



NORTH CAROLINA  
**IOLTA**

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2022 ANNUAL REPORT



40 years *of* restoring hope through justice

# Message *from* the Leadership

**FORTY YEARS AGO**, recognizing the opportunity to improve the legal system and the administration of justice, the North Carolina State Bar Plan for Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts was formed. Then, as now, the quality of justice was dependent upon the ability of people to access the system to protect their rights. A group of lawyers proposed we seize this opportunity to improve access by using interest earned on lawyers' general trust accounts to fund legal services for those who could not afford an attorney. The North Carolina State Bar Council and Supreme Court agreed, establishing the program on June 23, 1983.

As we look back at the past 40 years of funding access to justice, we celebrate the critical role that civil legal aid has played in breaking down barriers and creating strong communities. Our contributions have supported progress in making the justice system more accessible to low-income and underserved individuals, families, and children. By helping people stay in their homes, access health care, and escape domestic violence, communities are more stable, healthy, and safe. Your partnership makes this possible.

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As we look ahead, we acknowledge the continued need for resources and collaboration to move towards our vision: a state where all people can effectively meet their legal needs. We hope you will join us in 2023 as we work to increase our impact and improve access to justice.

Shelby Duffy Benton  
*Chair, Board of Trustees*

Mary L. Irvine  
*Executive Director*

*Your partnership* makes our work possible.

# 2022 Impact

North Carolina's legal services programs served **47,123 North Carolinians**.



Volunteer attorneys contributed more than **13,000 pro bono hours** to support access to justice.



## NORTH CAROLINA IOLTA

### OUR MISSION

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

Legal aid helped more than **8,466 families** achieve stability when dealing with domestic violence and other family law matters.



Legal aid ensured **11,254 families** had the support they needed to stay in their homes when faced with the threat of foreclosure and other housing issues.




Justice is a *journey*, not a destination.

# Celebrating 40 Years of NC IOLTA

**IN 1981**, Robinson O. Everett, Chairman of the Special Committee on Interest on Trust Accounts, reported to the North Carolina State Bar Council upon the conclusion of the committee's work, recommending the creation of an IOLTA program in North Carolina as "an excellent opportunity of how the individual attorney can aid in making needed changes and improvements" in the administration of justice.

**NC IOLTA** has evolved in the last 40 years but remains true to the core principles upon which it was founded: to use funds generated for the public benefit, assuring the availability of legal services to all, regardless of the ability to pay. Please join us in celebrating 40 years of NC IOLTA.



**\$111 million +  
awarded since  
our inception**



**\$109 million +  
interest earned on  
IOLTA accounts**



**<10% of income  
used for operating  
expenses**

By working toward equitable access to civil legal aid, we at NC IOLTA are creating a North Carolina where all individuals, families, and children can fairly navigate the justice system to have their basic needs met and rights protected—so they can thrive.

# A Brief History of NC IOLTA

<b>1983</b> The North Carolina State Bar Council approves a proposal for a voluntary IOLTA program, and the Supreme Court approves the rule changes necessary to allow IOLTA accounts.	<b>1985</b> The first IOLTA grants, totaling \$200,000, are awarded.	<b>1996</b> At the urging of Ward Hendon, the North Carolina IOLTA Board of Trustees establishes the reserve fund to stabilize grantmaking during periods of economic decline.	<b>2007</b> With support from the North Carolina Bar Association, Equal Access to Justice Commission, and Bankers Association, the North Carolina State Bar Council requests that the IOLTA program be made mandatory. The North Carolina Supreme Court agrees.	<b>2010</b> A new rule requires the financial institutions to pay an interest rate on IOLTA accounts that is comparable to the rate paid on their other similar accounts.	<b>2015</b> NC IOLTA receives the largest settlement award to date from Bank of America. Funds are used to support foreclosure prevention and community redevelopment legal services programs.
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## **2021**

NC IOLTA releases our first strategic plan, including updated mission, vision, and values statements, to guide leadership in the coming years.

Research demonstrates that even a small amount of legal assistance can dramatically improve outcomes for families. Access to justice can help keep people in their homes and out of poverty, prevent unfair criminal justice outcomes, and more—ensuring fair treatment under the law.

## *How We Work*

We partner with financial institutions across the state to secure the highest interest rates and lowest fees possible.

We assist individual lawyers and law offices with establishing mandatory interest-bearing IOLTA accounts to hold client funds.



Those accounts earn interest which financial institutions send to IOLTA on a monthly basis.

We distribute funds to grantees who, in turn, provide legal advice and representation across our communities and in all 100 NC counties.

Our partners—financial institutions, lawyers, and nonprofit providers of civil legal aid—each play a critical role in increasing access to justice through our work.

# One Client's Story:

## Martha Warkie Becomes an American Citizen



**Originally from Monrovia, Liberia,** Martha Warkie came to visit relatives already living in the United States in 2000. She didn't plan to stay long term, but the ongoing civil war and political instability in her native

country made her decide to apply for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

A TPS designation currently allows citizens in 16 countries around the world experiencing dangerous conditions such as armed conflict to stay in the United States and obtain a job legally. Each year, those with TPS must wait for an announcement from the presidential administration holding power regarding whether the program will be continued.

Despite ongoing uncertainty about being able to stay in the country, Martha remained committed to her employer and the Charlotte community. She loves helping others and has been a nutrition aide at University Place Nursing and Rehabilitation Services since 2001. The facility serves patients recovering from illness or injury, as well as long-term residents with Alzheimer's and similar conditions.

Martha enjoys her job and is a hard worker who excels in a challenging role. Nutrition aide positions are often difficult to fill and have high turnover rates.

Jelena Giric-Held, the Immigration Law Clinic Director at the nonprofit International House, has assisted Martha since 2015 with her TPS renewal. A 2022 NC IOLTA grantee, International House provides low-income immigrants and refugees with the legal assistance they need to navigate documentation, naturalization, and related issues.

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*Despite ongoing uncertainty about being able to stay in the US, Martha remained committed to her employer and the Charlotte community.*

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International House's services are increasingly vital. About 16–18% of Charlotte's population is now foreign-born, compared to less than 1% in 1980. In 2017, immigrant households in Charlotte earned \$4 billion and contributed over \$1 billion in taxes (New American Economy, 2019).

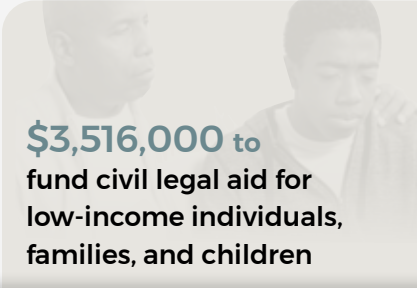
When Liberians unexpectedly become eligible to apply for green cards in 2019, Jelena helped Martha with the application process. She assisted her with completion of the appropriate forms and went with her to her qualifying interview.

Once she had a green card, Martha could apply for and obtain American citizenship. Now in her late 70s, she is extremely grateful for Jelena's support and continues to make a positive impact on others every day.

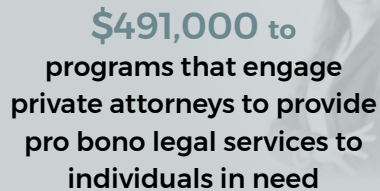
# 2022 Grantmaking

Total NC IOLTA grants administered in 2022:

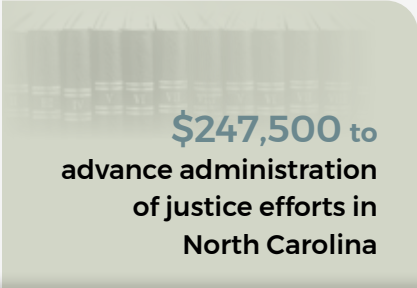
**\$4,254,500**



**\$3,516,000** to fund civil legal aid for low-income individuals, families, and children



**\$491,000** to programs that engage private attorneys to provide pro bono legal services to individuals in need



**\$247,500** to advance administration of justice efforts in North Carolina

## Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition

- \$30,000 to support individual representation for vulnerable immigrants and trainings for North Carolina attorneys

## Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy

- \$135,000 to support civil legal aid in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties
- \$75,000 to support pro bono legal services in Mecklenburg County
- \$31,300 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$200,000 to provide civil legal assistance for low-income immigrants in domestic violence, housing, consumer, and immigration cases

## 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.

- \$70,000 to support child advocacy in high-conflict custody disputes in Mecklenburg County

## Court Watch of North Carolina

- \$15,000 to provide assistance for pro se litigants in family law cases in Guilford and surrounding counties

## Disability Rights North Carolina

- \$160,000 to address educational services for at-risk juveniles with disabilities in North Carolina schools

## Financial Protection Law Center

- \$50,000 to support homeownership and asset preservation in southeastern North Carolina
- \$36,400 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance



### **International House of Metrolina, Inc.**

- \$25,000 to support the Immigration Law Clinic

### **Land Loss Prevention Project**

- \$70,000 to preserve land rights for minority and indigent individuals and address issues of environmental concern in North Carolina
- \$32,000 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance

### **Legal Aid of North Carolina**

- \$1,440,000 to support statewide civil legal aid
- \$250,000 to support pro bono lawyer engagement across the state
- \$229,700 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance

### **Mediation Network of North Carolina**

- \$50,000 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
- \$81,500 to support technology projects that improve access to justice

### **North Carolina Legal Education Assistance Foundation**

- \$61,000 to assist public interest attorneys across the state with loan repayment obligations

### **North Carolina Justice Center**

- \$690,000 to support statewide impact litigation efforts and legal services to immigrants
- \$41,500 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance

### **North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services**

- \$40,000 to protect the rights of jail inmates to safe and humane conditions

### **Pisgah Legal Services**

- \$96,000 to support civil legal aid in Western North Carolina
- \$91,000 to support pro bono legal services in Western North Carolina
- \$29,100 to provide foreclosure prevention legal assistance
- \$50,000 to support technical assistance, legal services, and education for community-based organizations

### **World Relief Durham**

- \$20,000 to support the Immigration Legal Services program

**In 2022, NC IOLTA administered *\$940,323* in state funding.**

In addition to IOLTA grantmaking, NC IOLTA also administers state funds directed to Legal Aid of North Carolina and Pisgah Legal Services to provide legal services to victims of domestic violence and veterans.

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*2022–2023*



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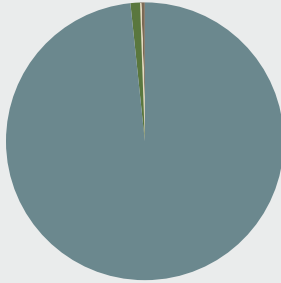
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OPERATIONS MANAGER

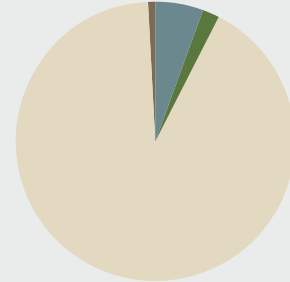
## Financial Information 2022

### Income



- IOLTA Accounts: **\$7,767,049**
- Interest on Investments: **\$88,983**
- Cy Pres: **\$17,212**
- Other: **\$25,000**
- Total Income: \$7,898,244**

### Expenses



- 2023 Grant Awards: **\$6,061,864**
- 2022 Matching Grants: **\$40,000**
- Personnel: **\$373,760**
- Non-Personnel: **\$125,532**
- Total Expenses: \$6,601,156**

The financial information provided above is a condensed version of NC IOLTA's audited financials for the year ending December 31, 2022. Contact the IOLTA office for additional financial information.

Thank you to our *Prime Partners* that commit to maximizing their contributions to our efforts.

BANK OF OAK RIDGE

BLUE RIDGE BANK

FIRST CAPITAL BANK

PROVIDENCE BANK

ROXBORO SAVINGS BANK

WELLS FARGO

**Forbright Bank**  
*For settlement agents only*

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

A PROGRAM OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR



NORTH CAROLINA  
IOLTA

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INVESTING IN JUSTICE FOR  
ALL NORTH CAROLINIANS

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