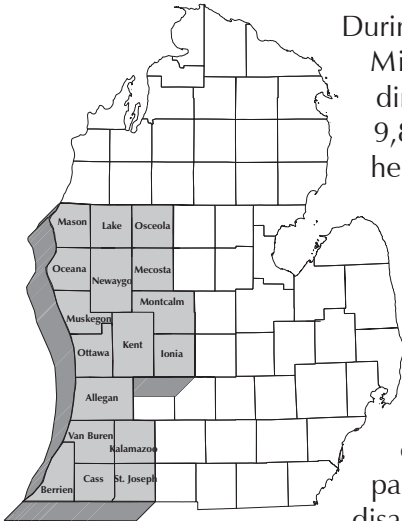


LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

2005 LAWM Office Locations: Big Rapids, Grand Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Niles, and St. Joseph

LAWM Service Area: Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties

Service Population: 261,773 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



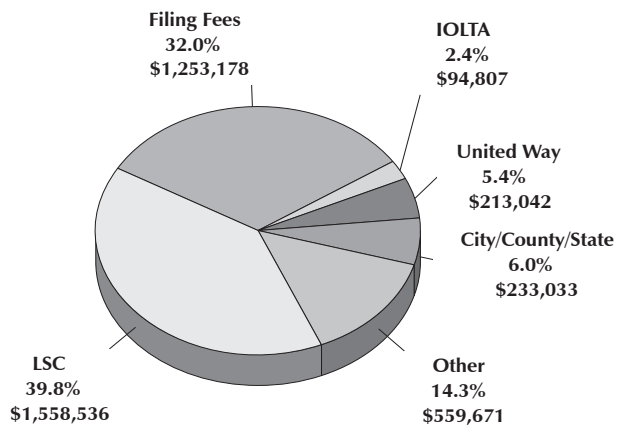
During 2005, Legal Aid of Western Michigan (LAWM) provided direct legal assistance for over 9,800 individual cases. LAWM helped families avoid homelessness in many of the 2,350 housing cases closed and provided much-needed security to families in 665 family law cases involving spouse abuse, child abuse, or the defense of a custody matter. LAWM also participated in 193 hearings for disabled persons, often helping these clients receive or maintain

LAWM is a partner of the Legal Assistance Center (LAC) at the Kent County Courthouse. LAC helps an average of over a thousand persons a month understand legal procedures and navigate a variety of legal pleadings. Individuals are regularly referred to LAC by the court and human service agencies. LAWM directly assists low-income clients at LAC and additionally receives many referrals from LAC of vulnerable clients who need more extensive representation.

critical health care and provide stable income maintenance. In 2005, LAWM's partnership with the Counsel & Advocacy Law Line increased client access to attorneys by 43% and resulted in more advice and counsel and extended legal services to low-income West Michigan residents. Also in 2005, LAWM's Soros Fellow created a manual concerning civil legal strategies to reduce the recidivism rate of ex-offenders returning to the community. Advocates and attorneys can use the manual to assist low-income ex-offenders resolve collateral civil legal issues. Additionally, a LAWM attorney received a State Bar *Unsung Hero Award* for her outstanding efforts to provide legal services to the poor.

An elderly woman sought help from LAWM to end her abusive marriage. The woman had been isolated in a rural area without transportation or a phone. Her husband had forbidden her to talk to her children, go outside the home, or even eat food without his approval. He even barred her from seeking medical treatment at a local hospital. LAWM provided the abused woman with the legal assistance needed to end the abuse and establish an independent place to live.

LAWM Sources of Funding for 2005: \$ 3,912,267



LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

Contact: Michael C. Chielens, Executive Director • (616) 774-0672

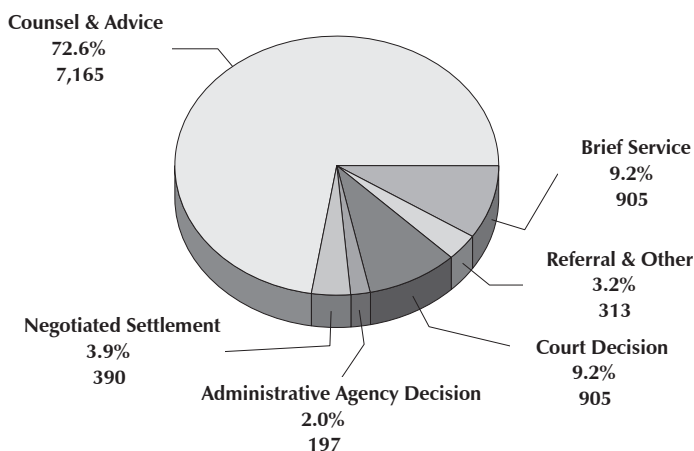
Community Outreach and Collaboration. LAWM continued to meet clients at various locations in the community such as courthouses, domestic violence and homeless shelters, community action agencies, or senior centers. LAWM also continued to expand opportunities to provide clients with access to legal services by working with the Kent County Legal Assistance Center which provided pro se help and legal information to more than 11,000 individuals in 2005. In addition to direct client outreach, LAWM staff also provided training to a variety of human service agencies throughout the service area on topics such as housing, civil legal issues for sexual assault victims and elder abuse. LAWM attorneys, along with private attorney volunteers, continue to meet monthly with homeless and domestic violence shelter clients to whom they give community legal educational seminars on family law, consumer law, housing, and public benefits. LAWM staff also participate in many community groups which coordinate and address services to those in need.

Client Age	
18 & Under	123
19-59	8,926
60 & Over	825
Groups	1
Total	9,875

Pro Bono Support. In 2005, pro bono attorneys volunteered their time to close 202 individual cases. Volunteer attorney hours spent on closed pro bono cases was valued at over \$600,000 with 71% of the cases resolved after litigation in court or before an administrative agency. The pro bono program at LAWM additionally raised over \$220,000 in donations with 80% of contributions donated through the Access to Justice Fund. LAWM continues to work collaboratively with the Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, and other local bar associations, participating in local pro bono committees and encouraging local pro bono involvement, such as helping to staff pro bono clinics.

Client Ethnicity	
White	6,755
Black	2,257
Hispanic	491
Native American	148
Asian	34
Other	190
Total	9,875

LAWM Types of Service in 2005



LAWM Cases Closed in 2005: 9,875

