



# *SLLS TOP 10*

## *Year in Review*



As we near the end of 2020, we reflect on the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impacts of the most active hurricane season on record, and the inequities of the justice gap faced by marginalized communities of color. SLLS' team of dedicated staff and volunteers rose to the challenge to serve the critical crisis needs of vulnerable people in new and innovative ways. Looking ahead to 2021, we are bracing ourselves to handle the coming tsunami of evictions, to fight for the rights of workers who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic, to safeguard domestic violence survivors, to protect the livelihoods of disaster victims, and much more.

Below are our Top Ten 2020 Significant Accomplishments made possible by your action, support, and leadership. Thank you for being part of our team and we hope you can continue helping us as we face an unknown future in what will undoubtedly be another challenging year. We wish you a happy holiday season, good health, and best wishes in 2021.

### **TOP 10 SLLS 2020 SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- 1** 2020 was a banner year for achieving meaningful COVID-19 related access to court issues through negotiations with 10 Louisiana courts, winning significant appellate cases protecting thousands of vulnerable Louisianians through our eviction defense and child in need of care work, and engaging in successful policy advocacy with government agencies administering housing assistance, child protection programs, and unemployment benefits.
- 2** Our 2020 case work for individual households resulted in 25,517 people being helped through free civil legal aid to protect their lives, homes, and families resulting in a direct economic benefit to them of over \$20 million. A recent Louisiana Bar Foundation study found that for every \$1 invested in civil legal aid programs like SLLS, there is a \$9.13 social return on investment.
- 3** SLLS' Community Legal Education Campaign quickly became a trusted and reliable source of important information for people impacted by COVID-19. Since March 2020, our Facebook Live "hot topic" sessions have been watched over 25,000 times and our blog posts have racked up 508,981 page views.

- 4 Our new COVID-19 Legal Helpline received 14,758 calls since its launch in March 2020 providing a vital resource to access our services.
- 5 On 3/17/2020, we pivoted to a virtual office model and throughout the pandemic and eight named storms this hurricane season, never ceased providing critical civil legal aid to people when they most needed our help.
- 6 SLLS was grateful to receive almost \$1.5 million in COVID-related grant funding to help us respond to the surge in demand from families and individuals adversely impacted by the pandemic including from the Bob Woodruff Foundation, Capital One Bank, the City of New Orleans CARES Act Emergency Solution Grant, Funders for Housing Opportunity, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, Hancock Whitney, the Humana Foundation, the Legal Services Corporation, the Louisiana Bar Foundation, the Loyola College of Law Gillis Long Foundation Social Justice Fellowship, Public Allies, Tulane University School of Law's Lutz Fellowship, the United Way of Southeast Louisiana, and Wells Fargo.
- 7 SLLS expanded our staff by adding 20 new staff members to our team to tackle the civil legal needs of low-income people seeking access to justice during the most challenging crisis we have faced since Hurricane Katrina.
- 8 We expanded our media footprint going from one feature pre-pandemic to 94 stories since March 2020 in local, state, national, and international publications to raise awareness about the devastating impact of the pandemic on our clients and how civil legal aid is an often overlooked but essential solution to stabilizing communities.
- 9 Though prevented from holding in person fundraisers in 2020, this was a record breaking year for essential private support of our work - 247 people generously donated \$203,812.76 in amounts ranging from \$10 to \$100,000.
- 10 Last but certainly not least, over 600 pro bono attorneys, volunteer law students, and other community volunteers donated thousands of hours to help people in need access justice.

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thank you