

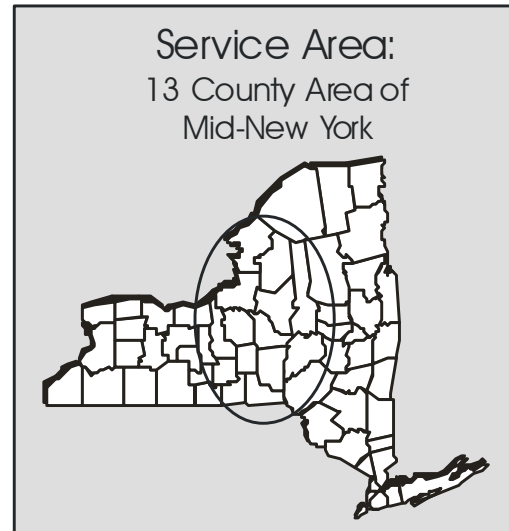
Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.

Overview of Achievements, 2014-2015

From April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015, LASMNY closed 5,488 cases benefiting 12,318 individuals. LASMNY won \$2,050,365 in back awards/settlements for clients, including 203 Social Security Disability (SSD) and/or SSI cases. LASMNY saved taxpayers \$2,004,313 by obtaining wrongfully denied SSD/SSI benefits, unemployment benefits and family support orders for individuals who would otherwise be on local welfare; restoring SSD/SSI eligibility for an additional 12 elderly and/or disabled refugees through the naturalization process; and keeping 63 homes at risk of foreclosure on the local property tax rolls. LASMNY helped consumers avoid \$4,761,198 in consumer debt, mortgage arrears, marital debt, support arrears, illegal rental charges and rental arrears, medical costs and court filing fees.

LASMNY presented 38 community legal education events to 825 participants, and distributed a total of 112,519 community legal education materials (including online downloads and unique web visitors). With the assistance of a Homeownership Protection Program (HOPP) grant, LASMNY has been able to greatly expand and maintain in-court foreclosure defense services throughout a 9-county area in the Central New York region. LASMNY also made a concerted effort to improve access to services for LGBTQ clients during the past year. LASMNY revised its internal policies and procedures to prohibit discrimination against clients, employees or board members on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. All LASMNY employees were required to attend LGBTQ cultural competency training, which was videotaped and is now required viewing for all new hires. All LASMNY advocates attended training about LGBTQ-related legal developments impacting their areas of practice. LASMNY posted “safe space” stickers in all offices, and created a pocket-sized service directory for LGBTQ survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. LASMNY distributed 1,200 copies of the booklet throughout the service area.

LASMNY’s Farmworker Law Project (FLP) greatly increased outreach visits and legal representation for migrant farmworkers this past reporting period. FLP made 563 labor camp visits to 31 counties in 2014-2015, as opposed to 399 labor camp visits to 23 counties in 2013-2014. FLP reached 5,142 farmworkers and their families, a 106% increase over 2013-2014 outreach numbers. FLP also distributed 10,416 bilingual legal education materials, a 76% increase over 2013-2014.



This Provider At a Glance

Population Served: Minorities, Disabled People, the Elderly
Poor, and Immigrants and Refugees

Area Served: 13-County Area in Mid-New York

Total Funding: \$5,284,155

Total IOLA Grant: \$100,000

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents

Total Staff: 56.60

Lawyers: 30.00

Paralegals: 16.00

Other Staff: 10.60

Types of Services Provided

Direct Civil Legal Representation

Brief Services

Extended Services

Hotlines and Other Phone-Based Services

Technology and Other Innovations

Community Legal Education

Pro Se Assistance

Collaborations With Other Service Providers

Major Cases or Other Advocacy Projects

Outcomes...

12,318 Individuals Benefited from 5,488 Closed Direct Civil Legal Cases

Dollar Benefits Achieved

for Clients* - Total	\$14,398,761
• Social Security, SSI Benefits:	\$12,478,486
• Other Federal Benefits:	\$24,914
• Unemployment Compensation:	\$24,212
• Family Law - Child Support:	\$1,110,504
• Family Law - Maintenance/Spousal Support:	\$30,360
• Family Law - Equitable Distribution of Assets:	\$355,736
• Affirmative Judgments:	\$49,764
• Other Benefits:	\$324,785

Extended Representation Outcomes

- 5,437 People benefited from extended representation

Brief Representation Benefits

- 6,649 People benefited from legal advice and counsel
- 164 People benefited from non-litigation advocacy services
- 68 People benefited by referral to other sources of help

*Total includes back awards and total monthly benefits, estimated over 6 months (unemployment compensation), 12 months (other federal benefits, equitable distribution of assets, affirmative judgments and other benefits), 60 months (Social Security, SSI) or 120 months (child and spousal support).

Examples...

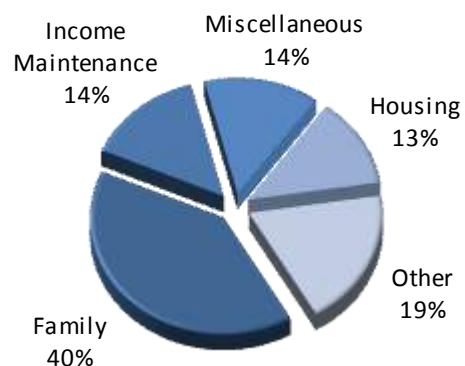
Outcomes for Clients

LASMNY represented a refugee from Burma with severe rheumatoid arthritis and post-traumatic stress disorder. Her young son is developmentally disabled and recently had a liver transplant. The child was receiving SSI due to his disabilities, but his benefits expired due to the 7-year time limit for non-citizens. The woman's own SSI application was denied by Social Security. LASMNY assisted the woman in successfully appealing her SSI denial, as well as obtaining a waiver of the English requirements for the naturalization exam. The woman was sworn in as a U.S. citizen in December 2014. She has now begun receiving her SSI benefits, including retroactive payments due to her. As the child automatically became a citizen when his mother did, LASMNY obtained a certificate of citizenship for him, allowing his SSI benefits to be reinstated.

At a farm in western New York, H-2A migrant workers were being transported in the back of a cargo van without seats or seat belts. Although they knew this was dangerous, they were fearful of losing their jobs if they complained. The workers retained FLP to see what their options were. FLP was able to file an anonymous complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, after which the farm started complying with H-2A vehicle safety regulations.

Breakdown of Cases by Legal Problem Area

	People	Cases
Total	12,318	5,488
Family	5,524	2,187
Income Maintenance	1,635	794
Miscellaneous	1,079	768
Housing	1,731	693
Other	2,349	1,046



Other Services

Hotlines and Other Telephone Based Legal Services

LASMNY's Central New York Legal HelpLine makes use of a voice over-IP telephone system, which connects 6 LASMNY offices via a telephone server in the Utica office. New clients from anywhere in the service area can dial a single toll-free number, or any local office number, to access the Central Intake Unit. Thanks to a 2010 Technology Initiatives Grant (TIG) from LSC, the phone system can now accept and respond to client intake calls in 9 languages, each of which has an "audio law library" allowing clients to hear information about their legal rights. From April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015, LASMNY's HelpLine staff provided advice and/or brief service to 1,140 clients. LASMNY's toll-free hotline number is listed on LawHelpNY, and was last updated on 4/17/15.

Technology and Other Innovations

LASMNY's Central New York Legal HelpLine makes use of a voice over-IP telephone system, which connects 6 LASMNY offices via a telephone server in the Utica office. New clients from anywhere in the service area can dial a single toll-free number, or any local office number, to access the Central Intake Unit. With the help of Judiciary Civil Legal Services funds, LASMNY was able to upgrade the HelpLine hardware and software in 2014, which was nearing the end of its useful life after 8 years in service. Since 2012, thanks to a Technology Initiative Grant from LSC, the phone system can accept and respond to client intake calls in 9 languages, each of which has an "audio law library" allowing clients to hear information about their legal rights. This past reporting period, 6,535 multilingual legal education materials were viewed on LASMNY's website, in 17 languages other than English. Numbers of LEP clients served also increased by 31% from the 2012-2013 reporting period to the 2013-2014 reporting period, and has remained at that level.

Legal Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

LASMNY provides a wide array of services to clients and the community in addition to direct legal representation, including community legal education events, distributing brochures on important legal topics, outreach to underserved populations, referrals to other sources of assistance and pro se assistance. From April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015, LASMNY assisted 121,669 individuals with these services.

A total of 38 community legal education events took place, attended by 825 people. Some of the legal topics covered were elder law, family law issues (including domestic violence), limited English proficiency, prisoner

re-entry issues, veteran's issues, dealing with difficult clients, human trafficking, public benefits and general information about LASMNY's services. LASMNY staff distributed a total of 15,638 brochures, and an additional 45,834 brochures and video/audio materials were downloaded from LASMNY's website. LASMNY's website had a total of 51,047 unique visitors during the reporting period.

FLP, as part of its statewide mission to represent migrant farmworkers, also provided an extensive array of services at the many migrant labor camps throughout the state. FLP provided outreach visits to 3,007 farmworkers at labor camps statewide, benefitting 5,142 people, on issues uniquely affecting the farmworker community. Outreach topics included employment law, worker's compensation, and health and safety issues. In addition, a Harvest Calendar and newsletter with important legal issues targeted at H-2A workers was jointly published and distributed throughout New York State and the New England area by FLP and other migrant projects in neighboring states. In all, 10,416 Spanish/English brochures, calendars and/or newsletters were distributed at labor camps and social service agencies throughout New York State.

LASMNY staff assisted 2,909 individuals through referrals to other sources of assistance, as well as 274 people through self-help (not counting those served by LASMNY's HelpLine). "Other" self-help largely consisted of technical assistance to both legal and lay service providers. PLEASE NOTE: LASMNY also held a number of pro bono and pro se clinics in 2014-2015, including divorce clinics, consumer clinics and veteran's clinics. However, an actual case is opened for each clinic participant, so clinic statistics are reported as cases rather than "other services."

Collaborations With Other Service Providers

LASMNY has a long history of collaborating with other legal services providers, the private bar and community-based organizations. First and foremost, LASMNY collaborates with its sister program in Syracuse, Legal Services of Central New York, Inc. (LSCNY). The

Number of People Benefited by Legal Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation...

Total:	73,960 People
Community Legal Education and Pro Se Assistance:	21773 People
Web Usage:	51,047 People
Legal Hotline Services:	1,140 People

Other Services, continued

Central New York Legal HelpLine serves as the single-point-of-entry for both programs, and both programs cross-refer cases to one another on a regular basis. LASMNY also cross-refers cases with the Frank H. Hiscock Legal Aid Society, Inc. (HLAS) in Syracuse, and is currently working on a “one roof” initiative that would house all 3 civil legal services providers in Syracuse in the same building.

LASMNY collaborates with the local bar associations in each county, including attending continuing legal education (CLE) trainings provided by the bar. LASMNY’s Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) program recruits, trains and refers cases to pro bono attorneys. With respect to community-based organizations, LASMNY’s Central New York Victims Assistance Project collaboration includes all 14 domestic violence and rape crisis programs over a 12-county area. LASMNY’s HOPP foreclosure defense staff attorneys work closely with foreclosure prevention counselors from Metro Interfaith in Binghamton, Utica NeighborWorks Homeownership Services, Delaware Opportunities and Home Headquarters of Syracuse. LASMNY’s Citizenship Project staff coordinates with the American Civic Association in Binghamton, the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees in Utica, the Syracuse City School District and nonprofit interpreting services.

Backup or Support Services

Under its federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant, LASMNY coordinates the Central New York Victim Assistance Project, a partnership with all 14 domestic violence and rape crisis programs over a 12-county area. LASMNY provides training to project partners on civil legal issues, as well as technical assistance on difficult cases. LASMNY’s project partners collectively strive to handle 15,000 hotline calls and serve 8,000 survivors per year. LASMNY’s goal is to

provide civil legal services to this population in 800 cases over the course of the VAWA grant period (2012-2015). LASMNY is particularly targeting the following underserved groups: isolated rural survivors; survivors of sexual assault; LGBTQ survivors; and refugees/immigrants. During this past IOLA reporting period, LASMNY completed and closed 421 cases for survivors.

LASMNY also collaborates with county departments of social services (DSS) in 6 counties to represent long-term welfare recipients in SSD/SSI appeals, with the aim of decreasing the welfare rolls and Medicaid costs to local taxpayers. LASMNY also provides technical assistance and training to DSS workers regarding understanding SSD/SSI requirements and screening potential referrals. Of the 12,608 welfare recipients served by the 6 counties, LASMNY handled 311 county referrals, winning SSD and/or SSI benefits for 115 of the clients referred.

Major Cases or Other Advocacy Projects

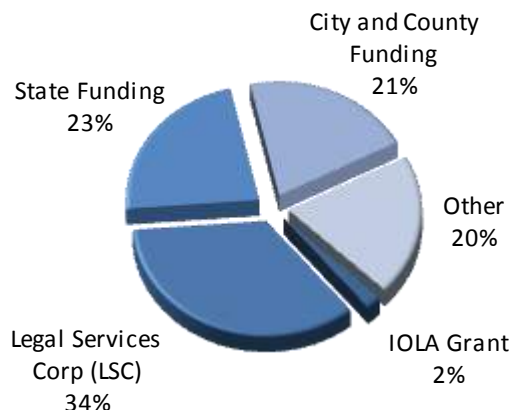
Foreclosure Defense Project

In partnership with 3 local foreclosure prevention counseling agencies, LASMNY obtained state funding from 2008-2011 to start a foreclosure defense project over a 9-county area. Fortunately, starting in 2012, LASMNY obtained HOPP funding from the New York State Attorney General’s office to restart and expand the project after funding had ended, reopening intake for clients.

During this reporting period, the project handled 530 foreclosure cases. The project is assisting these clients in responding to court summonses and enforcing rights to loan modifications and settlement conferences. The project closed 227 of these cases, saving 63 homes and providing advice and pro se assistance in 164 cases. Clients avoided \$841,647 in principal reductions, forbearances and cancelled debt, as well as \$135,983 in ongoing monthly mortgage payment reductions from loan modification agreements.

Sources of Funding

Total	\$5,284,155
IOLA Grant	\$100,000
Legal Services Corp (LSC)	\$1,830,770
State Funding	\$1,200,126
City and County Funding	\$1,099,596
Other	\$1,053,663



Other Services, *continued*

Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

LASMNY's Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) program strives to match attorney interest with service priorities, maximizing pro bono services through a combination of clinics and direct referrals. LASMNY's pro bono clinics utilize private attorneys to screen clients for divorce and bankruptcy referrals. Clinics are also held out in the community for veterans and senior citizens on a variety of legal topics. In addition, private attorneys may instruct clients in filling out their own child support or divorce paperwork through pro se clinics. LASMNY refers cases for extended pro bono service in many areas, including bankruptcy, child support, divorce, housing, unemployment insurance benefits, wills, health care proxies and powers of attorney. LASMNY also utilizes student interns to assist with pro bono matters. Students from Colgate University, Binghamton University and Syracuse University Law School are trained to work on bankruptcy, divorce and child support cases, and may be paired with pro bono attorneys as well. With the assistance of a pilot LSC pro bono grant, LASMNY now has a half-time staff attorney to coordinate volunteer opportunities for law students needing to fulfill their 50-hour pro bono requirement for admission to the New York bar.

LASMNY has developed several innovative programs to encourage private attorney involvement. In combination, these methods have resulted in 955 pro

bono cases being completed and closed in 2014-2015 (a 9% increase over the previous reporting period). LASMNY now utilizes private attorneys to make referrals to other private attorneys. Private attorneys also refer clients to LASMNY as "reverse referrals." If clients qualify, they are referred back to the private attorney for pro bono representation. Attorneys may now schedule

Pro Bono Statistics

During 2014-2015, the following volunteers provided services in our program:

• Attorneys:	164 Volunteers	1,538 Hours
• Law Students:	7 Volunteers	728 Hours
• Other Volunteers:	16 Volunteers	1,480 Hours
• Total Cases Completed by Attorneys:		955 Cases
• Dollar Value of Attorney Services*:		\$0.38 million

**estimated at \$250 per hour*

shifts at each of our three major offices on LASMNY's HelpLine, which provides telephone advice and brief service on any priority civil legal matter. Finally, LASMNY served 131 Broome County tenants and their families through its "Attorney of the Day" Program, helping them to avoid or delay evictions, reduce rental charges and obtain needed repairs. The attorneys provide on-the-spot representation to tenants at court on the day of their eviction hearings.