



From Our 2020 Co-Chairs



Sally D. Mills

I am honored to serve as one of this year's Co-Chairs for the Campaign for Justice. Over the years, I have learned about the work of our Maine legal aid providers, not only through my service as a past trustee and president of the Maine Justice Foundation, but also as a volunteer for the Volunteer Lawyers' Project. I have also made countless referrals to Pine Tree Legal Assistance and Legal Services for the Elderly through my own work. I have seen firsthand the important work these organizations do in my patch of the state, Downeast Maine. The providers' work is not only a path to justice but, in some cases, a matter of life and death.

This pandemic has only made the need for civil legal services that much more critical, not only for clients, but also for Maine's court system. As I write, Maine's family courts have all but shut down. What will happen when they reopen? The opportunity for a fair resolution only exists when all parties, whatever their economic circumstances, are able to obtain sound legal information and advice. A system which works for only some of us, works for none of us.

As I write, I sit, isolated, in my Blue Hill office. I am fortunate that law is considered an essential service. I can work. I have a computer, reliable internet connection, and a telephone. When I go home it is to a warm house where I have plenty to eat and plenty to do. When my grandchildren

ask me how I sat out the coronavirus pandemic, I will have to use considerable license to create any sort of dramatic impression. I have it good. But every day at work, I speak to people who are not as fortunate. Some are trapped in abusive homes. Others are elderly, fearful of catching the virus, and anxious to sort their affairs. Still others fear their small businesses will go under. My beautiful coastal community is encased in a fog of existential fear.

We all want to do what we can to support our healthcare providers – masks, social distancing, hand-washing, and so on. We keep an eye on our neighbors. We try to maintain a sense of community through what sometimes seems like endless Zoom

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I am honored to serve with Sally Mills as Co-Chair of the 2020 Campaign for Justice, which provides critical support for civil legal aid in Maine. I know many of you are familiar with the exemplary work our Maine legal aid providers do on a daily basis, much of which is described in the report that follows. And while I have supported the Campaign for many years, the two events related below inform and reinforce my personal commitment to the Campaign this year.

A number of years ago I attended the ABA National Association of IOLTA Programs Conference as president of the Maine Justice Foundation. In a roundtable discussion, I asked about the efforts in other states to raise funds from the bar; I had hoped to get some good ideas for the future. Few spoke, but those who did said that their efforts to raise money from the bar in their states were unsuccessful. They were surprised by the amount the Campaign raised from the Maine Bar. No one present could match or even approach the success of the Campaign - even from states with larger bars and more robust economies. As Maine lawyers, we should take great pride in this commitment to civil legal aid. Given our population and geography, this is no small accomplishment.

When I agreed to serve as Co-Chair of the Campaign we were in a pre-COVID-19 world in Maine. That all changed in mid-March. Overnight we went from thriving firms and companies to record

unemployment and dramatically reduced business activity. This has, and will for the coming year, reduce two significant sources of funding for civil legal aid. Interest rate cuts and reduced economic activity will slash the amount paid on IOLTA accounts. The partial closure of the courts has reduced the funding provided by the Civil Legal Services Fund. And meanwhile, unemployment and the stresses of the efforts to deal with the virus will ramp up the need for civil legal aid. These factors only increase the importance of the 2020 Campaign for Justice.

Shortly after Governor Mills issued her first emergency order, I called a long-time supporter of the Campaign. Our conversation started with the usual pleasantries and then turned to more serious

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Sally Mills *(cont.)*

meetings. What I hope will not go unmissed is the importance of helping our frontline legal aid providers. For me, supporting the Campaign for Justice is a tangible way to do my part during these dangerous times, to help members of my community remain safe, whether from unlawful eviction, financial exploitation, domestic abuse, or any of the other countless ways in which the vulnerable so often fall prey.

It is more important than ever to support our providers through the Campaign for Justice. I hope that you will join me and donate as generously as you can.

With sincere appreciation,
Sally Mills, Esq.

Dave Pierson *(cont.)*

matters. He said that looking at his 401K statement was a sobering experience. He was right, but then our conversation turned to the fact that the people served by the legal aid providers supported by the Campaign don't have 401K's. Even before the advent of COVID-19, they were worried about putting groceries on the table, keeping a roof over their heads, their immigration status, or escaping from abusive situations. Those concerns have only become more prominent in the midst of the current public health crisis and will remain so for the coming year.

For most of us, the current situation makes contributing to the Campaign more difficult. It is a hard time to ask for money. However, this is a time when your contribution is more important than ever. Please join me in this effort and continue the Maine Bar's exemplary tradition of support for civil legal aid.

Thank you,
Dave Pierson, Esq.

\$588,000 Raised for Legal Aid

Thanks to our 2019 Co-Chairs, Toby and Ezra

The generosity of the Campaign for Justice supporters you will read about in these pages—and the impact of Campaign giving on those vulnerable Mainers whose stories are told here—are a result of the efforts of our 2019 Campaign Chairs, Ezra Willey of Willey Law Offices in Bangor and Toby Dilworth of Drummond Woodsum in Portland.

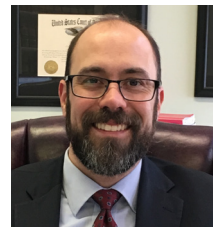
To Toby and Ezra the legal aid community gives our thanks for a year of hard work, diligence, and commitment as our most effective advocates in this critical arena.

Campaign Chairs must possess a number of attributes: the support of their firms in devoting the needed time to Campaign activities, the willingness to give generously, influence among their peers in the Maine Bar, and the ability to persuade those peers to give generously as well. Ezra and Toby demonstrated all of those attributes in abundance, as the 2019 Campaign for Justice raised over \$588,000.

The success of the Campaign for Justice, since its creation in 2004, has been built on the countless hours given by those attorneys who serve as volunteer leaders. Toby and Ezra serve as a model for Campaign leaders past and future, and to them we say "Thank you!"



Toby Dilworth



Ezra Willey

To our most valued partners— the volunteers—we say "Thank you!"

Many factors contribute to the success of the Campaign for Justice, but the catalyst for all them is the work of the volunteer attorneys who give so much of their time and energy. We offer our deepest thanks to them for their dedication to civil legal aid and for their hard work.

Toby Dilworth and Ezra Willey, 2019 Campaign Co-Chairs

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On its tenth anniversary, the Campaign for Justice created the Founders Circle to recognize those supporters who had donated to the campaign every year. We continue to acknowledge those who have donated for ten or more consecutive years. Thank you to all Founders Circle members for your steadfast support.

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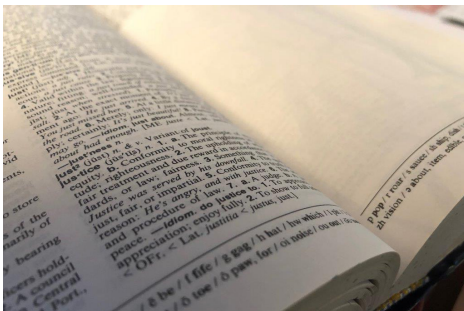
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STAYING HOME: two years, two different meanings

A new year is upon us, and 'staying home' has taken on new meaning in the face of COVID-19. It has become even more crucial for Volunteer Lawyers Project to serve Mainers through their helpline and to keep Maine families safe in their own homes.

Last year, a single mother – a woman with two disabled children, working part-time – contacted the Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP). She had been receiving yearly property tax waivers on her home since getting divorced. Then, a new town manager told her she would no longer receive the waivers – no other explanation was offered. When the woman attempted to seek clarification, she was told her file was "lost." Confused and scared, she was unsure of what to do next.

Then things got a lot scarier when she began receiving notices that her home was being put into foreclosure proceedings by the town. VLP was able to step in and assist, ultimately saving the woman's home. In the words of the client herself: "Recently your agency was kindly able to assist me in a legal matter involving property taxes and foreclosure on my home. My family and I were facing the hard reality of homelessness...I received the news today...I will be keeping my home and property. I can't thank you enough for your services. Thank you so much and God bless you all."

In another case, an only child served as caretaker of her elderly mother, living in their family home in rural Maine. When the mother passed on, the daughter was left the house in the will – but it still had a small remaining mortgage on it. The woman called VLP very distressed with no idea how to probate the estate, in deep fear she would lose the home because the mortgage was in her mother's name. An attorney from the Volunteer Lawyers Project was able to complete the probate work pro bono and worked with the lender to refinance the mortgage into the daughter's name so she was able to stay in her home.

Certainly, Governor Mills' executive order preventing evictions is somewhat of a relief in the face of coronavirus and the related economic devastation it has caused. But when the courts reopen and the order is lifted, what then? Volunteer Lawyers Project will seek to assist as many Mainers as possible. With unemployment in Maine now exponentially higher than it was in mid-March, civil legal aid matters pertaining to rent and mortgage payments will skyrocket.

In the meantime, VLP continues to help needy Mainers, publishing information on expanded General Assistance resources, helping spread the word about mortgage forbearance relief offered under the CARES Act recently put in place, and staffing the phone lines, which continue to ring with the questions of our neighbors in need.

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IMMIGRANT LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT

LAYERS UPON LAYERS: an immigration crisis in Maine shines a spotlight on ILAP

Imagine, for a moment, coming to a foreign country, seeking asylum. You do not speak the predominant language. You don't have any source of transportation. You're not sure where you're going to live, you have very few resources, and you're not allowed to work. And you face potential deportation simply because of the situation you're in.

Maine watched this exact scenario play out in real time for several hundred asylum seekers in the spring and summer of 2019 as they arrived in Maine from the southern border. The City of Portland set up temporary shelter in the Expo, and the community immediately sought to help a large population of people seek legal means to stay in the United States. Given the Trump Administration's hostility to many forms of immigration, this would be no small feat. Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP), based in Portland, was ready and able to help with civil legal aid resources.

To say the asylum seekers' cases were multifaceted seems grossly inadequate. The work was endless. ILAP had weekly legal orientation and outreach meetings and held in depth consultations with ninety-four families within the span of several months. Assistance with over 335 immigration forms was provided, often with language barriers: forms pertaining to address changes, motions to change venue, applications for work authorization, fee waivers, and much more.

As ILAP worked relentlessly to triage, community resources also rallied, and the situation began to stabilize. However, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project's work had only just begun. Because of chaos at the border points of entry, many asylum seekers had court cases pending at various locations around the country. Also, as this group began to move out of the Expo into other locations, legal matters became further obfuscated by mail



delivered to last known addresses. ILAP attorneys, staff and volunteers worked quickly and tirelessly to help change addresses. Legal matters handled largely by postal system: another layer in a seemingly limitless process.

Now many months later, it is clear that the asylum program at ILAP has years of work ahead to help this group obtain the legal right to remain in the United States. Simple procedural mistakes, easily avoided with appropriate help like that provided by ILAP, can set an applicant back for months. ILAP attorneys seek to minimize those errors, help asylum seekers understand where they stand in the process, and make sure they check in regularly with ICE and the immigration courts to determine if they have an upcoming court appointment. It's a frustrating, tiring, and seemingly never-ending battle, but one in which ILAP's role is pivotal: an asylum seeker is five times more likely to win their case in immigration court if they have a lawyer, and the amount of asylum seekers of the Expo group who could afford to seek their own attorney is next to zero.

With most immigration to the United States now temporarily halted, and COVID-19 forcing the closure of the courts, the status of the Expo group remains unclear. However, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project will remain on the frontlines of this battle.

"ILAP is grateful for the support of Maine's attorneys, for their generous donations to the Campaign for Justice and also for their important pro bono work. We currently have over 170 attorneys on ILAP's Pro Bono Asylum Panel and they are helping asylum seekers navigate the complex immigration court process so they can gain legal status."

**-Susan Roche, Esq.
Executive Director, ILAP**

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NEW YEAR, NEW PROBLEMS, NEW TOOLS: addressing civil legal aid the Maine way

As the most experienced of Maine's civil legal aid providers, Pine Tree Legal Assistance (PTLA) and its attorneys have seen and heard it all. Since 1967, PTLA has answered the call of Mainers in need time and time again. Pine Tree staff speak to an estimated 9,000 Mainers every year by phone and in person around the state. Pine Tree Legal Assistance has come to be recognized as a valued resource not only for Mainers in need of civil legal aid, but for advice and resources for the legal community as a whole. And it did so by becoming a trailblazer in the field.

In April 1996, PTLA became the first legal aid provider in the nation to launch a website with self-help legal resources available and free to the general public. Doing so was a maverick move, and exactly what civil legal aid needed. What we now accept as commonplace – looking up resources on the internet – was widely unknown at the time, and even more so in rural Maine. Today, two PTLA staff members maintain that original website and two others – one being a national website addressing the legal rights of military and veteran households which was launched by the White House in 2010. In 2019, an incredible two million people nationwide accessed resources on Pine Tree Legal Assistance's sites, a testament to the veracity and reliability of the content provided by their trusted attorneys and dedicated staff.

In another pioneering move Pine Tree Legal Assistance in December 2019 launched a national screening tool to help high rates of suicide among veterans. With the help of local and national stakeholders and using PTLA's own experience working with the veteran population, it helps determine whether a veteran at risk of suicide has underlying legal issues, which it can help alleviate. While legal problems may only be one facet in veteran suicide, PTLA has once again recognized a need through its work in the Maine veteran community, and they moved boldly to address it.

Mainers pride themselves on their Yankee ingenuity, their grit, and their ability to do more with less, and that is not reflected any more clearly than it is within the walls of PTLA's organization. Last year, PTLA handled 6,878 cases affecting approximately 17,400 people across the state through its six offices. Ninety-four percent of cases receiving full representation were resolved in favor of the PTLA client. By always thinking creatively about the civil legal problems of Maine's population, Pine Tree Legal Assistance remains poised to address new issues as they arise. And in 2020 they will certainly find new challenges.

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When Maine's elderly population calls for help, Legal Services for the Elderly answers – literally.

In the face of COVID-19, those calls are the backbone for Mainers in need. Serving all sixteen counties since 1974, Legal Services for the Elderly (LSE) is a trusted resource for the rights of people over sixty – handling nearly 6,000 legal matters with their staff in 2019 alone. Now, with our elderly population at an especially heightened risk for severe complications from the COVID-19 virus, the unique challenge of serving the most vulnerable becomes even more complex.

Take, for example, John: an eighty-four year old whose grandson moved into his home, with the understanding he'd stay just a few weeks. The grandson was still there months later and he had become increasingly threatening and abusive. John decided he needed to get a Protective Order but he had suffered a stroke and could no longer write. An LSE attorney worked with John over the phone to draft up a complaint and file it electronically with the court. The LSE attorney also worked with court personnel to ensure that when John arrived to sign the complaint they would assist him in correcting anything in the complaint that was inaccurate. The Order was issued and served, the grandson moved out, and John is once again safe in his home.

Or Sue: a seventy-eight year old woman who had lived in her own home for over thirty years. When expenses got tight she decided to rent out a portion of her home because she was no longer able to cover her mortgage expense and didn't know where else to turn. She met a woman who needed housing and thought she could trust her. Sue thought only the woman was moving in, but a family of four ended up in the home, along with two dogs. The family was verbally abusive and Sue was forced to move onto the three-season porch in an attempt to isolate herself from the people that had taken over her entire home, keeping the premises constantly dirty and damaging the property. Sue realized she had to get help and contacted LSE. An LSE attorney assisted Sue in pursuing an eviction. It took the full process, with a thirty day notice, summons and complaint, and a court appearance, but LSE successfully negotiated an immediate removal. LSE also assisted Sue with a tax abatement and referred her for help in applying for additional public benefits. Sue is once again safe in her home, and her mortgage payments are now affordable.



Such cases are very common in Maine, but COVID-19 has severely impacted the ability of LSE to help. While courts remain open in some cases, appearing in court isn't safe or healthy for at-risk individuals. Obtaining a Protection from Abuse order, for example, becomes complicated – especially for a population that may struggle to access the judicial system telephonically due to hearing impairment, or otherwise lacking technological ability or access. When home is not safe, and appearing in court is not safe, the right path is not always clear.

Legal Services for the Elderly has worked hard in this time to address the crisis uniquely and creatively. Intake lines have remained open even as court appearances and face to face meetings had to be curtailed. LSE also does intake using an innovative tool called the Risk Detector, which assists those working with seniors to screen for several risk factors and where risk is high allows for an immediate referral via email. Using this online assessment form during this time of crisis helps to ensure seniors are finding their way to LSE for help. As one of only six states in the nation to employ this tool, LSE is well-positioned to help the most vulnerable.

With twenty percent of Maine's population age 65 or older, we are one of the oldest states in the nation – and our elderly population is projected to increase. Half our elderly live at or below the poverty line, so LSE faces a difficult landscape – but continues to serve. It may not be business as usual in the face of an unprecedented pandemic. But when elderly Mainers call to seek help, Legal Services for the Elderly is there for them.

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FROM INCARCERATION TO SOBRIETY AND PARENTING: one Mainer's legal journey to living again



Cumberland
 Legal Aid Clinic

When you're an expectant mother waiting to give birth, even the simplest things can seem tough. Caring for yourself while maintaining your health, your sanity, and your emotional wellness is a full-time job. The bar seems impossibly high.

And sometimes, the bars are real – not just figurative.

In the case of Katie, her bars were real. When she first sought the help of the University of Maine School of Law's Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic, Katie was eight months pregnant and in prison. Though she had two other children with her estranged husband, they obviously were not in her care. Katie asked for the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic to help her create the best possible environment for her new baby, to seek sobriety, end her marriage, and to ensure she could be a positive and reliable presence in the lives of her two older kids.

The Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic (CLAC) is just the place to help Katie do that. As a legal aid provider staffed in large part by student attorneys, CLAC serves real people with real problems throughout the state of Maine while also training future lawyers. With the assistance of Clinic students, who practice law under the close supervision of faculty, Katie made steady progress toward her goals.

The road would not be an easy one. Katie and her husband both had long histories of substance use and involvement in the criminal justice system, and she had never held a steady job. A support system, a network Katie could depend on for a healthy environment, would be a critical first step. The Clinic continued to work with Katie as she transitioned from prison to a halfway house for new mothers. While there, she was able to live with and care for her new baby, while making steady progress towards sobriety.

The next hurdle was divorce proceedings. While caring for her infant, CLAC students worked to prepare Katie's divorce case while she mentally prepared herself to see her estranged husband for the first time in years. Proceedings began acrimoniously, but as Katie's parenting skills, life prospects, and sobriety grew stronger, so did something arguably just as valuable: her confidence. She returned home, remained clean and sober, and successfully parented her infant child. For the first time in her life she entered the workforce and held a steady job.

Katie and her ex ultimately agreed upon most parenting issues surrounding the older children, including visitation, and a Clinic student represented Katie in a child support hearing that resulted in a favorable outcome. After amicably co-parenting with her ex-husband for a short time, they both ultimately agreed the older children would also benefit from being in their mother's home, and as a result all three kids now reside with Katie.

While not an unusual circumstance, cases like Katie's are notable in the emotional toll they take on families. She was able to seek free legal aid through CLAC, and without it, would likely not have been able to advocate for her rehabilitation and ultimately put together the pieces of her family and her new life outside bars.

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ASSISTANCE, EDUCATION, AND ADVOCACY: the keys to changing Maine's landscape for the impoverished



From the windows of Maine Equal Justice in Augusta, you can look across the street and see the imposing dome of the state Capitol. The offices of the legal aid advocates at Maine Equal Justice are right where they need to be.

Maine Equal Justice serves the needs of low-income Mainers in all corners of our state by providing assistance to people struggling to meet their basic needs and advocating for systemic solutions to poverty. As a nonprofit civil legal aid and economic justice organization, the focus of Maine Equal Justice is improving economic equity, security, and opportunity for Mainers. Toward these ends, Maine Equal Justice advocates for fair public policies in all three branches of government: at the legislature, in state agencies, and in the courts.

It's a daunting task: in a state where nearly a third of the population meets the guidelines to be considered low income, solutions must address the root causes of poverty on a broad scale.

Maine Equal Justice (MEJ) rises to the mission. Last year alone MEJ completed a staggering number of efforts:

- ✓ Supported 97 people from across the state to testify in the state Legislature on behalf of bills that would directly impact their lives
- ✓ Directly handled 31 administrative cases to improve rules and laws impacting 342,000 Mainers
- ✓ Successfully advocated for expansion of the state's Earned Income Tax Credit impacting over 100,000 Maine households
- ✓ Improved income supports and access to education and training for low-income parents, elevating an estimated 2500 more Maine kids out of poverty
- ✓ Conducted 41 training events across the state for nearly 900 individuals
- ✓ Handled 644 client cases for basic needs such as healthcare, food, and access to housing
- ✓ Partnered with 152 Maine organizations to increase economic security and opportunity for Maine people

Tony, from the mill town of Jay, who worked hard to achieve economic stability for his own family and then advocated for public policy change to help thousands of families like his, provides an example of the work Maine Equal Justice does. He's a Marine Corps veteran, a former mill worker, and a dad. Tony is pursuing a degree in radiology at Kennebec Valley Community College. He joined MEJ at the State House last year to testify in support of legislation to increase economic opportunity for families with children. Tony testified about the difference that additional supports for parents getting their degrees will make in their lives. He knows firsthand that families must meet basic needs to succeed in school, which will ultimately improve their financial future.

When parents aspire to a better life, their children's hopes and dreams are lifted as well. As Tony puts it, "I've seen people who had to drop out of KVCC because it's too hard for them to go to school, work, and take care of a family. With a little bit of help, they could make it." The legislation Tony supported with the help of Maine Equal Justice was enacted and will help thousands of families like Tony's access opportunity through higher education.

Maine's difficult economic landscape is only becoming more challenging. As statewide unemployment claims skyrocket (claims climbed from around 600 in mid-March to nearly 28,000 at the end of that month) Maine Equal Justice continues to answer calls on its helpline, and provide online trainings for organizations and individuals across the state trying to access vital supports. MEJ is also working closely with state agency staff to craft solutions to get people the help they need – providing recommendations based on policy and technical expertise, as well as input from community members who need help.

Robyn Merrill, Executive Director, explained that the organization is working to help Mainers meet their immediate needs and to fix underlying inequalities that COVID-19 has laid bare. "Responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic will require policy reforms that fix underlying problems in our economy and government. Reform is necessary to protect public health and ensure that the eventual recovery benefits all of us and leaves no one behind."



Firm Recognitions

\$588,000 Raised for Legal Aid

FIRM PARTICIPATION OVER 50%

Thompson Bowie & Hatch, LLC	100%
Murray Plumb & Murray	88%
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Unum	50%

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Those with 50+ member firms who raised \$25,000 or more; 20-49 member firms who raised \$10,000 or more; 11-19 member firms who raised \$5,000 or more; 5-10 member firms who raised \$2,500 or more.

Berman & Simmons, PA	Monaghan Leahy, LLP
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Brann & Isaacson	Petrucelli, Martin & Haddow, LLP
Drummond Woodsum	Pierce Atwood LLP
Eaton Peabody	Thompson Bowie & Hatch, LLC
Federal Courts	Unum
Hardy, Wolf & Downing, PA	Verrill
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Maine Supreme Judicial Court	

MOST FUNDS RAISED

Drummond Woodsum	\$74,888
Bernstein Shur	\$45,099
Pierce Atwood LLP	\$39,775
Verrill	\$32,204
Berman & Simmons, PA	\$25,000
Law Offices of Joe Bornstein	\$23,500
Unum	\$17,350
Preti, Flaherty, Beliveau & Pachios, LLP	\$16,689
Eaton Peabody	\$16,100
Maine District Court	\$14,425
Brann & Isaacson	\$11,447
Norman, Hanson & DeTroy, LLC	\$11,000

AVERAGE GIFT AMOUNT

Law Offices of Joe Bornstein	\$2,136
Hardy, Wolf & Downing, PA	\$1,333
Berman & Simmons, PA	\$1,321
Drummond Woodsum	\$1,026
Brann & Isaacson	\$673
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Pierce Atwood LLP	\$523
Federal courts	\$460
Thompson Bowie & Hatch, LLC	\$458
Bernstein Shur	\$451
Verrill	\$441
Unum	\$423

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Mainers Served in 2019 by Six Core Legal Aid Providers



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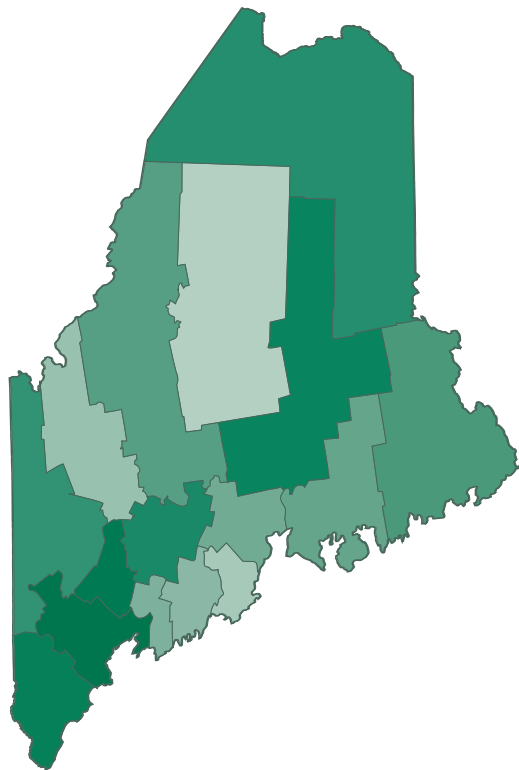
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This is the number of CASES reported to the Maine Justice Foundation for 2019, by county. The number of PEOPLE served is much larger—over 30,000.

County	
Androscoggin	2,748
Aroostook	707
Cumberland	5,843
Franklin	290
Hancock	487
Kennebec	1,689
Knox	279
Lincoln	316
Oxford	596
Penobscot	1,885
Piscataquis	183
Sagadahoc	385
Somerset	489
Waldo	418
Washington	550
York	2,002
Out of State	165
Unknown	55
Total	19,087

Errors: Please contact us if your name is missing, not listed correctly or if you believe your name was not carried properly in a particular grouping or category. We do our best to report as accurately as possible but sometimes errors happen. If we should miss something, we'd appreciate you letting us know. Thank you.

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