

2012 - 2013  
HIGHLIGHTS

CIVIL RIGHTS

Fairness

Housing

EQUALITY

Community

Partnership

EDUCATION



CHICAGO  
LAWYERS'  
COMMITTEE

FOR CIVIL RIGHTS UNDER LAW, INC.

CHICAGO'S  
PARTNERSHIP  
FOR  
EQUAL JUSTICE

INCLUSION

Voting Rights

PROTECT

Equity

PRISONER RIGHTS

PRO BONO

Pro Se

JUSTICE

COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

Integration

RIGHTS

DIVERSITY

ACCESS

Employment

Opportunity

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR  
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Integration JUSTICE

THE PAST YEAR has been a tough one in Chicago for advocates for equal justice and opportunity. High murder rates and gun violence have taken the lives of far too many young people, including innocents like Hadiyah Pendleton. The Chicago Public Schools have closed an unprecedented number of schools in neighborhoods that are overwhelmingly minority and poor; often these are the same neighborhoods that have witnessed no redevelopment or investment in the decade since high rise public housing began to be demolished in the name of transformation. The high-profile murder of Trayvon Martin in Florida, which captured the nation's attention but yielded no conviction in the courts, has left many observers upset, angry, and questioning whether the courts or the law can provide justice and opportunity for young men of color.

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WE BUILD A  
COMMUNITY OF  
LAWYERS AND  
ADVOCATES FOR THE  
PRINCIPLES THAT  
MAKE CHICAGO AND  
AMERICA GREAT

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Urgent work in our courts, reform of our laws, and advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged communities is undertaken daily by the lawyers, staff, and friends of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Hundreds of volunteer lawyers, contributing thousands of hours of pro bono service with an annual value in excess of \$8 million, serve to protect and promote civil rights and expand community development and opportunity in the neighborhoods of Greater Chicago. We build a community of lawyers and advocates for the principles that make Chicago and America great, and we serve a much larger community of citizens seeking equal justice and striving to build stronger neighborhoods, businesses, homes and organizations.

Through our Voting Rights Project the Chicago Lawyers' Committee is part of the nation's largest endeavor to protect the vote and reform election administration. The Law Project strengthens nonprofit organizations in every single Chicago neighborhood and suburb, and works as partner to those who work to build



JAY READEY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MAX STEIN  
BOARD CHAIR

stronger communities. Our Settlement Assistance Program assists pro se low-income litigants in federal court in settlement conferences, and is a favorite of District Court judges for its ability to streamline the justice system for those with meritorious claims. The Fair Housing Project is Chicago's largest legal service for victims of housing discrimination. And the Initiative for Northwest Indiana (INWIN) is supporting nonprofit organizations and small business entrepreneurs to rebuild the economies of Gary, East Chicago and Hammond.

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THIS PAST YEAR HAS  
BEEN A TIME OF  
GREAT NEED, ROBUST  
PROGRAMMING, AND  
CREATIVE GROWTH AT  
CHICAGO LAWYERS'  
COMMITTEE

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It is clear that if the law is to be a force for good in the lives of the classes of citizens who are protected by our civil rights laws, and if community-based organizations are to create new futures for low-income communities, then the private bar faces a great opportunity to lead the way. Through support for the Chicago Lawyers' Committee and pro bono service in partnership with the Committee's staff, members of the private bar are able to live out the principles of equal justice that drew so many of us to law school. The past year has been a time of great need, robust programming, and creative growth at the Chicago Lawyers' Committee. As we enter our 45th Anniversary Year, please join us in doubling down on our commitment to the least advantaged individuals and communities in our society.

WARM REGARDS,

Jay Readey  
Executive Director

Max Stein  
Boodell & Domanskis  
Board Chair

2012 – 2013 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

INITIATIVE FOR NORTHWEST INDIANA

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

## EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT

THE EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT strives to prevent, reduce, and eliminate the known disparities in educational resources that burden low-income and minority communities in the Chicago area.



EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

PROVIDED LEGAL REPRESENTATION  
TO 22 STUDENTS  
IN SCHOOL EXPULSION HEARINGS

The Educational Equity Project provides services to ensure schools do everything in their power to keep enrolled students in school. Male students of color are penalized at disproportionately frequent and disproportionately severe rates as compared to their White counterparts for similar offenses. This trend is both fed by and feeds into the criminal justice system, which penalizes students of color with disproportionate frequency and severity to Whites. The Educational Equity Project represented 22 students in expulsion hearings, provided brief legal counsel to 21 families, trained more than 70 attorneys to handle expulsion hearings and presented to numerous community groups on knowing your rights when facing harsh discipline. Project staff collaborated with the National Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights to develop and administer restorative justice and school discipline trainings. In addition to its school expulsion work and advocacy efforts, the staff meet regularly with CPS officials in pursuit of more transparent school discipline practices and data disclosure.

Lastly, in a pending educational equity case against the U-46 school district, the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee is assisting in the representation of Hispanic and African-American students after their exclusion in the school district’s gifted program, and the disproportionate assignment of Hispanic and African-American students to over-crowded schools.

## VOTING RIGHTS PROJECT

THE VOTING RIGHTS PROJECT seeks to prevent, reduce and eliminate barriers to voting for minority and low-income residents within Illinois and throughout the Midwest region.

The Voting Rights Project fielded more than 3,000 calls during the Presidential election, connecting individuals to the information and resources enabling them to exercise their most

FIELDLED MORE THAN  
**3,000 CALLS** DURING THE  
 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



Our youngest Election Protection volunteer

basic and fundamental right — the right to vote. Project staff worked closely with the National Lawyers’ Committee, which runs the nation’s largest non-partisan Election Protection Project dedicated to ensuring every eligible voter is able to cast a ballot that is counted. Staff Attorney Marissa Liebling and Legal Fellow Shubra Ohri worked closely with volunteers from member firms including Terry Dee (Kirkland), Annie Geraghty Helms (DLA Piper), Deborah Bone (Schiff Hardin), Ben Blustein (Miner Barnhill), Miriam Lieberman (Kirkland), Maria Maras (Kirkland), and Ralph Schumann (Law Offices of Ralph Schumann), who played important leadership roles in the effort.

More than 200 volunteers participated in the Illinois Election Protection program, providing legal voter protection throughout the region, including Chicago, Cook County, Lake County, DuPage County, Kane County, McHenry County, and Aurora. Amid a temporary outage of the City of Chicago’s website on Election Day, as well as confusion caused by redistricting and polling place consolidation, Election Protection volunteers were a trusted safety net, helping voters to navigate issues with poll workers, find their polling place and fully understand their rights.

Prior to the election, the Voting Rights Project staff worked to build a coalition of voter protection groups. The project partnered with the Illinois League of Women Voters, MALDEF, the Citizen Advocacy Center, the Asian American Institute, the South Asian American Research and Policy Institute, Common Cause, Equip for Equality and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights to identify and minimize potential issues facing voters, particularly in low-income and minority communities, in advance of the election. Voting Rights Project staff continues to monitor important litigation and policy issues concerning the right to vote and to provide legal voter protection services during local elections.

## FAIR HOUSING PROJECT

**THE FAIR HOUSING PROJECT** combats housing discrimination by investigating complaints of such discrimination throughout Chicago, educating people about their fair housing rights and obligations, providing pro bono legal services to victims of housing discrimination, and advocating for policies that affirmatively further fair housing.



Betsy Shuman-Moore of the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee speaks to the Cook County Board on the importance of protecting voucher status to “affirmatively further fair housing.”

The Chicago Lawyers’ Committee’s Fair Housing Project continues to lead the charge to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing in the Chicago metropolitan region and to promote fair and inclusive communities.

The Project’s recent advocacy efforts resulted in the County releasing a draft of its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and the passing of an amendment to the Cook County’s Human Rights Ordinance that would protect Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holders from discrimination. Studies have shown that housing providers often refuse to rent to HCV holders as a pretext for other types of illegal discrimination such as race, familial status, and disability. HCV holders consistently report that they face great challenges locating apartments in desired neighborhoods,



and finding landlords who accept vouchers and units that were in good condition and at affordable rates. The new provision will open up the county's rental housing to low income tenants, allowing them more opportunities for success and self-sufficiency than are available in segregated, high poverty areas.

In 2012, the Fair Housing Project settled three housing discrimination cases, resulting in significant settlements, fair housing trainings, and more comprehensive reasonable accommodation/modification policies. Together, with its peers, government partners, and the public, CLC's Fair Housing Project is forging the path toward long-term integration and equality for all Chicago communities.

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## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROJECT

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Through both advocacy and litigation, the **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROJECT (EOP)** aims to combat and reduce discrimination against minorities and women in employment and other economic injustices.

### EOP HIGHLIGHT

PROCESSED APPROXIMATELY  
**240 INTAKES** FROM  
PEOPLE CALLING ABOUT  
POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT  
DISCRIMINATION CASES

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In 2012, the Employment Opportunity Project, with pro bono counsel, prosecuted and settled cases for racial harassment at a car dealership; religious discrimination against a Muslim woman who worked as a university dormitory resident head; a car dealership's refusal to hire a woman because she had young children; and retaliation against an African-American employee who complained of race discrimination. EOP also filed and settled cases brought under the Fair Credit Reporting Act and Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act. Our project has been helping people who have not been hired because of old criminal convictions to file race discrimination EEOC charges challenging the disparate impact of such policies. In 2012, EOP handled approximately 240 intakes from people calling with questions about potential employment discrimination cases.

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## SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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Since 2006, the **SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)** has provided volunteer attorneys to represent low-income individuals in settling the civil discrimination and other claims they have filed in federal court.

### SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

SAP VOLUNTEERS HAVE  
**SETTLED NEARLY 75%**  
OF MORE THAN **250 CASES**

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"The Settlement Assistance Program provides attorneys with a meaningful opportunity to build on their negotiation skills while assisting litigants in vindicating their rights in a system that is often confusing and intimidating," said SAP Director J. Cunyon Gordon. This past year, SAP trained more than 200 lawyers from Chicago's leading law firms to represent pro se litigants, including workers with discrimination law cases and prisoners with constitutional prisoner rights' claims. "To be able to get negotiation practice and also make a real impact — it's fantastic," said Laura McNally, SAP volunteer and event presenter. Since its

formal inception, SAP volunteers have settled nearly 75% of more than 250 cases. The Settlement Assistance Program has proven to be very effective in achieving favorable outcomes for pro se litigants, due in large part to its pool of dedicated attorneys, eager to serve the public interest. Volunteer attorneys seeking short term volunteer assignments find the experience to be both rewarding and convenient. CLC fellows and recent law graduates appreciate gaining experience in the cornerstone features of being a lawyer: client contact, case analysis, advocacy and negotiation. Civil Rights Fellow Ayman Mourad has won more than \$200,000 in settlement awards for his clients.



#### VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Gordon K. Walton

“I truly enjoyed volunteering with the SAP. It was an honor providing my humble legal services to someone who would not have been otherwise represented by counsel. Volunteering allowed me to strengthen my ties with the community by meeting a new family, becoming a part of their lives, and seeing what they have been living with for several years. Thank you again.”



## THE LAW PROJECT

THE LAW PROJECT (TLP) is dedicated to assisting Chicago’s low-income communities in generating businesses, jobs, family income, and other necessities to enable people to improve the quality of their lives. Volunteer and staff attorneys provide transactional legal services to community-based organizations, small businesses and low-income first-time homebuyers.

#### THE LAW PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

PROVIDED LEGAL ASSISTANCE  
TO 136 NEW NONPROFIT  
CLIENTS, 68 LOW-INCOME  
ENTREPRENEURS  
AND 58 FIRST-TIME  
HOMEBUYERS

For hundreds of nonprofit clients each year, TLP provides a network of support for mission-based grassroots work that is unparalleled in the region. The Law Project’s nonprofit clients provide a wide range of services to assist the working poor and improve inner-city communities; our clients provide housing counseling, small business development, create affordable housing, run afterschool programs and facilitate job training programs. Last year, TLP provided transactional legal assistance to 136 new nonprofit clients, assisted 68 low-income entrepreneurs in starting or operating small businesses and helped 58 first-time homebuyers achieve homeownership. To date, TLP’s homeownership program has successfully helped more than 420 families purchase and keep homes.

By providing sophisticated legal representation to a variety of community-based organizations and individuals, TLP serves as the missing legal link to greater economic opportunity.



Breaking Ground has seen over 2,400 students come through its doors and has created a wide variety of employment opportunities to develop its graduates

**THE LAW PROJECT NONPROFIT CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: Breaking Ground**  
 Since 1998 Breaking Ground has been a spring board for individuals seeking to become instruments of lasting change in their community. As Breaking Ground has grown its clients and impact in the North Lawndale community, TLP has been a consistent source of legal guidance and support. Breaking Ground sought TLP's help with a tax matter on 70 homes that BG had constructed and sold on the West Side on vacant land donated by the City. A tax issue arose when Cook County began charging taxes based on a disputed valuation method. TLP connected Breaking Ground with Thomas Sweeney, a volunteer attorney from Katten Muchin Rosenman. Thomas engaged with the County on this issue, and got the County to agree to a more reasonable valuation method for determining the taxes owed. Breaking Ground has an ongoing relationship with Thomas as these issues continue to arise. "Our relationship with general counsel is like gold and now we have excellent counsel whenever we need it," Said Jeff Dennis, Breaking Ground Executive Director.



## INITIATIVE FOR NORTHWEST INDIANA

**THE INITIATIVE FOR NORTHWEST INDIANA (INWIN) promotes economic development in Northwest Indiana by providing free legal services to regional development projects, local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and small businesses to create better opportunities for Northwest Indiana citizens.**

### INWIN HIGHLIGHT

**HOSTED FIVE SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOPS, REACHING 74 NEW POTENTIAL BUSINESSES AND SERVED APPROXIMATELY 23 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**



Volunteer attorney Rhandi Anderson and INWIN staff attorney Renee Hatcher host a small business workshop for Northwest Indiana residents

Under the direction of staff attorney Renee Hatcher, INWIN hosted five small business workshops, reaching 74 new potential businesses and served approximately 23 nonprofit organizations, including consultation on a Community Benefit Agreement and certification of Community Development Financial Institutions.

INWIN has formed partnerships with the Hammond INnovation Center, the Indiana Small Business Development Center, Accion, City of Gary, Gary–East Chicago–Hammond Empowerment Zone, the Urban League of Northwest Indiana, local bar associations to support economic development in Northwest Indiana. INWIN co-sponsored a CLE for attorneys in NW Indiana to inform them on the new Indiana expungement law and partnered with Progressive Community Church, Kimbrough Bar Association, NAACP– Gary Chapter, and the Commission on the Social Status of Black Males to host an expungement clinic for Northwest Indiana residents. A partnership with the Legacy Foundation offers brief legal consultation to Lake County nonprofits at its monthly Executive Director's First Friday Coffee Hour. The project also partnered with Black Youth Vote to educate voters on the Indiana Voter I.D. Law.

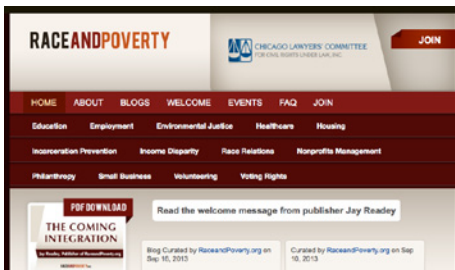


# RACE & POVERTY

## RACE & POVERTY

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RACE & POVERTY continues to provide a digital platform for advocates, community groups and civil right activists to discuss issues of the day.



RaceAndPoverty.org publishes articles and blog entries to spark discussion, organizes collaborations, and explores solutions to institutionalized poverty and race and its manifestation in modern society. RaceAndPoverty.org has published numerous blog entries and posts, covering issues of race, poverty, education, voting rights, incarceration and fair housing and integration. The site also hosts the multi-chapter eBook, *The Coming Integration*, by Executive Director Jay Readey. Visit [RaceAndPoverty.org](http://RaceAndPoverty.org) and join in the discussion today!

[RaceAndPoverty.org](http://RaceAndPoverty.org)

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

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CLC's director of development served as a member of the Donors Forum's Solving the Overhead Challenge Community of Practice. The group met multiple times throughout the year to learn from national experts, develop relationships with each other, and brainstorm solutions about solving the overhead (cost) dilemma for nonprofits. To help broaden the conversation, the Donors Forum held the Real Talk about Real Costs Initiative which brought funders and nonprofit organizations together to open up lines of communication and opportunities for learning about nonprofit sustainability and leveraging limited resources. The event also presented a video that the Community of Practice produced as a tool to aid funders and nonprofits in the discussion about overhead in their own organizations. The goal is for both nonprofits and funders to understand the real cost of operations in order to achieve successful results and support critical efforts in both communities served and in fundraising to support those critical efforts.



### CELEBRATING 45 YEAR ANNIVERSARY IN 2014

In 2014, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law will celebrate its 45th anniversary as a leader in the fight toward justice. While significant civil rights victories have been won, the struggle for racial justice and equality continues.

The most prestigious law firms in Chicago, whose contributions demonstrate their commitment to civil rights, invite you to join the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights in pledging your support in our fight for equal justice under law.



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The Chicago Lawyers' Committee's 2012 financial report reflects a 3.5% increase in unrestricted public support compared to 2011. Member law firm contributions remain one of the chief sources of support for the Committee. Chicago area foundations also responded affirmatively and generously to requests for support for the broad range of civil rights programs supported by the Committee.

In addition a case that the Chicago Lawyers' Committee filed in 1998 went to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2011 and was decided in the Committee's favor. As a result attorneys fees in the amount of \$965k were received in 2012. The board has established program diversification, litigation reserve, and operating reserve funds to stabilize the organization. When there is work on a major case resources are often used which may or may not be reimbursed depending on the outcome of a case; and therefore these reserves will help ensure financial stability.

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2012

## REVENUE

## PUBLIC SUPPORT

Law Firm Contributions	\$ 320,750	
Foundation Grants	221,300	
Government Grants	377,447	
Individuals	32,566	
Fundraising Events (net)	64,735	
Released from Restriction	295,717	
		\$1,312,515

## OTHER SUPPORT

Court Awards, Attorney Fees	\$ 1,019,862	
Fee for Services	35,420	
Investment Gains / (Losses)	15,270	
Interest Income	7,099	
Miscellaneous	6,434	
		\$1,084,085

## TOTAL REVENUE

\$2,396,600

## EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 1,423,202	
Management, Fundraising and General	235,313	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$1,658,515
Change in Net Assets		\$ (738,085)
Net Assets—Beginning of Year		\$ 521,626
Net Assets—End of Year		\$ 1,259,711



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The Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Inc. is the public interest law consortium of Chicago's leading law firms. From nineteen firms in 1969, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee has grown to fifty member firms today. Each year, CLC member firms donate over 18,000 hours of professional legal services, with a value of more than \$8.5 million, to challenge discrimination and other violations of civil rights in both the public and private sectors.

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