



ENSURING A FULL MEASURE OF JUSTICE FOR THOSE IN NEED • WWW.LSSP.ORG

# Legal Services of Southern Piedmont

January/February 2017 Newsletter

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## Be Our Partner in Justice

MECKLENBURG  
**ACCESS TO JUSTICE**  
CAMPAIGN

A JOINT PROGRAM OF  
LEGAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN PIEDMONT &  
LEGAL AID OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHARLOTTE

Help us serve local families in legal crisis by providing them with the legal assistance they need to secure a full measure of justice.

## Quick Links

- [More About Us](#)
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## This is Personal: We are all Immigrants

A note from our executive director



Immigrants are in the news, many escaping unspeakable dangers in their home countries - horrific gang violence in Central America, civil war in Syria, sectarian and authoritarian violence across the world.

The United States has been, in some times, a beacon of safety and a model of compassion for the world. In other parts of our history, we have shut our eyes, our hearts, and the door to

those in need only to realize the cost of our indifference long after the fact.

Unless you are a Native American, you are a descendant of immigrants, as am I. This is my family's story.

My paternal grandparents Gedalia and Tillie Tschernomoritz, immigrated in 1912 from the Jewish village of Telechan, near Pinsk, then in Poland, now Belarus. The winds of war were approaching and times, always difficult for Jews there, promised to get much worse. Tillie's uncle, who was already in America, bought them steamship passage on credit, and they arrived without money and in debt. They arrived speaking no English, and became Louis and Tillie Schorr, names pared by the steamship company or a harried immigration officer. Still, they were lucky.

Telechan was devastated by the first World War. Many died, but it was rebuilt. Two decades later, on August 2, 1941, the Nazis rounded up and killed everyone who had returned and obliterated the town. A few of the family that remained escaped to Palestine or survived the concentration camps, most did not.

My maternal grandparents Benjamin and Dora Girsowicz, emigrated in 1931 from Snov, in the Baronovich District, also then Poland, now Belarus. Benjamin felt the war coming, facing persecution by both the Poles and the Bolsheviks of Russia, who

arrested him for undermining the revolution. He was held for several days, threatened with execution and then released without explanation. But it was after 1923, and the doors to the U.S. were no longer open to refugees from eastern Europe.

They went to Argentina, the only place he could find to go, and were there for 15 years, carving a farm from the wilderness until they could get to the U.S. My mother grew up in Argentina, her family arriving in the U.S. in 1946 (Her memoir, "Finding a Place in the World," is available on Amazon.). Only a few of Benjamin and Dora's relatives were able to leave Poland before the war. Forty-two members of the family were killed by the Nazis in Snov on February 2, 1941, 76 years last week.

The U.S. has been good to my family who managed to make it here, literally to refuge. Many of those who didn't were murdered. Those memories from their odyssey still resonate for my family here, where we all work to make an America for others what it was for us: a refuge, a place to be free and to prosper, to live in peace with neighbors and friends of many races, nationalities, and religions.

A country that repudiates the tradition and principle of refuge and sends children and families back to violence and despotic governments they fled is not the America I know and love. I hope we can work together to protect ourselves from the real threats that this country faces with balanced and thoughtful policies that do not renounce the fundamental values of this country of immigrants.

Legal Services of Southern Piedmont helps immigrants in Charlotte and across North and South Carolina every day. We are proud to stand with them, pursuing justice for all people in need, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, religion and political beliefs.

Thank you,



Read LSSP's [statement](#) on the recently issued Executive Orders regarding immigration and their effect on our clients.

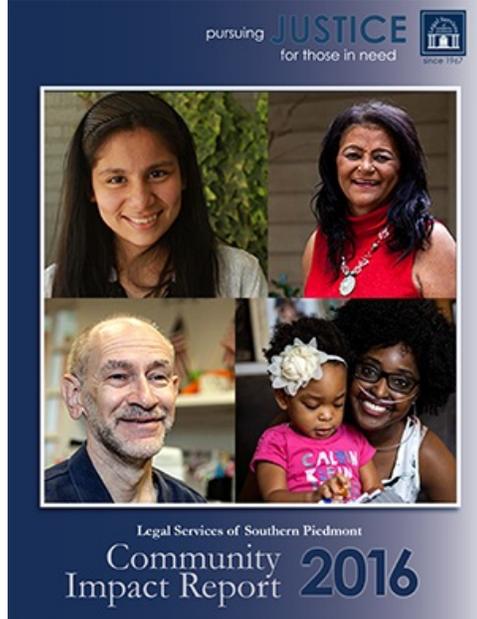
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## 2016 Community Impact Report

Find out what LSSP has been up to over the last year and how we are working to meet the changing needs of our community in 2017.

- 2016 highlights and upcoming projects in 2017
- Details on LSSP's 50th Anniversary
- The Lee Institute's Research on LSSP in the Community
- 2016 by the Numbers

- 2016 Pro Bono Honor Roll
- 2016-2017 Access to Justice Leadership List



## Access to Justice Matters More Than Ever in 2017

Thanks to your generous support this past holiday season, we are more than 75 percent of the way toward reaching our fundraising goal of **\$450,000** for 2017.

To date, only one law firm has achieved **100 PERCENT** participation in the campaign -- well done **Troutman Sanders!**

Every day there are people at risk in our community because they do not have access to basic legal services. By providing legal assistance, LSSP and LANC help our area's most vulnerable residents from falling through the cracks. We have a responsibility to dedicate our knowledge to service and to make the betterment of our community a top priority. We need your help now more than ever!

**Did you know that for every dollar given to LSSP,  
89 cents goes toward client services?**

That's why it is so important for our clients that we reach our goal.

Please reach out to your colleagues with one final ask and help us cross the finish line! Giving is quick and easy online, and pledge payments can be set up on a monthly basis.

### And Don't Forget!

The Leon Levine Foundation has offered to match every new, increased or lapsed donor gift up to \$25,000. **Your donations will be doubled!**



### Is your name on the list?

Pledge today to become a 2016-2017 Access to Justice Leader.

[View the leadership list and learn how you can support the Access to Justice Campaign](#)

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# Pro Bono Spotlight:

## We're Hitting the Ground Running in 2017



Volunteer Martez Dubois helped schedule consumer appointments in January.

Happy new year! Our Access to Justice Pro Bono Partners Program has hit the ground running in 2017. Our **ACA Volunteer Call** project was a success in January with volunteers from **Hunton & Williams**, **McGuireWoods** and **Bank of America's** legal department making more than 500 calls to schedule appointments for consumers needing assistance in selecting coverage plans for 2017 with LSSP's health insurance navigators.

### [Check out our 2016 Pro Bono Honor Roll!](#)

Thank you to all who have contributed to making 2016 our strongest pro bono year ever. Last year our generous partners donated nearly **8500 hours** of pro bono service across all LSSP and Legal Aid of North Carolina -Charlotte's practice areas, an **increase of over 20%** compared to 2015.

**New State Pro Bono Recognition:** Last year, the Equal Access to Justice Commission announced an important breakthrough in our pro bono world: North Carolina now has a voluntary, self-reporting mechanism to capture pro bono hours and recognize attorneys with 50+ hours of pro bono legal service across the state.

- **This is a voluntary process.** Individual attorneys must self-report pro bono hours. Access to Justice Pro Bono Partners will not submit names.
- The reporting mechanism is retroactive to the calendar year 2016. The **deadline for 2016 submissions is March 15**
- **Pro bono hours include** cases closed in 2016, as well as cases opened or in progress.
- The **reporting process** involves a quick, 10-minute survey. There are additional questions about legal-related community service and financial contributions to non-profit legal services providers, other aspirations included in Rule 6.1. The survey can also be completely anonymous.
- **Recognition:** Attorneys who complete 50+ hours of pro bono service in the prior calendar year will be inducted into the new **North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society** and will receive a certificate from the N.C. Supreme Court honoring their achievement. Expect an email from the Chief Justice in the coming weeks.
- **How to Report Pro Bono Hours:** Visit [ncprobono.org](http://ncprobono.org)

[Learn how you can join the Access to Justice Pro Bono Partners Program.](#)

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## LSSP in 2017

**Pro Bono Round Table - March 13**

LSSP and LANC are honored to host Justice Cheri Beasley of the North Carolina Supreme Court as

our keynote speaker at our next Pro Bono Roundtable at The Foundation for the Carolinas. Justice Beasley is an ardent champion of pro bono work and will be sharing her vision for North Carolina with us and will also address the new state pro bono reporting policy.

### Justice for All Breakfast 2017 - April 26, at The Westin Charlotte

Mark your calendars! Spring is right around the corner, and so is LSSP's annual Justice for All event, benefiting the [Access to Justice Campaign](#). While the location is the same this year, the event will be held in the morning as a breakfast. Plan to join us and keynote speaker **Toussaint Romain**, as we celebrate Justice for All in Charlotte.

### SummerSHARE - July 10 -21

LSSP, along with other Charlotte area non-profits, will participate in SHARE Charlotte's **SummerSHARE** donation campaign this summer. For two weeks, Charlotte steps up to send need on vacation by donating critically needed items to local nonprofit organizations. Last year, LSSP received donations of books and toys for our youngest clients to play with in our office waiting areas. We look forward to once again participating in this wonderful community event.

### LSSP is turning 50! - September 1

Along with community volunteers, LSSP's staff is busy planning a variety of events and activities to celebrate 50 years of pursuing justice for those in need in the Charlotte area. Be sure to stay tuned as the anniversary approaches!



Make a gift to help us provide  
a full measure of justice for those in need.  
Your support will directly impact LSSP and LANC's  
ability to work for fairness and justice for all of our clients.

[DONATE](#)



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