



NORTH CAROLINA
IOLTA

INVESTING IN JUSTICE FOR
ALL NORTH CAROLINIANS



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



INVESTING IN JUSTICE FOR ALL NORTH CAROLINIANS

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

By definition, justice requires fairness. Within the justice system, access to legal services promotes fairness, one critical step to achieving justice. Due to limited resources, just a fraction of North Carolinians have access to the critical legal services they need to thrive. Many are left to navigate the legal system on their own, without essential legal advice or representation. Individuals, families, and children who live in historically underserved communities are more likely to go without access to legal representation.

At North Carolina Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts, we are investing in justice for all. As the philanthropic focus of the North Carolina State Bar, we at NC IOLTA provide access to justice by funding high-quality legal assistance. NC IOLTA continued to pursue this mission in 2021 with the support of partners across the state.

2021 highlights of our work:

- **Released 2021-25 strategic plan.** In 2021, NC IOLTA developed a strategic plan to serve as a road map over the next several years as we move forward on the path toward justice. The plan remains true to the principles upon which the program was originally founded and seeks to build upon achievements since our inception in 1983. The plan, which can be found in full at www.nciolta.org, outlines five broad areas of focus to guide our work:
 1. Be a responsive and responsible grantmaker that engages in effective stewardship of funds to advance its mission.
 2. Solidify, increase, and diversify NC IOLTA funding.
 3. Heighten communication about the benefits produced by IOLTA and the need for increased civil legal aid.
 4. Embrace IOLTA's leadership role in the justice community.
 5. Build organizational capacity to pursue identified priorities, support sustainability, and address new issues as they arise.
- **Increased awards to organizations providing legal assistance to those in need.** In 2021, NC IOLTA provided funding of more than \$4.8 million to organizations that provide legal aid to individuals, families, and children. Grants support access to housing, family safety, and healthcare, and protect the basic human rights of North Carolinians.
- **Supported conversations about unmet civil legal needs in North Carolina.** With funding support from NC IOLTA, the NC Equal Access to Justice Commission released the 2020 Legal Needs Assessment in April 2021, the first comprehensive assessment of civil legal needs in North Carolina in more than two decades. NC IOLTA continues to support conversations about how we can improve the availability of legal services in our state.

Justice requires partners across the state to contribute to building a legal system that works for everyone. Let's invest in justice together so that all people can effectively meet their legal needs.

Maria Missé
Chair, Board of Trustees

Mary L. Irvine
Executive Director

IMPACT at a glance

OUR MISSION

NC IOLTA improves the lives of North Carolinians by strengthening the justice system as a leader, partner, and funder.

OUR VISION

A North Carolina where all people can effectively meet their legal needs.

In 2021, NC IOLTA surpassed more than \$100 million in grants awarded to improve the lives of North Carolinians.

NC IOLTA awards grants to provide civil legal aid for low-income individuals and other programs designed to improve the administration of justice.

NC IOLTA distributed more than \$4.8 million in 2021, including both NC IOLTA awards and state funds.

Total NC IOLTA grants administered in 2021:

\$4,097,290 — 19 GRANTS TO 15 ORGANIZATIONS

\$2,416,700

to fund civil legal aid for low-income individuals

\$1,071,590

for community economic redevelopment and foreclosure prevention legal services from the Bank of America settlement

\$352,000

to programs that engage private attorneys to provide pro bono legal services to individuals in need

\$257,000

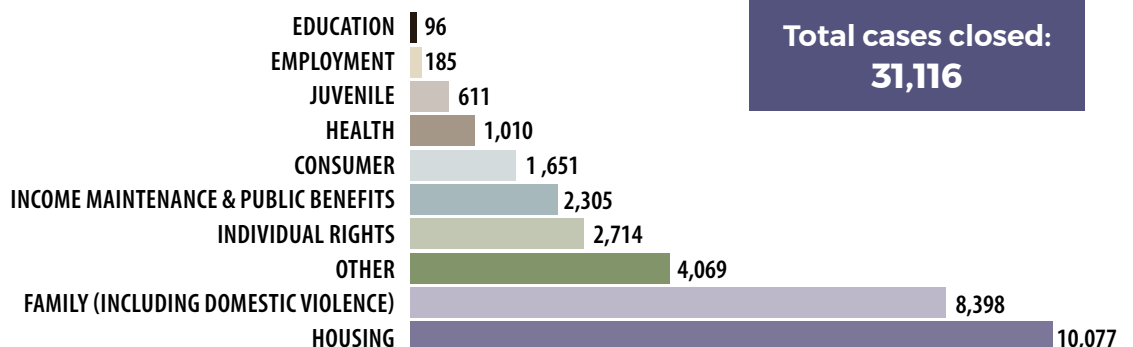
to advance administration of justice efforts in North Carolina

STATE FUNDS ADMINISTERED IN 2021:

\$759,152 for domestic violence legal services on behalf of the North Carolina State Bar as authorized by the General Assembly

CASE TYPES:

In 2021, NC IOLTA grantees addressed civil legal issues for clients in a wide range of areas.



Protecting victims of domestic violence

Aisha experienced constant stalking and harassment from her estranged husband and feared for her own safety and that of her children. She endured threats of arson to her home, calls at all hours of the night, and unexpected visits to her workplace.

The situation came to a head in early June 2021. After Aisha got off of work at about 11:00 pm, the estranged husband messaged her: "I see you. I know you are alone. I am going to come to the house and show you what I can do." Terrified, she called the police.

In a difficult contested hearing, Aisha was able to effectively tell her story with the support of an attorney from Legal Aid of North Carolina's Winston-Salem office. The judge entered an order of protection at the conclusion of the hearing.



More than **91,000** household members benefited from the support and counsel of **NC IOLTA GRANTEES**



GRANTEES CLOSED more than 31,000 CASES

Representing disabled seniors

J.C., a low-income elderly man living in rural northwestern North Carolina, faced the termination of much-needed personal care services. He has several chronic conditions that limit his mobility and ability to care for himself, and a certified nursing assistant was providing him with care in his home. J.C. is wheelchair bound with a history of bad falls.

After Medicaid services were terminated without a thorough assessment of the client's needs, an attorney with Legal Aid of North Carolina appealed. The attorney had multiple contacts with J.C.'s doctor's office and sent his doctor a questionnaire to fill out regarding his medical issues and care needs. Using this evidence, the attorney negotiated with Medicaid's attorney, and 53 hours per month of personal care services were reinstated for J.C. He was able to remain in his home.

Preventing homelessness

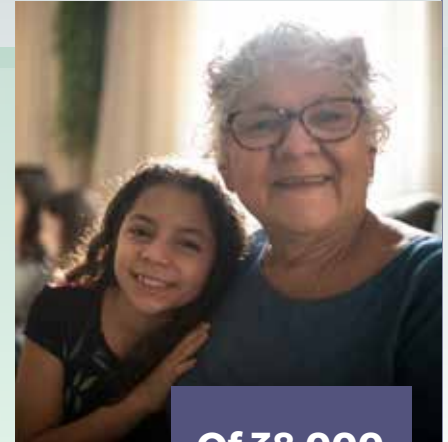
A family with three children in the rural southeastern corner of the state faced the threat of foreclosure on their manufactured home. The husband was self-employed and had income fluctuations that were exacerbated by COVID. Hurricanes Matthew (2016) and Florence (2018) damaged the home, but the family persevered, making repairs despite insurance claim difficulties and delays.

With the support of advocates from the Financial Protection Law Center over a five-year period, the family was able to reorganize their debt and achieve financial stability. They remained dedicated to meeting the requirements of the Chapter 13 bankruptcy plan and recently paid off the mortgage and obtained ownership free of encumbrances.



Keeping children out of poverty

Carla is the legal guardian of her three minor grandchildren and has an annual income of just over \$19,000 a year. Her husband is disabled. Last year, a volunteer attorney from Pisgah Legal Services made a life-changing impact in the life of this family by helping them secure stimulus payments and a child tax credit. Carla had not been in the habit of filing tax returns because of her very low income. When the attorney helped her file a return, she received \$13,400 to help her care for her grandchildren and disabled husband. This attorney assisted dozens of additional families with similar issues.



Of 38,000
clients served:

Nearly 7,000
were seniors

2,200 were
children

More than
2,000 were
veterans



Advocating for vulnerable immigrants

Legal aid work with low-income immigrants often has a ripple effect across the community. In 2015, Maria was pregnant and wanted to escape an abusive relationship. Legal aid attorneys from Pisgah Legal Services supported her through the legal process and filed for her to obtain a U-Visa, a special immigration status for victims of crime who work with law enforcement.

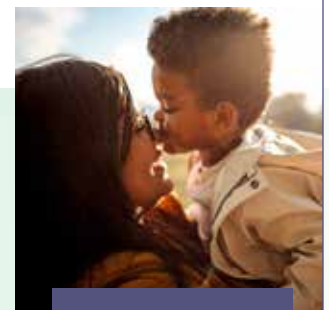
The waitlist for U-Visas is quite long, and Maria received her U-Visa status in 2021. Now that she has her work authorization, she is not only able to provide for herself and her children, but she is helping others in the immigrant community. Maria is giving back by working a nonprofit job to help vulnerable residents in Western North Carolina access health services and connect these families with critical community resources.

VOLUNTEER
ATTORNEYS
provided
nearly
16,000 hours
OF PRO BONO
SERVICE

Removing barriers to economic opportunity

Moniek lived a busy life taking care of her 1-year-old daughter, her birth mother, and the mother who raised her, as well as working as a dental assistant. It was her career that brought her to the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy (CCLA). As she began to prepare for her national dental board exams, her instructor expressed concern that Moniek's past might impact whether she could take the tests. These concerns were not new to Moniek. Since age 15, she had experienced difficulty finding employment because employers were unwilling to overlook her juvenile criminal record.

Having investigated the expunction process before, Moniek knew she needed a lawyer, an expense she could not afford. She contacted CCLA and was connected with a pro bono attorney who helped her have her juvenile record expunged, creating a future Moniek did not think was possible. She says, "I know I've made mistakes, but there was light at the end of the tunnel. I want people to know that the person you are in the past does not have to define who you are in the moment, or the person you could become in the future."



NC IOLTA
grants served
residents in all
100
NORTH
CAROLINA
COUNTIES

2021 GRANT AWARDS



Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition

- \$20,000 to support individual representation and trainings for North Carolina residents

Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy

- \$117,000 to support civil legal aid in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties
- \$47,000 to support pro bono legal services in Mecklenburg County
- \$39,130 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$120,000 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

Children's Law Center of Central North Carolina

- \$40,000 to support child advocacy in high-conflict custody disputes in Guilford and Forsyth Counties

Council for Children's Rights, Inc.

- \$55,000 to support child advocacy in high-conflict custody disputes in Mecklenburg County
- \$45,000 for additional social worker capacity to support child clients

Disability Rights North Carolina

- \$156,200 to address educational services for at-risk juveniles with disabilities in North Carolina schools



Financial Protection Law Center

- \$45,500 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$69,750 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

Land Loss Prevention Project

- \$50,000 to preserve land rights for minority and indigent individuals and address issues of environmental concern in North Carolina
- \$40,040 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$131,250 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

Legal Aid of North Carolina

- \$1,250,000 to support statewide civil legal aid
- \$225,000 to support pro bono lawyer engagement across the state
- \$241,150 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$91,875 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

Mediation Network of North Carolina

- \$46,000 to support mediation centers and coordination of efforts across the state

North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence

- \$40,000 to support advocacy of credible innocence claims across the state



North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Foundation

- \$75,000 to support North Carolina driver's license restoration and expunction efforts

North Carolina Legal Education Assistance Foundation

- \$51,000 to assist public interest attorneys across the state with loan repayment obligations

North Carolina Justice Center

- \$586,000 to support statewide impact litigation efforts and legal services to immigrants
- \$51,870 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$288,375 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services

- \$62,500 to protect the rights of jail inmates to safe and humane conditions

Pisgah Legal Services

- \$80,000 to support civil legal aid in Western NC
- \$80,000 to support pro bono legal services in Western NC
- \$36,400 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$225,000 to support community redevelopment legal assistance

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION PARTNERS



NC IOLTA works directly with financial institutions and lawyers across our state to set up general, interest-bearing accounts to hold client funds. With funds provided by financial institution partners, NC IOLTA makes critical investments in North Carolina communities to improve access to legal representation. By setting the highest interest rates and lowest service fees possible, financial institutions positively

impact access to justice in North Carolina, building stronger, more equitable communities.

In 2021, Prime Partners, banks that go above minimal compliance to support civil legal aid and access to justice, supported NC IOLTA in awarding more to grantee partners working to provide access to housing, family safety, healthcare, and other basic needs.

THANK YOU TO OUR PRIME PARTNERS!



BANK OF OAK RIDGE

BLUE RIDGE BANK



PROVIDENCE BANK

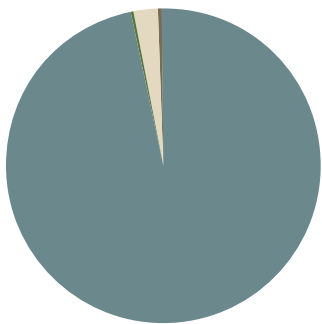
ROXBORO SAVINGS BANK



US BANK

WELLS FARGO

2021 FINANCIAL INFORMATION



INCOME

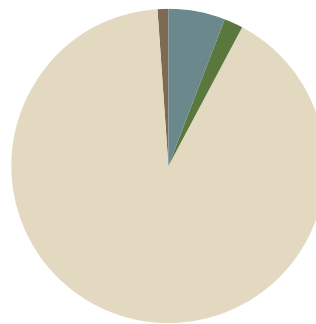
IOLTA Accounts:
\$5,661,404

Interest on Investments:
\$15,272

Cy Pres:
\$142,098

Other:
\$23,073

Total Income: \$5,841,847



EXPENSES

Personnel:
\$297,337

Non-Personnel:
\$101,639

2022 Grant Awards:
\$4,214,500

2021 Matching Grants:
\$40,000

Total Expenses: \$4,653,476

The financial information provided is a condensed version of NC IOLTA's audited financials for the year ending December 31, 2021. Contact the IOLTA office for additional financial information.



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**North Carolina Interest on Lawyers'
Trust Accounts (NC IOLTA)**

A program of the
North Carolina State Bar

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