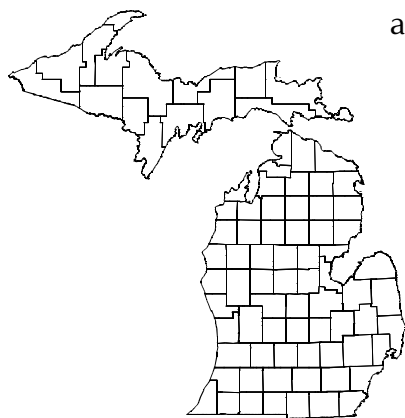


MICHIGAN MIGRANT LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT, INC.

MMLAP Office Locations: Berrien Springs and Grand Rapids

MMLAP Service Area: Statewide

Service Population: 160,000 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



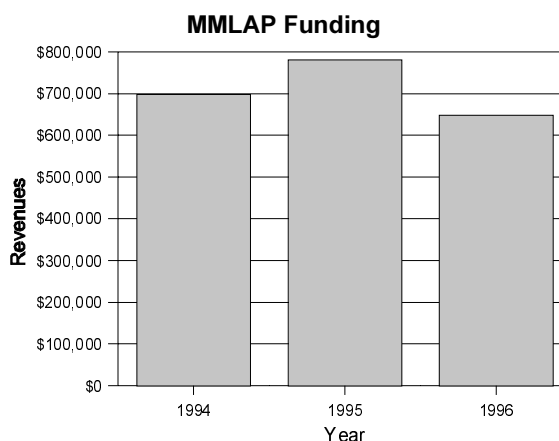
In 1996 MMLAP worked to address federal funding cuts, the effects of an uncertain funding environment and major (planned) program changes, including planning to transfer some migrant legal work to Legal Services of Southeastern Michigan and assuming a role in the provision of state support services for other

providers. Also, several staff vacancies remained in light of continued planning and the challenges of recruiting the specialized and bilingual staff that MMLAP requires. This resulted in a lower number of cases for 1996. Computer and technology systems were upgraded to improve efficiency.

MMLAP's farmworker environmental education project continued to provide materials, newsletters and trainings regarding sanitation, pesticides, ground water contamination, racism and poverty. MMLAP provided information regarding proposed bills affecting the rights of farmworkers in grower provided housing. MMLAP was also a referral agency for farmworker problems throughout the State.

MMLAP successfully intervened in seven separate cases involving unlawful termination of utilities or imminent threat of unlawful "lock-out." The typical case began with a minor dispute which escalated into the farmer's termination of utility services or threats of forcible ejection without recourse to legal procedures. These cases involved several farmworker families with minor children who would have lost heat, utilities or existing shelter. MMLAP advocates were able to negotiate resolutions for most of these cases without involving the civil courts.

Due to computerization changes in the state's administration of food stamps, some migrant farmworkers experienced serious delays in receiving "expedited" help. The families had become destitute due to the agricultural disaster caused by flooding in the early summer of 1996. MMLAP staff presented the problem through negotiation which promptly resulted in changes in policies of the Michigan Family Independent Agency. The families who were eligible under the law received the urgent food assistance they needed.



MICHIGAN MIGRANT LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT, INC.

Contact: Gary N. Gershon, Executive Director • (616) 454-5055

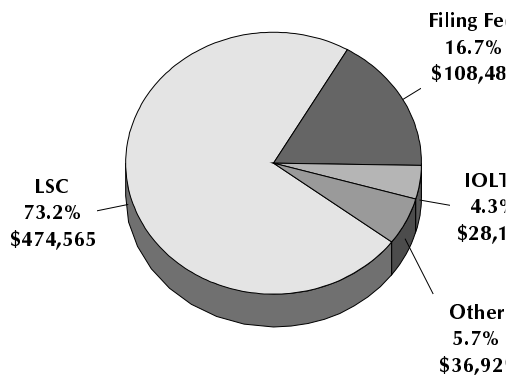
Community Outreach and Collaboration. MMLAP continued to conduct community legal education for farmworkers and their families at work camps with information on pesticide cautions, wage problems, workplace discrimination, and consumer matters. The newsletter "Bajo-Under the Burning Sun" is used to disseminate information not only to farmworkers, but to agency networks of the statewide Migrant Resource Councils and farmers. MMLAP works with the Michigan Department of Agriculture as well as with the Michigan Employment Security Agency on farmworker and seasonal outreach and activities which that agency is required to provide. MMLAP has developed productive relationships, which include mutual referrals, with many different agencies serving migrant families.

Client Age	
18 & Under	89
19-59	463
60 & Over	20
Groups	0
Total	572

Pro Bono Support. MMLAP does not maintain a traditional pro bono panel. However, significant pro bono services are provided in complex cases. MMLAP has received substantial assistance from large firms through the Litigation Assistance Partnership Program sponsored by the ABA Section on Litigation and the National Legal Aid and Defenders Association. After federal funding restrictions required MMLAP to discontinue class actions, several Michigan firms agreed to continue the cases pro bono. MMLAP participated in discussions with the State Bar and Michigan Poverty Law Program toward beginning a Michigan Litigation Assistance Partnership Program in 1997 which will use pro bono attorneys to assist with complex litigation.

Client Ethnicity	
White	9
Black	8
Hispanic	553
Native American	1
Asian	0
Other	1
Total	572

MMLAP Sources of Funding for 1996: \$ 648,



MMLAP Cases Closed in 1996: 572

