THE POWER OF
PRO BONO

Impact Report 2018
Since 1981, VLS has made it our mission to help individuals and families in need access the civil justice system. From providing access to critical legal assistance to supporting and training attorney volunteers, VLS is transforming Central Texas through the power of pro bono.

VLS's unique volunteer attorney model leverages the time, talent, and expertise of over 2,000 attorneys to deliver critical legal assistance to thousands of low-income and indigent individuals - veterans, seniors, domestic violence survivors, children and their families - every year. 2018 was no different.

**HOW WE SERVE**

$2,049,512 Value of legal costs saved or avoided | 1,151 Pro bono cases opened

2,565 Pro bono cases closed | 225 Number of legal advice and intake clinics

974 NUMBER OF ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS

14,049 NUMBER OF HOURS DONATED BY ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS

$3,652,740 VALUE OF PRO BONO CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED

32 NUMBER OF HOURS OF CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION OFFERED
OVER
7,000
CENTRAL TEXANS
RECEIVED OUR HELP

TRAVIS COUNTY:
• AUSTIN
• PFUGERVILLE
• JONESTOWN
• MANOR
• DEL VALLE
• LAKEWAY

HAYS COUNTY
BASTROP COUNTY

CLIENT PROFILE
Ethnicity

19% BLACK
26% WHITE
2% ASIAN
8% OTHER
44% HISPANIC

CLIENT PROFILE
Gender

845
1719
WHAT WE DO

Of the 2,565 pro bono cases VLS closed in 2018, approximately 40 percent involved family law; 18 percent concerned torts, wills, and estates; 18 percent were related to housing matters; and 11 percent were consumer law. The remaining 13 percent of cases included a combination of employment and income matters, individual rights concerns, and health and education issues.

PRO BONO MADE EASY

VLS understands the demanding schedules and other constraints most attorneys experience and has launched an effort aimed at making pro bono work more accessible and easy. VLS’s Attorney-on-Call Program (AOC) is a perfect way for attorneys to volunteer their time with minimal disruption to their work day. Attorneys simply sign up to be available to give legal advice via telephone to clients who are attending VLS’s outreach clinics in the outer parts of Travis County.

The AOC program emerged as an effort by VLS to respond to the massive growth and population change in Austin, particularly as many in poverty have moved out of the city and away from needed services because of a continued increase in costs of living. Every month, VLS offers a number of outreach clinics at local community centers during the day in outlying areas of Travis County, including Manor, Pflugerville, and Jonestown, as well as in south Austin. At these outreach clinics, people can inquire about and apply for pro bono civil legal assistance, as well as obtain immediate legal advice on their pressing legal matters from an AOC volunteer.
EMPOWERING WOMEN AND CHILDREN

After just three years of marriage, “Greg” disappeared, abandoning his wife, “Susan,” and their young daughter. He made no attempts to contact them and after nearly two years, Susan gave up trying to find him. She was left all alone to support and care for herself and her daughter.

Susan did not know what her rights were nor what she could do. She attended a VLS legal clinic and spoke with an attorney volunteer who provided vital legal advice. Susan’s case was reviewed by VLS and ultimately referred to Steve Selby, Attorney at Scott Douglass & McConnico, through VLS’s Family Law Case (FLC) referral partnership with law firms. Mr. Selby went to work immediately to help Susan understand the legal process and her rights. With Mr. Selby’s assistance, Susan was awarded a divorce, as well as, sole managing conservatorship and child support for her daughter. Additionally, Mr. Selby obtained an order for retroactive child support and judgment was granted in the amount of $43,480. Susan and her daughter were now able to move on with their lives and have a chance at a brighter future.

Mr. Selby has volunteered with VLS since 1994 and has handled 22 family law pro bono cases, donating more than 230 pro bono service hours.

FINANCIALS
Statement of Activities & Changes in Net Assets
Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2016

REVENUE
IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS
BY ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS $3,161,496
CONTRIBUTIONS $457,980
GRANTS $367,647
INTEREST, DIVIDENDS AND REALIZED GAINS $85,024
OTHER $14,635
TOTAL INCOME $4,086,782

EXPENSES
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATION $74,757
PROGRAM SERVICES $3,872,675
FUNDRAISING $73,186
TOTAL EXPENSES $4,020,618

NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR $1,313,219
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR $1,473,477