



2019

Annual Report

Advocating for legal rights,
continuing a tradition of
service in DuPage County



From Our Executive Director

fiscal year, and continued to build our visual identity within the community and measure the impact DLA has on our community.

Every year I am humbled by the over 400 volunteer attorneys that dedicate their time and talents to help DLA clients. Our volunteer attorneys continue to embody the pro bono aspect of lawyering and contribute to our program and our community by serving individuals that are of limited means or financial resources. These volunteers graciously provide free, high-quality legal assistance in family law cases including Orders of Protection, Divorce, Parentage, and Guardianship cases as well as Bankruptcy cases. This year was no different, but I was floored by the number of cases our volunteer base accepted. Thanks to our financial donors, we were able to add an additional staff attorney this year. Thanks to her added efforts, DLA staff handled 436 cases.

Despite changes in staff towards the end of this fiscal year, DLA (program-wide) helped 67 more clients than last year. 641 cases were handled this fiscal year. I am pleased to report that number is an all-time high.

In years past we have honored our volunteers at the annual DCBA Law Day Luncheon the following year, but this year the event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to

express my gratitude to our volunteer attorneys for all of their efforts. Our community is stronger because of our volunteer attorneys' efforts to serve our neighbors in need.

Attorneys that gave over 100 hours to our clients in 2019: Daniel Walker, Deanna Rosinski, Barbara Corrigan, Josette Allen, and Gregory Adamo.

Attorneys that contributed over 75 hours: Susan O'Neill Alvarado, Michael Hudzik, David Schaffer, and Frank Valenti.

Attorneys that provided over 50 hours: Brett Williamson, Marlene Siedlarz, Leah Setzen, Darius J. Sethna, Jane Nagle, Robert A. McNees, Daniel J. Kollias, Kathryn Harry, Nicholas Galasso, and Jesse V. Barrientes.

We would also like to take the time to thank the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, the Lawyers Trust Fund, DuPage County Human Services Grant Fund, Naperville Exchange Club, and Wayne Township for financially supporting our program and the individuals that we help.

If you are inclined to volunteer or donate to our program or have any suggestions, concerns, or questions for us, please do not hesitate to call (630-653-6212) or visit us at dupagelegalaids.org.

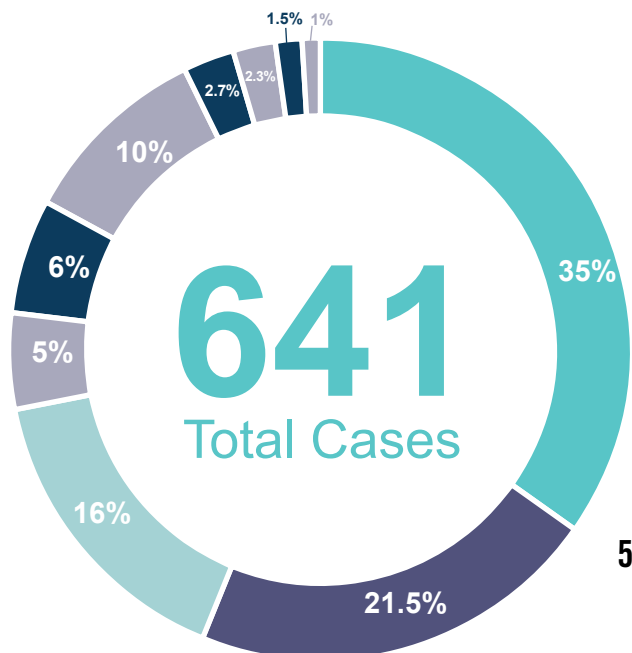
- Cecilia Najera, Executive Director

During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, our program continued to conduct legal clinics with Loaves and Fishes in Naperville and with Family Shelter Service at the West Chicago Police Department. DuPage Legal Aid ("DLA") continued to enjoy a close relationship with the DuPage County Bar Association ("DCBA") and screen for their Modest Means and Veteran's Initiative Program. We are very grateful to the DCBA for all of the efforts they put forth in supporting and helping raise funds for DLA. Judges' Nite 2019 continued to break fundraising records and thanks to the DCBA membership, our dedicated Board of Directors, and Fundraising Committee, raised over \$37,000. DLA also continued to make strides in implementing the Strategic Plan finalized the previous

DuPage Legal Aid Service

FY 2018-19 Cases by Type — Percentage

Order of Protection/Domestic Violence	223	35%
Divorce	137	21.5%
Parentage	101	16%
Guardian Ad Litem	64	10%
Guardianship	38	6%
Bankruptcy/Consumer	32	5%
Miscellaneous Legal*	17	2.7%
Support (Maintenance)	14	2.3%
Housing Issues**	9	1.5%
Wills & Estates***	6	1%



	2017/18	2018/19
Total New Cases Screened:	2134	2,076
Assigned to In-House Counsel:	332	370
Assigned to DCBA Volunteers:	121	129
Referred to DCBA-LRS:	612	465
Referred to Other Legal Service Organization:	3	0
Referred to Out of County Services:	16	19
Referred to No Retainer Attorney:	9	10
Modest Means (DCBA program):	15	16
Completed by In-House Counsel:	342	366
Completed by DCBA Volunteers:	117	120

2018-19 Total Program Activity



DLA represented 67 more people this year!

DLA focuses on supporting our clients and providing them with the legal link to a brighter future. A former client, who had fled domestic violence and lived in a shelter with her two daughters, once thought her situation hopeless. She questioned whether she would be able to care for her children. After her divorce, she was granted the ability to relocate her children back home to Florida where she had support. She returned to school. Today, she is attending college for nursing and currently works as a CNA. I am very humbled by what she says about DLA...

“ I could barely afford the gas to get back and forth for hearings while trying to care for my children and get back on our feet. I would never have been able to afford an attorney or GAL. Having our case accepted by DLA gave me the little bit of hope I needed to keep going. I couldn’t have gotten free without the representation I received.”





DuPage Legal Aid is dedicated to enlisting the pro bono aspect of lawyering by connecting DuPage County residents to high quality, compassionate legal representation. We educate and support individuals, families and community partners, and we provide our clients with the legal link to a brighter future.

Board of Directors and Staff 2018-19

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Thank you to our Donors!

\$10,000

Anonymous Attorney Donor 1

\$1000+

Anonymous Donor 2, Chad Husnick, Wendy Musielak, Emily Rapp, Joseph Cho, Andrew Cores, Greg S. Wildman

\$500+

Aaron Stanton, Huck Bouma, Burke, Warren, McKay & Serritella, Monahan Law Group, Mary McSwain, P.C., Law Offices of Kim DiGiovanni, Hon. James McCluskey, Jim Reichardt, John Cooney, Denise Pcolinski, Hon. Bonnie M. Wheaton

\$100 - \$499

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Grants

DuPage County Bar Association
 18th Judicial Court Civil Filing Fee Grant
 Human Services Grant Fund
 Lawyers Trust Fund
 Naperville Exchange Club Grant
 Wayne Township