



IDAHO

Access to Justice Campaign

...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

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Dear Friends,

Access to Justice Idaho is a fundraising campaign that benefits clients of DisAbility Right Idaho, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program and Idaho Legal Aid Services. Our mission is to provide civil legal services, education and advocacy to vulnerable Idahoans in need. While the Constitution guarantees access to the courts for all Americans, that right is rather hollow without a lawyer's assistance. More than 245,000 Idahoans live in poverty and a 2013 University of Idaho study found that over 775,000 Idahoans who face civil legal difficulties do not have the resources to seek the help of an attorney.

There is an urgent need for funding for DisAbility Rights Idaho, Idaho Legal Aid Services and the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program. These are the primary providers of legal services for low-income Idahoans and each have seen drastic cuts in their funding sources at a time when demand for legal services is at an all-time high.

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, additional legal help is being provided to Idahoans in need. Since the beginning of the Access to Justice Idaho Campaign in 2013, the number of clients that DisAbility Rights Idaho, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, and Idaho Legal Aid Services have served has increased from 4,335 people in 2013 to 5,226 in 2015. This increase is the direct result of the generosity of those who donated to the Campaign. In the following pages, you will see a few of their stories.

Thank you to all who have supported the Access to Justice Idaho Campaign. Your contributions have helped victims of domestic violence, vulnerable children and elderly, and people with disabilities have access to the things most of us enjoy every day: safety and security.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Homer
Steering Committee Chair

In 2016, only one out of five Idahoans living in poverty will receive the civil legal help they need when their most basic human rights are at stake.



“Josie”

“Josie” is a young mother of two whose husband, “Bill” was verbally abusive. Through the course of their marriage his behavior became increasingly erratic and frightening. Finally, Bill’s abuse became too much and Josie packed her children and fled to her parent’s house. Because she was afraid of what he might do, Josie refused to tell Bill where she was staying and cautioned her friends, family, and children to do the same. Bill, however, was allowed to call the children and eventually manipulated their four year-old daughter into telling him where they were. Bill immediately drove to Josie’s parent’s house. He used his car as a battering ram and crashed it into their garage, totaling their cars and everything in the garage. Bill tried to break into the house to get to Josie. He threatened Josie’s parents with a knife as they barricaded the back door while Josie called the police. Unable to break in, Bill hurled rocks through the windows of the children’s play room. Fortunately, the police arrived before anyone was physically hurt. Bill was put in jail and faced six felonies including two counts of injury to a child, two counts of aggravated assault, stalking, and malicious injury to property.

When Josie came to ILAS she was terrified. While going over the details of her husband’s abuse and attack, she suffered flashbacks. Not only was Josie traumatized by what her husband had done, she was also scared of the prospect of having to fend for herself and her children alone. Her confidence was low. Josie’s attorney filed a complaint for divorce and asked for sole physical custody of the children. Though Bill fought hard for custody—making misleading statements to the court and false accusations about Josie’s ability to parent, Josie remained strong. The judge saw through Bill’s manipulation and issued a no contact order, sole legal custody to Josie, and ordered Bill to begin paying child support immediately.

Though the ordeal has been difficult, Josie was able to gain freedom from Bill and her confidence has grown. Josie and her children are now safe, stable, and are rebuilding their lives.

Services to the State of Idaho

From January 1 to December 31, 2015, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, DisAbility Rights Idaho, and Idaho Legal Aid Services served **5,226** vulnerable Idahoans.

Family: 1,422. Divorce and custody cases with domestic violence, protection orders, and guardianships.

Income Maintenance: 239. Obtain SSI benefits for people with disabilities.

Health: 345. Helping seniors obtain Medicaid.

Consumer: 351. Consumer scams, identity theft and protecting assets.

Housing: 969. Wrongful foreclosures and evictions, security deposits, mobile home issues, and public housing.

Other: 700. Advanced directives, juvenile, education, wills and others.

DisAbility Rights Idaho: 1,200. The top services concerned denial of benefits/entitlements and Medicaid

Many vulnerable, low-income Idahoans need the protection of the civil courts to preserve their rights, their safety, and sometimes, their lives. Without the help of an attorney, that protection can be completely out of reach. When a woman’s husband becomes violent or abusive, someone has to help her file for a restraining order. When a person with a disability is abused or exploited by their guardian, someone has to file the petition to change the guardianship. When someone with a chronic mental illness is denied coverage for community mental health services, they need someone to appeal the decision. A senior citizen with dementia can no longer get by on their own, but their application for Medicaid coverage of in-home assistance services has been denied and must be appealed. In these situations, and so many others, people in need of legal assistance rarely have the means to hire an attorney in private practice. Access to Justice Idaho provides people like these with experienced attorneys who are committed to seeing their legal needs are met.



Jim Baugh
Executive Director
DisAbility Rights Idaho

"The Osbornes"

The "Osbornes" have raised their ten year-old nephew "Seth" since he was a toddler. Seth's mother had been deeply addicted to drugs for years. When Seth was two years-old, Child Protective Services gave her an ultimatum—either she find a home for Seth or they would place him into foster care. The Osbornes stepped in, hoping that the Seth's mom would get into recovery and stabilize her life. But as time went on she showed up for visits less frequently and it was clear that she still struggled with addiction. In order to protect Seth, the Osbornes contacted the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program for help obtaining a legal adoption.

Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program was able to place the Osbornes with a pro bono attorney who obtained an Order of Adoption. Seth's mother was living in a small, remote town with a new partner and newborn child and did not have a vehicle to travel to sign the termination of parental rights in front of a Judge. When she explained her circumstances, the volunteer attorney made arrangements to travel, along with a Judge, to where she lived so they could process her termination of rights. The hearing for the adoption was held three months after Seth's mother signed and the Osbornes were able to successfully adopt Seth. The Osbornes can now rest easy knowing that they are able raise Seth in a safe and healthy environment. Even Seth's mother has expressed gratitude to the Osbornes for providing for Seth. And Seth is happy too, recently requesting that his last name be legally changed to Osborne, as they have been his mom and dad ever since he could remember.

Access to Justice Idaho donations are particularly important because they provide unrestricted dollars, which can be used for any case and any client who qualifies under an organization's income guidelines. The primary funding for Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, DisAbility Rights Idaho, and Idaho Legal Aid Services is grant related, and we are all very grateful to the federal agencies and foundations that support us. However, most grants restrict their funds to certain case types or clients and therefore limit the ability these organizations have to respond to evolving legal needs in the community. For example, none of Idaho Volunteer Lawyer Program's current grants cover immigration matters or cases involving representation of minors, such as guardianships, although there is unquestionably a tremendous need throughout the state for free legal services in these areas. Due to these restrictions, we are often forced to turn away vulnerable people who desperately need our help. Donations, like those received through Access to Justice Idaho, allow Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, Idaho Legal Aid Services and DisAbility Rights to continue to meet demonstrated needs not otherwise addressed by available grant funding.



Sue Pierson
Legal Director
Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program

Thank you for giving me a priceless gift in 2015—my safety and freedom.

S.B. December 2015

I needed your services more than ever and had no money. My daughter needed to be protected from her father's drugs and alcohol problem. Thanks to you I got sole legal custody...Thank you!!

R.M. June 2015

My situation was very unique. I felt like I finally found an attorney that was able to understand my situation and take it seriously.

N.W. October 2015

"The United States ranks 65th for the accessibility and affordability of its civil justice. We're tied with Botswana, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, not far behind Moldova and Nigeria."

**Put Lawyers Where They're Needed, New York Times
June, 17, 2015**

“Dan”

“Dan” is a twenty-four year-old man with developmental disabilities. Dan’s parents served as co-guardian and co-conservators for Dan and had been taking financial advantage of him for years. They billed the Department of Health and Welfare for time spent as his community support workers, when in fact, they were not spending any time with him at all. One of his parents, who also served as Dan’s Representative Payee, refused to give Dan access to his Social Security checks. Finally, Dan’s parents opened gas and power accounts in Dan’s name and didn’t pay the bills, causing them to go into collections. Dan was understandably stressed and upset. He was referred to DisAbility Rights Idaho for help with terminating his parents as his co-guardians and co-conservators.

The attorney for DisAbility Rights was concerned by Dan’s story. She helped him file a Petition to Terminate to immediately remove his parents from their positions of co-guardian and co-conservator. A limited guardian was appointed for Dan for one year. After the year is up, the court will reevaluate to determine if Dan even needs a guardianship at all.

With DisAbility Rights Idaho’s help, Dan now has more control over his life. He has moved from his parent’s home into a residential rehabilitation home where he is able to maintain his independence in a supported environment. With help, Dan is strengthening his independent living skills and takes pride learning how to budget and manage his money.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lila and I worked with a volunteer attorney this year to get my 80 year old mother’s immigration status in order. Although my attorney was new to immigration law, his help was very beneficial to us. When he did not know the answer to a question or was unsure on how to proceed, he researched the answer or asked other attorneys about it and was always able to get the answers needed.

I really appreciated his help. He always made time for us and it never seemed like he was in a rush. He also communicated well with us through follow up phone calls and e-mails. One of the things that was most helpful to us was his ability to go over all the documents carefully. He made sure that we understood exactly what was being asked and how to answer most efficiently and appropriately. He made sure that we dotted all the I’s and crossed all the T’s. That is something that I felt was one of the things we could not have done without him. Our papers were filled out and sent to INS and now we are just waiting for the final documents to be issued. I was very grateful to have his help on this very confusing process.

Sincerely,

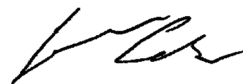
Lila

Poverty is a huge barrier for Idahoans with civil legal needs. According to the 2016 Justice Index, Idaho ranks 49th in the country with .287 legal aid attorneys per every 10,000 persons living under 200% the poverty level.

Poor legal outcomes due to self-representation (or not taking the matter to court at all) makes Idahoans who struggle to make ends meet even more vulnerable. Legal representation prevents homelessness by guarding against unlawful evictions, removes children and the elderly from abusive homes, and secures benefits for veterans. For victims of domestic violence, studies show that having an attorney increases the likelihood of obtaining a restraining order from thirty-two percent for self-represented victims to eighty-six percent for victims with a lawyer.

No one deserves to suffer because they are poor.

While we realize that we cannot serve all the civil legal needs of the more than 245,000 low income Idahoans, we can and will use Access funds to serve the most vulnerable members of our society. The positive outcomes from this representation will help our clients, their families and our communities.



Jim Cook
Executive Director
Idaho Legal Aid Services

If you would like to help Idahoans in need receive the legal help they deserve, please consider a donation to Access to Justice Idaho. You can donate online <https://www.razoo.com/us/story/Access-To-Justice-Idaho>; by mail: Access to Justice Idaho, PO Box 895, Boise, Idaho, 83701-0895; or personally deliver it to the Idaho State Bar, 525 W. Jefferson Street, Boise, Idaho.

For questions about the Campaign, please contact Gina Whitney, Development Director, Idaho Legal Aid at ginawhitney@idaholegalaid.org or call (208) 336-8980 ext. 1105



The Access to Justice Idaho Steering and Leadership Committees would like to acknowledge the following donors for their generous support.* From the bottom of our hearts, thank you! You make Idaho a better place.

Visionaries (\$5,000 and up)

Fourth District Bar Association
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Community Grant from the District of Idaho
Stoel Rives
ISB Commercial Law & Bankruptcy Section
Hawley Troxell
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The Access to Justice Idaho Steering and Leadership Committees would also like to extend a HUGE amount of gratitude to Whitney Fouser and Gjording Fouser for organizing the 2016 Access to Justice Idaho Fund Run.

The weather was beautiful and nearly 200 people (including teenage beauty queens from across the state and Bigfoot, aka Kerry Hong from the Idaho Supreme Court) showed up to support Idahoans in need. Thanks so much for all your hard work!

** Donations to the 2016 Campaign as of July 7, 2016*

