

Public Counsel

ANNUAL REPORT 2013



We represent community.

Public Counsel

is the nation's largest pro bono law firm with a staff of 120 and the power of more than 5,000 attorneys, law students and other professionals. We deliver justice, hope and opportunity to children, families, immigrants, veterans, nonprofits and small businesses through one-on-one legal help, policy and legislation, and impact litigation in nine practice areas.

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ON THE COVER: Public Counsel and our *pro bono* partners helped nonprofit East LA Community Corporation to obtain title to the run-down Casa Del Mexicano near downtown Los Angeles and start the process of restoring it to glory as a community centerpiece. Read more about this story on page 2.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Public Counsel Senior Staff Attorney Sarah Stegemoeller, Carmen Fuentes, Public Counsel Board Member Michael Spindler of Navigant, Leticia Andrade and grandson Benjamin, Benjamin Lichtman of Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert, Nessim, Drooks & Lincenberg, P.C., Christine Hermawan of Navigant, Bird Marella partner Ronald Nessim, and Hermenegildo Ortega.

Dear friends,

What is your community? Is it the place where you live or the people who live there with you? Would you fight for it?

At Public Counsel, community is our client. And we fight every day to protect the rights and dreams of the people we represent.

Our life-changing legal work makes a world of difference for people struggling with injustice or poverty. Last year Public Counsel reached more people, nonprofits and small businesses than ever before with one-on-one legal help.

And when Public Counsel and our *pro bono* partners go to work for a child in the foster care system, a family facing a wrongful eviction or foreclosure, or a veteran living on the streets, it triggers a tidal wave of justice that touches many others.

Last year we pursued statewide change for students and foster youth by sponsoring new laws and worked with local leaders in Los Angeles and San Francisco on policies to improve our schools and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

We also expanded our reach with a New York City initiative to put the power of *pro bono* attorneys to work for veterans.

Whether it's through the advocacy of talented attorneys and social workers, policy change or legislation, we get results, and we don't back down. And when those tools don't work, we litigate.

Public Counsel believes that having a great attorney on your side doesn't just change the outcome of your case, it can change your future. It can even make our world a better place. That's why we're proud to say that we represent justice, we represent hope, and we represent our whole community.

Thank you for your support.



Hernán D. Vera
President and CEO



Christopher A. Murphy
Chairperson, Board of Directors
DIRECTV



EMPOWERMENT PEOPLE: Attorneys, community members and the East LA Community Corporation worked to save Casa Del Mexicano.

We help people unlock their power, to raise their families, and Public Counsel has been a key partner,” said East LA Community Corporation Executive Director Maria Cabildo. “We wouldn’t have been able to afford the amazing legal assistance on our own.



CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LOS ANGELES' BOYLE HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD has been an immigrant crossroads for a century. Hard-working Jewish, Japanese and Mexican immigrants have all called it home.

Casa Del Mexicano is part of this rich history. Built in 1901 as a church, in the 1930s it became a self-help center for the community during the era when thousands of Mexican citizens were being sent home, blamed for stealing scarce jobs during the Great Depression.

By the 2000s, it had fallen into disrepair, and the California Attorney General's office took the rare action to dissolve the nonprofit that had mismanaged the historic space.

The East LA Community Corporation was selected to redevelop the property for the benefit of the local community, but was first required to pay a \$440,000 prior lien or lose the building to

foreclosure. Public Counsel *pro bono* attorney Rosemary Lemmis of Davies Lemmis Raphaely Law Corporation stepped in to help the group obtain clear title. She was supported by the forensic accounting work of Public Counsel Board Member Michael Spindler of Navigant to evaluate the validity of the lien, and litigation attorneys Benjamin Lichtman and Ronald Nessim of Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert, Nessim, Dooks & Lincenberg, P.C. and Ted Boxer to address the foreclosure threat.

Thanks to our team's help, Casa Del Mexicano will again be a source of support and pride to the whole community.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: Public Counsel Community Development Director Shashi Hanuman and Senior Staff Attorney Sarah Stegemoeller with Boyle Heights residents Leticia Andrade, grandson Benjamin, and Hermenegildo Ortega; ornate murals inside Casa Del Mexicano; the front of the 113-year-old building.



HAPPY TOGETHER: Public Counsel Director of Immigrants' Rights Judy London helped Didier Vakombua win his asylum case after a five year fight and reunite with his children, Didienne and Didierson, and his wife, Jeannie.

CASE STUDY: POLITICAL ASYLUM

HUSBAND AND WIFE DIDIER AND JEANNIE VAKOMBUA worked together as doctor and nurse in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They raised two children in the chaos of a country where more than 5 million people have died in vicious civil wars since the late 1990s.

But when Didier helped aid workers expose those atrocities, he became the target of threats and violence. He fled his homeland, but he was forced to leave his family behind.

Didier never thought their reunion would be five years away.

Didier's asylum application was stalled in America's broken immigration justice system. He thought of giving up his case and going back, risking his life to be with his family. But Public Counsel and *pro bono* attorneys Laura Wytsma of Loeb & Loeb LLP and Eric Welsh of Reeves Miller Zhang & Diza stood with the Vakombuas through the ordeal.

Didier won asylum last year and his wife and family joined him in Los Angeles.

“After five days together I forgot the five years that I was here by myself,” said Didier.

“It seems like a dream.”

– JEANNIE VAKOMBUA

“ I want the best for her. ”

– CLELIA AVLIES, WHO BECAME LEYLANIE'S
LEGAL GUARDIAN AFTER HER MOTHER'S DEATH

CASE STUDY: GUARDIANSHIP

LEYLANIE WAS BORN IN THE brightly painted back house her mother rented from Clelia and Porfirio Aviles. Leylanie and her mother quickly became part of the tight-knit family. When Leylanie's mother suddenly became sick last year, a hospital social worker referred Clelia and Porfirio to our Peace of Mind Guardianship Project. That's where *pro bono* attorney Karin Gottheiner helped them file for joint guardianship.

When her mother died just weeks later, Leylanie still had a place to call home with people to care for her. Now 6, she falls asleep every night in her pink room under a giant baby picture of herself.

"She's been part of our family since she was born," said Clelia, who plans to adopt Leylanie. "I want to see her grow, to be a good student, to have a career. I want the best for her, and I want her to be with me always."

Public Counsel's Adoptions and Guardianship programs help hundreds of children like Leylanie find stable, loving homes every year.

Leylanie at home with Porfirio and Clelia Aviles





Alondra with
her mother,
Christina Zamora

CASE STUDY: EDUCATION RIGHTS

A LONDRA WAS A TYPICAL 10-year-old who had never been in trouble at school. Her mother, Christina Zamora, worked hard to keep the drugs and violence in their San Fernando Valley neighborhood out of their lives.

But trouble found her. Alondra didn't notice when an older relative hid a small bag of marijuana in the pocket of her shorts. When school staff learned about it, she was expelled from her public charter school.

"They didn't even give her a chance," Christina said. "They didn't know my daughter. They didn't know her mother."

Christina stood by her daughter and contacted Public Counsel. We fought for Alondra to be reenrolled in the school district, and we obtained school materials so she wouldn't fall behind during the months when she was out of school. Alondra, who is now 11, started sixth grade in 2013 and didn't lose ground.

Students like Alondra shouldn't have to face the consequences of harsh school discipline. Research shows that even one suspension makes it three times more likely a student will later enter the juvenile justice system, and a huge percentage of those suspended or expelled are students of color or students with disabilities.

That's why Public Counsel is a statewide leader to end discrimination in school discipline and keep students in school and out of court. Our efforts led to five new laws enacted last year to promote research-based alternatives to suspension and expulsion, and we drafted new policies in Los Angeles and San Francisco schools to reduce police contact with students and end suspensions for minor misbehavior.

“They didn't know my daughter.”

— CHRISTINA ZAMORA ON
ALONDRA'S EXPERIENCE WITH HARSH
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE RULES

”

“This is our home.”

– ORNEALYNN COLEMAN

CASE STUDY: EVICTION DEFENSE

ORNEALYNN LOVED HER ONE-BEDROOM apartment in central Los Angeles where she raised three daughters. The place wasn't big, but it was clean and safe. Then she met Fred, a quiet man whose sparkling eyes seemed a perfect match to her huge smile. They married in 2000, and brought their two families together. Today the photos of their seven children in graduation gowns and school uniforms compete for space on the mantle.

Last year they received a three-day eviction notice.

“It came completely out of left field,” said Fred, who works as a train attendant for Amtrak. Money was tight, but they had always paid their rent.

The Colemans came to the Shriver Housing Project, where they

were paired with Public Counsel staff attorney Deepika Sharma and *pro bono* attorney Michael Baldock of Morrison & Foerster. They stopped the eviction, obtained much-needed repairs including bedbug abatement and patching a cracked ceiling, and won a rent reduction because of the problems.

“This is our home,” said Ornealynn. “They are miracle workers.”

The Shriver Housing Project is a collaborative of four legal groups that provide representation in high-stakes eviction cases, funded through the California courts as part of the Sargent Shriver Civil Counsel Act. The project has helped thousands of people to avoid homelessness caused by eviction.

“MIRACLE WORKERS”:
Fred and Ornealynn Coleman (center) with *pro bono* attorney Michael Baldock of Morrison & Foerster and Public Counsel staff attorney Deepika Sharma, who stopped their eviction.



“You have to keep pushing.”

– PUBLIC COUNSEL STAFF ATTORNEY ERIC POST

CASE STUDY: LGBTQ EQUALITY

PUBLIC COUNSEL IS DEDICATED to equality for people in the LGBTQ community. We protect the rights of LGBTQ students and individuals here at home, and pursue asylum for gays and lesbians who are victims of discrimination around the world.

As a transgender person, Myra Vandenberg's life was never easy. And when she moved to Los Angeles, it got harder. She wound up living in a park, homeless and alone. She eventually found a temporary shelter and was in line for a special federal Section 8 voucher reserved for people who have experienced homelessness.

Then she faced a new challenge because of her sexual identity. The name on her birth certificate didn't match her identification, and she was at risk of losing both the Section 8 voucher and her shelter bed. That's when Public Counsel staff attorney Eric Post got involved. Through intensive advocacy he made sure that Myra's identity would be recognized and her housing voucher honored. She now lives in a small apartment with her dog, Prince, around the corner from the park she once called home.

"I never had anybody to fight for me like Eric did, because all my life I had to fight for myself," Myra said.

"So many times she could have given up," said Post. "But you have to keep pushing."

HOME FOR GOOD:
Public Counsel
protected a federal
housing voucher for
Myra Vandenberg.



2013 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



ADOPTION DAY: Public Counsel celebrated the 8,000th adoption of children from the Los Angeles County foster care system since the program started in 1997.

Children's Rights Project

"If you had told me when we started the Adoptions Project that we would help 8,000 children to be adopted, I would not have believed you."

— KAREN ULLMAN, SUPERVISING SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY



PUBLIC COUNSEL'S ADOPTIONS PROJECT REACHED A MILESTONE IN 2013 when we finalized our 8,000th adoption of children from foster care. Since the program started in 1997, Public Counsel and the Alliance for Children's Rights have cleared a backlog of children waiting to be adopted and expanded our services to help children and families with special needs. Last year with the help of a \$1 million grant from the Everychild Foundation we offered a needs assessment to every family who we assist through adoption or guardianship to ensure they receive the mental health, special education, and other services that children need to thrive.

Pregnant and parenting teens living in foster care confront unique challenges that require specialized resources, support and services to help them parent their young children successfully and move toward

independence. **Public Counsel was a co-sponsor of SB 528, which encourages counties to conduct specialized conferences for pregnant and parenting foster youth.** Governor Brown signed SB 528 in September, and the law will also ensure there is timely, accurate information about the number of parenting youth in foster care, and will clarify that county child welfare agencies are authorized to provide age-appropriate information about reproductive health.

Young people who wind up in foster care through no fault of their own face long odds against attending college or even graduating from high school. Nationally only half of former foster youth graduate from high school, and just 3% will attend a four-year college. But Public Counsel's intensive advocacy is helping young people defy the odds. **Last year the attorneys and social workers in Public Counsel's Transition Age Foster Youth unit helped 93% of the foster youth they served to graduate from high school and go on to college.** Desiree Cruz was one of them. "I realized my life was about struggling through challenges that I had no control over," she said. "I've grown to realize that I am able to change my life with my education. That's the only path for me, the only way my life can be."

Community Development Project

PUBLIC COUNSEL'S SUPPORT FOR NONPROFIT housing developers is helping to create affordable homes for seniors and communities in need. Our client Little Tokyo Service Center builds affordable housing and provides community services in Los Angeles. In 2012, it obtained city approval to develop a four-story, 36-unit affordable housing complex in Koreatown for seniors with low incomes as well as social service space and community rooms. However, the project was threatened when three individuals filed a lawsuit against the City of Los Angeles challenging the approvals for the project. Public Counsel recruited experienced Alston & Bird attorneys Nicki Carlsen, Rebecca Harrington and Andrea Warren, who represented Little Tokyo Service Center and defended the City's decision to approve the project. Shiraz Tangri, who is now with Meyers Nave Riback Silver & Wilson, was also part of the team. They prevailed in trial and in the appellate court. Because of their dedicated efforts and brilliant legal strategy, this much-needed project will be able to move forward, and seniors with low incomes will have better access to vital housing and services.

Public Counsel joined community-led efforts to improve the lives of hard-working Angelenos. As part of the Street Vending Campaign we helped initiate a City Council motion that explores the legalization of street vending in order to provide economic development and healthy food options for Los Angeles neighborhoods. **We joined the Southeast Asian Community Alliance to win a landmark Cornfield Arroyo Specific Plan** for the Chinatown and Lincoln Heights neighborhoods that the *Los Angeles Times* called "a model for urban planning." As part of the Alliance for Community Transit, we are applying the lessons we learned there about how community members can have a meaningful voice in the future of their neighborhoods to shape new development that's happening in response to the region's increased public transportation planning and investment. In South Los Angeles, we are working with a diverse group of organizations and stakeholders to help create a new Community Plan that will protect and increase affordable housing, enhance economic opportunity and improve community health.

Last year started with President Obama's call to expand early care learning opportunities in his State of the Union address. **Public Counsel's work with early care providers and elected leaders in Southeast Los Angeles County** is helping to increase access to quality early care and close the achievement gap for children from working families with the support of First 5 LA.

2013 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Appellate Law

“We are committed to the rule of law and human rights, even when it may be unpopular.”

– LISA JASKOL,
DIRECTING ATTORNEY OF
THE APPELLATE LAW PROJECT

PUBLIC COUNSEL APPELLATE

Law Project Directing Attorney Lisa Jaskol worked to defend the rule of law as lead appellate counsel for Obaidullah, an Afghan held at Guantanamo Bay for 12 years without a trial. She presented oral argument in January 2014 at the D.C. Circuit. Jaskol's work on behalf of Guantanamo Bay detainees was featured in the *Daily Journal*, and she was named one of Southern California's Top 50 Women Attorneys by Super Lawyers.

The Federal Pro Se Clinic continued its successful partnership with Irell & Manella LLP, with nearly a dozen attorneys providing *pro bono* help to federal litigants over the year. “We continue to reaffirm our firm-wide commitment to *pro bono*, and we are always on the lookout for ways to increase our assistance to those who need but can't afford legal representation,” said Andrei Iancu, managing partner of Irell & Manella.

Public Counsel's Appellate Self-Help Clinic was featured in the ABA's manual on *pro bono* appeal programs and distributed to appellate judges and lawyers as a national model.

ASYLUM CLINIC:
UCLA School of Law
students joined our annual
asylum law clinic.

Immigrants' Rights

“Sometimes I would wonder how people can be so good.”

– SUSANA, A VICTIM OF ANTI-GAY PERSECUTION
FROM UGANDA WHO WON ASYLUM WITH OUR HELP

UGANDA'S CLIMATE OF ANTI-GAY HATRED HAS LED TO

persecution for gays and lesbians and others promoting tolerance. Our client Susana was the principal of a secondary school in Uganda who taught the value of diversity to her students. When school authorities accused a group of students of being lesbian and demanded that Susana expel them from the school, she refused. Then Susana herself became the target of bigotry. She was gang-raped, a horrific act meant to silence her. Working together with another group, we won asylum for Susana and are working to unite her with family members still in Uganda. “When I was in desperate need, I met people from the Program for Torture Victims and Public Counsel,” Susana said after learning she had been granted asylum. “They were there for me in everything. Sometimes I would wonder how people can be so good, hardworking, and understanding.” Public Counsel supports the rights of LGBTQ immigrants from around the world.

Public Counsel has helped nearly 1,000 young people brought to the U.S. as children to qualify for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

Deferred Action allows these young people to pursue their dreams of college and career without fear of deportation. For many, it has also opened the doors to permanent residency. Our client Perla was brought to the U.S. at age 5, and sought Public Counsel's help for Deferred Action. But staff attorney Katka Werth found that she was eligible for a U visa because she had been a victim of violence. Despite being blind in one eye, and unable to access health insurance due to her immigration status, she received a BA from the California State University system. A year after Perla's Deferred Action application was approved, her U visa application was also approved. Now she can pursue her future as a permanent U.S. resident. “There were a lot of times I thought it wasn't worth it,” Perla said. “Now I have a chance to make use of what I learned and not be afraid.”



Consumer Law Project

“Every time that someone loses a home to foreclosure we all suffer.”

– MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI ANNOUNCING
LAUNCH OF A LEGAL PROJECT TO HELP
HOMEOWNERS STAFFED BY PUBLIC
COUNSEL AND OTHER GROUPS

FORECLOSURES CONTINUE TO HURT

Los Angeles families and neighborhoods struggling to recover from the economic crisis. But legal help can make the difference in whether a person can obtain a foreclosure modification or whether their eviction rips a hole in the fabric of our city. Public Counsel *pro bono* attorneys are working with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment and legal partners in the California Consumer Justice Coalition, funded through a grant from the office of California Attorney General Kamala Harris. At a press conference announcing the legal clinic, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said, “Neighborhoods are still reeling from the foreclosure crisis, and every time that someone loses a home to foreclosure we all suffer.”

Ceith Sinclair and Louise Redrick raised their five adopted children and three biological children in the same home where Ms. Redrick had grown up as a foster child. When the financial crisis hit, they sought out a loan modification that they thought would keep them in their home. But an error by the servicer for their loan meant the modification was not recognized, and they received an eviction notice instead. Public Counsel filed the lawsuit that stopped the eviction, and the lender rescinded the sale. **Because of our help, Ceith and Louise and their family kept their home.** Bob Haase at Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi L.L.P. and Public Counsel continue to litigate the case against the servicer for compensatory damages for Ceith and Louise.

Public Counsel's Debtor Assistance Project provided legal help and representation to over 3,300 *pro se* Chapter 7 bankruptcy filers through the Los Angeles Self Help desk and Pro Se clinic, and at monthly reaffirmation hearings in the Los Angeles and Woodland Hills Bankruptcy Courts for the Central District of California. Without Public Counsel, unrepresented debtors would be vulnerable to fraud perpetrated by unlicensed bankruptcy petition preparers and unlawful harassment by creditors. Public Counsel also collaborated with the Bankruptcy Court in producing a Chapter 7 bankruptcy video to educate consumers about the bankruptcy filing process, and other courts across the country are looking to us as a model.



Education Rights

“Ending discrimination in school discipline isn’t just a local issue, it’s an issue for our entire state and our nation.”

— STATEWIDE EDUCATION RIGHTS DIRECTOR LAURA FAER, QUOTED IN THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

BECAUSE OF HARSH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES, TOO MANY LOS ANGELES students are put on the path to failure in school. Public Counsel worked with the Brothers, Sons, Selves Coalition, CADRE, and Youth Justice Coalition to jointly draft the School Climate Bill of Rights, a landmark policy for Los Angeles Unified School District that ends out of school suspensions for minor misbehavior known as “willful defiance” and commits the nation’s second largest district to implement research-based alternatives to harsh discipline.

Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall locks young people with disabilities in solitary confinement for up to 23 hours a day and deprives them of education, according to a **federal class action lawsuit Public Counsel filed in August with Disability Rights Advocates and Paul Hastings LLP.** Education is supposed to be at the center of young people’s rehabilitation. But students at Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall are locked for weeks at a time and hundreds of days in total in cells that have barely enough room for a bed and a narrow window the size of a hand. Young people are routinely held in conditions like those in a maximum security prison. Parents of young people currently held at Juvenile Hall say that Contra Costa County is denying them an education and contributing to their mental illness. The lawsuit is ongoing.

San Francisco community members are taking action to end the racial gap in school suspensions of African American and Latino youth. After Public Counsel and Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth requested data that showed 77% of suspended San Francisco students are African American or Latino, the **San Francisco school board passed a Safe and Supportive Schools Resolution** that requires schools to pursue alternatives such as restorative

SCHOOL CLIMATE:

Members of community organizing group CADRE with staff attorney Ruth Cusick after the LAUSD board approved the School Climate Bill of Rights.

practices or positive behavior support that can help students learn rather than sending them home for an unsupervised vacation, something research shows only make the problem worse. **The San Francisco school board approved an MOU with the San Francisco Police Department** that will help reduce arrests of students on campus, some as young as 8.

Impact Litigation

PUBLIC COUNSEL AND A COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR LOS ANGELES’S most vulnerable communities announced a settlement agreement with the County of Los Angeles that will lead to major changes to the General Relief program.

Public Counsel, Inner City Law Center, and Gary Blasi, Professor Emeritus at UCLA School of Law, together with *pro bono* counsel Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP led by Public Counsel Board Member Dan Grunfeld, filed papers for preliminary approval of the settlement agreement of the class action lawsuit titled *Guillory, et al. v. County of Los Angeles*, to resolve claims involving tens of thousands of people who were deprived of General Relief benefits in violation of state law and Constitutional guarantees of due process. The agreement followed 15 months of intensive negotiations with Los Angeles County and was approved by the Board of Supervisors.

A majority of General Relief recipients are homeless and the aid pays for things they desperately need such as food, medicine or resources for at least a few nights of shelter during the month. Approximately 100,000 people in Los Angeles County participate in the program.

Center for Veterans Advancement

“My foundation is proud to be announcing a new partnership with this great organization to extend legal services to the nation’s hidden heroes—America’s military and veteran caregivers.”

— SEN. ELIZABETH DOLE, 2013 WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS AWARD HONOREE

WE LAUNCHED A NEW NATIONAL PROJECT TO MEET THE LEGAL NEEDS of military caregivers. Senator Elizabeth Dole told the audience of nearly 1,000 at our William O. Douglas Dinner about a collaboration between Public Counsel’s Center for Veterans Advancement, the American Bar



PROUD TO SERVE: Staff Sgt. Lucas Gonzales survived one of the worst battles of the war in Afghanistan but suffers PTSD as a result. We assisted him with a benefits claim to help him get back on his feet.

Association, and the Military Officers Association of America to assist some of the estimated 1 million caregivers who support wounded, disabled or elderly service members and veterans. “Public Counsel’s work is a vital lifeline for countless vulnerable citizens, and my foundation is proud indeed to be announcing a new partnership with this great organization to extend legal services to the nation’s hidden heroes – America’s military and veteran caregivers,” said Senator Dole.

Public Counsel’s Center for Veterans Advancement launched a new initiative in New York City as part of Volunteer Lawyers for Veterans, a *pro bono* collaboration with the Yellow Ribbon Fund and Bank of America. We held a nationwide conference call with more than 100 Bank of America attorneys to discuss *pro bono* opportunities for their in-house legal staff.

2013 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Public Counsel on the Move

THE CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT named Public Counsel President and CEO **Hernán Vera** to the State Bar Board of Trustees...Appellate Law Directing Attorney **Lisa Jaskol** and Education Rights Director **Laura Faer** were recognized by Super Lawyers magazine...Supervising Senior Staff Attorney **Maggie Bordeaux** of our Debtors Assistance Project received the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys President Emeritus Henry J. Sommer Pro Bono Award, a national award recognizing the outstanding contributions of a consumer bankruptcy attorney. She was also appointed as a Lawyer Representative for the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference... Impact Litigation Director **Catherine Lhamon** departed Public Counsel to become Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education...Public Counsel launched an Education Rights Advisory Council of experienced litigators from some of the Bay Area's top firms and expanded our Bay Area office with the addition of Education Rights Advocate **Sarah Omojola**...Attorney **Ruth Stein** joined Public Counsel's New York City-based Volunteer Lawyers for Veterans initiative with the Yellow Ribbon Fund and Bank of America...Our San Francisco community organizing partner Coleman Advocates for Children & Youth honored Public Counsel with a Next Generation Champions award...Senior Staff Attorney **Sarah Stegemoeller** received the Spirit of Healing award from our nonprofit client Los Angeles Christian Health Centers... The New Leaders Council Los Angeles recognized Staff Attorney **Claudia Medina** as an outstanding progressive leader.

Homelessness Prevention

PUBLIC COUNSEL HELD TWO HOMELESS COURT SESSIONS IN 2013. PRO BONO attorneys from major law firms helped individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless by clearing up traffic tickets and minor "quality of life" offenses and the warrants that arise from not resolving them. Tyrone Robinson cleared old tickets so he can restart his automotive career. "Let's get you back on the road," Superior Court Judge Michael Tynan said as he dismissed the tickets in a special court hearing at People Assisting the Homeless. Public Counsel administers Homeless Court in partnership with the Los Angeles County Superior Court, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors/County Chief Executive Office, Los Angeles City Attorney's office, and other public agencies and advocates for homeless individuals.

Public Counsel's clinics in Hollywood, Skid Row, South L.A., Pasadena and San Pedro brought our model of legal help directly to people in need. By working with community-based organizations and local governments we support people

HOMELESS COURT: Public Counsel Board Members and Associate Leadership Board members joined a special court session last year (top); Director of Homelessness Prevention Will Watts with Tyrone Robinson

who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or HIV-positive with a range of legal needs including benefits advocacy and housing advocacy. Our client Barry was homeless on Skid Row for nearly a decade and survived off just \$221 a month in General Relief benefits and \$200 in food assistance. When he was hospitalized with a life-threatening illness, we advocated for him to obtain immediate disability benefits. In just two months, his claim was approved and his income tripled, meaning he will now have the financial stability to care for his needs.

OUR STAFF

Public Counsel's staff of 120 includes attorneys, social workers, paralegals, intake specialists and volunteer coordinators. Our attorneys are national experts in social welfare, immigration, veterans' advocacy, special education, impact litigation and economic justice.

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OUR EVENTS



▲ U.S. District Judge Terry J. Hatter Jr. with past Chairperson Gail Migdal Title of Katten Muchin Rosenman at the William O. Douglas Dinner



▲ Philip Cook of Jones Day, Robert Scoular of Dentons, Public Counsel's Hernán Vera, and Chairperson Christopher Murphy of DIRECTV at the 2013 Pro Bono Awards



▲ Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP Partner William R. Dougherty, Chairman of the firm's Executive Committee, received the Law Firm Pro Bono Award at the Douglas Dinner.



▲ Former U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole received the William O. Douglas Award



▲ More than 40 teams joined the Run for Justice at the ASICS LA Marathon

▼ Board members at the 2013 retreat



OUR SUPPORTERS

2013 DOUGLAS DINNER

Last year we honored former Sen. Elizabeth Dole with the William O. Douglas Award, City National Bank with the Corporate Achievement Award, and Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP with the Law Firm Pro Bono Award. The following organizations and individuals generously supported Public Counsel's annual William O. Douglas Dinner, which last year raised more than \$2.4 million.

GUARDIANS OF JUSTICE - \$100,000

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SENTINELS OF JUSTICE - \$75,000

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Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP
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UNDERWRITERS - \$25,000

Abacus Credit Counseling
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
Alston & Bird LLP
Bingham McCutchen LLP
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Holland & Knight LLP
The Audrey Irmas Foundation for Social Justice
K&L Gates LLP
Loeb & Loeb LLP
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

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Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

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Public Counsel dedicated its Douglas Society with 42 founding members. Their legacy gifts will help sustain Public Counsel for generations to come.

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▲ Public Counsel founder Fred Nicholas and former board chairperson Tom Unterman at the dedication of Public Counsel's wall of supporters and the Unterman Family Community Room.

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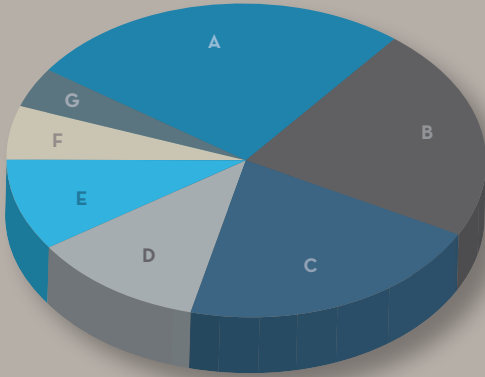
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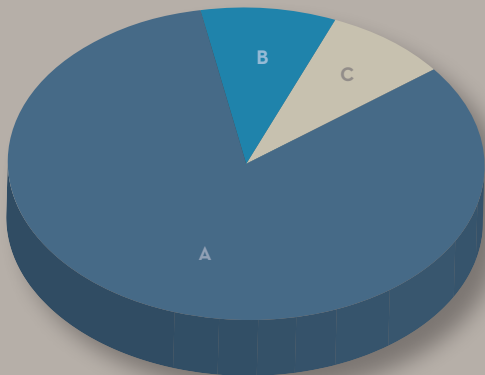
FINANCIALS

2013 REVENUES



A. GRANTS	\$2,892,461	26.15%
B. CONTRIBUTIONS	\$2,449,377	22.14%
C. PROGRAM FEES	\$2,336,333	21.12%
D. BUILDING-RELATED CAPITAL GAIN	\$1,281,676	11.59%
E. IOLTA/EQUAL ACCESS	\$1,050,153	9.49%
F. INVESTMENT/ MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$610,596	5.51%
G. ATTORNEY FEES/CY PRES	\$442,138	4%
TOTAL: \$11,062,734		

2013 EXPENSES



A. PROGRAM	\$8,346,957	82.62%
B. FUNDRAISING	\$921,713	9.12%
C. ADMINISTRATION	\$833,983	8.26%
TOTAL: \$10,102,653		



Our grants

Public Counsel received grants from the following organizations in 2013, in addition to our generous support from law firms, corporations and individuals:

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The California Wellness Foundation	Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation
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The Green Foundation	Walter S. Johnson Foundation
The Hearst Foundations	Weingart Foundation
Herman Family Foundation	Yellow Ribbon Fund
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