



# GRANT MAKING: A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

BY JULIE CAVANAUGH-BILL

Without the collaboration of the Justice League of Nevada (formerly the Nevada Law Foundation), Nevada lawyers and Nevada financial institutions, the Justice League would not be able to provide funding for its grantees, which served more than 3,500 low-income Nevadans in the first half of 2012.

Nevada Supreme Court Rule 217 requires Nevada attorneys to place certain client funds in Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTAs). An IOLTA-approved financial institution must meet the minimum guidelines set by the Supreme Court. Since 1990, the Justice League has administered, safeguarded and distributed the interest generated from Nevada's IOLTAs.

When the Justice League became the recipient of Nevada IOLTA dollars, it embraced the responsibility to maximize the impact of the funds through strategic grant making. With a mission to support organizations that meet the civil legal needs of the low-income population in Nevada, the Justice League oversees a competitive grant process for the distribution of IOLTA funds to organizations that provide legally-related services to the poor, to the victims of domestic violence and to children protected by or in need of the protection of the juvenile court.

**In 2012, the Justice League granted \$1.7 million IOLTA dollars to 16 organizations providing legally related services to the poor.** This funding makes a very real impact on grantees' capacity to provide legal aid to at-risk populations.

Committee to Aid Abused Women Executive Director Denise Yoxsimer wrote, "Funding from the Nevada Law Foundation continues to change lives in Washoe County. Your support for victims of domestic violence has single-handedly helped 598 primary victims seeking services from our Protection Order Project."

A long-time Justice League grantee, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN), informed the Justice League that the organization was able to use Justice League funding to expand its pro bono program. As a result, in March, LACSN placed more clients with pro bono lawyers that single month than in the entire history of the organization.

These funds truly affect individual lives and provide opportunities where they may not have been before. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Northeastern Nevada reported that the grant award from the Justice League allowed CASA to help a foster child who had not been to school for three years and was forced to move to another county due to a lack of foster homes in the area. The child was behind in all of her classes, particularly

reading. The child's CASA volunteer contacted the child's new teacher and school staff, advocating for immediate testing and additional support. With help from the school and from books, workbooks and games sent by the CASA volunteer, the child has improved her grade level by six months in a short period of time.

The experiences, stories and actualized results from Justice League grantees demonstrate that Nevada's IOLTA program is critically important in supporting access to justice efforts. For more information on the Nevada IOLTA Program, please visit [www.nvbar.org/content/iolta](http://www.nvbar.org/content/iolta).

## 2012 Justice League Grantees

CASA of Carson City  
CASA of Douglas County  
CASA of Northeast Nevada  
Committee to Aid Abused Women  
Douglas Special Advocates for the Elderly (SAFE)  
Southern Nevada Senior Law Program  
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN)  
Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center  
Nevada Legal Services  
NV Rural Counties RSVP Program  
State support for legal service providers  
Stop Abuse in the Family Environment  
Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis (TADC)  
Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans (VARN)  
Washoe County Senior Law Project  
Washoe Legal Services

## Justice League Mission

- 1) Increase opportunities for the community and stakeholders to learn about and financially support legal services and law-related education for vulnerable populations;
- 2) Provide stewardship and accountability for IOLTA and other funding resources in partnership with the Nevada Supreme Court and the State Bar of Nevada; and
- 3) Generate additional resources and distribute those resources to qualified providers of legal services and law-related educational programs to vulnerable populations that produce positive outcomes for the community.

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