

California State Justice Plan 2001

Response to LSC Program Letter 2000-1

Submitted by the
CALIFORNIA LEGAL SERVICES COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Toby Rothschild, Chair
through the
PUBLIC INTEREST CLEARINGHOUSE
c/o Stephanie L. Choy, Executive Director
100 McAllister Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

TEL: (415) 255-1714 ext 304 FAX: (415)255-3042
Email: slchoy@pic.org Website: www.pic.org

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California shall have an inclusive, client-centered justice community of clients; legal services programs; bench and bar; academia; community groups; and government, business and civic leaders sharing responsibility for effectively meeting the essential legal needs of the poor [no matter where they live or what language they speak] and for removing barriers to achieving self-sufficiency and true access to justice.

Draft Vision for the Delivery of Legal Services in California, September, 2001

INTRODUCTION

California has moved progressively closer to building a comprehensive, integrated system for the delivery of legal services: each year a broader cross-section of our community becomes actively involved in statewide planning. This is no small feat considering that California's legal service programs are spread over 163,707 square miles, divided by desert and mountain ranges and serve a population of almost 5 million poor people, speaking 224 languages, in very diverse situations and with a full range of legal problems.

Our network of legal services programs includes the 11 LSC-funded programs, which are part of the broader community of 78 field programs funded by our State's Legal Services Trust Fund Program. Additionally, there are 24 support centers and over 200 identified nonprofit community-based organizations that have an attorney on staff to provide some legal aid to the poor. Solo practitioners and small firms that provide sliding scale and no-fee work add to the network, as do court-based self-help programs and law school clinical programs. Large and small firm pro bono attorneys provide a significant amount of legal services, and civil rights firms also work for access to justice for our clients.

For the last few years, California has been strengthening the delivery of legal services, including through merger and reconfiguration of LSC-funded programs. While this is an extraordinarily difficult process, as this plan outlines, our delivery of legal services has been strengthened by these multi-faceted efforts.

Our most significant statewide accomplishments since our 1999 state plan are:

- ***Greater Collaboration with Powerful Allies.*** Legal services programs are partnering with a more diverse set of players than ever before. In particular, the Judicial Council, led by the Chief Justice, has become a powerful ally, as have concerned policymakers and bar leaders who have embraced our cause.
- ***A Strengthened Statewide Infrastructure.*** The California Legal Services Coordinating Committee, the State Bar, and the Legal Aid Association of California (reinvigorated by the energy of member legal services programs) form a strong infrastructure to support and coordinate the delivery of legal services.
- ***Effective Ongoing Resources Development.*** The FY 2000 and 2001 State appropriations of \$10 million in Equal Access Funds were no less of a victory than the 1999 initial funding allocation, which had been described as "one-time" only. California programs have expanded funding through other avenues as well.

- ***A Resolution for Statewide Support of Rural Areas.*** The Access to Justice Commission, the Legal Aid Association of California, and the LSC-funded Project Directors all have committed to focusing on delivery of legal services in rural areas, and to constituencies that are under-served, such as immigrants. Plans are underway to further these goals.
- ***Integration of Powerful New Technology Tools.*** From I-CAN to the Jnana Justice Advisor to ProBono.Net, California legal services programs continue to build effective technology strategies that ultimately will expand the services available to clients.
- ***Program Innovation to Effect Change.*** Our legal services organizations continue to develop new programs and to prevail in litigation that will have a lasting impact on the ability of poor people to raise themselves out of poverty.

Within the confines of a 30-page limit, this report responds to the questions raised in LSC letter 2000-7, with a particular focus on statewide and regional collaborations and the *systems* for delivery of legal services in California. In doing so, we do not lose sight of the crucial work that is being done by every single advocate in the state. By focusing on the system, we are not valuing system efforts over individual program efforts, or impact work over individual client services. To the extent that we are able to highlight innovative models that effect widespread change, we do so only expressly recognizing the exemplary and critical work of our advocates who daily help seniors stay in their homes, protect victims of domestic violence, fight for benefits to feed hungry families, or help asylum petitioners stay in the country.¹

This is our snapshot of the delivery of legal services in California. Through it, we strive to illustrate how our stakeholders are developing a multi-faceted, inclusive, client-centered community that will provide access to justice to all the people of California.

¹ While this report responds to LSC 2000-7, this state plan addresses the delivery of legal services throughout the state, including the work of stakeholders not governed by LSC restrictions. We cannot paint a complete picture of the delivery of legal services in California if we omit restricted work or services to restricted classes. To the extent that any restricted work is discussed in this plan, all such work is undertaken by non-LSC-funded programs.

“In the midst of this remarkable economic boom, ours is the tale of two Californias.” Despite all its successes, California has the greatest gap between rich and poor of all but four states. The poorest 20 percent of Californians suffered an income drop of 10 percent — to just over \$12,000 per year — in the 1990s. And, one in five California children live in poverty.”

Philip Angelides, California State Treasurer
San Francisco Business Times, July 14, 2000

1. What are the Important Issues Impacting Poor People in California?

A. The Poor Get Poorer. Although the 2000 Census figures indicate that the percentage of those below the poverty line in California declined to 12.9% last year,¹ that statistic does not portray the extent of poverty in California. While federal poverty thresholds have remained relatively static, the cost of living in California has risen. As a result, poverty rates do not come close to reflecting a person’s actual economic ability to meet essential needs. For example, while the annual poverty guideline for a family of four is \$17,650,² according to studies on the actual cost of living in California, a family of four with two working parents needs closer to \$52,034 annually (two 40-hour jobs, 52 weeks/year at \$12.51 an hour) to pay for basic necessities: food, shelter, clothing, transportation, health care, and childcare.³

Minimum wage at \$6.25 an hour (\$13,000/year) does not even support an individual living alone. Thus, a full-time job, may not be enough to bring the poor out of poverty. In 2000, 26% of California’s hourly wage earners were at the poverty level.⁴ In evaluations of welfare-to-work programs in California and other states, researchers found that recipients, who often are not fully employed throughout the year, earned on average less than \$2,700/quarter, or \$10,800/year.⁵ Moreover, those studies revealed that many low wage jobs do not provide paid vacation, sick leave or health benefits. Without access to health care, an illness may mean the difference between getting by and hunger or homelessness. Our society’s institutional failure to recognize the true cost of basic survival has perpetuated a permanent class of poor people who cannot break the bonds of poverty.

B. Housing Shortage. Contrary to popular belief, a rising tide does not lift all boats. It is a strange irony that the strong economy that California experienced in the mid-90s adversely affected the poor. The results of our healthy economy were astronomical increases in rents, making low and even moderate income housing completely unavailable in many areas. In 1999, 91% of low income urban renters spent more than 30% of their income on rent, and 67% spent more than 50% of their income on rent.⁶ Urban low income renters exceed low cost rental units (rent of less than \$400/month) by a ratio of 2.3 to 1, a gap of 581,304 units. Rent increased 14% in Los Angeles and 38% in San Francisco between 1989 and 1998.⁷ The result is that poor people increasingly live in substandard or temporary housing, in overcrowded conditions, or become homeless.

C. Inadequate Transportation. As housing becomes more expensive where there are jobs, low income workers are forced to accept a longer and longer commute. Many workers commute as long as an hour and a half to get to work, often on irregular and unreliable bus systems or with poorly operating cars. Bus delays, loss of a driver’s license, or freeway traffic jams may tragically result in job termination. In other cases, employees cannot take higher paying jobs because no transportation is available. Increasingly, lack of transportation is the most critical barrier to job development.

D. Health Care Access. One of the most pervasive issues facing all Californians, especially those who are poor, is the lack of access to health care. More than 7 million California residents currently have no health care insurance. Millions of low-income residents although eligible for

state and federal health care programs do not receive those benefits. The lack of access to care is particularly troubling for many immigrant communities, particularly Latinos, where people work in very low-wage jobs where no insurance is available.

E. Consumer Issues. Seniors, immigrants, and poor people are particularly vulnerable to unfair and deceptive business practices, such as fraud in the purchase and sale of a used automobile; deceptive insurance sales; predatory fringe lending and illegal debt collection practices. Home improvement fraud often results in foreclosure on seniors' homes. Increasingly, scam artists prey on those who seek assistance in obtaining legal residence, work authorization or citizenship.

F. Unmet Needs of Special Populations. For some groups, justice is even more inaccessible. This includes people who live in rural California, who lack not only the basic necessities of life, but also telephone service, transportation, time, and the necessary information to reach legal services programs. Extreme poverty also exists in inner city urban areas — such as Los Angeles, which United Way dubbed the "poverty capital of the nation with thousands of working poor men and women."⁸ Because of cultural differences, educational levels and language capacity issues, immigrants seem to have the greatest need for legal services assistance. Additionally, California is home to more Indian tribal governments than any other state -- 109 federally recognized and more than 30 unrecognized tribal governments. Although a small percentage of these tribes have achieved economic self-sufficiency through economic development, a large percentage, 20% in 1990 and close to 75% in rural areas, live below poverty lines. Other populations with special legal services needs include children, seniors, and institutionalized individuals.

1. The Rural Poor. The farm worker population of California, estimated at 800,000 to 900,000 individuals⁹ constitutes approximately 23% of the national farm labor pool.¹⁰ Most of those laborers are geographically, culturally and linguistically isolated: Migrant farm workers most often reside and work in remote locations on farms or other private property, hidden away from public roads. Many are without benefit of regular street addresses, mail delivery or telephone service. While the majority are Spanish speaking, more than 50,000 of these farm workers are Mixtec Indians who speak 12 pre-Columbian languages.¹¹ Increasingly, farm workers are employed through farm labor contractors, rather than directly by Agribusiness and Growers, with the result that fewer farm workers have health insurance and other benefits.¹² While the national unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, the unemployment rate in the Central Valley of California, which contains the three largest agricultural counties in the world, consistently ranged from 13% to 20%.¹³ The Central Valley's poverty rate exceeds that of all but two states — West Virginia and New Mexico -- and Washington, D.C.¹⁴

2. The Urban Poor. In 1999, about 1.6 million, or 16.3%, of Los Angeles County's 9.86 million people were living in poverty.¹⁵ Nearly 40% of all children under 5 in Los Angeles, and nearly 75% of public school children in that city, live in poverty.¹⁶ According to the 2000 census, Los Angeles also has one of the largest Latino populations in the nation.¹⁷

3. Immigrant Legal Needs. Both urban and rural immigrant populations seem to bear the greatest weight of poverty. In 1996-1998, 43% of heads of households in two-parent families were headed by an immigrant, and half of those heads of households had not completed high school.¹⁸ In 1997, more than 25% of California was foreign-born, which was more than 33% of the nation's immigrants. Roughly half of California's recent immigrants come from Mexico and Central America and a third come from Asia. These immigrants tend to be less educated, younger and have more children than other immigrants nationwide. This is extremely significant as education impacts the ability to

succeed economically and socially.¹⁹

We are facing a language access crisis. In 1990, the US Census Bureau reported that 224 languages were spoken in California, and in 1999, it reported that more than 4% of California's 33.4 million residents spoke no English at all. Language barriers make it hard to get education, find employment, and access government services, the courts or even local nonprofits.

4. Not Caring for our Children. In 1999, 19.5% of the state's child population lived in poverty. Tragically, parents who cannot financially care for their children, often lose them to foster care. According to a San Diego grand jury investigation, between 35% and 70% of foster children should never have been removed from their parental homes.²⁰ Moreover, while foster care should be designed for reunification of families — parents often cannot meet —reunification requirements— which, for example, might include visits to a home that is inaccessible either due to job requirements or lack of transportation. If children are not to be reunified, then children in foster care need to be nurtured and taught to care for themselves as adults. A study in Contra Costa County found that 33% of children placed in foster care eventually end up homeless, and 35% are arrested while in foster care.²¹ As testified by Children's Rights Project attorney, Marcia Robinson Lowry, —Foster care systems established and funded to serve children are failing, producing only more damaged graduates who will go on to produce new generations of damaged children, who will continue to lead unspeakably tragic lives and who will increasingly tax our public resources.—²²

5. Senior Abuse. California will experience a growth in its retirement population, as boomers reach retirement age. The proportion of our population that is over 65 is projected to increase from 11% in 1998 to 17% by 2030.²³ While poverty rates for older Californians have remained below 10%, seniors are particularly susceptible to abuse in our society -- whether it be physical abuse or as targets for consumer fraud. The high percentage of seniors living alone puts them at high risk for isolation or institutionalization. Seniors suffer from age discrimination and often cannot access healthcare.

G. (UN)Equal Opportunity for All. Three decades after the Civil Rights movement, many people in California continue to suffer discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, poverty, immigration status and language barriers. For many, these conditions bar equal opportunity and equal protection. Discrimination and lack of parity in access to education, jobs, transportation, equity, housing and the justice system have a tremendous impact on the ability of women, minority populations, the disabled, immigrants and others to raise themselves out of poverty.

1. Education. Education has always been recognized as the great equalizer. Yet, despite efforts by the legislature and the school system, the education gap in California is actually growing. Minorities make up a disproportionate share of those being left behind, especially the fast-growing Latino population, which lags significantly behind other Californians in education and income. According to the California Research Bureau, only 8% of Latinos -- compared to 43% of Asians, 33% of whites, and 24% of African Americans -- have a bachelor's degree or higher.²⁴ In many cases, our public schools still are failing to give our children basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills — let alone, the ability to reach for a higher education.

2. Jobs, Investments, Development. Corporations are choosing overseas labor markets and lenders are reluctant to take a chance on inner-city companies: in short, there is insufficient investment to bring economic opportunity to blighted neighborhoods. The disparity in economic op-

portunity between whites and non-whites is apparent in Census 2000 figures on home buying trends that show that the gap in homeownership rates is widening even with assistance programs to help low and moderate income Californians qualify for loans. While the state's minority population has added 1.4 million new households since 1990, minority housing has increased only 2.9%. While the state's white population dropped since 1990 by over 1 million, its housing still increased by 3.1%.²⁵

II. How We as a State are Responding to these Issues

The problems of the poor in California, and indeed the nation, cannot be addressed by any one strategy, by any one organization, or even by any one group of organizations. Therefore, California's vision is to enlarge our network of people involved in solving the problems, to coordinate our work, to leverage our resources, and to embrace a myriad of strategies from solving individual needs to developing policy change. Our growing partnerships include the private bar, policymakers, business and civic leaders, the courts and their family law facilitators, other self-help centers, law schools, government agencies, and an increasingly large array of client and community-based organizations.

Our litigation ranges from administrative hearings to obtain benefits for a single person to impact litigation benefitting whole classes of people. Our media work ranges from flyers and handouts to radio talk shows to cable access television. We provide community education through websites, clinics, pro bono programs, and court-based programs. We provide brief advice through hotlines, by appointment, and in court-based mobile vans that reach rural areas. Our work to effectuate policy change ranges from high level interaction with key policymakers to grassroots organizing and rallies. Legal Services advocates facilitate community economic development to empower client communities and utilize cutting-edge technology to broaden our reach and increase our capacity to serve. Only through our network of LSC-funded and non-LSC-funded providers, can we accomplish the full range of legal services described above.

1. The Components of our Delivery System

1. Legal Services Programs and their Partners

Legal Services and Pro Bono Programs. There are 102 programs funded by our State's Legal Services Trust Fund Program (IOLTA-funded programs), including 78 field programs and 24 support centers. Of the field programs, 11 are LSC-funded,²⁶ 12 are free-standing seniors programs, 11 focus service on immigrants and ethnic minority populations, 15 focus on other special populations (the disabled, homeless, children, domestic violence victims, prisoners, people with HIV-Aids); 15 are community-based organizations including law schools; 18 are general purpose free-standing pro bono programs; and 2 focus on constitutional rights and impact issues. Between 20 and 28 of these programs provide some level of service to rural areas. Fifty seven have services in the area of consumer issues; 48 on education or employment; 62 in family services; 23 in juvenile services; 53 in health care access; 65 in income maintenance; and 58 provide advice on individual rights. Services in other substantive areas, such as community economic development and service to prisoners, are not captured in these figures, which are based on year 2000 reports to the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (Trust Fund Commission).

In 2000, all the programs that received California IOLTA funds, received a total of \$163.9 million in government, IOLTA, foundation grant money, fees and private donations, as compared to \$128.5 million in 1998 and \$151.4 million in 1999.²⁷ During those years, LSC funding was \$29.2 million, \$31 million and \$30.6 million respectively. In addition to the \$10 million in Equal Access Funds (only \$2.1 million of which was distributed in 1999) this substantial increase primarily reflects increased efforts on the part of legal services programs to raise funds through grantwriting and private donor campaigns, although fee-for-service contracts and attorneys' fees also impact total funding dollars. Total fundraising and earned income dollars have risen 61.2% since 1995, from \$68.9 to \$112.5 million.

Private Attorneys. Through free-standing Pro Bono programs, in the year 2000, we harnessed over 347,916 hours logged by 9,452 private attorneys, and 99,669 hours logged by 1,994 paralegals, in total billable hours worth \$71,989,919. These numbers are based on reports to the Trust Fund Commission and do not reflect private attorney time given outside of IOLTA-funded programs, including substantial time donated by solo and small firm practitioners in their daily practice. Nor do they include the 20 or more programs that use pro bono lawyers but not as their primary delivery method.

Community-Based Organizations. Community-based organizations are increasingly involved in the delivery of legal services. As part of its study of the California legal services delivery system, the State Bar Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services (SCDLS) sent out over 200 surveys to community-based organizations that deliver legal services to the poor. Almost 50 nonprofit organizations provided detailed information about their programs, including information on the number of attorneys in their program (ranging from 0 to 4), and the substantive areas of service. These programs reported collectively serving over 75,000 clients last year. While many of these programs already partner with IOLTA recipients, as we develop a stronger state justice community, we need to weave these community-based organizations more tightly into our network.

2. Statewide Participants

California has an extensive network of statewide organizations in its legal services delivery system — each with its own focus but all working toward the same vision for the delivery of legal services. Since 1998, the network has grown stronger, so much so that it is a challenge to keep the field abreast of the multitude of statewide projects. (See Appendix 2 for a flow chart, a primer on the work of the statewide entities, and rosters of the statewide entities.)

Judicial Council. The Judicial Council has taken a much more substantial role in the delivery of legal services to the poor, and deserves national recognition for its unique involvement in access to justice for the poor. Through the cooperation and advocacy of the Judicial Council, working with the Access to Justice Commission (Access Commission), the Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC), California Judges Association and others, the State appropriated the \$10 million Equal Access Funds as a part of the Judicial Council budget. The Judicial Council has created court-based programs to help unrepresented litigants in all 58 counties, including partnership programs with legal services programs. It also has expanded the number of languages in which court interpreters are certified, and has developed a resource-rich, soon-to-be multi-lingual website for self-represented litigants.

In 2001, the Judicial Council hosted four regional roundtables that included representatives from Court administration, family law facilitators, the bench, private bar, legal services programs and advocacy groups. Each discipline within the county came together to develop county plans to enhance and increase services to self-represented litigants. Staff from the Judicial Council and the State Bar facilitated breakout groups at each conference, and legal services programs are actively involved in follow up meetings with court administrators. The Judicial Council has appointed a blue-ribbon *Pro Per* Task Force, including representatives of legal services programs, to tackle some of the issues raised at the forums. The *Pro Per* forums are an example of the Judicial Council's role in our community. The Judicial Council has not unilaterally effected changes, but has been a partner, informed by and collaborating with legal services programs through the California Legal Services Coordinating Committee (CLSCC), the Access Commission, the Trust Fund Commission, SCDLS and in conferences and roundtable discussions throughout the state.

Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC). LAAC, with the financial and time commitment of the legal services community, is being re-built in 2001-2002 to provide a forum for providers and clients to discuss tough issues, and to develop, coordinate and implement strategies for more effective delivery of legal services. LAAC is a membership organization of legal services programs, staffed by the Public Interest Clearinghouse (PIC). Created in the early 1980's to be the independent voice of legal services, LAAC has been most effective in times of crises. At the annual meeting of LAAC, legal services programs agreed on the need for an ongoing and rejuvenated LAAC to be the forum for frank dialogue and planning; the forum for leadership where coalitions are built and planning turns into action; a coordinator of legislative advocacy efforts; a center for special projects; and a center for accountability. Working with other stakeholders, LAAC is responsible for state planning in California. The previously independent CA-Nevada LSC-Project Directors and the Litigation Directors have opted to fold their organizations into LAAC, where they now assume a leadership role.

State Bar of California. The State Bar has recovered from its loss of funding in 1998. The new Office of Legal Services, Access and Fairness (OLSAF) now operates programs and provides support for the Access Commission, the Trust Fund Commission, and SCDLS. The three units offer a range of staff and volunteer-driven projects, including studying and making recommendations in a white paper on "limited practice," monitoring the Equal Access Funds and co-sponsoring the Immigration and Language Access Summit. For the first time in five years, in May, 2002, the State Bar will co-host with LAAC a three-day Pro Bono and Legal Services conference.

California Legal Services Coordinating Committee (CLSCC). CLSCC, which includes representatives of all of these groups -- as well as the California Clients Council (CCC), PIC and Western Center on Law and Poverty (WCLP) -- will continue to facilitate communication and coordination of all of the ongoing work in California, including state planning efforts.

B. Expanded Access through Coordination

In a state as big as California, coordination is critical to the effective delivery of services. Just as geese have 71% more flying range when they fly in a "V" formation to gain the benefit of the wind shadow and updraft of the goose in front, so too does the legal services community provide more effective services when we "fly together." This is true across all aspects of the delivery of legal services -- sharing substantive knowledge through task forces; collaborating to increase resources; developing statewide staff training; developing technology solutions for dissemination throughout the state; expanding media efforts; coordinating advocacy; and in the day-to-day operation of collaborative programs.

1. Legal Services Stakeholder Meetings: "Connecting the Dots"

Through regular legal services stakeholders meetings, California stakeholders gather to review the strengths and gaps and plan for the delivery of services in California.

- During the 1998 Stakeholders' meeting, funding was identified as a primary need. The Access Commission pursued that objective, forming a Funding Committee with LAAC to work with the Judicial Council to achieve the State's allocation of \$10 million in Equal Access Funds.
- During the 1999 Stakeholders' meeting, the stakeholders perceived a gap in coordination be-

tween the legal services entities, and as a result, the CLSCC was formed. Additionally, programs agreed on the need for better coordination and more consistent support center service, which resulted in the creation of an active LAAC Support Center Committee.

- During the 2001 Stakeholders' meeting, the largest California meeting of legal services staff and other stakeholders since 1982, the stakeholders talked about the need for greater collaboration on language access issues and training. As a result, LAAC and others are holding a Language Access/Immigration Summit and are working on several other training initiatives.

As these examples show, through periodic coordinated strategic planning, people compare needs, become energized, and plan for systemic changes to improve the delivery of legal services. In addition to the Stakeholders' meetings, substantive task forces and other groups, such as the Pro Per Forums, meet periodically and as needed to address specific issues. These collaborative meetings give our system the necessary impetus for evaluation and change. The next stakeholder meeting will be held on June 1, 2002 in Los Angeles.

2. Collaboration to Expand Resources Generally

Equal Access Funds. The Equal Access Funds (EAF) were a victory in 1999, and no less of a victory in 2000 given that funding originally was included on a "one-time" basis. The following year the \$10 million was included in the governor's budget. In fiscal year 2001, both the governor's budget and the California legislature supported a \$5 million augmentation of the \$10 million, and it was only because of California's energy crisis that the increase ultimately was eliminated from the budget. Were it not for the intensive collaborative efforts of the Access Commission, the Judicial Council, and legal services advocates, those EAF funds would not have been allocated to legal services.

While we recognize that "number of dollars" does not equate with "expanded access," a significant correlation is evidenced by the new projects undertaken under separate EAF grants, many of which have quantifiable results. A few of the notable new projects undertaken under separate EAF are identified in the brochure created by the Access Commission, entitled "The Equal Access Fund, A Wise Investment," attached as Appendix 4. The EAF also funds \$950,000 in "partnerships grants" between the courts and legal services programs. These projects implement diverse strategies, from technology-based to a high school clinical program, assisting clients with domestic violence, tenant, consumer and other issues, in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Chinese. Partnership grants also bring services to rural Fresno, Greater Bakersfield, the Mother Lode, and Tulare, Riverside and Sonoma Counties.

Collaborative Efforts for Major Funding. Funding from non-LSC and non-IOLTA sources has risen from \$88.0 million in 1998 to \$106.6 million in 1999 to \$112.5 million in the year 2000. A significant amount of these funds is from foundation grants, including over \$10 million for the Health Consumer Alliance (HCA) connecting Legal Aid Society of San Diego (LASSD), Legal Aid Society of San Mateo, Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA), Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS), Legal Aid Society of Orange County (LASOC), Central California Legal Services (CCLS), National Health Law Program (NHLP), Western Center on Law and Poverty (WCLP), as well as LSN's health rights hotline. NLS has secured an additional \$2.5 million grant from the California Endowment and \$100,000 from the State of California to enhance and expand its nationally recognized VIDA health advocacy project, which is a collaboration with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) organization in Los Angeles. CCLS is the convener and chair of the Multicultural Community Alliance, a group of community, media, government and legal services organizations, including California Rural Legal

Assistance (CRLA) and Centro La Familia (CLF) that have received over \$1 million in funding for helping parents enroll Fresno County children in Healthy Families/Medi-Cal plans.

Funding from New Partners. California programs also have expanded resources by developing innovative partnerships. For example, the District Attorney in Orange County funded the LASOC I-CAN project for self-help modules in driver's license review and child custody support payments. BALA received a 4-year \$425,000 grant as one of 30 community-based organizations funded by the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department to stabilize families and prevent juvenile delinquency. It also received \$350,000 to administer a 2-year grant from the Department of Justice for a domestic violence prevention project, which brings together shelters, counseling agencies and legal services providers.

Advocacy to Expand Access to Justice. Throughout the state, legal services programs are involved in advocacy efforts to expand access to justice. One of the most significant efforts this year was by Uncommon Good to create loan forgiveness of up to \$11,000 for 3,000 public interest lawyers. The bill was sponsored by Assembly Speaker, Bob Hertzberg, and was passed after legal services programs testified in support of it. The bill, now on the Governor's desk for signing, creates an endowment account for appropriated or donated funds, but is not yet funded. Other funding legislation that legal services advocates supported include: 1) a bill that would require pro bono commitments from law firms that contract with the State; 2) a bill to appropriate \$100,000 to establish a task force to study the delivery of legal services to seniors, including a statewide legal hotline; and, 3) a bill to provide \$3 million in start-up funding for pilot programs in health advocacy. The first of these two bills are on the Governor's desk for signing and the last was not funded.

3. Increased Access and Enhanced Services through Technology

Even if we tripled funding and resources, we could not serve all the essential legal needs of the poor in California. Part of the solution lies in creative thinking and new technologies. We are building on our extensive statewide technology expertise to expand our system of delivery of legal services. Within legal services programs, use of technology is now fundamental to every aspect of law practice management — document creation, case management, information sharing on the internet, legal research, and e-mail communication. Just as technology has changed the way we do our work, we anticipate the technologies that we are developing today will change the very core of how we deliver services to clients.

In 2000, PIC formed the CalJustice Technology Advisory Committee (CalJustice Committee), which is composed of legal services advocates, private attorneys, Court personnel, and State Bar officials, who understand the interface between technology and client-centered legal services. The Advisory Committee collects and shares information on technology developments, plans for the use of new technologies to better serve clients, and gives guidance on designing, developing, and deploying specific technology projects such as I-CAN and the Jnana Justice Advisor.

California's technology accomplishments since 1998 include the following:

- *I-CAN!* I-CAN! is now available to clients in English, Vietnamese and Spanish. Developed by LASOC, I-CAN! helps unrepresented litigants fill out standardized legal forms including: Fee Waivers, Answers to Complaint Regarding Parental Obligations, Domestic Violence Restraining Orders, and Small Claims forms. Questions are presented to the user on kiosks in text and as a talking video image, which helps clients complete and file properly formatted pleadings. As of

last month, ninety percent of English-speaking clients, and 70% of Spanish-speaking clients, gave I-CAN a rating of "helpful" and "easy to use."

With the technology grant provided by LSC, LASOC will deploy I-CAN! in various rural locations in partnership with CRLA, Inland Counties Legal Services (ICLS), and Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance (GBLA) this year, and with LASSD, and NLS/Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA) by Summer 2002. The Judicial Council has also granted LASOC funds to explore e-filing.

- *Jnana Justice Advisor.* PIC, under sponsorship of the Access Commission, is working with legal services organizations and the private bar to develop case intake, analysis, and placement systems using software donated by Jnana Technologies Corporation. Attorneys at Morrison & Foerster and BALA are developing a Fair Housing Advisor that will determine if a client's state or federal fair housing rights have been violated. Attorneys at Wilson Sonsini and Volunteer Legal Service Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco (VLSP/BASF) have designed an Employment Law Auditor to help nonprofit employers comply with state and federal labor laws. Both systems will be field-tested in 2001. The next step will be integration of the Justice Advisor with other technology tools such as I-CAN!
- *Quality Websites.* With an Open Society Institute grant, VLSP/BASF is piloting a web portal for pro bono attorneys with training libraries and forms; descriptions of client matters that pro bono attorneys can help with; expert advice online and more. VLSP/BASF has opened this site to the entire legal services community. Since 1998, many entities have developed resource-rich sites to provide information to clients and advocates, including: the California Judicial Council site for unrepresented litigants, and the sites of Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC), WCLP, HCA, LAFLA, CRLA, and California Indian Legal Services (CILS). At the request of LSC, CILS will resubmit its grant application for a statewide technology center to handle resource and referral and a library of substantive information for advocates.
- *Videoconferencing.* To reduce traveling between sites, CRLA (Sacramento) and the CCLS and GBLA offices have set up videoconferencing for trainings, meetings and review of cases. At the LSC project directors' strategic planning meeting on June 25-26, 2001, the project directors committed to investigating a system for connecting all regions by 2002. The programs are looking at videoconferencing, and the alternative use of WebEx to conduct multi-site simultaneous training and conferencing. WebEx is being piloted by CRLA, and was successfully utilized in a State Planning LSC-project director's meeting in September 2001.
- *Cable Access Television.* LASOC, the California Rural Justice Consortium (CRJC), which consists of CRLA, GBLA and CCLS, and others, continue to use videotaped community education material for public broadcast. With a production facility and capable staff on premises, LASOC can develop video for both community education and advocate training needs, and that work product is available on a statewide basis.
- *E-filing.* A committee of the Access Commission is following the development of e-filing technology to identify policy issues and concerns impacting access to justice for the poor.

As legal services programs develop innovative technology tools, they are put in the toolbox of the statewide system. Specifically, tools are developed so that they can be reused by other programs throughout

the state as a part of a coherent system of statewide resources.

4. Expansion of the Use of the Private Bar to Deliver Essential Services

Much of the legal services delivered to the poor in the state continues to be delivered through formal programs that incorporate private bar pro bono attorneys. As previously stated, approximately 18 projects serve the poor predominantly through pro bono programs. At least an additional 20 programs utilize pro bono attorneys to supplement or support projects or litigation.

For example, Bet Tzedek Legal Services (BT) has been a national leader in connecting pro bono attorneys with legal services clients. It actively co-counsels with all its pro bono attorneys to ensure quality handling of cases. By reviewing all pleadings and key documents prepared by volunteers, BT is able to achieve over a 90% success rate. For several years, the Southern District of the United States District Court has referred its civil rights *pro per* cases to San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program (SDVLP) to place with private attorneys. Through this program, large law firm associates gain federal experience handling employment, housing discrimination, and prisoner rights cases, while providing needed representation. Pro bono programs leverage legal services dollars. For example, for every dollar spent by SDVLP, \$9 worth of services are donated.

Collaborative efforts to increase pro bono include:

- *Large law firm challenge.* In response to the shrinking economy, in partnership with Chief Justice George, VLSP/BASF, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the SF Bay Area (LCCR), and others obtained the commitment of 19 large law firms to use best efforts to contribute either: 1) 5% of total billable hours or 100 hours per attorney; or 2) 3% of total billable hours or 60 hours per attorney, and to adopt policies to enable pro bono at either level.
- *Student Pro Bono.* PIC is piloting a pro bono program at several Bay Area law schools. The program will create a partnership of law schools, private attorneys and legal aid programs to foster a culture of public service in the law student community and instill a lifelong habit of giving.
- *State Bar Six-Point Pro Bono Plan.* In August 2000, the State Bar adopted a plan for encouraging pro bono: 1) renew the pro bono resolution; 2) renew the large law firm pledge; 3) reconfigure the pro bono awards; 4) work with the judiciary to educate judges about the need for pro bono; 5) expand the Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Program; and 6) publicize pro bono work. The work is underway. The Chief Justice presented the State Bar's pro bono and legal service awards at a special reception. In addition, the status of doing pro bono was elevated by the Governor's proclamation declaring the first "California Pro Bono Week" to coincide with the reception, and by the six state legislators who presented certificates to the award recipients.

5. Resources for Hard to Reach Groups

Rural. At the June 24-27, 2001 Strategic Planning meeting of the LSC-funded project directors, participants took a hard look at the disparity between funding available in urban, as compared to rural areas. While the raw numbers may not completely reflect the fact that some urban programs actually provide statewide services and conduct impact litigation that has statewide implications, the numbers were nonetheless astounding □ funding is almost ten times higher in the highest funded urban area compared to the lowest funded rural area.

Faced with those statistics and the overwhelming poverty statistics in rural areas, the LSC-funded project directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

The disparity in civil legal services resources (money, voluntary attorneys, law schools, etc.) across the state is a problem. While all areas of the state have insufficient resources to provide access to civil legal services, rural areas in particular have notably fewer resources than urban areas of the state.

This group pledges to develop and take action to, a) significantly increase resources for civil legal services in California and, especially, to, b) close the gap in resources between rural and urban areas.

The Rural Resources Committee (RRC), chaired by the project director of GBLA, consists of the directors and senior staff from ICLS, LASOC, CRLA, CCLS, LAFLA, LSNC, the Trust Fund Program and PIC. The committee has outlined the areas in which rural programs need support: 1) developing funding; 2) expanding pro bono support; and 3) obtaining legal, technical, training and donor development expertise. After exploring options, the committee decided on the following first priorities:

- *Technology.* Explore the use of videoconferencing or Webex to expand training to advocates in rural programs. Expand the I-CAN! self-help system to serve rural areas starting with a domestic violence module in El Centro in partnership with CRLA, and modules in San Bernadino and Riverside in partnership with ICLS, and in Bakersfield in partnership with GBLA.
- *Hotlines.* Evaluate, design and, if feasible, implement a statewide hotline to utilize both legal services advocate and pro bono support available to help rural programs expand their areas of expertise, and to free up rural advocates to undertake other work.
- *Development Expertise.* Explore ways in which larger programs might support smaller rural programs in achieving grants. In the meantime, PIC centralizes grant research by sending a free monthly e-mail, □FundOpps,□ which identifies upcoming grant opportunities. A compendium is posted on PICs website.

Other current efforts within the state to bring resources to rural communities, include:

- *Support Center Traveling Show.* The LAAC support centers will bring a training to Fresno (heart of the rural Central Valley), co-sponsored by CCLS on November 15-16, 2001. Following that, trainings are planned for Sacramento and San Diego (chosen for their relative accessibility to both Support Centers and rural advocates) in partnership with LSNC and LASSD.
- *Pro Bono.* Through its pilot student pro bono program, PIC will plan a student Spring Break trip to a rural location to provide student pro bono for a project, and to create a critical nexus between rural programs and future attorneys, where few currently exist.

Immigrants. The significant plight of immigrants and their unmet legal needs has been the subject of discussion and planning in the State.

- Through 16 workgroups, Santa Clara County investigated the needs of the immigrant community. The study culminated in a summit on December 6, 2000, □Bridging Borders in Silicon

Valley, Summit on Immigrant Needs & Contributions, in which legal services programs participated. Among the action steps are: 1) develop a language access bank to cover major immigrant group languages; 2) increase immigrants' knowledge regarding laws; and, 3) improve the adult literacy and employment training infrastructure. Project representatives will be presenting information at our Language Access Summit in October.

- National Immigration Law Center (NILC) and Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) have approached the Trust Fund Commission for grant funds to conduct an extensive survey of the legal needs of immigrants in California. That study will identify gaps in the delivery of services, both to support efforts to obtain funding, and to foster collaborations to fill those gaps.
- Legal Services Stakeholders including the Access Commission, LAAC, PIC, NILC, ILRC and others will host a Language Access/Services to Immigrants Summit on October 29-30, 2001. The Summit, which will involve court personnel, as well as legal services and government agencies, will cover issues impacting immigrants, model programs in direct services, coordinated advocacy, access to the courts and cultural competency, and will involve all stakeholders in planning for the delivery of linguistically and culturally appropriate services to immigrants.

In addition to statewide initiatives, programs have engaged in impact litigation to help immigrants. For example, in 2000, the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law (CHRCL) won a national victory in *Catholic Social Services v. Reno*, in which the majority of a class of 400,000 long-term residents were granted relief through an opportunity to adjust their status to that of permanent U.S. resident. After the litigation, Congress enacted the Legal Immigration Family Equity Act (LIFE) to afford qualifying class members and their spouses and children one year to apply for legalization under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. Many legal services programs helped thousands of California immigrants to successfully obtain legal permanent residency and citizenship under the new provision. This type of dual approach, combining impact litigation and individual services, is critical to the delivery of legal services in California.

Through a variety of community collaborations, programs can provide legal services to clients in many languages. For example, Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California (APALC) has formalized two networks to capitalize on the language capacity and expertise of ethnic specific organizations. The Asian Pacific American Naturalization Network (11 partners) focuses on helping people through the citizenship process and the Asian Pacific American Government Benefits Network (5 partners) helps individuals through government benefits programs. Through these partnerships, APALC handled 5,334 cases in the first half of 2000. APALC is also a partner with NLS, LAFLA and LASOC in the Asian Language Legal Access Project which, with nearly \$500,000 in foundation grants, will soon provide hotline services with separate "800" numbers in the pilot languages of Mandarin and Vietnamese.

In Northern California, six legal services agencies,²⁸ led by the Alameda County Bar Association VLSP and Legal Assistance for Seniors (LAS), and 13 community-based organizations are collaborating on the Legal Language Access Project, to develop a bank of trained interpreters. The language bank has provided cultural sensitivity and poverty law training to interpreters of Cambodian, Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Taishanese), Dari, Farsi (Persian), French, German, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Punjabi, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Vietnamese. NLS purchased special equipment with headphones that facilitates simultaneous language translation without interrupting the presenter. El Rescate Legal Services (ERLS) partnered with Mayavision to launch a program of Special Court Assistance in

Mayan Languages for Central American indigenous people.

3. A Strong Diverse Leadership

We cannot hope to gain ground on equal justice unless we consciously strive to develop a diverse leadership. The leadership must include clients — both to keep program priorities firmly rooted in the needs of the community, and to empower clients, who bring new skills back to their communities. We must attract skilled and diverse staff, and staff must be trained and nurtured, to enhance effectiveness as well as job satisfaction and thereby retention.

1. Client Leadership to Set Program Priorities based on Community Needs

Leadership rests first with the Boards of Directors of local programs, who are legally responsible for governance, mission, and assignment of priorities to accomplish objectives. Many programs ensure that clients and the communities that they serve participate in shaping fundamental policies by including client and community members on their boards. Often boards consult with clients through language specific community focus groups and other input. As board members, client leaders help set program priorities and, more importantly, are in a position to hold programs accountable.

In California, as in other parts of the country, there is a shift in the way that programs are delivering legal services to the poor. Through “holistic advocacy” programs, legal services programs develop much closer relationships with community-based organizations to address the entirety of each client’s needs, not just legal needs. Moreover, community economic development partnerships with community groups help legal services programs develop a much deeper understanding of client perceptions and needs. As our lawyering becomes more client-centered, our programs naturally become more entrenched in the needs of client communities.

2. Empowering Client Leaders: Changing Lives, Impacting Communities

California continues to build on its strong tradition of empowering client leaders through a client-centered delivery system.

□ The NLS VIDA Project in Los Angeles is a prime example of the effective and creative ways that programs promote client involvement and client leadership development. Funded by The California Endowment (TCE), VIDA is a statewide model for delivering effective health care to low-income, uninsured communities. The VIDA model provides data to demonstrate the results that flow from health systems where barriers to health care are eliminated and, most importantly, where low-income communities are specifically included in the health care policy decisions. Under the project, low-income VIDA participants with the assistance of NLS staff have become community leaders, participated in numerous County Health Department meetings and hearings, traveled to Washington and Sacramento to meet with government officials and attend conferences and have testified before a Congressional Committee studying the need for health care reform. TCE has recently provided a new three-year \$2.5 million grant for VIDA, which includes \$75,000 for leadership training for VIDA participant-leaders.

- In northern California, over \$1 million in funding from TCE helped start LSNC's collaboration with the Sacramento Valley Organizing Community (SVOC), which is an Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) organization, consisting of faith-based entities located in low-income communities of color that promote client leadership development. With a small staff, SVOC leverages millions of dollars by organizing community volunteers to be involved in economic development projects, creation of affordable housing units, welfare-to-work job training and development and childcare.
- Trial courts in nearly all 58 counties, conducted community-focused strategic planning on various issues, including access to the courts. The written plans were reviewed by the Judicial Council Community Focused Court Planning Implementation Committee, on which the Executive Director of Public Law Center (PLC) sits, and will guide each court's budgeting, resource allocation and project prioritization.
- Programs recognize the importance of developing clients as leaders. Some programs, such as BT and APALC, have developed model training programs for clients. Benchmark Institute (BI), an IOLTA-funded Support Center focused on training legal services advocates, has created a certificate program for Client Training.

3. Developing Statewide Leadership: Legal Aid Association of California

LAAC will facilitate development of statewide leaders. Although LAAC staff manage statewide projects, those projects actually are driven by a strong committee structure within LAAC and the organization of program volunteers to assume leadership. This volunteer-driven structure nurtures young advocates as leaders as they take on ever increasing levels of responsibility. As it focuses on Board development, the current LAAC Board specifically is looking to the goal of nurturing leaders to that infuse the organization with new and creative energy.

LAAC also is supporting program efforts to develop leaders within their own programs by supporting training. A LAAC Training committee arising from the LSC-PDA 2001 strategic planning meeting is exploring how training programs can be replicated and made available at low cost to programs on a periodic and dependable schedule. As a first step, BI agreed to convene a working group to develop a core training curriculum for California programs. Once core curriculum is developed, support centers and legal services programs can plan regular trainings. In addition to presenting the LAAC Traveling Training, LAAC is looking at models developed in other states, such as the Michigan Ohio CORT model, and training through outside vendors, such as MIE's "Managers in the Middle" trainings.

In the meantime, WCLP will provide trial advocacy workshops, and several full-day workshops on law and motion practice, and other advocacy skills. PIC will continue to work with private law firms to open associate trainings to legal services programs, as well as with private vendors, such as Practising Law Institute, to arrange and publicize free and discounted trainings available to legal services attorneys.

4. Client Leadership in our Statewide System

California has a long history of client participation in our statewide system. The California Client's Council is made up of client members of the boards of legal services programs — both LSC-funded and not — and members of the Clients Council have long held three seats on the Board of LAAC. Clients also hold two seats on the Trust Fund Commission. When the CLSCC was formed, a client representative was elected by the Clients Council and a client still serves on the committee. A client was part of the California team at the LSC Conference in Hershey, Pennsylvania on the delivery of client-centered services.

Given California's history of client participation, we are particularly frustrated by our inability to effectively incorporate a diverse pool of clients in statewide planning. While clients are very involved in program development within their communities, it is more difficult to keep clients engaged in discourse regarding the overall system of statewide delivery. We attribute this to a number of factors, including: the size of California and the difficulty in travel; the diversity of the clients we serve and the languages they speak; the sometimes dissimilar solutions to legal needs within differing geographic and ethnic communities; the technology divide which makes e-mail, and even telephone connection, difficult; and clients' lack of time and connection to the structure that constitutes our legal services delivery system.

LAAC has formed a board development committee to consider how it incorporates clients into its board structure, along with the bigger picture of how it might support the California Clients Council. In addition to existing client representation in stakeholder groups, at this time, we rely on the client input and leadership that is effectively nurtured and developed at the field program level. Through our statewide network, this client input is translated up from the program level to impact the statewide legal services delivery system and to ensure that our system remains client-centered. Client leadership exists where client input and leadership is critical — at the point of service.

5. Diversity within our Leadership

California boasts a richly diverse population, but our leadership does not yet match that diversity. Some programs, particularly those that serve special populations or specific communities have leadership and staff that mirror their service populations, such as California Center for Law and the Deaf (CCLD), in which five out of six of its board members are hearing impaired. Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc. (DREDF) is a program dedicated to securing equal citizenship for people with disabilities. Its staff is composed primarily of adults with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities who are lay advocates, parent trainers, lawyers and policy analysts. Twelve of CILS' thirteen board members are Native American, as are four of its five Directing Attorneys. Moreover, we consider it a significant achievement that five out of the 11 LSC-funded programs in California have ethnic minority project directors. Notwithstanding these examples, as demonstrated by the fact that only two of our 11 LSC-funded project directors are women, we believe that our legal services leadership, does not yet reflect the diverse cultural, ethnic, race, gender, and other characteristics of the populations we serve.

The need to further diversify leadership is not unique to California, or to legal services programs. California project directors of GBLA, ICLS, NLS and CRLA participated in national discussions with LSC and NLADA to address lack of diversity in legal services. In other sectors of our legal community, organizations are involved in efforts to achieve equal access, including for the

legal services community. The Women of Color Subcommittee of the Access and Fairness Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council convened a two-day conference to develop strategies for responding to stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination that affect women of color. The State Bar of California has funded (OLSAF) with \$750,000, in part to achieve diversity in the profession. We will continue to seek equal representation among our legal services leadership.

6. Our Leadership Supports Innovation to Meet Changing Needs

California legal service providers continue to develop innovative, creative solutions to meet the changing needs of the poor in California. While not always tangible, innovation exists in all that we do. Development of a stronger infrastructure, by implementation of Wide Area Networks for interoffice communication; development of new partnerships, by garnering law enforcement and religious leader support of our Equal Access Funds; development of new approaches to problems, such as NLS's VIDA program which has been adopted by the state as a model low income health care insurance program, and more -- all are evidence of our leadership's support of innovative, creative solutions.

In yet another example of our leadership's willingness to seek innovative strategies, the Discrete Task Representation Committee of the Access Commission has been exploring a new paradigm for the delivery of legal services -- "unbundling" of legal services. The Access Commission has drafted Preliminary Recommendations Concerning Limited Representation, in order that clients can retain legal counsel for only those parts of litigation in which they cannot effectively represent themselves, and lawyers can limit the scope of legal services to those defined tasks. By separating those components of litigation that need a lawyer from those that do not, costly attorney time can be utilized most effectively.

4. Key Examples of Individual Programs Responding to the Needs of the Poor

While this state plan does not attempt to list all of the many ways in which our legal services programs are responding to the issues impacting the poor, we cannot talk about the delivery of legal services in California without highlighting at least a few areas in which our network of legal service programs have done exemplary work. Selecting from the many model programs is extremely difficult, and the ones discussed here are selected because they depict particular approaches, partners or substantive areas, not because they are any "better" than programs that are not identified.

1. Preserving Homes. At the January 2001 "Connecting the Dots" stakeholders meeting, advocates at the housing roundtable discussed the importance of adopting multiple approaches to housing preservation, including: 1) delivery of individual client legal services, coordinated with other social services; 2) impact work that increases housing, including through litigation and by persuading corporate and government entities to invest in housing;²⁹ and 3) statewide coordination to effect legislation on eviction defense and preservation of existing housing. All these approaches are utilized by the different legal services programs in California.

The Volunteer Attorney of the Day (VAD) Unlawful Detainer EAF Project, sponsored by seven legal services programs in Los Angeles, provides counsel and representation to tenants. Through this program, tenants prevailed at trial 24% of the time in 2001, as compared to 12% in 1998. In another

project that serves individual client needs, legal service providers, including VLSP/BASF and social service agencies, conduct "early detection" of problems and prevent homelessness through negotiation of back rent and other issues. The East Palo Alto Community Law Project Home Buyer Education Program works with existing community advocacy groups to prepare low income residents for homeownership, and the Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA) housing program, is staffed through a clinical program with New College of the Law.

The Public Interest Law Project (PILP) co-counseled with a number of legal services programs in the case *Mercy Charities Housing California v. Dept. of Housing and Community Development*, in which plaintiffs obtained a judgment enjoining the Department of Housing from implementing immigrant eligibility and verification requirements in numerous housing and community development programs throughout the State. As co-counsel in *In re Riverside County*, CRLA and PILP reached a settlement that resulted in the preservation of farmworker mobile home parks and \$27 million for rehabilitation of the parks.

2. Meeting Critical Transportation Needs. Access to reliable transportation impacts job and economic stability and other fundamental necessities, such as access to health care. Studies have shown a high correlation between car ownership and obtaining and retaining higher paying jobs. Legal services programs help individuals obtain or sustain access to transportation, or effect widespread impact, such as by urging transit district recognition of the need for adequate public transportation in blighted areas.

LAFILA advocates have taken an active role in the Transportation Inter-Agency Task Force (TIATF), formed to find solutions to transportation barriers faced by welfare-to-work participants. The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors recently approved a \$12 million plus set of proposals developed by the TIATF, including funds to enhance transportation services and help participants secure and retain access to personal vehicles. Likewise, NLS has negotiated unique timelines that are included in the CalWORKS county application process to ensure participants can get transportation payment within a week. Through CRLA participation in planning, the transit district has expanded public transportation between rural Yuba City and Roseville where poor people live, and Sacramento where there are jobs. A CRLA representative sits on the Sacramento Area Council of Governments and has been active in developing a 25-year plan for transportation and a linked plan for low-income housing.

Under a \$59,000 grant from the County of Sacramento, LSNC assists 120 clients each month in its driver's license clinic, which resolves underlying problems in order that clients can reactivate suspended licenses. LASOC is developing an I-CAN module to help clients request a review of their drivers license suspension. In a different kind of strategy to ensure that low income people have transportation, in 1999, San Diego Friends of Legal Aid (SDFLA), WCLP, and National Center for Youth Law (NCYL) filed and settled a class action challenging the reduction or denial of food stamps and CalWORKS benefits to persons using their one vehicle for transporting disabled children to medical appointments and emergencies.

3. Upholding Civil Rights. Using matched pair testing, the Impact Fund (IF) found that auto service shops preferred male over female mechanics four times to one, and that San Francisco employment agencies preferred the white candidate three times more often than the slightly more qualified black candidate. In the wake of the September 11th incident, Middle Easterners and Southeast Asians have reported incidences of discrimination and violence, showing that our fight against racism and inequality is not over. Racial and gender inequality and injustice exists in California. If there is no parity in access to education, jobs, equity and justice, we will not be able to get to the root of

poverty. Moreover, if discrimination and type-casting is apparent in times of economic boom, it can slide into intolerance and hate violence when times are bad. Many programs in California address these issues, from a variety of perspectives.

The East Bay Centro Legal de la Raza (EBCL) Student Rights Program helps students graduate from high school by providing legal advocacy in discipline cases, advice on special education matters, and with respect to other obstacles to learning, such as violence. Public Advocates (PA) fights discriminatory placement of minority students in dead-end special education classes and has worked with the State to blunt the anticipated unfair impact of the proposed High School Exit Exam on low-income, minority and limited-English-speaking students. Many programs, including LAFLA, NLS, Multicultural Education, Training & Advocacy (META), the Center for Law in the Public Interest (CLIP) and MALDEF collaborated to contest unequal educational opportunities in Los Angeles, as evidenced by disparity in the number of experienced teachers, in expenditures per student and in physical facilities in schools serving poor neighborhoods. Another collaborative, led primarily by American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the law firm of Morrison & Foerster, is contesting similar inequities in schools in rural areas.

Working with clients in El Monte, APALC created a cross-racial coalition of exploited workers; and obtained a landmark ruling in *Bureerong v. Uvawas* holding garment retailers responsible for illegal exploitation of workers. APALC taught life skills to the workers while involving them with litigation strategy. Through this client-centered advocacy, APALC empowered a coalition of Latina and Thai workers that led to a national movement to eliminate sweatshop labor and the enacting of the Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.

The Employment Law Center, Legal Aid Society of San Francisco (ELC) promotes self-sufficiency and economic justice by enforcing equal opportunity in employment. In a class action filed in Fresno, ELC is challenging a company's application of workplace language standards on Cambodian, Vietnamese and Latino workers that prior to the policy implementation had demonstrated that they could successfully fulfill job requirements. In December, ELC will be arguing *Barnett v. U.S. Airways*, before the United States Supreme Court, on the issue of whether an employer-promulgated seniority system takes precedence over reasonable accommodation requirements under the American with Disabilities Act. This decision will have far-reaching impact on the rights of the disabled in the workplace.

CRLA mounted an extensive education and outreach campaign with national, regional, and local census authorities to improve enumeration of farmworkers in Census 2000.³⁰ The campaign was built on more than a decade of work with the Census Bureau to address the data problems resulting from the mega-undercount of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the 1990 Decennial Census. CRLA participated on the 2000 Census Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Commerce and collaborated with the Population Division of the Bureau of the Census to suggest improved enumeration procedures and review materials developed by Bureau staff.

In Sacramento, LSNC acts as general counsel for Sacramento Valley Organizing Community (SVOC), an IAF faith-based group, to create economic development projects constructing housing and developing childcare facilities. Additionally, LSNC helps SVOC create job cooperatives, negotiate job commitments from private industry; create micro lending opportunities; and create partnership agreements for clients who wish to start their own businesses. With LSNC acting as general counsel, SVOC has constructed and helped clients purchase over 210 housing units and attracted over \$10 million in funding to build affordable housing. It has opened three childcare facilities, with five more pending.

Job programs develop employment opportunities that average \$9.50/hour plus benefits.

The LCCR Legal Service for Entrepreneurs program mobilizes transactional attorneys to provide pro bono legal assistance to low-income entrepreneurs and struggling businesses in low-income neighborhoods. CILS provides broad economic development services from micro-economic development to capital constructions projects worth tens of millions of dollars. During the recent energy crises, CILS worked with the State and tribes to create Memoranda of Understanding for tribes that wished to locate power plants on their reservations.

In the wake of the September 11th incident, LCCR is conducting outreach to Arab, Muslim, Afghani, and other people that have suffered backlash from the terrorist attack. LCCR has found discriminatory conduct based on race, religion and national origin, including mistreatment of customers in bank and retail outlets, prevention of travel on commercial airlines, hate crimes, police and other official misconduct, and over-reacting to student misbehavior. At this time, LCCR is matching individual cases with appropriate attorneys or legal services programs, and monitoring claims for potential impact litigation.

III. Evaluation and Assessment

A. Statewide Mechanisms to Assess Program and System Performance

Statewide evaluation is undertaken at two levels: 1) review of individual program performance for quality and effectiveness; and 2) review of the California legal services delivery system for effectiveness and to eliminate gaps in service. Program review is primarily the responsibility of the Trust Fund Commission, which sets standards for receipt of its grant funds and monitors for compliance. Of course, LSC-funded programs also work under LSC Performance Criteria. System review is undertaken by LAAC.

1. Standards to Review Program Performance

The State Bar of California formally adopted the 1986 ABA Standards for Providers of Civil Legal Services to the Poor for measurement of the performance of all IOLTA-funded programs. In addition, the Trust Fund imposes separate grant guidelines for field programs, support centers, EAF, and EAF Partnership Grants with the Courts, to ensure client and community input into program priorities and that grant resources are well utilized. Where necessary to improve program performance, the Trust Fund and Program Development staff offer technical assistance.

The Trust Fund strives to do a program audit of all its funded programs every four years. Because the EAF is funded through the Judicial Council, in conjunction with the Judicial Council, the State Bar is implementing new protocols for stringent monitoring of use of those funds. Beginning next year, program audits will be increased in frequency to every three years, and the State Bar has proposed new financial audit requirements for smaller programs that previously were exempt. Program audits serve a dual purpose: 1) they allow the Trust Fund to monitor program efficiency and effectiveness and provide the State Bar with information about programs that can benefit from assistance and guidance; and, 2) they position Trust Fund staff to have an intimate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of legal services in California.

In this way, the Trust Fund staff is able to inform our state planning, and in many instances, to facilitate statewide efforts. For example, Trust Fund staff compiled the information highlighting the

disparity in funding between rural and urban legal services programs, which study resulted in the LSC Project Director's formation of the Rural Resource Committee.

2. Evaluation of our Delivery System

Working in partnership with other stakeholder groups, evaluation of our delivery system is the responsibility of LAAC. LAAC provides a forum for providers and clients to discuss issues and develop strategies for more effective service delivery. LAAC promotes higher standards of practice and encourages programs to be accountable to their constituencies.

In 1999, the Support Center Subcommittee designed two projects to review and set standards for Support Center operation:

- *Joint Assessment.* A subcommittee of support centers, working with consultant John Arango of Algodones Associates, created an extensive survey, "Assessment of State Support," that in August 2001 was sent to over 1100 advocates in the IOLTA-funded programs in California. The assessment will: 1) create a comprehensive database about current support; and 2) identify, from the perspective of field programs, gaps in support services. The assessment goals are to evaluate current support services; foster greater collaboration between support centers; reinforce communication with field programs; and inform program management of support services.
- *Standards.* Recognizing that the ABA Standards do not cover the unique support center function, a subcommittee of support centers drafted "Standards for California Support Centers" to meet two needs: 1) develop minimum standards for performance by individual support centers; and 2) articulate a model structure for a statewide network of support services. The document has been circulated through the Support Centers and the field programs for comment, and will be finalized based on information from the support center assessment project.

These LAAC Support Center projects are examples of how LAAC is playing a role in evaluating and improving system effectiveness. With new funding in 2001-2002, LAAC will play an even more significant role in the delivery of legal services in California.

Additionally, in 2001, the legal services community has initiated several studies. The Access Commission Five-Year Anniversary Study and Report will review the state of legal services since the 1996 working report that led to the creation of the Access Commission. This update will be a tool for educating persons outside the legal services community about the legal needs of the poor. The SCDLS Study of the Status of Legal Services to the Poor and Middle Income, requested by the State Bar Board of Governors to inform its programming, will supplement other reports to include information on the delivery of legal services to middle income people and the provision of services to the poor by non-IOLTA funded programs.

Although California has not conducted a cost-benefit study, the Access Commission has begun compiling reports on the cost-savings in providing legal services to prevent homelessness, domestic violence and elder abuse; provide community economic development and micro business support; create welfare-to-work opportunities; help those with disabilities enter the workforce; and provide support during early childhood. This report will support California's funding request to the California legislature and governor's office.

2. Efficient Operation of Our Legal Services Delivery System

Given scarcity of resources, it is of foremost importance that resources are put to effective, efficient use. Therefore, as a state, we seek to avoid duplication in services and capacities. Although we currently have programs that provide similar services, this does not reflect waste. Replication of services in a state as large and demographically diverse as California is necessary to ensure that people are able to obtain the same services regardless of where they live or who they are, and that advocates can represent indigent parties on both sides of a dispute, such as in a family custody issue.

California avoids duplication of efforts by close collaboration, clear communication and the identification of partnerships. Through effective communication and collaboration, course corrections can be made when it appears the system is not working effectively. For example, in response to concerns regarding the need for greater collaborative services to immigrants, PIC obtained funding to bring together community and legal services organizations. At the same time, the Access Commission, in response to comments at the 2001 stakeholders meeting, agreed to create a forum on Language Access. The two projects became linked through LAAC, and a summit on Language Access and Service to Immigrants will be held October 29-30, 2001.

While we believe California's system for the delivery of services operates effectively, California clients would benefit from a better system for referral between programs. CILS' Technology Initiative Grant proposal on behalf of California programs for a statewide technology center was developed in part to resolve this referral inefficiency. Because that proposal was not fully funded, California will continue to seek means to effectively refer clients, including possibly through the Inana Justice Advisor and use of the State Bar's newly revived Legal Services Directory.

C. Measuring Success in Response to Issues

California programs understand the importance of outcome measurements. In September 2000, the LSC Project Directors sponsored a workshop for all legal services programs entitled, "Program Evaluation from an Outcome Perspective." Unless we measure program success based on its impact on each client, we cannot have a client-centered justice community. The workshop was directed towards helping all legal services programs to shape their programs around client outcomes.

Additionally, the Trust Fund Commission convened an "Evaluation Working Group" which held several intensive meetings to discuss evaluation protocols for the EAF Partnership Grants. Because those partnerships between court-based and legal services programs have high visibility in the State, the grants are held to a particularly high standard of accountability. Based on recommendations of the working group, the Trust Fund Commission required specific and detailed data, but asked each project to design its own system for setting baselines and measuring and evaluating outcomes. It was agreed that because many of the projects were innovative and experimental, it would not be effective to apply pre-defined evaluation methods to all programs. In addition to the self-evaluations, the Trust Fund staff will conduct in-depth audits of the partnership grants on a rotating basis. (A copy of the Trust Fund Commission evaluation protocol is attached as

Appendix 5.)

The FY2001 legislature has mandated that an extensive evaluation of the effectiveness of new programs funded through the EAF be completed by 2005. With the help of expert consultants, the State Bar and Judicial Council will soon begin developing this in-depth multi-level evaluation process. In the meantime, several comprehensive studies already have been conducted to inform our programming. In particular, Gary Blasi, a previous legal services advocate and now Professor of Law at UCLA has just completed his first year study of the NLS Van Nuys court partnership. The study looked at the extent to which *pro per* assistance is adequate to address the needs of clients, both through statistical analysis of client outcomes, and client interviews. The evaluation, which will be released shortly, specifically is designed to inform future planning of *pro per* services, and is funded for a second year.

To the extent that model evaluation protocols surface from these intense studies undertaken in respect of the EAF partnership grants, or from national or other state models, those evaluation protocols will be considered for use by the legal services community for statewide application.

D. Improvement in the Quality of Services Since 1998

As we look back at our accomplishments, we believe the quality of services has increased and improved, even as we recognize that no baseline measurements in 1998 allow us to quantify improvements since that date. We can point to increased access at the point of delivery through increased *input*, such as all the new programs developed with the \$10 million EAF, California Endowment Funding, and other sources. We can even tie those funds specifically to numerous projects (and outcomes) within the state that would not have been possible without the funds. Yet, as a state we do not currently have the resources to measure the overall improvements in the quality of our delivery system since 1998.

We believe that the true answer is that improvement in the quality of services can be felt in the nature of the work that we do. Because our work is increasingly client-centered, legal services programs are addressing core poverty issues: expanding opportunities for clients through job development, housing, transportation, health care access, and economic development. These additional services help clients break the cycle of poverty. Likewise, legal services advocates are more involved in significant litigation that has far-reaching impact, both in dollars and in the number of people that are helped. In that way, the quality of our legal services has improved since 1998.

1. Improvement in a Full Range of Capacities

In 1998, California was proud to be the situs of innovative new legal services programs. We were exploring the effective use of brief services, such as regional hotlines, use of technology in self-help programs, and developing community education programs. These programs are no longer exploratory but are an integral part of our delivery system. Now, more than ever, we recognize the importance of brief services to help those clients that can benefit from it. In that "reverse triage mode," we can save valuable resources to represent those clients requiring more comprehensive legal services.

On the other side of the spectrum, our capacity to undertake large impact cases has grown. In addition to many other support centers that engage in impact litigation, The Impact Fund (IF) is a IOLTA recipient that expands our communities' ability to engage in impact litigation through training and technical assistance, and as co-counsel. Moreover, the Impact Fund funds impact litigation, recovering loaned amounts from attorneys' fee recoveries.

2. Improvement in Relative Equity

In this report, we have both outlined the work that we are doing to improve the relative equity regardless of who the client is and where the client lives and discussed the depth of the current inequity between rural and urban areas. Admittedly, even if there has been improvement in access to justice in rural communities, California falls short of its goal of full equity in the delivery of legal services. However, there clearly has been improvement in relative equity, notwithstanding the remaining disparity.

The Courts, often in partnership with legal services programs, have played a big role in providing relative equity throughout the state. Every court in the 58 counties of California now provides assistance to litigants appearing *in pro per* through Family Court Facilitators, who have attorneys to assist litigants with family law matters, and many courts have self-help centers that provide other assistance. The EAF created Partnership grants in which legal services and courts jointly submitted proposals for *pro per* litigant services. These model partnership grants have resulted in many new collaborations between legal services and the courts, many of which are separately funded. NLS' Van Nuys court project, for example, is funded by the Los Angeles County, Department of Consumer Affairs. LASSD also has been working extensively with court administrators to negotiate Domestic Violence and Unlawful Detainer self-help centers tied to hotline services, outside of partnership grants.

In 1999, the Fresno Forum was sponsored by the Access Commission and CCLS to spark community involvement in that rural area. The Central Valley Access to Justice Coalition, chaired by CCLS Project Director and vice chaired by the Fresno Superior Court Presiding Judge, with broad representation from government, private bar, legal services and the community, has met monthly to address access issues. Since 1999, the Coalition helped form Neighborhood Justice Centers and is currently seeking funding for a Homeless Court, and studying language access issues. The Coalition will host "The Court Community Forum" on November 9, 2001. In Fresno, CCLS also assisted West Fresno Coalition for Economic Development to apply for and receive a three-year grant of \$150,000 each year. This enabled the Coalition, which heretofore was all volunteer efforts, to open an office and hire staff.

Expansion of our range of services, as described in the section above, will have the impact of improving the relative equity of services. Systems, such as I-CAN, are being developed first in rural areas where the need is greatest. Collaborations, such as the Asian language hotline in Southern California and the Language Access Project in the Bay Area, are expanding service to meet the needs of immigrant populations that otherwise would not receive services.

IV. Best Organizational and Human Resource Configurations

A. Report on LSC Regions

As described in this section, reconfiguration of programs has allowed us to create more effective administrative structures, such as BALAs, and bring resources to outlying rural offices, such as LSNC's Redwood office. However, merger also creates costs to programs, and to the statewide system, in a myriad of ways that often aren't acknowledged. Most notable is the tremendous continuing cost, both time and money, of centralizing administration on an ongoing basis. Therefore, we believe that it is important to scrutinize each region carefully to determine what program design is more appropriate to client services, effective management, and maximum resource development. In our state, we also have models for regional collaborations between programs that have not merged and these programs have demonstrated that regional collaborations can effectively result in stronger programs and enhanced delivery of services to clients. We believe that our current LSC program-configuration is appropriate to best organizational and human resource management. We report on regional developments below.

Northern California. As a result of a program merger in 1999, LSNC is the sole LSC-funded provider for the region, with nine offices covering 23 counties. With representatives involved on the LAAC Board, on the E-filing and the Funding committee of the Access Commission, on the Cal-Justice Technology Committee, in Judicial Council-sponsored *pro per* forums, and more, LSNC is an active player in the planning around the statewide delivery of legal services. LSNC also has made progress toward integrating the legal services delivery system within its own region.

LSNC has created an infrastructure for programmatic coordination and program-wide training. LSNC has standardized its intake system, which is staffed by paralegals. In addition to instituting a program-wide Regional Counsel advocate support/case review system, which emphasizes collaboration and co-counseling on common issues throughout the region, LSNC is advancing a region-wide advocacy agenda in welfare-to-work, housing and economic development. LSNC conducts regular program-wide, in-house training in both substantive areas and skills, and also utilizes state-wide trainings offered by WCLP and BI, and is participating in statewide training development.

Throughout its region, LSNC works with community-based organizations to maximize services in core areas, such as housing, health care, seniors and public benefits. For example, both in Sacramento and in Solano, LSNC works with SVOC to provide new opportunities for low-income neighborhoods, primarily in the areas of housing, jobs, health care, child care, and welfare-to-work. LSNC/Redwood has established monthly outreach at the regional Food Bank that also handles the Seniors Brown Bag Food Program, at which Food Stamp applications are distributed. LSNC has partnered with local bar associations, local government and the county courts, particularly in rural areas, such as Yolo, Solano and Butte Counties. Community education efforts occur throughout the service area, such as in the innovative collaboration which provides advice to at-risk youth at the Sacramento Boys and Girls Club.

In 1999, the Shasta Office began the Shasta Voluntary Legal Services Program (SVLSP), the only pro bono program in its five-county service area, in collaboration with the Shasta-Trinity Counties Bar Association and the City of Redding. In addition to SVLSP and other local programs,

LSNC meets its Private Attorney Involvement commitment through funding the Voluntary Legal Services Program (VLSP) in Sacramento, and by other in-house efforts. In 2001, LSNC hired a Managing Attorney for VLSP, who is responsible for supervising the programs and clinics. Approximately 750 volunteer attorneys, and 250 non-attorney volunteers, participate in the VLSP program.

Effective operation of all LSNC branch offices has been managed through enhanced technology, including "real time" intake on the Clients 98 system; desktop e-mail, internet and Westlaw for all advocates; LSNC's premier website, including separate web sites for LSNC's Senior Legal Hotline and Health Rights Hotline; and a completely computerized administrative unit for payroll and human resources and management information. Through the conversion of case management from Turbocases to Clients 98, LSNC has improved tracking of cases, and can begin to measure client outcomes more effectively.

In 1996, LSNC hired a Director of Development to work with LSNC staff and volunteers on fund development, through which LSNC has increased its private donations by about 20% in each of the past three years. With the help of an active fundraising Board, LSNC expects to raise \$175,000 in private donations in 2001. LSNC has also developed resources for region-wide initiatives, such as a \$120,000 three-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to increase the capacities of three community-based organizations.

Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA). BALA was formed through the year 2000 merger of three existing programs: Community Legal Services of Santa Clara County, Contra Costa Legal Services Foundation and San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation. BALA focuses on four priority areas: affordable housing and homelessness prevention, access to quality health care, transition from welfare-to-work and domestic violence prevention.

Through merger, BALA has reduced duplication and increased efficiency in its operations. In 1998, six people managed the finances of the four LSC programs (including the Legal Aid Society of Alameda County), using four different accounting programs. Each program separately contracted for auditing services at a cost of approximately \$25,000. The accounting function now has been centralized under one Director of Finance and Administration who supervises an Operations Manager, a Controller, an accountant and a payroll/accounts payable clerk. The new Human Resources Director has responsibility for the recruitment and hiring process, new employee orientation, health insurance and other benefits. This new configuration is more economical and efficient, has greater capacity to manage grants/contracts and produce financial reports, and allows the program to more effectively engage in financial planning.

BALA also has centralized its training and developed in-depth training and staff development plans for each of its advocates, tailored to substantive areas of practice. In addition to collaboration with local legal services providers on training programs, BALA is participating in statewide efforts to develop training core curriculum to ensure the professional development of attorneys and other advocates. The statewide committee will develop and promulgate professional standards and expectations, identify and integrate existing resources, and utilize those resources to meet statewide training needs that are not currently being addressed in a uniform and effective way.

With the LSC technology grant, BALA has taken tremendous strides toward integrating its

information infrastructure. It now has the necessary foundation to centralize its case management, document assembly, and a document management systems that will allow advocates to share legal information. This also makes it possible to move towards a centralized intake system.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of BALA's first twenty months is the additional resources allocated to Contra Costa County, without any reduction in resources available in other counties. For the last ten years, the LSC program in CCC had only three attorneys to serve a poverty population of 77,000. BALA now has six attorneys in that office. The added resources allow the office not only to serve more clients, but also to provide, for the first time, family law legal assistance to domestic violence survivors. BALA is also part of the Silicon Valley Campaign for legal services, a successful South Bay fundraising collaborative that last year raised more than \$325,000 in law firm contributions.

California Rural Justice Consortium. The California Rural Justice Consortium (CRJC),³¹ comprised of CRLA, CCLS and GBLA, serves as a coordinating and planning entity dedicated to the vision of a seamless justice system serving a resident poor population of approximately 930,000³² located throughout the 17 counties³³ in Central California. CRJC Draws on its member organizations' substantial skill and experience, office site locations, working relationships with other attorneys and agencies as well as other community resources in their common effort to meet client needs.

Working through Task Forces,³⁴ CRJC members have been able to effectively identify and address common issues at both the regional and local levels. This "unified" strategy of shared information and resources assures a focused effort and mutual accountability while avoiding efforts at cross purposes. For example, the Economic Development Task Force³⁵ has sponsored regional training events³⁶ in response to advocates' need to support client efforts in creating jobs³⁷ and developing needed services.³⁸ Additionally, the CRJC Economic Development Task Force continues to leverage the resources of the Rural Communities Collaborative³⁹ originally established in response to the devastating freeze of December 1998.

The CRJC Housing/Fair Housing Task Force has sponsored regional advocate training events⁴⁰ to support extensive litigation.⁴¹ The CRJC Public Benefits Task Force assures continuing dialogue among its advocates through training⁴² and its restricted electronic chat room established specifically to post current law and enable an exchange of its analysis in this era of devolution. Because individual representation is key to current LSC recipients' legal practice in the area of public benefits law, CRJC advocates' focus on local implementation is critical to assure access to those benefits.

Having created a network of advocates throughout 17 rural counties,⁴³ CRJC's extensive communication among its staff members relies on extensive electronic systems,⁴⁴ which are further enhanced by a common, Kemps CFW intake system⁴⁵ to facilitate the organization of data and the delivery of legal services to clients. CRJC's⁴⁶ sophisticated video conferencing system provides a necessary platform for CRJC members to overcome barriers that face rural and isolated communities and enhance communication between and among the three programs. CRJC's region-wide community education programs, which enjoyed a coordinated genesis in response to the 1998 Central Valley Freeze, continue to make use of Radio Bilingual⁴⁷ and television stations.

Although CRJC members share employment candidate lists⁴⁸ and information,⁴⁹ CRJC has not developed a unified system for accounting and human resources management.

CRJC's network with the private Bar and Courts is reflected, in part, through continued participation with the Access Commission focusing on three areas: 1) language access — especially access for speakers of Pre-Columbian and Southeast Asian language, 2) Neighborhood Dispute Centers — as an alternative to litigation and 3) Homeless Court Committee - as a resource for homeless individuals. That network is also demonstrated in the long standing and effective participation by the private Bar in the PAI efforts with the CRJC partners.

Los Angeles/Orange County. Beginning in 1998, the LSC-funded programs in Los Angeles and Orange Counties commenced an extensive planning process in collaboration with LSC officials that ultimately resulted in a substantial LSC program reconfiguration. Through the reconfiguration, the service areas of the two smallest programs in the counties, Legal Aid Foundation of Long Beach and Legal Services Program for Pasadena and the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, were collapsed into neighboring areas, leaving the two-county area with three LSC-funded programs — LAFLA, LASOC and NLS — to serve the more than 2 million poor people living in those communities — a poverty population that exceeds most states.

The changes were designed to expand and equalize the availability of comprehensive, integrated legal services across Los Angeles and Orange counties. In one case, the Long Beach program formally merged with LAFLA thereby adding an additional, large office to LAFLA's existing 5 offices and giving the Long Beach area access to the substantial administrative and advocacy resources of LAFLA. The merger is now complete. LAFLA's Long Beach office is now technologically connected to the LAFLA network. The executive director of what had been the Legal Aid Foundation of Long Beach is now General Counsel of the merged firm, and has taken statewide leadership in helping to forge a state justice community. In addition, the former senior attorney at LAFLB is now the Director of Advocacy and Training of LAFLA. Thus, the merger built on the strengths and experience of key staff.

In the second situation, as of 2001, the two service areas in the Western, Northern and Eastern Valleys of Los Angeles County, covering nearly 75% of LA County, were combined into one service area under NLS. Since no merger was involved, NLS will have the benefit of designing a new, integrated, multi-office system for delivering legal services to the low-income communities in its new service area. Plans for new larger offices with a full array of state-of-the-art technology located in the heart of the large immigrant communities in the new service area have been completed and are expected to open in early 2002. When the expanded NLS is fully operational, the number of advocates in the community will be 20% greater than before the reconfiguration.

The reconfigurations have left the Los Angeles/Orange County area with three of California's largest programs. LAFLA, California's largest program, now has six offices, a staff of over 130 and an operating budget of \$11 million. NLS will go from one to three offices, with a staff of nearly 100 and an operating budget in excess of \$7 million. And, LASOC will continue with five offices, a staff of approximately 80 and a total operating budget of \$5.7 million.

In addition, the LA/Orange County programs have taken dramatic steps to further integrate their advocacy and service delivery systems. First, recognizing that the nation's largest, most diverse poverty population resides in their service areas, the programs agreed to undertake a joint effort to eliminate the barriers that make it difficult for many immigrant and ethnic communities to effectively access legal services. The focus of the joint effort is the large, multi-lingual Asian/ Pacific Islander (API) communi-

ties located throughout the two county area (i.e., Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Philippine, Vietnamese and Thai), which historically have not been substantial participants in legal services programs despite their significant poverty levels.

The three LSC programs concluded that having a limited number of staff who spoke the many different API languages and were familiar with those cultures had become a serious detriment to making services accessible to API communities. To address the problem LAFLA, LASOC, and NLS approached APALC, one of the country's premier API focused advocacy organizations headquartered in Los Angeles, to join with them in a concerted effort to substantially reduce, if not eliminate, the legal services language barrier for low-income API communities in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

The four-program consortium then pooled its resources and talent to create the Asian Language Legal Access Project (API Project), which to date has received more than \$500,000 in funding. The API Project will address the barriers to providing legal services to low-income API communities: 1) it establishes a centralized hotline/intake systems with bilingual staff that uses separate "800" numbers for each API language, beginning in 2001 with Mandarin and Vietnamese; 2) it provides for expanded API language capacity at each LSC-funded program; and, 3) it utilizes coordinated and culturally sensitive community outreach to publicize make these services to the community. LAFLA, LASOC and NLS have already grown their bilingual API staff. Between the three programs, there are now advocates who speak Mandarin, Cantonese, Thai, Kmer, Korean, Tagalog, Japanese, and Vietnamese.

Although the programs have a long tradition of working cooperatively to help clients throughout the two county area, the three LA/Orange County LSC programs also recognized that there were more opportunities to streamline those advocacy opportunities. LAFLA, LASOC, and NLS agreed that a significant barrier to better coordinated advocacy was assuring that staff had the freedom to work in cross-program advocacy teams and the need for some oversight and management direction of the joint advocacy projects.

As a result, the programs commenced discussions among their staff on this issue, and the three LSC funded programs pooled their resources to jointly hire an experienced attorney from O'Melveny & Myers, to become the Joint Advocacy Coordinator. She is in the process of meeting with staff from all three programs in order to pick one or two joint advocacy projects as the focus of the collaborative efforts of the three programs. The goal is to select projects where the joint resources of the programs can be most effectively harnessed and targeted to address a problem for the client community that would otherwise not have been handled by the individual programs. The special project and joint advocacy team(s) are expected to be under way by the end of the year.

Southern Region. LASSD and ICLS are working together to achieve improvements in the client service delivery network within the Southern Region. Collaborative efforts in many areas of service delivery that were initiated last year are in the process of being expanded into more formal arrangements between the programs that will continue to have positive results for the Region. Both programs are sharing essential information and meeting at all personnel levels to increase the integration of appropriate work functions. A detailed discussion of LASSD and ICLS collaborative planning is attached as Appendix 6.

Staff contact information within substantive law areas and identified duties is being exchanged and provided to staff to allow direct programmatic collaboration on substantive issues. Initiation of this exchange is the direct outgrowth of various *ad hoc* staff to staff meetings scheduled over this last year.

The programs have exchanged organizational charts and are making them available to staff as a directory for additional resources to support the collaborative work environment. This is the precursor to the longer-term plan of developing substantive issue coordination between programs where effective and appropriate.

Program management has exchanged Board of Directors rosters and meeting schedules to stimulate an exchange regarding board philosophies, involvement in fundraising, and governance. The first step, collaboration on developing increased private funding, is underway as described in Appendix 6.

Private Attorney Involvement program information exchanges and program staff meetings are leading to a long term working relationship between the two organizations in this area. While both programs work closely with minority bar associations to recruit volunteers, each has a unique focus. Collaboration here promises to expand the operational horizons of both programs.

Finally, ongoing management team meetings between the programs promises to create a new perspective on and useful strategies for the community, government, foundation, and labor relationships each program must nurture to expand resources for the clients served. Simply sitting down and discussing management philosophy and organizational relationships has proved invaluable. Current discussions include creating long term trust relationships with counties and cities to develop potential avenues for funding in areas of common interest (e.g. conversion of county general relief recipients to SSI income, maintaining Medi-Cal eligibility when Medicaid benefits are cut, etc).

Through the series of meetings involving various LASSD and ICLS team members as well as key meetings of the top management of each program, a framework for continuing collaborative activities important for the further development of the service delivery system has been firmly established.

Statewide Native American. CILS is the only provider of specialized legal services to California Indians and Indian tribes. Created by California Indians in 1967, CILS has continuously adapted to the changing needs of the California Indian community. CILS works closely with many other legal services providers, the courts, state and local governments, law enforcement and, of course, tribal governments to provide a staggeringly broad array of specialized services ranging from intense representation in difficult juvenile dependency cases implicating the Indian Child Welfare Act, to transactional representation of tribal consortia seeking to raise tens of millions in working capital, to representing tribes in landmark natural resource cases, and other areas of the law.

Starting in 2000, CILS formed an internal working group that created the ACORN project devoted to improving CILS's hotline, brief service, self-help and referral capabilities. The ACORN project has developed a number of unique self-help and advocacy guides, and provides training and support to CILS's thirty advocates. As an outgrowth of the ACORN project, CILS assumed responsibility on behalf of the legal services community to seek LSC funding to improve the statewide use of technology. Although not fully funded, CILS is very enthusiastic about the \$150,000 in funding it did receive to help the community develop a statewide web site.

CILS routinely collaborates with other providers and members of the legal services community. However, CILS's ties to the Native American community are what set it apart and ultimately propagate its success. CILS staff participate in virtually all regional and statewide inter-tribal projects, consortia, and work closely with dozens of organizations. CILS has leveraged its LSC grant, the smallest in the

State, very effectively, and enjoys broad support throughout California. CILS operates five offices in California, with a new office to open this fall, and staffs these offices with almost thirty attorneys. CILS receives significant financial support from: private donations; Indian tribes; corporations; foundations; state, local, tribal and federal governments; and contracted services. Over the last four years, CILS has been awarded more NAPIL fellows than any other program in the country.

California Rural Legal Assistance. California Rural Legal Assistance provides statewide legal services and education programs to migrant farmworkers through its 23 offices located throughout rural California. It is not only well placed to meet the needs of the migrant client community but also technologically connected to provide a coordinated, seamless delivery system throughout the state. Exploited farmworkers include both documented and undocumented laborers. Therefore, in order to realize LSC's vision of promoting "the development of a broad-based, diverse, civil justice system based upon the model of public private partnership,"⁵⁰ CRLA has extended its referral and collaborative efforts to non-LSC recipients and private practitioners to deliver legal services in cases involving fundamental issues of health, housing, employment and personal safety. CRLA regularly co-counsels with other LSC recipients, public agencies,⁵¹ non-LSC funded legal services programs,⁵² and private practitioners,⁵³ to help farm workers and other low wage workers improve dangerous and unhealthy working conditions⁵⁴ and obtain the wages to which they are legally entitled.⁵⁵

B. Other System Configurations that were Seriously Explored

As discussed in detail in our 1999 plan, at the time the 1998 California State Plan was submitted to LSC, San Diego County and Riverside/San Bernardino Counties were designated as the "Southern California region" without full consideration of all the obstacles to operating those programs as a single organization. Having closely considered the complexities of their situations as set forth in detail in the 1999 plan, we conclude that ICLS and LASSD best serve the region as separate entities, working closely together to eliminate inefficiency and strengthen both programs. In that way, the programs with their very diverse clients and supporters will best benefit from the strong and diverse leadership of both organizations. Both programs will also continue to collaborate with other programs in the southern region, including the Los Angeles region programs, CRLA and CILS.

3. Innovative Service Delivery Systems (Explored and Rejected)

Many innovations that are explored and met with initial skepticism, are pushed forward by visionaries, and later embraced. For example, when I-CAN! was first introduced as I-LAW, legal services advocates were skeptical, and clearly concerned about the impersonalization of legal services, as well as the perceived inadequacies of providing shallow services. Now that I-CAN! has been piloted with success in several languages, its role within the delivery system can be perceived and embraced.

Other innovations surface before they are truly feasible, and are initially rejected, but renewed when the timing is right. For example, in our 1998 plan, we indicated that we were working with consultant Steve Green to ensure that local or toll-free 800 service is available to every potential client in California. The LSC programs researched the feasibility of developing a joint project to obtain wholesale 800 services, but by the end of 1999, it was clear that such a hotline system would be prohibitively expensive. The idea was temporarily dropped. Recently, the idea of a statewide hotline system was resurrected in the context of expanding resources available to rural clients. At this time, initial exploration shows that a statewide hotline is feasible, and could be an

effective use of precious dollars because it could be built upon and sustained by any number of existing hotline systems in California, including those utilized by ICLS, LASSD, and LASOC. This concept is under discussion.

V. Conclusion

Over the last few years, our California justice community has gained strength. Much of the work -- building infrastructure, developing partners, devising new strategies -- is foundational, and the impact of these efforts will be felt for many years. While there still is much work to be done, we take this opportunity to thank our legal services partners, both within legal services programs and outside of them, for their tremendous contributions to the delivery of legal services to the poor.

A. Greatest Obstacles

The greatest obstacle in California to achieving a client-centered integrated and comprehensive delivery system is the overwhelming extent of need within California, and the limited resources available to meet that need. Programs continue to feel overwhelmed in the face of the critical needs of clients and the lack of adequate funding. The aftermath of the events of September 11th will undoubtedly place further strain on our already overburdened delivery system.

The most direct route to overcoming this obstacle would be the infusion of over \$250 million (the amount estimated in 1993 to be necessary to serve the legal needs of the poor, unadjusted for inflation). Failing that, we must surmount this obstacle by expanding the community of individuals who are willing to work toward these goals and by identifying and focusing on the most effective means to address our clients' legal needs. This is at the core of California's new proposed vision:

California shall have an inclusive, client-centered justice community of clients; legal services programs; bench and bar; academia; community groups; and government, business and civic leaders sharing responsibility for effectively meeting the essential legal needs of the poor -- no matter where they live or what language they speak -- and for removing barriers to achieving self-sufficiency and true access to justice.

While the language of the vision is still evolving, the vision has been discussed by all concerned stakeholder groups, and all agree on the importance of bringing more partners into our legal services community. Since 1998, California has made progress in serving the legal needs of the poor, primarily by solidifying its partnership with the State Bar and its Commissions, and building new relationships with the Courts, policymakers, and community-based organizations.

While we expand our system, another challenge is retaining existing legal services staff. In California, we are burdened with an exceedingly high cost of living. Many law school graduates with \$100,000 in student loans cannot afford housing and basic expenses on legal services wages. To that end, Uncommon Good, with the support of the legal services community, sponsored loan forgiveness legislation. Unfortunately, the bill is not likely to be funded this year. Legal services programs themselves have loan forgiveness programs to help their advocates stay in legal services, but if these efforts are not successful, California will be facing a dearth of qualified legal services advocates in the future.

B. Resources/Technical Assistance to Meet Goals

California's biggest hurdle continues to be inadequate resources to meet the legal needs of the poor. Prior to the LSC restrictions imposed by Congress in 1996, several of our LSC programs received a significant amount of their revenues from attorneys fees recovered in successful litigation. For example, in the 1990s prior to restrictions, LAFLA recovered attorneys fees averaging \$373,651 per year and LSNC recovered attorneys fees averaging \$405,445. We estimate that total attorneys fees recovered by LSC-funded programs prior to the restrictions, amounted to as much as \$1.75 million annually. Even those programs that did not generate significant fee recoveries benefitted from being able to settle cases in favor of their clients through the leveraged threat of prevailing-party attorneys' fees. If LSC were to have an opportunity to address Congress about the impact of the restrictions on the delivery of legal services, a high priority would be to modify the attorneys fees restriction. If this restriction were lifted, our state would immediately benefit. Likewise, LSC's support in advocating that Federal funds outside of LSC funds be designated for legal services programs could significantly expand available resources.

We support NLADA's recommendation that LSC request an increased legislative allocation in fiscal year 2003 and that portions of the increased amounts be designated for loan repayment assistance to legal services attorneys, and pension plans for legal services attorneys.

In response to comments at the Statewide Stakeholders Meeting, CILS and LSNC agreed to seek a LSC Technology Initiative Grant to fund a Technology Center for: 1) centralized resource and referral of clients; and 2) substantive information for advocates. We believe that LSC's assistance with this project now and in the years to come will improve the effective delivery of legal services in California. Likewise, funding to distribute I-CAN! and other technologies throughout the state will exponentially increase our ability to deliver services.

We appreciate the support that LSC has shown California in the past and LSC's recognition that coordinating legal service programs in California is far more difficult and costly than coordinating in smaller states. Technical assistance funding for such things as a project directors retreat for LSC and non-LSC leaders, would help California advocates communicate and plan more effectively.

National support efforts, such as the Project for the Future of Equal Justice Public Awareness Campaign, the ABA Rural listserv, LSC's Technology assistance, the conference on minority leadership and on client-centered delivery, and the Training roundtable led by NLADA/LSC/AARP all inspire and spark creative responses to issues within our state. Training on a national level enhances advocate effectiveness. We embrace LSC's focus on inclusive client-centered communities that look for partnerships outside of LSC-funded programs and hope that LSC will continue to help us develop leadership both within and outside our LSC-funded programs.

C. Next Steps in Client-Centered Delivery

Our next steps are dictated by the issues facing poor people outlined in the beginning of this plan. Because so much need remains unfilled, our steps are reincarnations of the achievements that we so proudly highlighted in our introduction: We will continue to build our collaborations with allies. We will continue to work together utilizing our strengthened statewide infrastructure to share

best practices, develop leadership including client leadership, evaluate our program effectiveness and our delivery system, and create statewide training. We will continue to develop resources for the provision of legal services through private funding sources, loan repayment assistance, and increased private attorney pro bono services. We will find ways to increase funding and bring equity to those who live in rural areas and to other under-served populations. We will develop and utilize technology tools. We will foster program innovation to effect change. We will work towards our vision of true access to justice.

Endnotes:

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4. California Budget Project, "The State of Working California: Income Gains Remain Elusive for Many California Workers and Families," (September 2001), at p. 2, downloaded from www.cbp.org on September 29, 2001.
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10. Larson, Alice and Luis Plascencia, Migrant Enumeration Project, 1993
11. Languages include, Cakchiquel, Chatmo, Kanjobal, Nahuatl, Otomi, Tlapaneco, Trique, Mixteco (Alto and Bajo) and Zapoteco. Villarejo, Don,
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15. "Just the Facts, Housing and Poverty in Los Angeles," Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center, July 2001, p.1, downloaded at <http://www.weingart.org/institute/> in July 2001.
16. K.I.D.S., "KIDS and Shelter Partnership Team Up to Fight Rising Child Poverty in Los Angeles," downloaded from www.kidsdonations.org on July 10, 2001.

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17. Census Bureau, "Census 2000 Paints Statistical Portrait of the Nation's Hispanic Population" (May 2001), downloaded from <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001> on October 2, 2001.
 18. Public Policy Institute of California, "Trends in Family and Household Poverty," California Counts, Population Trends and Profiles, (May 2000), p. 9.
 19. RAND, Institute on Education & Training, "New Immigrants, New Needs: The California Experience," 1997, downloaded from <http://www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB8015/> in August 2001.
 20. Transcript of the Grand Jury Investigation, County of San Diego, downloaded from <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/cntydepts/safety/grand/reports/report7.html>
 21. "A Critical Look at the Foster Care System: Foster Care Outcomes," downloaded from <http://home.rica.net/rthoma/foster14.htm> in August 2001.
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 23. Tafoya, Sonya M. and Johnson, Hans P., "California Counts, Graying in the Golden State," Public Policy Institute of California, Volume 2, Number 2, November 2000, p.3
 24. Sacramento Bee, "Good Times Barely Touch State's Poor," January 23, 2000.
 25. McCormick, Erin, "Home Buying Racial Gap is Widening," San Francisco Chronicle, August 12, 2001, p. A19.
 26. In 1998 there were 20 LSC-funded programs. As a result of the LSC mergers, there are now 11 programs that receive funding from LSC. LSC funding amounts to \$30,656,376 of the \$163,852,666 total legal services funding in California.
 27. These numbers, provided by the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission are based on IOLTA reports, and should not be considered exact data. For example, total funding reported by programs includes total funding for national support centers that provide significant services outside of California. On the other hand, program reports of fundraising efforts may be net or gross amounts.
 28. The legal services agencies are: Bay Area Legal Aid, East Bay Community Law Center, Family Violence Law Center, International Institute of the East Bay, Law Center for Families, Legal Assistance for Seniors, Alameda County Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services Corporation.
 29. Many cities and counties in California have established "trust funds" for housing. According to the Bay Area Homeless Alliance, in the San Francisco Bay Area, the counties of Alameda, Napa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara and the cities of Berkeley, Cupertino, Morgan Hill, Palo Alto, Menlo Park and San Francisco, all have established housing trust funds.
 30. "Census 2000 Undercount of Immigrants and Farmworkers in Rural California Communities," August 1, 2001.
 31. Originally formed in 1999 by the five LSC recipients serving the Central California region, the current three CRJC members reflect the reconfigured LSC funding for FY2001.

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32. 1990 Poverty Population, Report to the Legal Services Corporation, March 11, 1994.
33. Those 17 counties include: Merced, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Tuolumne, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara.
34. Economic Development Task Force [Chaired by a CCLS advocate]; Public Benefits Task Force [chaired by a GBLA advocate] and Housing/Fair Housing Task Force [chaired by a CRLA advocate].
35. The CRJC Economic Development Task Force works closely with the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC), National Center for Youth Law (NYCL), Child Care Law Center (CCLC) and other support centers.
36. "Community Economic Development Programs Administered by HUD" (March, 2001) and "Securing jobs from Publicly Supported Development Projects" (May, 2001).
37. In a county suffering an unemployment rate running in the teens, GBLA advocates have effectively represented clients in conjunction with the City of Bakersfield and the Bakersfield Redevelopment Agency to create jobs: 1) through the development of a supermarket in a blighted neighborhood; and, 2) through the construction of a baseball stadium in Bakersfield. CCLS, 1) working with the City of Fresno has created jobs through the development of a shopping center in a blighted area of Fresno; and 2) working with local leaders is helping incorporate the isolated towns of Allensworth, Raisin City and Biola as they struggle to develop a viable economic infrastructure.
38. CRLA, CCLS and the NEDLC have been working to establish: 1) a federal credit union responsive to the needs of the low income community, and 2) a bicycle repair/recycle business to address in-town transportation problems of the low-income community.
39. The Rural Communities Collaborative has over 70 members representing nearly 50 entities including public agencies, community based organizations and private industry. CCLS staff members serve as the two co-chairs of the Collaborative.
40. "Fair Housing & Enforcement Procedures" (April, 2000), "Housing, Fair Housing and Enforcement" (July, 2000), "Fair Housing Litigation Discovery" (August, 2000), "Fair Housing/Fair Lending" (September 2000), "Fair Housing and Enforcement" (February, 2001), "Fair Housing Testers" (March, 2001).
41. Challenging Fair Housing violations, GBLA has successfully litigated *McKinley, et al v. Lacks* (sexual and racial discrimination) and *Robles v. Church* (migrant farm worker housing discrimination).
42. Each regularly scheduled Public Benefits Task Force Conference Call includes a half-hour training in specific areas as well as update on pending cases among the CRJC participants.
43. The 17 counties served by CRJC constitute a geographical area larger than a number of states.
44. CRJC members rely on electronic mail, websites with links, video conferencing, facsimile transmissions, WebEx and other telephone conference systems.
45. CRJC members have used the Kemps Clients for Windows data management system for more than three years.

46. GBLA and CCLS in tandem with the Latino Civil Rights Network own the interconnected video conferencing system to which CRLA members have access.

47. Although Radio Bilingual broadcasts nationally, many of its member stations are located in the Central California area, which receives much of its attention. Radio Bilingual has also been instrumental in helping CRJC produce public service announcements and "know your rights" recordings for use in community education as well as for broadcast at other stations.

48. CRJC members share employment candidate lists who were "unsuccessful" in their application for employment at one of the programs as well as the names of individuals who are "laid off" as a result of end of funding for a particular grant, e.g., Census, Citizenship, CDBG, or other local funding.

49. CRJC partners share their "best practices" as reflected in their internal operations manual, case handling manual, collective bargaining agreements and training on LSC mandates.

50. Legal Services Corporation Twenty-Fifth Anniversary 1998-1999 Annual Report at p.14

51. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Women's Employment Rights Clinic at Golden Gate University and CRLA co-counseled for plaintiffs in a sexual harassment claim resulting in a \$1.8 Million settlement, Alfaro et al. v. Tanimura & Antle: After Riverside County attempted to close more than 400 mobile the Department of Housing and Urban Development co-counseling with CRLA negotiated an agreement resulting in Riverside County agreeing to make nearly \$16 Million in loans and grants for community-wide projects including \$10 Million for low-income housing, \$1.8 Million to create and fund a new 40-home single family housing development and committing 1.5 Million to create a far workers Services center, In Re Maldonado.

52. Apart from Alfaro, above at footnote 1, where CRLA Co-counseled with Women's Law Project, CRLA has also worked with Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy (META) to secure proper monitoring of bilingual education programs by the State, Comite v. SDE; and with California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation on behalf of farmworkers' right to past due wages and deplorable housing conditions in Manuel A. et al. v. Bautista FLC et al.

53. CRLA regularly co-counsels with private practitioners, for example, in Apio v. Maldonado & Sons, 74 farmworkers were awarded \$80,000 as and for back wages; In Hickey v. Lal, the defendant landlord agreed to pay \$195,000 as settlement for sexual harassment claims.

54. Apart from the examples cited above, CRLA has challenged the use of "driverless" tractors [Bautista v. VegPacker and Taulaugon v. Green Valley Farms], "sharecropping" abuses [Arredondo v. Tremper and Gonzalez et al. v. Furukawa Farms], and pesticide spraying near schools [Carrillo v. California Department of Pesticide Regulation et al.].

55. Apart from the numerous wage and hour claims regularly brought before the Labor Commissioner as well as the Courts, CRLA along with 6 other low wage worker advocacy groups successfully litigated against the Labor Commissioner to prevent its practice of computing past wages on wage claims from the date an administrative hearing had been held rather than the date the claim had been filed, Cuadra v. Millan.