SPRING 2021

SPEAKING OF JUSTICE

NEWS FROM THE FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION

Volume 13 Issue no. 2

CABA Pro Bono wins 2021 Doyle Children's Advocacy Award



With help from Cuban American Bar Association (CABA) Pro Bono Legal Services, Roberto became a U.S. citizen after fleeing Guatemala, where his father had abused him for many years.

After the initial shock of being diagnosed with a brain tumor subsided, Miami teen Roberto was relieved that his CABA Pro Bono Legal Services lawyers had invested so much time preparing him for adulthood.

Roberto had fled Guatemala at age 16 after years of abuse at the hands of his father. In Miami, his CABA lawyers helped him file a Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) Visa. The SIJ Visa protected him in juvenile court as a child that had been abused, abandoned or neglected by a parent.

Roberto became a Legal Permanent Resident, and CABA staff helped him create a savings account, learn to pay taxes, purchase health insurance and attend night classes at Miami Dade College to learn English.

Roberto needed emergency surgery to remove his tumor, but fortunately, he had insurance. And, he had saved enough money to spend six months recovering.

Using funding from The Florida Bar Foundation's Children's Legal Services grant program, CABA helped 42 children receive Legal Permanent Residency and more than 100 other children like Roberto get SIJ Visas approved during the 2019-20 grant period.

CABA's goal is to protect and safeguard vulnerable immigrant children that have been abused, abandoned and neglected by providing them with the legal representation that they need to assert their right to remain safely and legally in the U.S. CABA currently serves more than 400 children residing throughout Florida.

For their efforts, CABA will receive the 2021 Paul C. Doyle Children's Advocacy Award at the Foundation's annual award ceremony in June.

Without the legal services provided by CABA, the children represented would be ineligible for documents that allow them to obtain a job, a driver's license, work permits, and a social security number. Additionally, once children obtain Legal Permanent Residency,

see CHILDREN, p. 5

THE FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION
LEADERSHIP AND FUNDING FOR JUSTICE IN FLORIDA

Florida Bar Foundation President Stephen R. Senn began his term September 16, 2020. Board certified in appellate practice, Senn is a senior shareholder with Peterson & Myers, P.A. in Lakeland, where his practice includes appeals and federal litigation, as well as employment and business disputes. Senn earned his bachelor's degree and juris doctor from Florida State University. He has served as president of the boards of Florida Rural Legal Services and Florida Equal Justice Center. Senn has been a member of the 10th Circuit Pro Bono Committee since 1999. He earned The Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award in 2006, 2011 and 2018. Most recently, he was honored by the Appellate Practice Section of The Florida Bar with the John R. Hamilton Pro Bono Award.



Message from the President

If you support the mission of The Florida Bar Foundation (and if you are reading this, you probably do), then please consider partnering with us in one of many gratifying ways that can make a difference.

Because interest rates continue to be at all-time low levels, funds from the Interest on Lawyers Trust Account (IOTA), which are used to make grants, are also low. Donations from the public remain an incredibly important source of funding for the Foundation.

If you've ever made a donation to the Foundation, you're already on track to join one of our giving societies. Once your lifetime giving exceeds $2,000, you become a member of our Bronze Society. See all of our giving society members starting on page 11.

If you haven't given before, an easy way to start is by becoming a Foundation Fellow and pledging $1,000, which can be paid at once or over five years at $200 a year (or 10 years if you are a young, government or nonprofit lawyer). See our newest Fellows listed on page 15.

Another way to financially support Foundation efforts is by joining The Legacy for Justice, which recognizes those who have included the Foundation in their estate planning, made a gift or pledge of more than $10,000, directed a significant cy pres award to the Foundation or facilitated a colleague's major gift. See members on page 11.

To make a gift, visit www.TheFloridaBarFoundation.org, or contact Director of Development Michelle Fonseca, CFRE, at 407-960-7000.

Supporters of the Foundation can also give their time or talent to bolster our work. Consider applying to serve on our board of directors. Service on the board can be fulfilling in so many ways. The Board sets policy and makes all major decisions of the Foundation. We try to reach decisions which will best serve the cause of justice for Floridians who cannot afford an attorney. Applications for board seats can be found on our website at www.TheFloridaBarFoundation.org.

Civil legal aid is an essential service in our society. Without legal aid lawyers, thousands of Floridians would struggle with the complicated processes of eviction, divorce, foster care, estate planning, benefits and more. The Foundation's grants and programs fund legal aid lawyers and promote pro bono work. But, legal aid programs turn away many clients due to lack of resources. There is simply more need than supply.

Our grantees work hard every day to help clients who have fallen on hard times, and who could have guessed how hard 2020 and beyond would be? During these perilous times, Florida's legal aid providers continue to shine in their willingness to tackle tough cases and provide much needed legal representation.

If you know a legal aid lawyer, please take a moment to thank them. If you are a legal aid lawyer, please know how grateful we are to you and how much we admire the work you do.



Stephen R. Senn, President

THE FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION 2021 AWARD CEREMONY

The Florida Bar Foundation

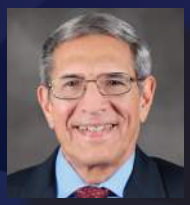
Virtual Award Ceremony

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation will not host an Annual Reception and Dinner during The Florida Bar Annual Convention. Instead, a virtual award ceremony will be held June 17 at 12 p.m. to honor the award winners below.



MEDAL OF HONOR FOR A LAWYER

HON. EMILIANO J. SALCINES JR., RETIRED JUDGE,
SECOND DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS



JANE ELIZABETH CURRAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

ANTHONY J. KARRAT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
LEGAL AID SERVICE OF BROWARD COUNTY AND
LEGAL AID SERVICE OF COLLIER COUNTY

PAUL DOYLE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY AWARD

WINNER – CABA PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES

1ST RUNNER UP – FSU COLLEGE OF LAW

2ND RUNNER UP – FLORIDA LEGAL SERVICES

PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

TO BE ANNOUNCED

VISIT THEFLORIDABARFOUNDATION.ORG TO REGISTER FOR THE VIRTUAL AWARD CEREMONY.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTING SPONSOR

Florida Lawyers Mutual® INSURANCE COMPANY
LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE CREATED BY THE FLORIDA BAR

PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE SPONSOR

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JANE ELIZABETH CURRAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD SPONSOR

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PAUL DOYLE CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY AWARD SPONSOR

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AWARD CEREMONY SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE. CONTACT MICHELLE FONSECA, CFRE, AT MFONSECA@FLABARFNDN.ORG OR 407-960-7019.

Spring Board of Directors meeting report

The Florida Bar Foundation Board of Directors met via Zoom on March 12, 2021, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The major actions of the board and reports received included:

Election of Foundation Directors

John F. Harkness and Raymond P. Reid, Jr. were elected to serve a second term as directors beginning July 1, 2021. It was also reported that the Foundation and The Florida Bar are in the process of convening a joint selection committee to address public member seats for service beginning July 1, 2021.

Lastly, applications and information will be sent to the Florida Supreme Court regarding its certification of selection of the Court's designated seats, as well as the Chief Justice's appointment of two judicial officers for service on the board.

Report of Medal of Honor Committee

The Board ratified the selection of The Honorable Emiliano "E.J." Salcines Jr. as the Foundation's 2021 recipient of its Medal of Honor award. The committee did not recommend a non-lawyer recipient because none were nominated this year.

The Board also ratified the selection of Anthony J. "Tony" Karrat, executive director of Legal Aid Service of Broward County, as this year's recipient of the Jane Elizabeth Curran Distinguished Service Award.

The Board previously decided that the Foundation's annual awards dinner would be cancelled due to the pandemic. A virtual award ceremony will be held instead on June 17 to recognize honorees.

Paul Doyle Children's Advocacy Awards

The Paul Doyle Children's Advocacy Award honors the Foundation's founding director of its Legal Assistance for the Poor and Law Student Assistance Grant Programs (1991 to 2013) in recognition of his commitment to high-quality legal representation of Florida's low-income children, for encouraging grantee programs to collaborate across geographic regions in order to bring the benefit of legal advocacy to low-income children regardless of their county of residence, for his strong and consistent support of Legal Assistance for the Poor and Law Student Assistance grantees, and for a career dedicated to promoting high-quality legal representation of the poor. The purpose of the award is to recognize and encourage systemic legal advocacy on behalf of low-income children by the Foundation's grantees.

A committee, chaired by former Foundation president John Patterson, selected the Cuban American Bar Association (CABA) Pro Bono Legal Services' Immigrant Children's Program as winner. First runner-up is Florida State University College of Law's Human Trafficking and Exploitation Law Project; second runner-up is Florida Legal Services' Ending Juvenile Solitary Confinement in Florida project.

The committee also recommended that the award's selection criteria be reviewed, with possible recommendations for change made in time for the next selection process (the award is bi-annual, alternating years with the Goldstein/Van Nortwick Award for Excellence). The Board ratified the committee's selection of award recipients and adopted the recommendation to review the selection criteria. Director Roberto Pardo was designated as the chair of the selection criteria subcommittee.

Administration of Justice Grants Awarded

The Improvements in the Administration of Justice (AOJ) grant program is designed to improve the administration of justice in areas within the broader framework of the justice system, with emphasis on the process of operating the courts in an effective and expeditious manner. It has historically been used to fund programs that are not otherwise or regularly funded in the Foundation's other

see REPORT, p. 6

2021-23 Equal Justice Works Fellows named



Melissa Lipnick, Florida Health Justice Project
Lipnick will engage in individual and systemic advocacy to expand access and address barriers to Medicaid home health care to enable more low-income Florida seniors to stay safely at home and out of nursing homes. The pandemic has exacerbated the need for these services. Lipnick will graduate from the University of Miami School of Law in May.



Janeille McPhail, Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida
McPhail will provide holistic legal services for the veteran population in rural Ocala to create systemic change and offer stability. The project will use outreach, pro bono services and advocacy to increase public benefits and veteran benefits. McPhail will graduate from the University of Florida Levin College of Law in May.



Oliver Telusma, Community Justice Project
Telusma's fellowship is designed to prevent COVID-fueled evictions of residential renters and small businesses at high risk of displacement in South Florida through direct legal services, policy advocacy and movement lawyering. Telusma will graduate from Florida A&M University School of Law in May.

Fellows are sponsored by the Foundation. McPhail is jointly sponsored by Greenberg Traurig and The Florida Bar Foundation.

CHILDREN, from p. 1

they can qualify for financial aid and obtain higher education.

At just 23, Roberto is now a U.S. citizen and owns his own landscaping company.

On average, CABA represents each child for three to five years. To obtain an SIJ visa, CABA must first file a case in state court and obtain findings of abuse, abandonment and/or neglect.

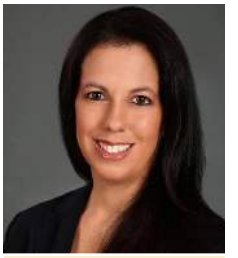
As part of the state court process, CABA lawyers also make sure that each child has a legal caregiver that can provide complete care. Once an order is obtained in state court, CABA represents each child before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and in immigration court.

Even with immigration courts being closed due to the pandemic, CABA represented more than 100 new children in 2020. Many of the children did not have legal caregivers with the necessary legal documents to consent to medical treatment on their behalf. So, CABA filed more than 50 temporary custody cases in Family Court on an emergency basis to ensure that these children had someone able to consent to their medical treatment if they got COVID-19.

CABA staff also work to make connections with community groups and the public school system, which come into contact with vulnerable children. In one instance, an elementary school principal discovered a migrant camp within his district with more than 19 families living in rustic conditions.

The camp had many undocumented children in need of legal representation. The principal informed CABA of the situation, and CABA interviewed the children and families, then provided them with free direct legal representation.

CABA also advocates for the just treatment of immigrant children within the judicial and foster care systems. CABA has developed and conducts SIJ trainings for state court juvenile, probate and family judges.

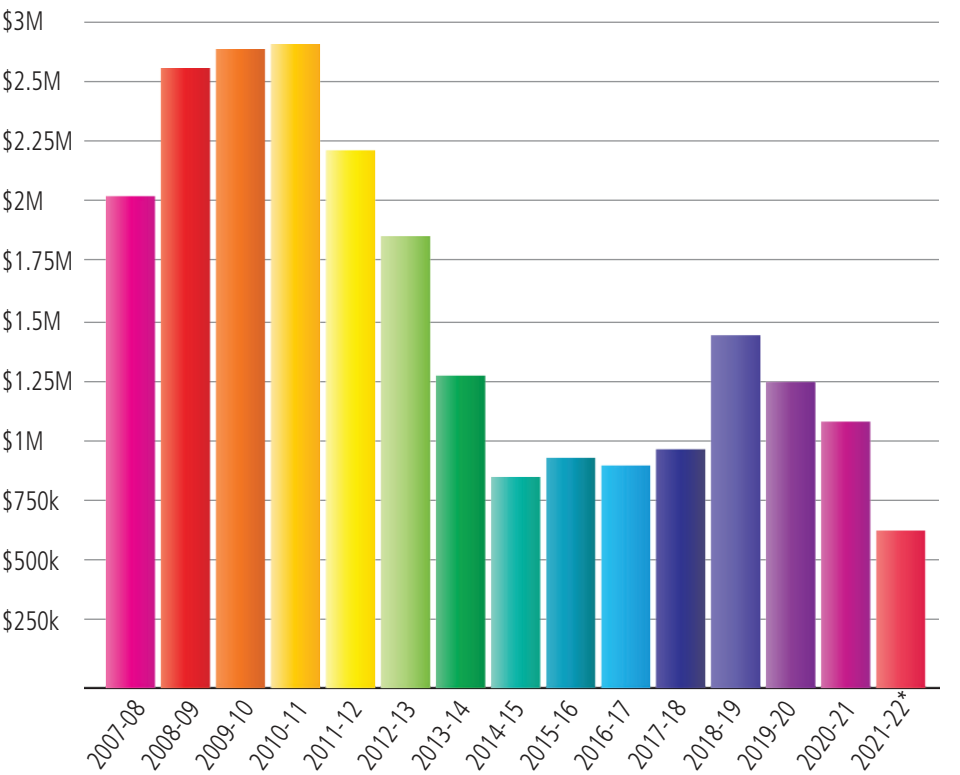


Lesley Mendoza

"Many of the children that we have represented throughout the years come back to our offices to report their successes," Leslie Mendoza, CABA's executive director, says. "One is employed by a utility company and is making over $60,000 plus benefits. He would not have been able to obtain this job without our services."

"Many other former clients have gone on to create small businesses within the construction industry or in landscaping, and create an economic impact by employing other individuals. Without necessary legal documents and without having become a legal permanent resident, this would not be possible."

History of Children's Legal Services funding



*$655,000 has been allocated to Children's Legal Services grants in the FY 2021-22 budget.

How Can I Help?

Your donation to the Children's Legal Services grant fund ensures access to justice for Florida's children. Donate now online.

TheFloridaBarFoundation.org

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grants programs. The Board previously allocated and approved $500,000 for AOJ projects this year. The Foundation received 16 applications for funding, requesting $1,647,185.68.

The Board selected Florida's Children First (Improving Justice for Children: Attorneys and Clients Partnering for Systemic Change) to receive $230,000, and Innocence Project of Florida (Investigation and Litigation to Exonerate Innocent Floridians) to receive $270,000.

Limited extensions for 2020 Community Economic Development (CED) grants

In light of significant decreases in available funding for CED grants ($6,443,162 in 2020 vs. $2 million for 2021) the Board voted on November 6, 2020, to forgo a new application process for 2021 CED grants and instead tasked the grants committee to make recommendations for extending existing 2020 ongoing CED projects. As a result, staff completed a comprehensive review of existing CED projects in order to give a recommendation it deems as fair and equitable as possible under the circumstances, while striving to keep as many projects as possible intact.

More than 100 hours of staff time was devoted to determining a funding recommendation. Several worksheets were developed and reviewed, and several alternatives for funding CED grant extensions were explored. Ultimately, the Board decided to fund 10 existing projects, based on the amounts each project reported as the minimum amount required to maintain the viability of their projects. Staff concluded that such an approach provides the best alternative based on merits while allowing more programs to continue their important work in an acceptable manner at a minimum viable amount. This will "stretch" the Foundation's limited funding to more projects in more geographic areas of the state thereby serving more populations in need. See the 10 projects on page seven.

Action on Annual Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) Forgiveness Applications

Consistent with previous practice and in accordance with the terms of the program and individual loan agreements between the Foundation and eligible participants, the Board took up the matter of its 2020 LRAP outstanding loans. The Board adopted the Grants Committee's recommendation (based on staff's detailed report) that of the $1,170,000 loaned to 234 qualified legal aid providers in 2020, $1,043,190.94 will be forgiven. $96,497.72 was previously rescinded and/or returned back to the Foundation (funds were either declined, withdrawn or not disbursed due to ineligibility) and $30,311.34 was not forgiven and is to be returned back to the Foundation.

Technology Assets Recommendations approved

The Florida Bar Foundation received seven digital assets from the former Florida Justice Technology Center. Over the last 12 months, the Board's Technology Committee evaluated possible plans for the future of these individual assets. The committee evaluated ongoing expenses, maintenance time, system complexity, intellectual property, and overall value of each asset. While every asset had both benefits and obstacles, the committee wanted to determine which assets should reasonably remain under the Foundation's care, and which should be offered to grantees for future maintenance. The committee recommended, and the Board approved, the disposition of the following technology assets as follows:

1. Florida Advocate (a library and communication platform for legal aid attorneys): Wind down over 12 months with notice to grantees, after which it will be terminated unless assumed by an eligible grantee.

2. Florida Tenants' Rights (website with goal of providing person-specific information to renters about their legal issues): Wind down project.

3. Turning18.org (website with goal of assisting parents and guardians of children with developmental disabilities transition to adulthood): Keep for 12 months while attempting to find a recipient, then revisit.

4. FL Advocate's Guide – Medicaid (content-based website with goal of providing information on Florida Medicaid Program): Wind down over 12 months with notice to grantees, after which it will be terminated unless assumed by an eligible grantee.

5. FL Advocate's Guide – Long Term Care (content-based website with goal of providing information on Florida Medicaid's Managed Long-Term Care Program): Wind down over 12 months with notice to grantees, after which it will be terminated unless assumed by an eligible grantee.

6. FloridaNameChange.org (website with goal of assisting people to legally change their name): the Foundation will hold for 12 months pending the exploration of marketing, revenue-generating, and/or sale/licensing opportunities toward the highest and best use, with a cost estimate for technological upgrades within three months.

7. Gateway/Florida Law Help (website with goal of helping Floridians navigate their legal issues): Foundation will hold for 12 months pending the exploration of marketing, revenue-generating and/or sale/licensing opportunities toward the highest and best use, with a cost estimate for technological upgrades within three months.

The Technology Committee continues to work on a Long-Range Technology Plan that it intends to present to the Board for consideration as soon as practicable.

Development/Pro Bono Report

Committee Chair Raymond Reid provided the Board a report regarding various and sundry efforts and initiatives involving the Development/Pro Bono Committee. Mr. Reid's report referenced Fundraising Campaigns Performance Reports, a Kids Deserve Justice Specialty License Plate update, and a Restricted Gift report. Mr. Reid also reported that research, analysis and discussion continue regarding whether the Foundation will implement a Service Charge/Administrative Fee policy. The subcommittee chaired by Director Ashley Sybesma will report its findings as soon as the research and review are concluded. It is expected that such will be available for

see REPORT, p. 8

Foundation's Florida Pro Bono Law School Challenge places 309 cases

The Florida Bar Foundation announced the winners of the 2021 Florida Pro Bono Law School Challenge April 5. Stetson University College of Law won the top honor, the MVP Pro Bono Champion Award, for matching the most students with its own alumni. Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law won for most student engagement. Ave Maria School of Law won for the most alumni engagement.

"It is a testament to our state's law schools' commitment to pro bono work that 309 law students matched with lawyers on full representation cases through the Challenge," Stephen R. Senn, the Foundation's president, said. "Providing students with opportunities to get real world experience and lawyers with opportunities to mentor and support their local legal aid programs strengthens the legal aid system."

For the third year in a row, students and lawyers used an online platform at FloridaLawSchoolChallenge.org to choose cases hosted by legal aid programs. Florida's law schools competed for six weeks to see which could take the most pro bono cases.

Students and lawyers from all of Florida's 12 law schools participated. Legal aid programs also competed to post the most cases online during the Challenge; CABA Pro Bono Legal Services, Legal Services of North Florida, and Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida were winners.



Ft. Lauderdale lawyer Robert Phaneuf, left, and St. Thomas University College of Law student Krystle Johnson (not pictured) were matched through the Challenge and completed a probate case for a Legal Services of Greater Miami client, right.

Trophies will be presented to the winners at the Foundation's 2021 Virtual Award Ceremony on June 17. Registration is open now at TheFloridaBarFoundation.org.

A core part of the Foundation's mission is to promote public service among lawyers by making it an integral part of the law school experience. By connecting students with lawyers to partner on pro bono cases from legal aid organizations, the Foundation increases access to justice and promotes pro bono work.

MVP Pro Bono Champion

STETSON LAW

Most Student Engagement

Barry University
Dwayne O. Andreas | School of Law

Most Alumni Engagement

AVE MARIA SCHOOL of LAW

2020 Community Economic Development grants extended

Funding for 2021-22 CED grants was significantly reduced due to the exhaustion of the funds from the Bank of America settlement. Rather than asking grantees to complete new applications, the Foundation funded the extension of 10 existing grants based on project viability and results.

Program	Project	Grant
Bay Area Legal Services	Florida Senior Home Ownership Protection Program (SHOPP)	$25,000
Brevard County Legal Aid	Survivors of Domestic Violence Advocacy Project	$125,000
CABA Pro Bono Legal Services	Domestic violence, human trafficking, immigrant children, and veterans programs	$100,000
IDignity	Identification and Dignity: Reducing barriers to economic stability in Central Florida	$60,000
Jacksonville Area Legal Aid	Region II Wealth Building Project	$449,380
Legal Aid Service of Broward County	Consumer law, impact litigation and veterans' law projects	$243,466
Legal Aid Society of Orange County Bar Association	Cultivating Empowerment by Navigating Toward Stability (C.E.N.T.S.)	$94,000
Legal Services of Greater Miami	Florida Community Development Legal Project	$773,239
Seminole County Bar Association Legal Aid Society	John Hamilton Domestic Violence Prevention and Community Economic Project	$40,000
Three Rivers Legal Services	Home Sweet Home: clear title and home ownership to Heirs' property project	$60,000
		Total: $1,970,085

Foundation receives donations from Family Law Section, settlements

The Florida Bar Family Law Section made a $75,000 donation in February in support of the Foundation's Children's Legal Services grant program. The section has now given $500,000 total in lifetime giving to the Foundation (see page 15 for a chart of all section giving).

"The funds are needed more than ever now, as availability of grants has dropped by 40% this year," said Maria Gonzalez, Foundation board member and former Family Law Section chair.



Maria C. Gonzalez

"We truly believe it is our responsibility as Family Law practitioners to help the Foundation fill this critical need. It's a testament to the continued commitment of the Family Law Section's leadership to support the Foundation' efforts to promote access to justice for children, and we're incredibly grateful that the Section has contributed $500,000 so far."

The Foundation also received $8,662 from the Maher Law Firm in Winter Park in September. The donation was interest earned on a private Qualified Settlement Account in connection with the national Actos Multidistrict Litigation settlement.



Jason Fraxedas

"As lawyers and advocates for Florida residents, we are proud to support The Florida Bar Foundation and its mission to provide access to justice for everyone," firm shareholder Jason Fraxedas said.

The Foundation also received a $7,418 donation related to Coastal Wellness Centers, Inc. vs. Ocean Harbor Casualty Insurance Company, a class action lawsuit resolved in Broward County. The amount donated represented claim payments that were returned uncashed or undeliverable. The parties and the trial court agreed to donate the funds to the Foundation under the Cy Pres doctrine.

"The Parties, Class Counsel and Defendant's counsel are pleased to support the important work performed by The Florida Bar Foundation in providing Floridians with greater access to legal representation and improving the administration of justice," wrote plaintiff's attorney and former Bar president Tod Aronovitz, who worked on the case with his partner Barbara Perez, who was instrumental in the resolution of the case.



Barbara Perez

The Foundation encourages counsel and courts to consider making provisions for possible cy pres awards or distributions during the settlement approval process rather than afterward to allow parties more control over the process involving recipients of settlement funds to lessen the burden on the Court and save judicial time and resources.

The Foundation is extremely grateful for these gifts.

2020-21 Improvements in the Administration of Justice grants awarded

The Improvements to the Administration of Justice (AOJ) grant program is designed to assist in the improvement in the administration of justice in areas within the broader framework of the justice system, with emphasis on the process of operating the courts in an effective and expeditious manner. It has historically been used to fund programs that are not otherwise or regularly funded in the Foundation's other grants.

Program	Project	Grant
Florida's Children First	Improving Justice for Children: Attorneys and Clients Partnering for System Change	$230,000
Innocence Project of Florida	Investigation and Litigation to Exonerate Innocent Floridians	$270,000
	Total:	$500,000

REPORT, from p. 6

consideration and review at the Board's meeting in June or shortly thereafter.

Lastly, the Board was informed about the status of the Foundation's third annual Florida Pro Bono Law School Challenge. At the time of the report, 273 matches between lawyers and law students had been made. NOTE: To date, 309 matches resulting in full representation cases have been made and 430 law students have signed up to participate in the challenge. Despite the continuation of the pandemic, this exceeds the 306 matches and 315 participating students during the inaugural year of the program in 2019. The second year of the program produced 200 student – lawyer matches on full representation cases from 20 legal aid programs, but was hampered and shortened by the onset of the pandemic.

Next Meeting

The Board's next scheduled meeting will be on June 10, 2021, either remotely or in person in Orlando. In the interim, the Executive Committee will consider whether an in-person meeting is possible or preferable given the fact that all Board meetings since 2020 were conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Annual Report

THE FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION 2019-20

Message from 2019-20 President Hala A. Sandridge



I always knew it would be a privilege to serve as president of The Florida Bar Foundation. What I did not know—and could never have anticipated—were the challenges the Foundation would face from the COVID-19 pandemic.

My presidency started out as normal, with our September board meeting in 2019. The in-person conference in Tampa was full of energy, ideas and excitement. The Foundation moved toward a new board meeting format, with law firms sponsoring the meetings and fronting expenses to reduce Foundation administrative costs. These meetings were also designed to "ride the circuit"—rather than maintain a constant Orlando location—so that legal services stakeholders around the state could more easily attend Foundation board meetings in their locale. The new format was wildly successful. I thank my law firm, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, for carrying the expense of that first newly-formatted board meeting.

All changed with the March 2020 board meeting. If you are reading this article, you know how your life drastically changed around that time, too. The Foundation board meeting moved to a virtual format. Looking back on that meeting, I recall how foreign I considered the Zoom platform and how optimistically I thought our June board meeting would be in-person at The Florida Bar Annual Convention.

Equally difficult, many of the Foundation staff normally working in its Maitland office were forced to work remotely. As of the time you read this article, we continue to hold our board meetings virtually and many staff work remotely. Gone were the days of in-person brainstorming, team work, and camaraderie for which the Foundation is so well known. It is a testament to the hard work of the Foundation staff that we were able to keep our grants and funding cycles in place, along with all other business of the Foundation, through a remote work environment.

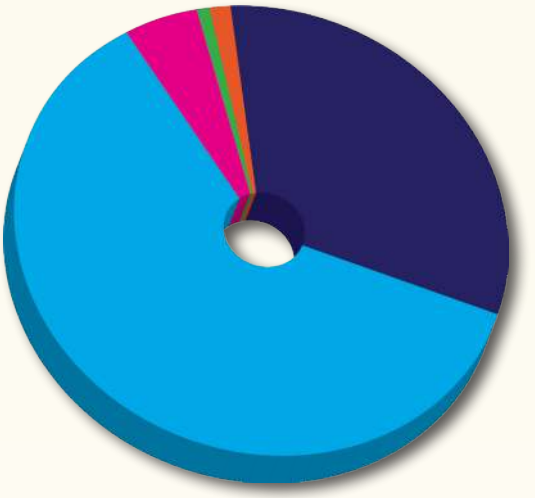
COVID-19 not only changed how the Foundation conducted its business, but it drastically affected the legal organizations the Foundation funds. Many of the grantees sought immediate funding for COVID-19 relief. The Foundation quickly pivoted its funding resources and issued new COVID-19 grants to allow grantees to address a slew of pressing legal issues—such as evictions, unemployment, domestic violence, and healthcare—amounting to $1,454,993 in immediate aid.

The Foundation faced other non-pandemic challenges. Interest rates—the mainstay of IOTA funds—continued their historic lows, forcing the Foundation to continue its search for other funding sources. But good things happened, too. The board's wise investment decisions and a hot financial market increased the value of the Foundation's investments.

The highlight of my presidency was bestowing the Foundation's 2020 President's Award. The federal judges of the Jacksonville division of the Middle Division of Florida's federal courts entrusted $3.6 million to the Foundation for distribution to legal service organizations located within the Middle District. The Foundation honored those judges—the Honorable Timothy J. Corrigan, Honorable Roy B. Dalton Jr., Honorable Marcia Morales Howard, and Honorable William G. Young—for their commitment to access to civil justice. Although the Foundation's awards are usually presented during the June Florida Bar Annual Convention, the Foundation staff created an amazing virtual award ceremony for all to attend in the fall.

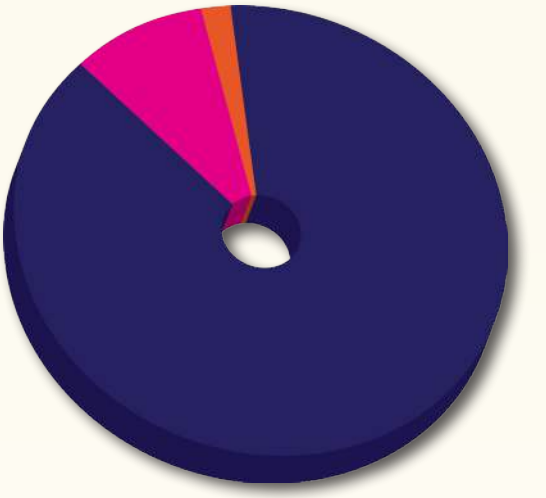
Not only do I thank the judiciary, but I thank all of you, dear readers, for your support and assistance with the Foundation's mission of ensuring access to legal services.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR 2019-20 GRANTS



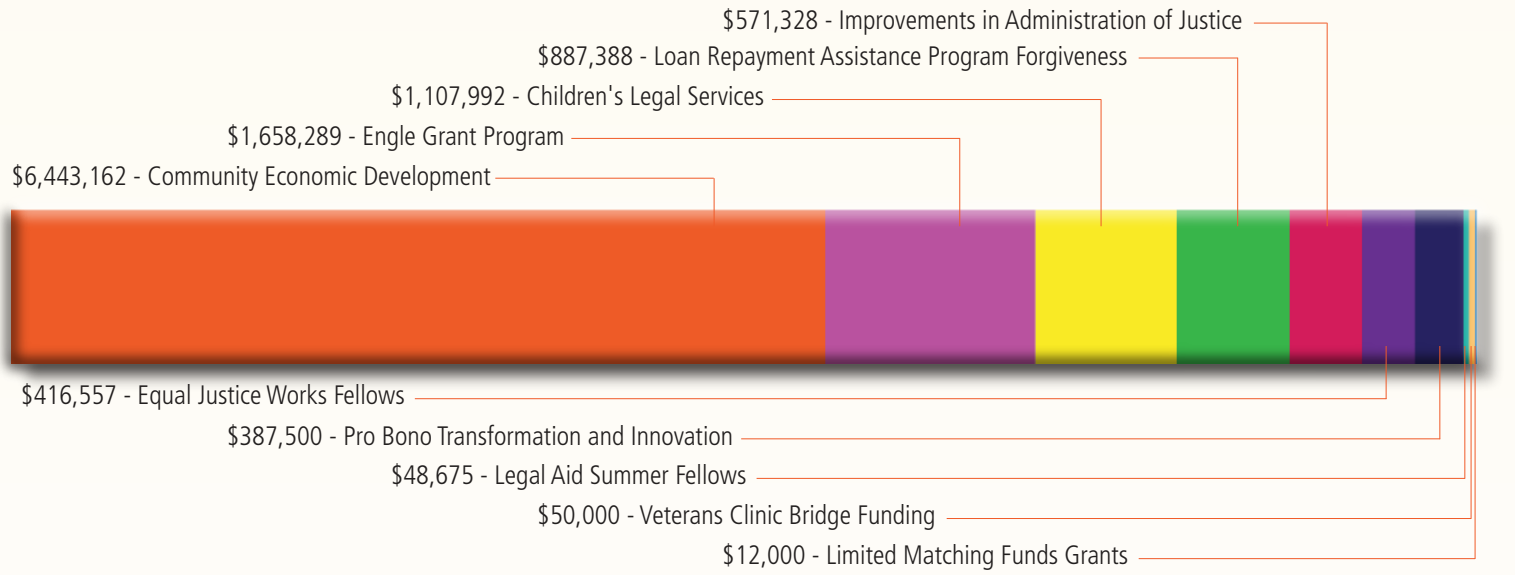
61.1% BOA/Engle Awards
31.9% IOTA Revenue
5.0% Private Contributions
1.2% Net Investment Income
0.8% Cy Pres Awards

HOW FUNDS WERE SPENT IN 2019-20

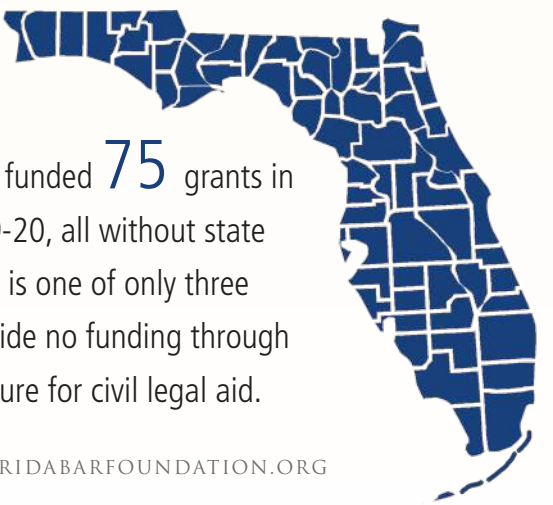


89.0% Charitable Activities ($12,454,231)
9.3% Administration ($1,305,896)
1.7% Fundraising ($240,138)

GRANTS AWARDED IN 2019-20



In addition to the grants awarded, the Foundation spent $889,580 in program support and other charitable activities that provided direct and indirect support to our grantees. Also, $18,238 in unspent grant funds were returned to the Foundation.



The Foundation funded 75 grants in fiscal year 2019-20, all without state funding. Florida is one of only three states that provide no funding through its state legislature for civil legal aid.

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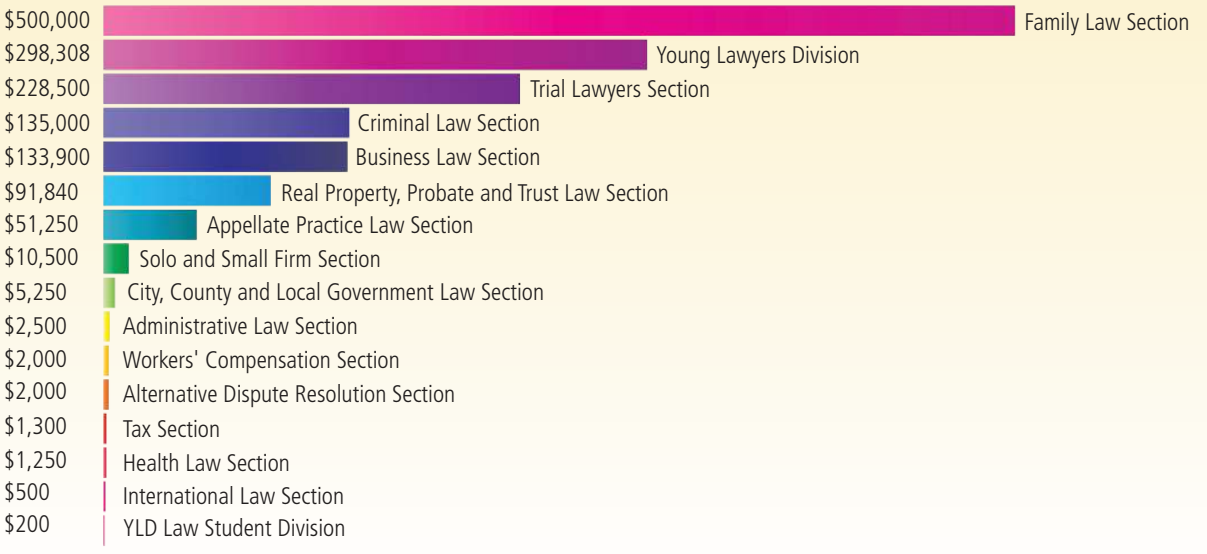
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(Designate for John M. Stewart, Immediate Past President, The Florida Bar)
J. Samantha Vacciana, President, Florida Legal Services, Inc.

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