

NORTH MISSISSIPPI RURAL LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

The

IMPACT

2017

*NMRLS: Impacting the lives of individuals, businesses and communities
in North Mississippi*

A Message from...

The 2017 Board of Directors

The NMRLS Board of Directors is comprised of 15 volunteers who have an innate love and commitment to the communities in which we live. We also have a strong belief in NMRLS and its mission that helps ensure equal access to justice for residents in 39 counties who are low-income, elderly or disabled.

For more than 50 years, we have successfully made an impact upon the lives of vulnerable residents by providing governance, advocacy and fiduciary oversight of NMRLS. We, as board members, could not have done this alone. With strong management and high quality legal and technical assistance from staff and volunteers, NMRLS has helped thousands of Mississippians attain social, economic and legal equality.

Therefore, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I say thank you to staff, businesses, organizations and other partners. It is with your personal and financial SUPPORT and by GRACE that **WE CAN and WE WILL continue to make a POSITIVE IMPACT in North Mississippi and beyond!**



Willie J. Perkins, Sr., Esq.
Chairman

CHAIRMAN

Hon. Willie J. Perkins, Sr.
The Perkins Law Firm, PLLC

VICE-CHAIR

Mrs. Katherine Weatherby
West Point Client Representative

SECRETARY

Hon. Kristian McCray
The Trout Law Firm, PLLC

TREASURER

Hon. Gwendolyn Baptist-Rucker
The Baptist Law Office, PLLC

MEMBERS

Hon. J. Lane Greenlee
Greenlee Law Firm

Ms. Mary Hastings
Tupelo Client Representative

Hon. I. Richard Gershon
*The University of Mississippi
School of Law*

Mr. Robert Jamison
Clarksdale Client Representative

Mr. Robert Mayes
Oxford Client Representative

Hon. Charles Merkel, III
Merkel & Cocke, P.A.

Hon. Solomon Curtis Osborne
The Osborne Law Firm

Hon. Karen Peairs
*The University of Mississippi
School of Law*

Hon. Nebra E. Porter
*Assistant District Attorney,
First District*

Hon. Derrick T. Simmons
Simmons & Simmons, PLLC

Ms. Mattie Tucker
Greenville Client Representative

Legal Services make \$73.4 Million Impact

New study reveals: For every \$1 spent, the impact is 12x OVER!

Since 1966, North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS) has provided free, civil legal representation and advocacy for the poor, elderly or disabled in North Mississippi. To be eligible for assistance from Legal Services, a person's income generally must be at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. With Mississippi's poverty level being the highest in the country, this amounts to nearly 350,000 people who qualify for legal services in north Mississippi.



Ben Thomas Cole, II, Esq.
Executive Director

"The typical clients we see on a daily basis are persons who are in dire need of legal help," said Ben Cole, Executive Director of NMRLS. "They don't have the money to hire a private lawyer. So, they turn to us— a place they know— a place with a proven track record in helping low-income persons and others in need of free civil legal representation or other assistance.

"We knew that Legal Services was making an impact, but we didn't know the true value of our services to individuals and to communities UNTIL NOW."

The Economic Impact— QUANTIFIED

In 2017, the Civil Legal Aid Economic Impact Study was commissioned by the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission to determine the effectiveness of Mississippi's Legal Services, the level of the economic impact and the beneficiaries of that impact. The study, conducted by The Resource for Great Programs, Inc., examined data from the two comprehensive Legal Services organizations in the state— North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS), the Mississippi Center for Legal Services Corporation (MCLSC) and the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project (MVLP). For example, the study showed that in 2016 NMRLS and MCLSC closed over 500 cases involving SSI, SSDI and other Social Security issues. The benefits of Social Security to the economy were \$17 million from this service, alone.

According to the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project's *2016 Impact Report*, the MVLP contribution to Legal Services was \$119,450. In total, the Study revealed that the economic impact of NMRLS, MCLSC and MVLP was \$73.4 million in 2016.

"It is humbling and gratifying to be able to quantify the enormous impact that we are making upon the lives of people we serve," said Cole.

Clients, Businesses Benefit From Legal Services

Economic Impacts Felt by Mississippians

The Economic Benefits to Clients (\$32.37 Million)

The economic impact study revealed that the total direct economic benefits to legal services' clients totaled \$32.37 million. The values of the services that we provide to clients were calculated as follows:

- \$17.1 million in Social Security benefits – Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and other benefits;
- \$5.8 million in Medicare benefits
- \$7 million in Medicaid benefits
- \$1.4 million in child support
- \$275,000 in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (
- \$855,000 in mortgage assistance, tax credits and other awards

The Economic Benefits to Businesses and Community (\$39.79 Million)

The study revealed that the benefits to Mississippi businesses were \$39.79 million. Most of the income is spent at local businesses for health care, food, utilities and transportation. This amount was derived from:

- Increased income for local businesses
- New jobs created as a result of increased demand for goods and services
- Avoidance of emergency shelters*
- Prevention of foreclosure*

**The savings to the community in foreclosure preventions and emergency shelter avoidances were \$1.2 million.*

The Resource for Great Programs, Inc., which conducted the 2017 study, is a national corporation that uses analytical and evaluative services to assess the value of Legal Services in the communities they serve. The economic impact study was performed at the request of the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission.

**For Every \$1 of Funding for Legal Services,
\$12.05 Worth of Impacts Were Created**

Total Funding for MS Legal Services (\$M) \$6.09

Legal Services Corporation	\$4.31
MS Supreme Court/Civil Legal Assistance Funds	\$0.69
Other Federal Programs	\$0.24
Private Foundation Grants	\$0.20
Bank of America Foreclosure Prevention	\$0.13
IOLTA Grants	\$0.12
Other Sources of Funding	\$0.40

TOTAL IMPACTS (\$M) \$73.42

• Increased income for Local Businesses	\$39.79
• Dollar Benefits to Clients and Families	\$32.37
• Cost Saving for the Community	\$ 1.26

Impact Per Dollar of Program Funding \$12.05

NMRLS Operates 4 Offices in State

LSC helps communities through legal services

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services was founded in 1966. But it was in 1976 that we became incorporated as an independent non-profit corporation. This act enabled NMRLS to receive major funding from the national Legal Services Corporation (LSC) with the express purpose being to provide high quality legal representation, education, technical assistance and advocacy for people in poverty, in conformity with the LSC Act and Amendments. Last year, NMRLS received more than 70% of its funding from LSC.



With LSC support, NMRLS operates four offices in North Mississippi: Clarksdale, Greenville, Oxford and West Point. These locations were selected based on: 1) A large population in that area; 2) Locations which minimized travel by clients to our office; 3) An area with special needs such as the Delta (Clarksdale / Greenville offices); and places where we have major partnerships, such as nearby universities and the University of Mississippi School of Law, which is the only law school in northern Mississippi (West Point/Oxford offices).

CLARKSDALE/ GREENVILLE OFFICES

The Clarksdale Office, with a staff of three staff members, serves Bolivar, Coahoma, Quitman, Tallahatchie and Tunica Counties.

The Greenville office is comprised of three staff members. They serve some of the poorest counties in the country: Humphreys, Issaquena, LeFlore, Sharkey, Sunflower and Washington Counties. According to the 2010 U.S. Census data, *Issaquena is the third poorest county in the United States*. With a vast amount of poverty in these counties, there is an overwhelming need for legal services.

Successful Outcome:

Crime Records Expunged in the Delta

Good job opportunities in the Mississippi Delta are hard to come by. Some residents may have skills, educational training and other credentials, but they may also have past arrests and/or convictions. Fortunately, removal of these barriers will increase the earning potential of some of these residents.

With assistance from the non-profit organization Family and Youth Opportunities Division (FYOD), NMRLS helped individuals who needed a removal of criminal records. The Clarksdale office staff presented an outreach program explaining "expungement" and its positive impact on employment and housing options. One of the program attendees applied for our services, and her record was expunged. She was able to obtain the job for which she had been trained. Since then, many others have begun their expungement process.

OXFORD/ WEST POINT OFFICES

Oxford is home of the NMRLS Administrative Office. It is also a place where clients can receive legal assistance, access information about our programs and obtain referrals to the Call-Center Hotline. The counties that the Oxford Office serves are Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, DeSoto, Grenada, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tate, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union and Yalobusha.

Several outreach programs take place in Oxford such as the *Street Clinic*. Under the direction of Attorney Minnie Howard, the Oxford attorneys provides first-hand experience to educate University of Mississippi Law School students on laws regarding public benefits, disability, unemployment, basic contracts and other information.

Second- and third-year University of Mississippi School of Law students are able to receive one credit hour for every 50 hours of service with NMRLS. Or, they can volunteer at legal services *at leisure* to get free legal experience.

The West Point Office is directed by Attorney Mable Kimbrough. This office of three members serves clients in Attala, Carroll, Clay, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Itawamba, Lee, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston Counties.

Successful Outcome:

NMRLS Make a House a “Home” for Client

John McNeil came to NMRLS complaining of the poor construction of his new house, and the real estate company that handled the contract and sale of the house.*

THIS STORY BEGAN WHEN..... Mr. McNeil received a special Section 502 USDA Loan for the purchase/ construction of a new home. He canvassed several sites in the Lafayette County area and settled on an empty plot in an unfinished subdivision. Mr. McNeil chose a construction company that agreed to build a house on this plot for the cost of the loan. The house closing details were to be handled by a dual agent from Realty Anonymous. This was a good deal, he thought!*

The house was eventually built but not in a timely manner; and by all accounts, it was not built well. There were other problems: 1) The USDA failed to monitor the construction and closing of the house, thus violating their own regulations; 2) The agent, who was authorized by both parties to act as a dual agent, breached her fiduciary duty to Mr. McNeil by allowing the construction company to change the closing date; and 3) There was no final inspection.



Prior to trial, NRMLS was able to negotiate a settlement of \$3,500 from the real estate company. Also, NMRLS negotiated a \$7,500 grant for the repair of defects that were later discovered by the USDA inspector. Now, Mr. McNeil has a house he can call “home”.

(John McNeil and Realty Anonymous* are fictitious names.)*

NMRLS' Priorities Designed To Impact

With 19 attorneys, staff and volunteers, NMRLS helped over 14,530 individuals and families

NMRLS Priorities Include:

Employment

- Helps obtain wrongfully denied unemployment benefits
- Assists with criminal record expungements to remove barriers to housing, and employment
- Avoids wrongful garnishment of income

Housing

- Preserves affordable housing
- Stops wrongful evictions
- Assists homeowners in loss mitigation process
- Helps persons with housing choices
- Obtains return of security deposits

Consumer

- Combats overly aggressive

or illegal debt-collection activity

- Enforces contracts and warranties for consumer goods

Family and Children

- Assists in obtaining divorce, custody and support
- Assists survivors of domestic violence
- Helps parents obtain visitation rights, guardianships, or adoptions
- Helps stop unwarranted termination of parental rights
- Provides help for correction of birth certificates

Income Maintenance

- Helps clients obtain, restore, increase income to meet basic human needs
- Represents clients on public benefits

- Assists in preparation and resolution of tax conflict
- Prepares heirship affidavits and quitclaim deeds
- Promotes the financial independence and dignity of clients and their families

Health

- Helps the disabled, sick children and the elderly obtain medical coverage
- Assists seniors with preserving long term care choices
- Prepares advance health care directives, powers of attorney and basic wills

Education

- Helps children obtain educational services to which they are entitled
- Assists children in avoiding unfair school suspensions and expulsions

Successful Outcome:

Client Finally Gets “What’s Coming to Her”

Ms. Smith had been terminated without cause from her full-time time employer; and a week or two prior to that wrongful termination, she had voluntarily left her part-time employer. Ms. Smith worked for her full-time employer over 15 years, and her part-time employer three months.

When she filed for unemployment benefits, she included both jobs. Initially, a claims adjudicator disqualified her claim for benefits, saying that she failed to show good cause for voluntarily leaving her part-time employer.

Ms. Smith contacted an Administrative Law Judge within the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) but an appeal for unemployment benefits was denied. Many pleas, questions and evidence went unaddressed by the Judge. Instead, the Judge affirmed MDES’ decision.

*Ms. Smith appealed to the MDES Board of Review and sought help from the NMRLS West Point Office. After a great deal of research, our West Point attorney and staff prepared a memorandum/petition on behalf of this client and submitted it to the MDES Board. Soon after, the Review Board issued a Fully Favorable Decision, finding that the prior two denials had been done in error and Ms. Smith was entitled to her unemployment benefits. Thankfully, Ms. Smith also received retroactive unemployment benefits payments that had previously been denied. (*Ms. Smith is a fictitious name.)*

Successful Outcomes...

We fought the Law and “The Law”

NMRLS has helped hundreds of victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault and other victims of crime. However, in 2017, we encountered a most interesting situation because the ex-boyfriend of our soon-to-be client was what some may say, “The Law”. He was a law enforcement officer accused of abusing his ex-girlfriend. In fact, she filed for relief. Even though he had admitted to some of the abuse, he was still found *not guilty*.

His aggression continued and she filed a petition. The Chancery Court took the case under advisement but entered mutual Restraining Orders. The case stayed in Chancery Court for a longer time than needed with many unnecessary delays. The woman believed that the law enforcement members and court personnel were not giving her proper protection under the law. After all, she believed, the officer was their friend and co-worker. Plus, an unfavorable decision would restrict his ability to possess a weapon

THEN, NMRLS TOOK THE CASE. We aggressively requested the case be reopened for additional proof on the original petition for protective order. Then, our attorney filed a contempt action against him for violating the restraining order. Soon, the case went to trial.

NMRLS convinced the court that the officer was guilty of domestic violence. Because of NMRLS, our client received a protective order; and through further negotiations, the officer agreed to obtain counseling, pay attorney fees and never to contact our client again. Yes, we fought “The Law”, and the client won. It was also a win for future victims, because NMRLS also demonstrated to the court staff the importance of their role in helping victims of abuse.

*If you want to
**HELP MAKE AN
IMPACT**
in North Mississippi,
contact:
Ben Cole at 662-234-8731,
Ext. 2108,
bcole@nmrls.com; or
Ethel Gilmore, egilmore@nmrls.com,
in the Development Office,
Ext. 2132;
or go to our
website: [www.nmrls.com/
donate-to-nmrls/](http://www.nmrls.com/donate-to-nmrls/).*

CLIENT'S INCOME RETURNS

A 33-year-old man had stopped receiving his disability payments. So, he came to NMRLS for help!

The loss of his income was due to disputes with the Social Security office regarding his health.

After our research, counsel and legal representation, an Administrative Law Judge agreed with our assessment. As a result, the client continued receiving his monthly income and his medical insurance coverage.

Help Is Just a PHONE CALL Away!

The NMRLS Call Center, under the direction of Attorney Nora Rasco, operates Monday-Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Last year, NMRLS helped 13,494 callers by providing them with counseling, advice, referrals or an appointment for extended services.

Individuals may call the Call-Center Hotline at 1-800-498-1804 to become qualified. They may also access specific legal information by visiting our statewide website at www.mslegalservices.org or our local website: www.nmrls.com.

NMRLS Receives Grant Award to Help Women

Funding to help reduce violence in 12 counties

In 2016, NMRLS received a three-year grant through The Office on Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to establish the Legal Assistance to Victims (LAV) program. The LAV is designed to reduce violence against women and strengthen services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking.

Now in the second year, VAWA is partnering with two domestic violence shelters in North Mississippi: *Our House, Inc.*, in Greenville and *Safe Haven, Inc.*, in Columbus.



Our impact is being made in:

- Obtaining protection orders for clients
- Providing legal representation for divorces (when related to the safety for victims)
- Securing custody and/or visitation rights
- Obtaining child support orders
- Assisting in securing unemployment compensation
- Developing more programs to reach diverse, underserved populations

The 12 counties served through VAWA are: Bolivar, Coahoma, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Lowndes, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica and Washington.

Successful Outcome:

NMRLS Breaks Language Barrier to Aid Client

A young woman named Jane walked into our Clarksdale office to see an attorney. Our VAWA attorney could tell that this woman wanted help but the attorney didn't fully understand the type of assistance she needed. With help from the interpreter, our attorney soon learned that Jane's husband had been indicted for kidnapping and felony domestic assault. The woman desperately wanted a divorce after 18 years of marriage in which she endured sexual, mental and physical abuse.*

*After obtaining our services, the client was able to receive protection from domestic violence, custody of her child and child support payments. (*Jane is a fictitious name.)*

Legal Services, Partners Fight Against Violence

New grant to serve 52 additional counties

For many years, the U.S. Department of Justice has awarded grants from its Crime Victims Fund to establish projects nationwide that will provide direct services to individuals who are victims or would-be victims of crimes.

The grant funding is made available by the *Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984* and administered in Mississippi by the Mississippi Department of Health, Office Against Interpersonal Violence.



In 2017, NMRLS received major funding to establish a VOCA program. As a result, NMRLS and the Mississippi Center for Legal Services (MCLSC) are providing legal representation and advocacy to crime victims with special priorities given to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. MCLSC is the sub-grantee.

The VOCA program began December 1, 2017 and is named, *The Earlene Gardner Victims Assistance Project (EGVAP)*. With a team of five, including three attorneys, the Project provides legal services involving domestic abuse, protection orders, divorces, housing and other solutions to violence. The Project serves 52 counties.



In addition to MCLSC, NMRLS is collaborating with the *Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence* and the *Mississippi Coalition Against Sexual Assault* in identifying violence and sexual assault victims and providing shelters when needed. In addition, the Coalitions are offering education, training, technical assistance and other support services.

The Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence is an agency which advocates for battered women and provides support for its 13-member shelters in the state.

The Mississippi Coalition Against Sexual Assault provides education, training and awareness needed to address sexual violence. There are 10 sexual assault centers in the state. It is estimated that the Earlene Gardner Project will impact at least 5,500 residents in Mississippi.

Mrs. Earlene Gardner was a long-time client-eligible member of the NMRLS Board of Directors and a well-known advocate in the fight against domestic violence in the Tupelo area.

Clients Find Needed Relief from Tax Woes

The LITC Tax Program

Each year, thousands of low-income North Mississippians need tax relief. Some need help with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) disputes, while others simply need assistance in filing their returns. With grants from the IRS, NMRLS operates two tax programs: 1) Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC); and 2) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).



For taxpayers who are low-income or who speak English as a second language (ESL), NMRLS provides legal representation in disputes with the IRS, including audits, appeals, collection matters and federal tax litigation.

LITC provides taxpayer services including:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Earned Income Tax Credit Appeals | Deficiency Notices |
| Innocent Spouse Relief Requests | Injured Spouse Claims |
| Injured Spouse Claims | Negotiations/Tax Debt Settlements |
| Employee/ Independent Contractor | |

NMRLS also informs taxpayers of their rights and responsibilities, such as: The Right to Be Informed, The Right to Quality Service, The Right to Pay No More than the Correct Amount of Tax, The Right to Retain Representation, and The Right to a Fair and Just Tax System.

The VITA Tax Program

In addition to LITC, NMRLS operates the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. It is designed for individuals who are low- to moderate-income, elderly, disabled or those who are limited English speakers.

VITA funding enables NMRLS to:

- Increase tax services to the underserved across the state
- Increase the number of returns filed electronically
- Enhance volunteer training
- Significantly improve the accuracy of returns prepared at volunteer sites

In 2017, volunteers helped 2,066 individuals file federal and state income tax returns. In doing so, NMRLS partnered with BancorpSouth Tupelo, BancorpSouth Desoto, Brown Missionary Baptist Church, LIFT Community Action Agency, Mid-State Opportunity, Inc., and the University of Mississippi School of Law Pro Bono Initiative.

NMRLS' LITC program made a financial impact upon communities by helping 75 taxpayers with controversies with the IRS. The total reduction in tax liabilities for Mississippians was over \$100,000.

NMRLS Makes Impact On Elderly Population

In 1992, the NMRLS Elder Law Project was established. Its mission is to provide legal assistance and to educate the elderly, community organizations and the general public about elder law, abuse, neglect, exploitation and its tragic consequences.



According to the 2016 U.S. Census data, of the 2.97 million people living in Mississippi today more than 541,000 (18.2 percent) are over the age of 60.

Unfortunately, no one knows how many of the elderly are abused, neglected or exploited. A report by the National Center on Elder Abuse indicated that the problems of elder abuse could be as high as 1 in 10 older adults. Cases go undetected and unreported because many elderly are reluctant to report abuse.

The Elder Law Project, under the direction of Attorney Al Cutturini, employs one full-time Elder Law attorney, and uses interns from the University of Mississippi School of Law, paralegal students and other volunteers to conduct the following services:

- *Provide legal assistance in matters such as denial of Medicaid and nursing home benefits*
- *Provide legal assistance to institutionalized and homebound elderly and disabled*
- *Conduct community legal education workshops for the public and for service providers at senior centers, churches, and other locations in the communities*
- *Conduct "will days" to provide on-site services to rural sections of the state*
- *Prepare written materials and brochures for distribution at outreach sites and on-line regarding senior matters, such as health law, estate matters and other elder law topics*
- *Conduct the annual NMRLS Elder Law Conference*
- *Collaborate with other governmental agencies, educational institutions and community organizations to provide legal assistance to the elderly and disabled*
- *Provide training for law students and other service providers to the elderly*

The impact of the 2017 Elder Law Project is enormous. The Project represented and/or counseled clients in 660 cases. Also, the Project conducted 42 outreach/education programs with 3,140 people in attendance.

Conference Celebrates 25 Years, Breaks Record

The annual Elder Law Conference took place August 11, 2017, bringing together some of the region's noted experts on Elder Law. It was also an event which marked the Conference's anniversary with a record-breaking attendance.

The Conference was sponsored by three Area Agencies on Aging and Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation. The event broke previous attendance records with more than 250 people attending the day-long event at the Oxford Conference Center. The focus was AGEISM and its impact on the elderly.

The Elder Law Conference was designed to educate caregivers, health care providers, and others who serve the elderly.

Conference Presenters

Al Cutturini, J.D.,

Elder Law Project Director, NMRLS

David Calder, J.D., *Child Advocacy Clinic
Director, University of Mississippi School of
Law*

Elgalene Close, MSW, *District Ombudsman,
North Delta Planning and Development District*

Laura M. Pannell, PhD.,

*Instructor, Psychology and Social Work,
Itawamba Community College*

Donna Harkness, J.D., *Elder Law Clinic Direc-
tor, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law,
University of Memphis*

James M. Simpson, J.D.,

*Allen, Summers, Simpson, Lillie & Gresham,
PLLC, Memphis*



Pictured left: As part of Dr. Laura Pannell's discussion, Conference attendees were asked to wear mock eyewear and gloves to simulate what it's like to be elderly with poor vision and limited dexterity. **Top right:** Keynote speaker, Attorney James Simpson, discussed AGE and its effects in the workplace. **Right Bottom:** Before the Conference began, many people hurried to vendors' tables, such as the Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation's table; while others signed up for door prizes.

The 2018 Elder Law Conference takes place Friday, August 10, 9 a.m. — 4 p.m. at the Oxford Conference Center.

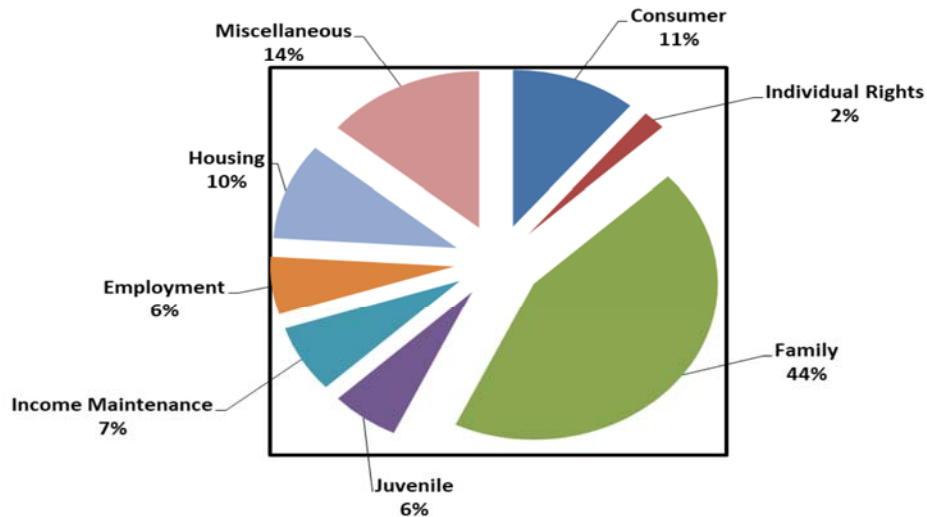
Register on-line at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-elder-law-conference-tickets-45651126749>.

Registration is available at 8 a.m. on event day ONLY IF space is available.

For more information, call: 662-234-2918, Ext. 2119.

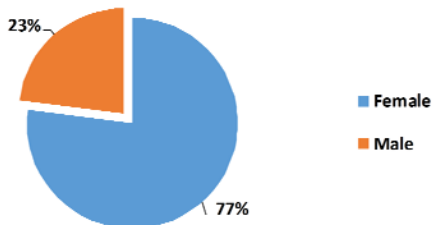
The People and Cases of NMRLS

NMRLS CASE TYPES



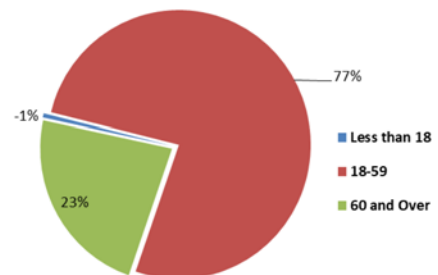
During 2017, NMRLS attorneys, staff and volunteers helped 14,530 citizens by providing representation, advocacy, counseling and outreach services.

Gender of NMRLS Clients

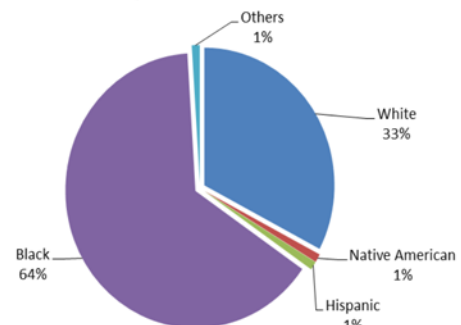


Our clients are very diverse, inclusive of all genders, ethnicities, and ages. The majority are women. Most of them... single mothers with children.

Age of NMRLS Clients



Ethnicity of NMRLS Clients



NORTH MISSISSIPPI RURAL LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

Financial Overview

January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017

Net Assets-Beginning of Year	\$	619,871
2017 Revenue		
Legal Services Corporation	\$	1,610,360 68.51%
Grants and Contracts Non LSC	\$	540,227 22.98%
Lawyers Trust Fund	\$	33,500 1.43%
Older Americans Act	\$	88,031 3.75%
Fundraising	\$	9,463 0.40%
Other	\$	68,856 2.93%
Total	\$	2,350,437 100.00%

2017 Expenditures		
Personnel	\$	1,629,073 68.32%
Occupancy	\$	175,582 7.36%
Supplies and Postage	\$	41,914 1.76%
Telephone/Internet	\$	105,313 4.42%
Travel and Lodging	\$	62,158 2.61%
Other	\$	370,441 15.54%
Total	\$	2,384,481 100.00%
Net Assets-End of Year	\$	584,522

Thank You For Your Support

Individuals

Gwendolyn Baptist-Rucker, Esq.	Sabra & Ron Laumbach, Esq.	Solomon Osborne, Esq.
Thomas G. Barrett	Charles M. Merkel, III, Esq.	Karen Peairs, Esq.
Annie Lee Burt	Cynthia Mitchell, Esq.	Willie J. Perkins, Sr., Esq.
Ben T. Cole, II, Esq.	Tampa Orlando Pinellas	Derrick Simmons, Esq.
Lucius Edwards, Esq.	Jewish Foundations	Ethel L. Ford Terry
I. Richard Gershon, Esq.	Catherine Kilgore, Esq.	Mattie Tucker
Ethel Gilmore	Etoyil F. Long	Roberts Wilson, Esq.
J. Lane Greenlee, Esq.	Robert Jamison	Katherine Weatherby
Minnie Howard, Esq.	Robert Mayes	Ruby White, Esq.
William & Sally Johnson	Kristian McCray, Esq.	Susan Zachos, Esq.

Partnerships

Area Agencies on Aging
BancorpSouth Tupelo and Desoto
Bank of America Foundation
Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation
Borchard Foundation Center on Law and Aging
Brown Missionary Baptist Church
Family and Youth Opportunities Division
Internal Revenue Service
Housing and Urban Development
Legal Services Corporation
LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc.
Mid-State Opportunity, Inc.
Mississippi Access to Justice Commission
Mississippi Bar Foundation, Inc.
MS Coalition Against Domestic Violence
MS Coalition Against Sexual Assault
MS Dept. of Health, Office Against Interpersonal Violence
MS Volunteer Lawyers Project
Office On Violence Against Women
Our House, Inc.
University of Mississippi
University of Mississippi School of Law, Pro Bono Initiative
U.S. Department of Justice
Safe Haven, Inc.
West Tennessee Legal Services

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Inc. (NMRLS) is a 501(c) (3) organization that provides free civil legal services to low-income people in north Mississippi. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by calling our office: (662) 234- 8731, ext. 2104.



All funds received by North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Inc. are spent in accordance with the Legal Services Corporation Act of 1974, as amended 1977, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2996 et. seq., its implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. § 1600 et. seq., and other applicable laws.

The 2017 IMPACT Report:

Ethel Gilmore

Editor, Lead Writer

Ben Thomas Cole, II, Esq.,

Ruby White, Esq., and

Glenn Holman, Esq.,

Advisors

Every effort was made to ensure accuracy of these listings. If we have inadvertently omitted any donor or partner, please accept our sincere apology.

A Special Thanks To..

Attorneys, Staff, Volunteers Who Give to Help Others

Private Attorney Involvement (PAI)

PAI 's are private attorneys who take NMRLS cases for free or at a reduce rate.

Eugene Barton	Karshunn Moore
Michael Boyd	Hiawatha Northington, II
Kimberly Brown-Bowling	Jane Vu Pak
Vallrie L. Dorsey	Adrienne Parker
Carnelia P. Fondren	Chris Powell
W. Heath Franklin	LuJaclyn Richardson
Renetha Frieson	Matthew D. Ross
Tenisha M. Gates	Femi Salu
John M. Gilmore	William Sanders
A.E. Harlow, Jr.	Alexander Simpson
Rhonda Hayes-Ellis	Chaka Smith
Peggy M. Hodges	Jacqueline Smith
Derek Hopkins	Warren Smith
Sabrina D. Howell	Brian L. Starling
Tarik Johnson	Winton J. Thompson, III
Wilbert L. Johnson	Bobby Taylor Vance
Angela T. Kimbrough	Jamaal Walker
Kiley Kirk	Louis C. Walker
L. Paul Kossman	Juan T. Williams
Arnold D. Lee	Trena Williams
Sandra D. Marshall	Michael Wilson
Dalton Middleton	Chereka Witherspoon

2017 NMRLS STAFF

Gail Akins
Gloria Benson
Gloria Bogan
Patricia Booker
Shandreka Brown
Eunice Carter
Ben Thomas Cole, II
Susan Culpepper
Al Cutturini
Denise Fondren
Cynetra Freeman
Clarence H. Franklin
Ethel Gilmore
Nadia Gipson
Priscilla Grantham
Lacy A. Hollins
Jordan Hughes
Minnie Howard
Johnnie Ivy
Romara Johnson
Tonell Jones
Nora Rasco-Keasler
Naomi Keaton
Catherine "Ginny" Kilgore
Mable Kimbrough
Schenille Martin
Christi McCoy
Ruthie McEwen
Shirley McNeal
Sandra Murray
Jessica Rayford
Kristine Simpson
Linda Strong
Gail Thompson
Benjamin Wilkerson
William L. Williamson
Sharon Witty
Ruby White
William Young

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

Sierre Anton	Alisha Harris	Emma McNair
Camille Beasley	Kimberly Ibarra	Carroll Roberson
Roslin Bradley	Courtlin Jones	David Rucker
Mary F. Greenwood	Yolanda Kelly	Christopher Schurman
Sarah Gunnells	Tanner Kittrell	Hunter Story
Amber Hairston	Mikayla Joyner	Joshua Theus
Madison Harbison	Maria Maune	Heather Tutor
		Erica Wood

How You Can Help Make An Impact!

Your support enables North Mississippi Rural Legal Services to help thousands of north Mississippians who count on us each year.



To make a donation, please use the donation form below and mail to:
Post Office Box 767, Oxford, MS 38655 **or visit:**

<http://nmrls.com/donate-to-nmrls/> to make a secure credit card donation online.

To learn more about NMRLS giving, contact Ben Thomas Cole, II, Executive Director, at (662) 234-8731, Ext. 2108 or bcole@nmrls.com. You may also contact: Ethel Gilmore, Director of Development, at 662-234-8731, Ext. 2132 or egilmore@nmrls.com.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Telephone: _____

☐ Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ ☐ Enclosed is a money order for \$ _____

Please make checks and money orders payable to:

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Inc.

Post Box 767
Oxford, MS 38655
662-234-8731, Ext. 2108
662-234-8731, Ext. 2132

Credit card payments can be made on our secure website:

<http://nmrls.com/donate-to-nmrls>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Inc.

Office Locations



Administrative and Oxford Litigation Office

5 County Road 1014
Oxford, MS 38655
(662) 234-2918
(800) 559-5074

Minnie P. Howard, Managing Attorney

Clarksdale Litigation Office

504 Desoto Avenue
Clarksdale, MS 38614
(662) 627-4184
(800) 388-3163

Patricia Booker, Managing Attorney

Greenville Litigation Office

1024 Washington Avenue, Suite 101
Greenville, MS 38701
(662) 335-8203
(800) 545-1909

Sharon Witty, Managing Attorney

West Point Litigation Office

313 Highway 45 Alt. South
West Point, MS 39773
(662) 494-6122
(800) 898-6122

Mable Kimbrough, Managing Attorney



Call Center: 1-800-498-1804

VISIT US HERE:

www.nmrls.com

www.mslegalservices.org

Making an Impact in 39 North Mississippi Counties and Beyond!