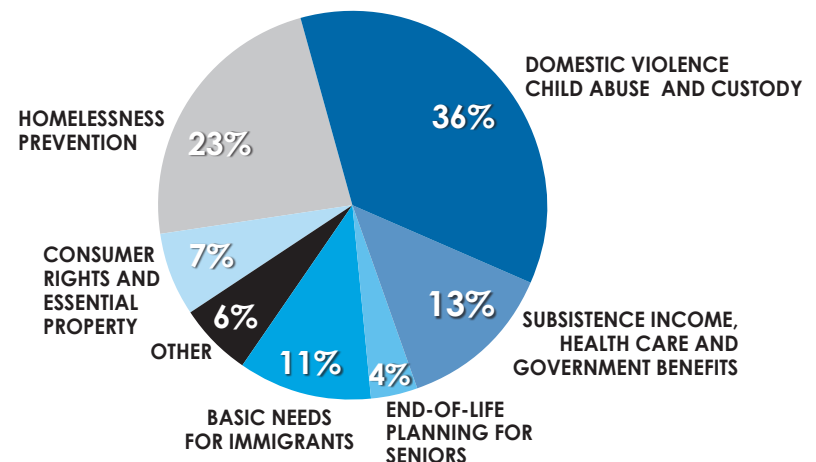
SECURED IN QUANTIFIABLE BENEFITS TO OUR CLIENTS

Pisgah Legal Services secured \$18,284,224 in quantifiable benefits for our clients in 2018 with a budget of \$4.4 million, including:

- Home equity saved from foreclosure
- Child support for victims of domestic violence
- Medicaid benefits payable to local medical providers
- Subsistence income for individuals with disabilities
- Tax credits for consumers buying insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace

***That's more than a 4 to 1 return
on your investment in Pisgah Legal Services!***

PLS CASES CLOSED IN 2018 (PERCENTAGES BY ISSUE AREA)



VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

HELP OUR CLIENTS MOVE FORWARD



Last year, hundreds of volunteer attorneys contributed 3,993 hours of pro bono service to Pisgah Legal clients. These services are valued at \$998,250. Thank you for using your knowledge of the law to help others!

One of Pisgah Legal's top priorities is to provide legal help to keep local families housed: by preventing evictions, preserving housing assistance and improving housing conditions.

In 2018, Pisgah Legal launched a "Housing Heroes" campaign to recruit volunteer attorneys to help tenants facing housing crises. Twenty-nine attorneys stood up for justice on this issue and helped hundreds of low-income people with housing problems.

We are so grateful to all of our generous volunteer attorneys. In addition to preventing homelessness, volunteers stop domestic violence and child abuse, secure health care, and protect consumers from fraud and harassment.

Pictured here (clockwise from top left) are Housing Heroes: Bo Carpenter, Dale Curriden, Vann Vogel, Esther Manheimer, Johanna Fowler, Coalter Lathrop and Elizabeth Newman.

2018 MAVL AND EAGLE ATTORNEYS

MAVL = Mountain Area Volunteer Lawyers and EAGLE = Emeritus Attorneys Giving Legal Expertise

Pro Bono All Stars 10 or more hours in cases closed

Steve Agan
Cynthia Alleman
Chad Anderson
Andrew Atherton
Frederick Barbour
Shannan Barclay
Tuorto
Leah Broker
Jean Brooks
Patrick Bryan
April Burt
Bo Carpenter
Steve Carruthers
William Christy
Catherine Claussen
Bob Clifford
Ryan Coffield
Page C. Collie
Sarah Corley
Walton R. Davis, III
Emily Dezio
Rob Dimitrijevič
Erin Dunnuck
Joanne Dykes
Cindy Eller
James Ellis
Nicki Engel
Holly Fairbairn
Katherine Fisher
Johanna Fowler
Kerry Friedman
John Frue
David C. Gantt
Victor Garlock
Jason Gast
Ben Gilbert
Alex Gomes
Natalie Gray
Anna Hamrick
David Hillier
Cynthia Holman
Kenny Hunt
Rodney D. Kight
Gerald Kirksey
Taji Kommineni

Rich Kucharski
Mark Kurdys
Robert Lamb
Beth Lane
Coalter Lathrop
Brian Lawler
Jean Lee
Meredith Lenell
Harris Livingstain
Lance Martin
Lucy Massagee
Sarah Massagee
Betsey Matthews
Mariah McKinney
Jennifer Moore
John Noor
Julie Northup
Andrew Parker
Will Parz
Lois Penn
Benson Pitts
Robert Pitts
Eleanor Powers
Ana Prendergast
Sonya Rikhye
Adrienne Roberson
Matthew Roberson
Ben Scales
Tom Siekman
James A. Siemens
Jamie Stokes
Cynthia Strom
Jesse Swords
Allan Tarleton
Douglas Tate
Scott Taylor
Vann Vogel
Adam Vorhis
Eunice Ward
Bryant Webster

Volunteers for Justice Up to 9 hours in cases closed

Ile Adamora
Sharon Alexander
Leticia Allen
Matthew Allen
Garrett Artz
Jannice Ashley
Lora Baker
Wm. Michael Begley
Jenna Blackwell
Joseph Bowman
Jenny Boyer
Annika Brock
Kim Brown
Shelley Brown
Hannah Camenzind
Eugene Carr, III
David Carter
Vincent Childress, Jr.
Eva Clement
Eric Contre
Wendy Craig
Rebecca Crandall
Mae Creadick
John Crotts
Dale Curriden
Walter Daniels
Rebecca Darchuk
Katherine Dare
Jerome Davidow
Jane Dearwester
John Decker
Robert Deutsch
Gary Dodd
Elleveve Donahue
Dustin Dow
Paul Erickson
Woody Farmer
Perry W. Fisher
Allison Garren
Carol Goins
George Goosmann, IV
Tikkun Gottschalk
Mike Greer
Judi Hafner

Sam Harben
Edward Harrelson
Larry Harris
Joshua Harrold
Edward Hay, Jr.
Barbara Henry
Burcu Hensley
Ann-Patton Hornthal
Margie Huggins
Robin Jacobs
Martin Jarrard
James W. Johnson
Robert Kaplan
BJ Kilgore
Melody King
Susan Russo Klein
Caroline Knox
Scott Lamb
Sheila Lambert
Kathy LaMotte
Katherine Langley
Jessica Leaven
Tod Leaven
Delia Ledesma
Gene Leicht
Thom Leslie
Doris Loomis
Richard Maita
Esther Manheimer
Blake Marcus
James Marshall
Mark Martin
B.B. Massagee, III
Chris Matthews
Patrick McCroskey
Michael McEnery
Barrett McFatter
Peter McGuire
Dustin McIntee
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James Minick
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Rhonda Moorefield
Joanne Badr Morgan
Tom Morris
Lee Mulligan
Elizabeth Newman
Heather Newton

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Amita Peltz
Jason Peltz
Saul Perla
Chris Reed
Senta Rhodes
John Robenalt
Robert Robinson
Sabrina Rockoff
Kathleen Rodberg
Ellen Rose
Marc Rudow
Ashley L. Saville-Amtower
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Glen Shults
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Zeb Smathers
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Theresa Weber
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Susan Wilson
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Terry Young
Kenneth Youngblood

We do our best to keep accurate records. If you have a correction to this list, please contact Katie Russell Miller: katiem@pisgahlegal.org.



USING RETIREMENT TO HELP OTHER VETERANS

Will Parz, an Iraq War veteran, is also a Pisgah Legal “EAGLE,” one of 25 retired attorneys who are helping PLS clients while working under the supervision of staff attorneys.

Will has been instrumental in allowing Pisgah Legal to help more veterans. He serves as the volunteer coordinator for the Veterans Law Project.

THANK YOU

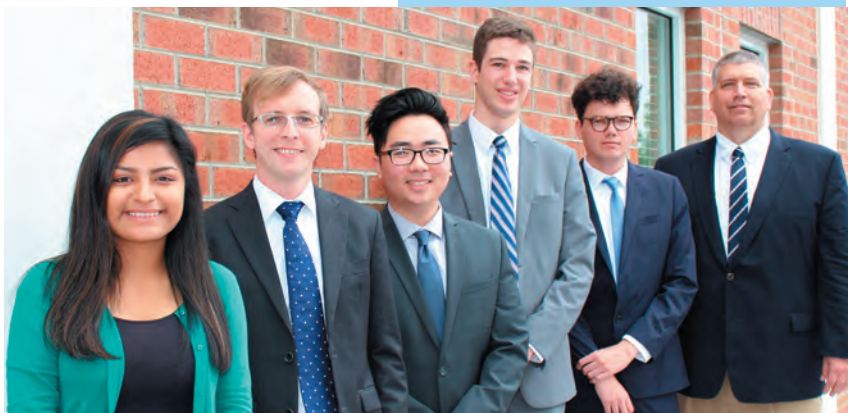
VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING DEDICATION



15,269

**VOLUNTEER HOURS
CONTRIBUTED
TO PLS LAST YEAR.**

**THAT'S THE EQUIVALENT OF NINE FULL-TIME
STAFF MEMBERS.**



2018 Summer Intern and Law Clerks: (L-R) Intern Betsy Chavez (UNC-Pembroke); Law Clerks: Josh Renz (UNC School of Law), Jay Kim (UNC School of Law), Chris Eddy (UNC School of Law), Phillip Perko (UNC School of Law) and Phillip Carwane (Washington and Lee School of Law).

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Delia Pinto
Marian Plaut
Tom Plaut
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Bonnie Rockwood
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Maria Roloff
Martha Romero
Brian Sanders
Sabrina Sandoval
Flor Sanitago
Bonny Schley
Norwood Schoenke
Russell Schuler
Lowell Smith
Georgia Grace Snead
Mariela Solano
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Valerie Welbourn
Alice Weldon
Keith Wright

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Terry Call
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Jeff Dektor
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Marianne Mooney
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Kathy Quinlan
Robyn Sadle
Ali Schuetze
Pat Smith
Tom Snow
Jane Vasica
Tracey Whitehouse
Katie Winchell
Martha Zeigler



Improving Domestic Violence Services in WNC

Pisgah Legal Services has attorneys working at three Family Justice Centers in Western North Carolina that coordinate and consolidate services for domestic violence survivors. (L-R): Parris Booker (Buncombe); James Gorsuch (Henderson); Casey Steen (Transylvania); Managing Attorney Julia Horrocks oversees this work.

PISGAH LEGAL ATTORNEYS AND STAFF*

Noele Aabye
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Kristianna Bartow
Cindy Benitez
David Blehar
Parris Booker
Rhonda Brown
Keverlee Burchett
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Shannon Cornelius
Flor Corral
Christine Culbreth
Sammy Cunningham
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Molly Maynard
Robin Merrell
Alicia Merrill
Nikki Mitchell
Tom Newton
Jacob Oakes
Madeline McKeller Offen

Sam Peck
Sara Player
Nelson Reyes
Carol Rogers
Katie Russell Miller
Anne Salter
Dylan Simosko
Parker Smith
Michelle Spiegel
Casey Steen
Andrew Stevenson
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Valerie True
Kathy Walker
Jenna Walley
Bill Whalen
Evie Sandlin White
Tracey Whitehouse
Ally Donlan Wilson
Leah Yetter

*as of March 2019



Managing Attorney Robin Merrell (R) is the new chair of the NC Housing Coalition, championing statewide policies that increase safe, affordable housing.



Managing Attorney Jaclyn Kiger (R) continues to serve as a leading advocate for the Affordable Care Act and the need for health care.

Photo by Jesse Kitt



At our 40th Anniversary Celebration in April 2018, Pisgah Legal's Executive Director Jim Barrett (above) was presented with The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, the governor's highest civilian honor. The honor is given to individuals with a proven record of extraordinary service to the state.

Barrett first came to Pisgah Legal Services in 1983 as part of a two-year poverty law fellowship. After practicing housing and community development law for 10 years, he became the executive director. Under his leadership, Pisgah Legal has grown dramatically, from helping 2,080 people in 1993 to more than 16,800 people in 2018.

2018 FINANCIAL REPORT

Grants of \$10,000 or more

Anonymous Foundations (2)
 Beattie Foundation
 The Chaddick Foundation
 Charles M. and Mary D. Grant Foundation
 Community Foundation of Henderson County
 The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina
 - Southwestern Child Development Commission
 - Women for Women
 Fanny Landwirth Foundation
 Hot Springs Health Program, Inc.
 Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
 Mission Health Community Investment
 Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC)
 N.C. Bar Foundation
 North Carolina Synod of the ELCA
 RHA Health Services, Inc.
 RHI Legacy Foundation, Inc.
 Samuel L. Phillips Family Foundation
 Sisters of Mercy of N.C. Foundation
 Walnut Cove Members Association
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 William Randolph Hearst Foundation
 Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

IOLTA

N.C. Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts

United Way

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

Competitive Federal Sources

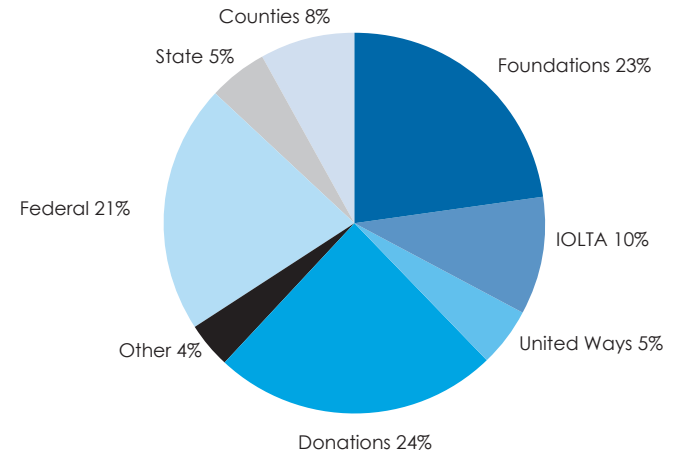
Community Development Block Grant
 - City of Asheville
 Family Violence Prevention and Services
 - N.C. Council for Women
 Home and Community Care Block Grants
 U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
 - Legal Aid of N.C.
 Victims of Crime Act
 - N.C. Governor's Crime Commission
 - Family Justice Center (Buncombe)
 - Safelight (Henderson)
 Violence Against Women Act
 - Mediation Center

Local and State Governments

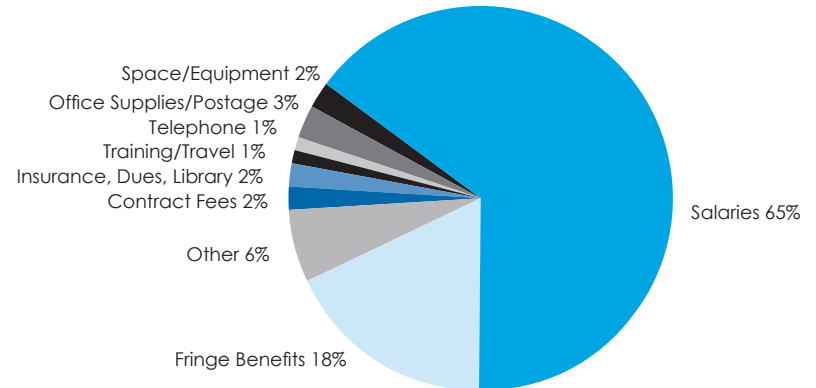
Buncombe County
 City of Asheville
 City of Hendersonville
 Henderson County
 Madison County
 Rutherford County
 Transylvania County
 State of North Carolina

PLS also leveraged \$998,250 in pro bono legal services in cases closed in 2018.

Revenue: \$5,225,899



Expenses: \$4,493,137



These numbers are based on information available as of March 3, 2019. A few items, such as depreciation and contributions to the PLS Endowment, are not included. Most excess revenue over expenses in 2018 is restricted for expenses in 2019. 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.

THANK YOU

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

2018 DONORS

Champions for Justice \$10,000 or more

Anonymous (8)
Anchor QEA
Asheville Radio Group
AVL Technologies
Beattie Foundation
Central United Methodist
Church of Asheville
Chaddick Foundation
Church of the Good
Shepherd
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The Justice for Women Challenge

was issued by **Arnold and Bernice Green, The Oliver Family, Susan and Charlie Shanor and Jerry Sternberg**, encouraging the community to come together and raise \$150,000 to help women in need in Western North Carolina. Thank you for your leadership and generosity and to each and every person who made a gift. We exceeded our goal thanks to you!

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**Thanks to you, in 2018 Pisgah Legal
served more than 16,800 people,
more than ever before!**

CARING PEOPLE, GREAT EVENTS SUPPORT PISGAH LEGAL YEAR ROUND



January: Local chefs raise funds for PLS' immigration work by serving up their tastiest dishes at "Our Global Table."



April: UNC School of Law Professor Gene Nichols and Sen. Terry Van Duyn speak at the 40th Anniversary Celebration.



May: Coffee does a lot more than wake folks up at Java for Justice thanks to Asheville Radio Group and Paramount KIA.



September: Talented female chefs treat Pisgah Legal donors to a delicious dinner at Smoky Park Supper Club.



October: Princeton Sociologist and Author Kathy Edin (far left) headlines the PLS Annual Poverty Forum.



October: Shelley Brown, Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer and Jerry Sternberg enjoy the reception before the Forum.

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and former staffer and avid cyclist Tony Hauser. Each year the environmental consulting firm encourages its employees to fundraise for their favorite local nonprofit. In 2018, Tony embarked on a near 300-mile bike ride from Asheville to Charleston and completed the ride in less than 24 hours!

Pledges based on every mile Tony biked raised more than \$10,000; then Anchor QEA matched those gifts, bringing the total contribution to more than \$21,000!

Thanks for going the extra mile(s!) to help your neighbors in Western North Carolina!



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"It's Soup Day!" That's the happy cry that rings in the halls of Pisgah Legal's Asheville office on the third Wednesday of each month when volunteers from **Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church** bring homemade soups, breads and desserts, much to the staff's delight. It's their way of providing extra support for the work Pisgah Legal does, especially our work with immigrants. Thank you to every kind soul that makes our Wednesdays special!

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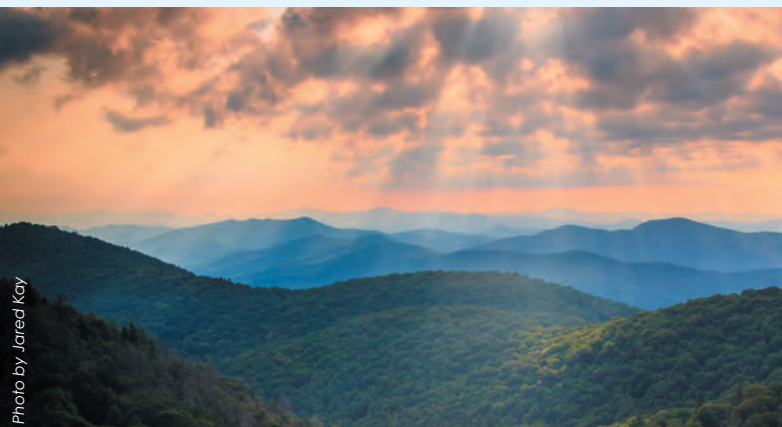
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