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Pisgah Legal Children's Law Attorney Molly Maynard remembers, "One family discovered their rental house had bacteria contaminating its well water. The water caused a series of stomach infections that resulted in their child missing so much school that he was going to fail the grade. In addition to his health issues, what does that then do to a child: to get held back, lose all your friends, and get teased by other kids for being 'stupid'? Not having your basic needs met as a child impacts everything: your social life, academic performance, your short- and long-term health. It's all related."

Uncovering What the Eyes Don't See

LOCAL CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN POVERTY STRUGGLE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT THEIR HEALTH NOW AND FOR YEARS TO COME

In any given classroom, some children may *appear* less willing to learn than their classmates, but looks can be deceiving.

A child who dozes off at his desk during the day might be exhausted because he and his parents are homeless and sleeping in the family minivan at night. A kid who cannot focus on her algebra lesson may be distracted because she's not getting enough to eat. And could that surly teenager who defies authority at school also be the same

person who is bravely defending his mother from an abuser at home?

Last year Pisgah Legal Services helped more than 7,000 children living in difficult, sometimes unimaginable situations that impact their everyday lives and health. At this year's Justice Forum on Oct. 7, we will focus on why inequalities in health exist, the factors or "social determinants" at play, and how our children's lives and futures are at stake.



Don't miss the
11th Annual Justice
Forum **October 7**
with Dr. Mona
Hanna-Attisha,
the caring and tough
pediatrician who
exposed the Flint
water crisis and
fought for change.

Details inside!

Funding Cuts Threaten Programs that Stop Abuse

LOCAL VICTIMS WILL PAY THE PRICE UNLESS SUBSTANTIAL FUNDING CAN BE REPLACED

Dear Friends,

This summer we received the devastating news that Pisgah Legal Services is losing \$1.2 million in grant support over the next two years for our legal work to stop domestic violence, child abuse and sex trafficking.



This was our largest abuse prevention grant, enabling us to serve more than 3,500 adults and children per year.

The funding was earmarked to serve clients in the rural areas of 17 WNC counties, with services prioritized for people of color, immigrants, and those who live in our more remote areas. As a retired attorney and former Pisgah Legal staff attorney, I've seen the first-hand how life-changing these programs are for local families.

Sadly, we aren't the only nonprofit to face major funding cuts from the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funds; it's happening across our region, state and nation. The impact on our mountain communities is severe.

A bipartisan solution was recently reached and signed into law, but **it will still take several years before these funds will be available again.**

What Can Be Done?

Replacement funding is critically needed now from local governments, individuals, faith communities, and foundations to mitigate this loss and prevent a dire lack of services for victims. American Rescue Plan Act funds could be used to fill these gaps. We implore you to contact state and local officials today and urge them to provide this replacement funding.

How Does Your Gift Change the Lives of Local People?

Hear from "Sarah," a Pisgah Legal client and domestic violence survivor, in her own words:

"I had never been through anything like this before. I didn't know what was going to happen next. I didn't know what I was supposed to do. I was worried about my safety, my children's safety. I was worried about what he was going to do, how he was going to react to my leaving, to my filing a restraining order, to my filing charges.

Every decision I had to make was so overwhelming because everything was happening so fast. This is where Pisgah Legal Services came in. My attorney walked me through each step of the process, breaking everything down into understandable, manageable pieces. I have no idea how I would have made it through without the free legal aid that Pisgah Legal Services provides.

Thanks to Pisgah Legal Services, and our local domestic violence agency, I have been given the opportunity to start over, to create a better life for myself and my children moving forward."

Please make a donation online today at pisgahlegal.org/give, mail a check using the enclosed envelope, or contact Director of Development Ally Wilson at (828) 210-3444.

We will not abandon those who need us most, and we need your help today. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Shelley Brown, PLS Board President



11TH ANNUAL
JUSTICE FORUM

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha

PEDIATRICIAN • SCIENTIST • ACTIVIST • AUTHOR

Thursday,
October 7,
2021

Get Your Ticket Today!

ATTEND ONLINE OR AT AN IN-PERSON WATCH PARTY

Please join us for the Oct. 7 Justice Forum to hear Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha share her fascinating first-hand account of exposing the Flint water crisis. She will also discuss the effects of health, environment and social disparities: how low-income communities are disproportionately affected, and what we can do to change it.

“Dr. Mona” was named one of Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in the World and recognized as one of USA Today’s Women of the Century for her role in uncovering the water crisis and leading recovery efforts. She has testified three times before the U.S. Congress.

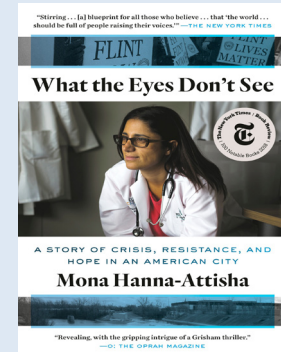
Thanks to our generous sponsors, the online Justice Forum is free to attend and begins at 7:00pm via Zoom.

An outdoor, in-person Reception and Forum Watch Party will also be held starting at 5:30pm at Rabbit Rabbit in downtown Asheville. Tickets for this event are \$50/person. **Registration for both the online and in-person event is required. Visit pisgahlegal.org/JusticeForum, or contact Michelle at (828) 210-3773. Opportunities to sponsor the event are also still available. Call Ben at 210-3405.**

Dr. Mona received her bachelor’s degree and a Master’s of Public Health from the University of Michigan. She completed her medical degree from Michigan State University College of Human Medicine and her residency at Children’s Hospital of Michigan. She is currently a Charles Stewart Mott Endowed Professor of Public Health and an associate professor of pediatrics and human development at MSU.

A New York Times Notable Book

Sept. 23, 7:00pm: Malaprop’s
Online Book Discussion



“Revealing, with the gripping intrigue of a Grisham thriller.”

— O: The Oprah Magazine

“It is one thing to point out a problem. It is another thing altogether to step up and work to fix it. Mona Hanna-Attisha is a true American hero.”
— Erin Brockovich



PLS Attorney David Bartholomew is interviewed by WLOS about evictions.

Eviction Moratorium Ends

PISGAH LEGAL WORKS TO KEEP LOCAL PEOPLE HOUSED

As this newsletter went to press, the Supreme Court ruled that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had exceeded its authority, thus ending the eviction moratorium. Evictions for non-payment of rent due to COVID-19 can go forward.

Pisgah Legal Executive Director Jim Barrett says, “We have known for months that PLS and other relief programs would be tested when the moratorium ended, and we have prepared for this as much as possible.” **If you are at risk of eviction, apply for help at pisgahlegal.org or call (828) 253-0406.**

Medicaid has Changed in NC

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, CHANGE PLANS BY SEPT. 30

This year, most people in NC who receive Medicaid began getting health services in a new way, referred to as “Managed Care.” Coverage under these new health plans began July 1, and beneficiaries have until September 30 to change their plans for any reason. Confused? A new program can help!

The NC Medicaid Ombudsman is your advocate for quality care.

This program helps North Carolina Medicaid and NC Health Choice beneficiaries understand the changes happening to Medicaid. The Ombudsman provides free, confidential support and education about the rights and responsibilities people have under NC Medicaid. The Ombudsman can help if people with Medicaid have trouble getting access to health care, and connect people to resources like social services, housing resources, food assistance, legal aid, and other programs.

Learn more, or get help at ncmedicaidombudsman.org or call 877-201-3750.

The NC Medicaid Ombudsman is operated by Legal Aid of North Carolina in partnership with the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy and Pisgah Legal Services.

Nov. 1 ACA Open Enrollment Begins

IF YOU NEED HEALTH INSURANCE, WE CAN HELP



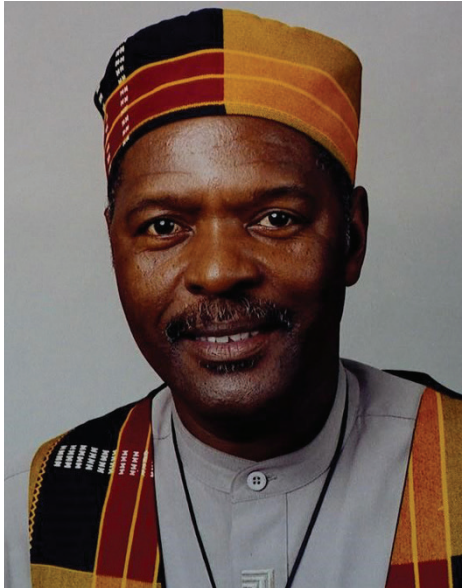
More people than ever before qualify for ACA health insurance. Pisgah Legal Services, along with our enrollment partners in the WNC Assisters Group, is helping local folks get quality health insurance with never-before-seen savings. In fact, more than two million Americans already signed up during 2021's special enrollment period earlier this year. On average, **40 percent of North Carolina consumers secured plans for \$10 or less/month** thanks to new savings from the American Rescue Plan.

Shannon Cornelius, Pisgah Legal's Health Justice Program Director, says, “Folks can still take advantage of these savings during regular Open Enrollment **Nov. 1 – Dec. 15** and secure the coverage they need for the coming year. As always, our help is free and unbiased.”

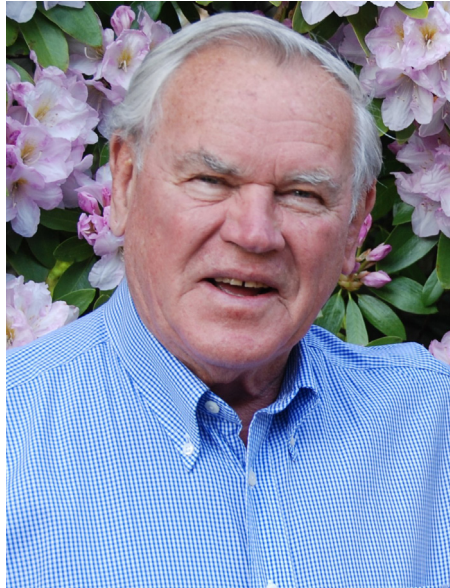
Make an appointment at pisgahlegal.org/aca or call (828) 210-3404.

In Memoriam

TWO COMMUNITY LEADERS LEAVE LASTING LEGACIES



Elder John R. Hayes
1942 – 2021



Charles D. Owen, Jr.
1935 – 2021

In June, Pisgah Legal lost two friends and members of our community who contributed in substantial and extraordinary ways.

Racial justice leader **Elder John Hayes** dedicated his life to raising awareness about disparities affecting Black and low-income people in Asheville. He worked with community members and elected officials for change, justice and equity. A former president of the local NAACP chapter and champion of the Hillcrest community, Hayes founded the Empowerment Resource Center, including WRES 100.7 FM radio, where he would often interview Pisgah Legal staff about programs that could benefit his listeners. He was a friend and mentor to countless members of our community.

Charles D. Owen, Jr. was a generous philanthropist and a long-time supporter of Pisgah Legal Services and many other local charitable organizations. He began his textile career in 1956 working at his family blanket business, Beacon Manufacturing Company. He founded Owen Manufacturing in 1971 which became the largest single unit blanket producer in the world. Combined, the two companies provided jobs to 10,000 families in the Swannanoa Valley. His son, Charlie, says his dad always had a desire to help those who were the most underserved in our community, especially single mothers and children.

To both of their families, we wish to express our sincere condolences and gratitude. Their many contributions to the betterment of our community will not be forgotten.

Executive Director Honored



The North Carolina Justice Center, one of the state's preeminent voices for economic and social justice, has selected Pisgah Legal Services Executive Director Jim Barrett as the recipient of their **2021 Lifetime Champion of Justice Award**.

Jim Barrett started his legal career as a community lawyer and Reginald Heber Smith Fellow at Pisgah Legal Services in Asheville in 1983. He focused on housing and community development law and was one of 15 staffers.

Under Jim's leadership over the last 28 years as Executive Director, Pisgah Legal Services has moved from a civil legal aid program that was shrinking due to federal government funding cuts to a program that has grown to almost 100 staff serving 20,000 people in WNC annually through multiple locations in the mountains.

Jim says he is proud to work with PLS' dedicated staff, 300 volunteer attorneys and dozens of community volunteers, other nonprofit organizations, and local people who give generously as we all work together to address the unmet need for free civil legal services in our mountains and help folks with low-incomes improve their lives.



PISGAH
LEGAL SERVICES

Standing for Justice and Dignity since 1978.

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Toll Free 800.489.6144

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“Challenging injustice means standing up for the weak, the vulnerable, the abused, and the forgotten – be it in health, employment, education, or the environment.”

– Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha

Lifting Children Out of Poverty

The newly expanded federal Child Tax Credit is a once-in-a-generation initiative that can be life-changing for children and families living in poverty across our mountains. Families may qualify for up to \$300 per child/month from July – Dec.



Those who filed 2020 taxes should be receiving monthly payments. For those who didn't file taxes, an IRS tool is available online at:

irs.gov/credits-deductions/child-tax-credit-non-filer-sign-up-tool.

Contact Pisgah Legal for more information.

Run for Justice 2021

INAUGURAL EVENT A RUNAWAY SUCCESS



A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who laced up their sneakers for our very first Run for Justice 5K. Folks across Western North Carolina – and as far away as San Francisco and the United Kingdom! – got moving for this virtual run/walk. Participants tracked their distance and traveled at the time and route of their choice from May 29 to June 12.

Together, you and generous sponsors raised more than \$17,000 for Pisgah Legal Services to provide caring legal advocates to those who need us most. Congratulations, thank you, and well done!

Because Justice is for Everyone, Not Just Those Who Can Afford It.