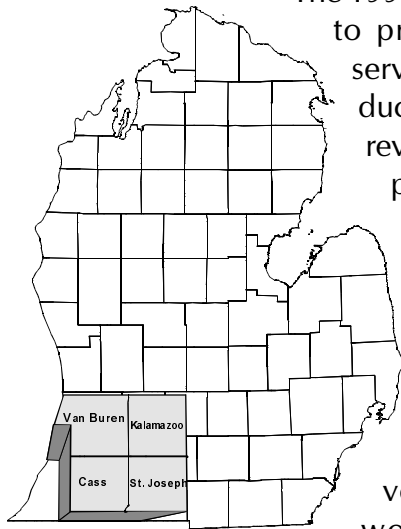


LEGAL AID BUREAU OF SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN, INC.

LABSWM Office Locations: Centreville, Cassopolis, Kalamazoo, and Paw Paw

LABSWM Service Area: Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties

Service Population: 68,230 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level

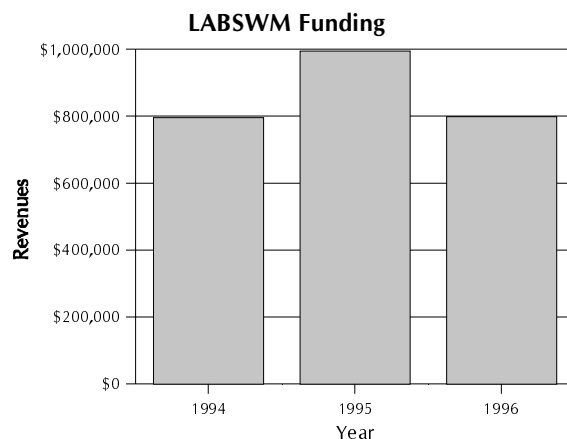


The 1996 challenge was to continue to provide high quality legal services with significantly reduced federal Funding. LAB revised its delivery system and prepared to provide these services with 14-15 staff members versus 21 staff members while keeping all 4 offices open with modified hours, hiring a pro bono coordinator, referring cases to the volunteer attorney clinics, working with the Dispute

A 41-year-old mother of three young children had advanced stages of Multiple Sclerosis. She was about to become homeless because a friend who had given her the use of his home died suddenly and his family was unable to keep that home. LAB obtained an accelerated hearing for special funds for dire needs and procured the critically needed assistance, allowing this disabled woman to obtain housing and child care for her family.

Resolution Center on housing issues, and kicking off the "Case for Legal Aid" fund drive. LAB also planned and obtained funding for a KIOSK project to provide legal information, describe court systems and create a referral directory of community agencies using public computer stations. IOLTA and filing fees funding helped stabilize the decline in services and have allowed LAB to keep its offices open.

A mother and her four children relocated back to Michigan after having been granted a Personal Protection Order in another state. However, the husband refused to support the children and continued to threaten the woman. LAB quickly obtained a Michigan Personal Protection Order, began divorce proceedings and obtained custody and support orders so that the mother and children could remain together and live in safety.



LEGAL AID BUREAU OF SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN, INC.

Contact: Ward F. McDonough, Executive Director • (616) 383-8922

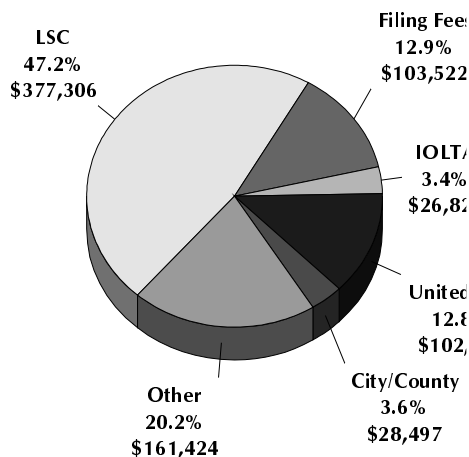
Community Outreach and Collaboration. LAB shares information with and refers clients to many agencies in the service area. LAB staff participate in local community activities, such as the Domestic Violence Task Force. LAB conducts intake and outreach events at sites in the high density poverty population areas of the more rural counties because transportation to LAB offices remains a problem in rural counties. Client eligible board members assisted in identifying the organizations and regions in most need. LAB staff created a consortium of "unlike" groups who would normally be adversaries; this Fair Housing steering Committee is made up of bankers, realtors, low-income persons, etc., in order to educate relevant persons about housing discrimination and help prevent legal problems. Also, in cooperation with the Dispute Resolution Center, LAB created a Housing Clinic to provide brief service and educational information on housing issues.

Client Age	
18 & Under	12
19-59	1,258
60 & Over	264
Groups	5
Total	1,539

Pro Bono Support. Although the location of the pro bono program moved from the bar association to LAB in 1996, LAB continued to work closely with bar association leaders and the pro bono committee of the local bar and presents a yearly pro bono award in cooperation with the Bar. LAB's pro bono coordinator recruits volunteer lawyers to provide many services. Several attorney's have also agreed to assist LAB with matters concerning personnel and organizational structure issues. Pro bono attorneys also staff volunteer clinics and offer time for Day of Caring activities to non profit groups. Attorneys in all four counties participated in the referral of pro bono cases.

Client Ethnicity	
White	1,089
Black	393
Hispanic	35
Native American	13
Asian	4
Other	5
Total	1,539

LABSWM Sources of Funding for 1996: \$ 799



LABSWM Cases Closed in 1996: 1,638

(Number of Clients Served: 1,539)

