ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

"BUILDING A JUST SOCIETY"
The mission of the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii is to address critical legal needs through high quality legal advocacy, outreach, and education in pursuit of fairness and justice.
Betty Belle Morrison was born in Wenatchee, WA. in 1919. After graduating from Lewis and Clark High School, she attended the University of Washington, earning a bachelor’s degree in sociology in 1940.

That year she traveled by ship to Japan as a delegate of the American Student Conference. While on board, she met and became friends with Roy Vitousek of Honolulu. After the war, they reconnected and were married in December 1945.

They attended law school at Stanford University and graduated together in 1948.

After graduating from Stanford, Judge Vitousek practiced adoption law for a number of years. She conducted the research which led to the formation of the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i. She became the first executive director of the Hawaii State Bar Association and worked with Judges Gerald Corbett and Samuel King to pass legislation establishing Family Courts in Hawaii, only the second state to do so.

In 1970, Gov. John A. Burns appointed Judge Vitousek to the newly created Family Court of the First Circuit, and was named Senior Administrative Judge of the Family Court in 1977.

Judge Vitousek was an early advocate of mediation, and also started “Divorce Experience,” to help divorcing couples to understand the process, both legally as well as emotionally. Today the program is called “Kids First” and is mandatory for couples with children.

Judge Vitousek’s influence extended beyond Hawaii. She served as national president of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, was named a delegate to the White House Conference on Children, and served on the board of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court judges.

Judge Vitousek retired from Family Court in 1988, and passed away on August 28, 2017, at the age of 98.

“At least as long ago as thirty years, many citizens of this community recognized the need for legal advice or service to those persons worthy of help but without means to secure it...”

Betty M. Vitousek
MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Elauhoe mai na waʻa; i ke kā, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke kā; pae aku i ka ʻāina

Everybody paddles the canoes together; bail and paddle, paddle and bail, and the shore is reached.

The end of March began a new reality for Legal Aid. Over the course of a few days, our operations went remote and we rose to the challenge to ensure that our clients still had access to justice.

We did not stop and have not stopped providing civil legal services across the state to those most in need.

Our outreach team continued to serve our houseless neighbors, and our intake hotline continued to take calls for those in need. Our kūpuna legal services staff made social distanced home visits so kūpuna did not need to leave their homes to get vital documents completed. In the height of the pandemic, our attorneys continued to go to court to represent clients in restraining orders for protection or to keep a landlord from locking someone out.

The shutdown of our state’s economy caused unprecedented demand for government services like unemployment and public assistance as well as a growing need for resources to understand the latest emergency order from the Governor as it impacted the possibility of eviction or to understand new federal programs and rules.

Uniquely situated to assist, Legal Aid staff quickly pulled together resources that explained the latest on eviction moratoriums and how to apply for unemployment. Resources were translated and made accessible to communities across the state. Our website resources, brochures, and online events helped countless residents in Hawai‘i. We also advocated for language access in unemployment and spoke out on behalf of tenants facing illegal attempts at eviction.

As we look toward the future, we know that it will take time for our economy to recover and that for many facing economic hardship, eviction, debt, and family crisis, accessing safety net services like Legal Aid will be a first time experience. But, we will be here and will continue to address these issues together.

Together we have bailed and paddled, paddled and bailed, and working together we continue to work to build a just society.

Malama pono.

M. NALANI FUJIMORI KAINA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii is at the forefront of some of Hawaii’s greatest challenges. Challenges such as homelessness, unemployment, evictions and foreclosures, child safety, benefits and other hardships faced by members of our communities. Every day Legal Aid helps those who have no other recourse, in order to achieve a fair and just outcome. In doing so, Legal Aid improves lives and strengthens our communities one by one, family by family.

At some point, the pandemic will ease and a new normal will emerge, but there will be a lasting impact on those affected by the virus and on our communities. Thus, even after the virus subsides, the need for legal aid services is likely to remain at elevated levels for the foreseeable future.

Effective client engagement practices will become even more important as will the expansion of funding sources beyond traditional state and federal grants given budgetary constraints.

"In a typical year, Legal Aid receives over 9,000 inquiries... due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the number of inquiries has increased to more than 12,000."

The economic and social health of a community is the responsibility of everyone who lives within that community. It is therefore my hope to see increased engagement by our business community to support key organizational initiatives, provide pro-bono services or make a direct charitable contribution to accelerate Legal Aid’s mission.
Where we serve

Last year, we closed a total of 6,608 cases throughout our 10 statewide offices.

"As chair of the Strategic Planning and Priority Setting Committee, I work with Legal Aid to focus on having a positive impact on what the community really needs, especially for urgent and growing issues such as homelessness. One area that deeply resonates with me is Legal Aid's role in preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place. The work being done to address landlord and tenant issues and foreclosures, are all critical in keeping families off the streets."

- Naomi Fujimoto, Board Member Since 1999
Highlights

The Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i is committed to serving the vulnerable in our community. Over the past year, we helped to stabilize 1,805 families, 798 individuals maintain their economic security, and helped protect 939 seniors.

1,805 CASES
Stabilizing Families

939 CASES
Protecting Seniors

798 CASES
Maintaining Economic Security

"Legal Aid is there to provide help whenever you’re lost. I felt lost"

- HERMELEEN AMOND

20,000 LIVES IMPACTED
MORE THAN
Who we serve

- **23.9%** Native Hawaiian
- **23.3%** Living with family and friends
- **18.91%** Reported domestic violence
- **15.11%** Homeless, living in a homeless shelter, or in transitional housing
Helping families.

I was overwhelmed on how I would receive help on becoming a legal guardian of my minor siblings. In 2018 we lost our older brother. In April 2019 we lost our father and our mother in December 2019. I lived in Waianae and my siblings were living in Kalihi. All I knew was to care for my siblings.

Legal Aid helped me with the petition for legal guardianship and get court fees waived. Due to Legal Aid's help I was granted unlimited legal guardianship for my minor siblings. With set backs and many court hearings being cancelled due to Covid-19, I now can address their needs legally (medical, schooling, therapy, and etc.).

I want people to know that Legal Aid helps individuals and families like me at times of need.

J. Rosario, 34 years-old
In 1991 I separated from my first husband, and because we owned a small business and he was the talent, I was left to look for a job. Because we had no real assets to split, it should have been a quick process, but my husband was not willing to sign the divorce papers for almost 2 years.

I was struggling to provide health insurance and as much as I resisted, I was advised to apply for food stamps and Medicaid for my son.

It broke me but I did it for a few months and it helped me get on my feet. Your staff reminded me that I paid into a system that is a safety net for exactly my situation. It was humbling.

During that time I enrolled in a community college to complete my bachelors degree. I later remarried, moved to Oregon for 16 years for my husband’s job, and I started a healthcare consulting business. We moved back to Hawai’i 7 years ago when we became empty-nesters. This month is my 17th year in business and I have employees in 3 states including Hawai’i.

I have referred women in domestic violence situations to seek help from your organization over the years. You are the safety net for so many. It was my pleasure to be able to donate during these trying times when DV victims need our help more than ever.

I will forever be grateful to the Legal Aid Society of Hawai’i for helping me in my greatest time of need.

Julie McGovern
AS OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO FEEL THE DEEP IMPACT OF COVID-19 ECONOMICALLY, PHYSICALLY, AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY, THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAII CONTINUES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL LEGAL SERVICES AND OUTREACH TO ENSURE THAT OUR MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES ARE PROTECTED DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES.
"Helping people with their first step..."

The most rewarding thing about my work is helping people with their first step. Getting vital documents is one of the first steps to having an identity in this society. After the first step, people are able to apply for jobs, work, support their families, and build lives for themselves. It’s inspiring.

I am driven to help others. Having been a prior service member, that aspect of being able to help others under any circumstance is something that I carry today. The feeling of seeing someone benefit directly through my service is such a great feeling. It is humbling. I know I am making a difference in the community and my life has purpose.

- Emil R.

"I have been with Legal Aid for 40 years - we help change people’s lives for the better everyday."

The Legal Aid Society of Hawaii is really a special place. I have been working here for 40 years and have seen firsthand how our work changes people’s lives for the better everyday. So many of the clients come back over the years to thank Legal Aid because they’re so deeply grateful. That’s what we do, that’s what Legal Aid does... we help the community and make a difference in somebody’s life.

- Sarah R.

"We would call her my forever client."

One of the most memorable experiences I’ve had was helping an elderly client on Maui with her TRO representation, consumer issues, and intervening in her grand-daughter’s child welfare case. We were able to get her appointed as her grand-daughter’s legal guardian, but unfortunately she passed away shortly after completing her case.

The last time I saw her, she shared that she was once married to a famous rock band member, and was writing her memoir. We would call her my forever client.

I would like the community to know that the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii - Maui office is like home. We are a tight-knit group, committed to serving those in need on Maui, Molokai, and Lanai.

- Yukari M.
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

STATEMENT OF REVENUES

DOLLARS RECEIVED (IN 000s)

Federal Grants $3,968
State Grants $2,748
Contract and Other Income $640

Total $7,357

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES

DOLLARS SPENT (IN 000s)

Salaries - Attorneys & Paralegals $3,555
Salaries - Management & General $968
Benefits $1,441

Total Salaries and Benefits $5,964
Other Expenses $1,239

BALANCE SHEET 6/30/2020 (IN 000s)

ASSETS $6,646
LIABILITIES $1,412

NET ASSETS
Without Donor Restrictions $4,264
With Donor Restrictions $970

Total Net Assets $5,234
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LEADERSHIP

Joseph Boivin, President
Veteran Energy Pacific, LLC

Blaine Rogers, Vice President
Dentons

Regan Iwao, Treasurer
Schlack Ito, LLC

Naomi Fujimoto, Secretary
Attorney at Law

DIRECTORS

Catherine Aubuchon
Bronster Fujichaku Robbins

Lowell Chun-Hoon
King, Nakamura & Chun-Hoon

Michael Cruise
Leavitt Yamane & Soldner

Wattie Green
Community Director

Joanne Lo Grimes
Carlsmith Ball LLP

Lea Hennessy
Community Director

K. Alohilani Hue Sing
Community Director

Ian Jung
Belles Graham Proudfoot Wilson & Chun

Aldora Kahele
Community Director

Loel Kaikuaana
Community Director

Robin Kobayashi
Hawaiian Airlines

Andrew Levin
County of Hawaii

Jake Matson
Hawaii Gas

Arsima Muller
Carlsmith Ball LLP

Gary Murai
County of Maui

Kurt Murao
Hawaiian Electric Industries

Kahiolani Papalimu
Community Director

Nainoa Seitz
Community Director

Vaimagalo Seto
Community Director

Vivian Skilling
Community Director

Jan Tamura
University of Hawai‘i

Jodi Shin Yamamoto
Yamamoto Caliboso

Elijah Yip
Luminate Law
We are deeply grateful to these law firms, corporations, foundations, and individuals for their support of the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i and our core vision to build a just society.

Law Firm and Institutional Support
Kalaeloa Partners
Dentons US LLP
The Cades Foundation
Bronster Fujichaku Robbins
Hawaii Gas
Yamamoto & Caliboso
Marr Jones Wang LLP
Central Union Church
Women’s League of Central Union Church
Hawaii Island United Way, Inc.

Individual Supporters
Ashley Agcaoili
Justina Acevedo-Cross
Sergio Alcubilla
Kristen Apruzzese
Lynda Arakawa
Marjorie Au
Gail Ayabe
Christine & Chris Barteluce
Ashlee Drake Berry
Teresa Bill
Eric Bonham
Jean Campbell
Jade Ching
Philip Ching
Gail Cosgrove
Michael Cruise
Malia Day
Joni Domingues
Alejandra Duque
Burrelle Duvauchelle
Uson and Lani Eward
Robert Fricke
Muriel Fujii
Jim Gagne
Roland Galban
Chuck Greenfield
Scott Gronke
Clyde Hall
Susan Haruki
Geraldine Hasegawa
Dawn Henry
Ted Hong
Susan Ichinose
Eva Inada
Lynn Inafuku
May Izumi
Joan Jackson
Jan Kagehiro
James & Nalani Kaina
Brent Kakesako
Donna Kalama
Jeff Kent
Diana Kim
Danelle Knapp
Joseph Kobayashi
Elizabeth Kuoka
Corianne Lau
Robert LeClair
Kurt Leong
Beverly Look
Melody MacKenzie
Malachy McNamara
Ginger Mallard & John Daniel
Ramiro Martinez
Melanie May
Julie McGovern
Moilili Hongwanji Mission
Gary Murai
Connie & Albert Nahale’a
Craig Nakamura
Shawn Nakoa
Dennis Niles
Alan and JoAnn Oshima
Benton Pang
Calvin Pang
Vina Quick
Richard Rapoza
Adriana Reyes-Villanueva
Emily Rivera
Johannette Rowley
Judith Sampson
Eric Shroeder
Joyce Shenna
Kaela Shiigi
Roy Shishido
Sandy Shishido
Sara Silver
Jody St. Joseph
Cynthia Stoldt
Maata Taualo
Jan Tamura
R. Malia Taum-Deenik
Lori Teranishi
Vickie Teves
Judith Egusa Trust
Mel Uchida
Douglas & Marilyn Ushijima
Robin Uyeshiro & Donna Leong
Elise von Dohlen
Ryker Wada
Donald Wilkerson
Leslie Wilson
Patrick Wong
Darlene Yamauchi
Elijah Yip
Keith Young
Joanna Zeigler
We are deeply grateful to our dedicated volunteers for their time in supporting the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i and our core vision to build a just society.

Aaron Masser  
Adam N. Miller  
Al Konishi  
Alana Peacott-Ricardos  
Alana Song  
Allisha F. Marotz  
Alyssa Segawa  
Amy Self  
Andrew Kennedy  
Andrew Son  
Arlette Harada  
Ashley C. Chinain  
Belinda Hughes  
Ben Acob  
Ben Creps  
Ben Fisher  
Ben Herren  
Ben Pittenger  
Bennett J. Chin  
Bill Heflin  
Bill Pannell  
Bradley Scott Dixon  
Brit Barker  
Brooke H. Hunter  
Bryant Zane  
Calvin E. Young  
Candace Hough  
Carlito P. Caliboso  
Carol Kitaoka  
Caroline Peters Belsom  
Casey T. Miyashiro  
Cassie Bagay  
Cecily D. M. Kaya  
Charles McCreary  
Charles Murray  
Cheuk Fu Lui  
Chloe Maxine Reiko Fasi  
Christopher K. Hicka  
Christopher P. St. Sure  
Claudia Shockley  
Craig Masuda  
Damir Koulev  
Daniel Cheng  
Daniel Kim  
Daniel Lam  
Daniel Mistak  
Daniel Peters  
David J. Hoftiezer  
David James Jordan  
David Raatz  
Derek Kobayashi  
Donna Payesko  
Dwayne Lerma  
Edward Fetzer  
Eileen C. Zorc  
Eileen Nims  
Eric Elkind  
EZ Smith  
Forest Jenkins  
Francis Jung  
Frederick Macapinlac  
Gary Murai  
Gerald Garcia  
Gilbert Doles  
Gina Gormley  
Gregory K. Schlaflin  
Inia M. Yevich  
Jacky Mena  
Jaime Tokioka  
James Biven  
James Clark Glenn, IV  
Janice Heidt  
Jason Braswell  
Jeffrey Ng  
Jen Ng  
Jen Wharton  
Jen Zelko-Schlueter  
Jennifer F. Chin  
Jennifer Heimgartner  
Jennifer Oana  
Jenny Nakamoto  
Jeremy Butterfield  
Jeremy Kyle O’Steen  
Jessica Domingo  
Jill Hasegawa  
Jill Raznov  
Jo Kim  
Joanna C. Zeigler  
Joanna Sokolow  
Joanne Goya  
Joanne Hicks  
Joelle B. Yamamoto  
John Kelly  
John Olson  
Joy San Buenaventura  
Judith A. Schevituch  
Judith Pavey  
Judy Neustadter Naone  
Justin Brackett  
Kainani Collins  
Kayla M. Fajota  
Kelly Higa  
Kelly Y. Uwaine  
Kelsey S. Yamaguchi  
Kenneth G K. Hoo  
Kevin C. Tongg  
Kevin Jenkins  
Kimberly Taniyama  
Kimi Ide-Foster  
Kristi Keiko O’Heron  
Laehla Hite  
Lance D Collins  
Lanson Kupau  
Laura Cushman  
Laura Ozak  
Laurel E. Pepe  
Lauren Akitake  
Lauren K. Chun  
Leslee Matthews  
Lindsay E. Orman  
Lynda Arakawa  
Lynne T.T. Toyofuku  
M. Nanai Fujimori Kain  
Madisson Heinze  
Maegan A. Ruggles  
Magdalena Bajon  
Maile Osika  
Mark Van Pernis  
Mathew J. Terry  
Matt Sylva  
Matthew Caulfield Winter  
Matthew Evans  
Megan L. M Lim  
Megumi Sakae  
Melinda M. Weaver  
Melissa Toshiko Marusigae  
Melody Parker  
Mia Obciana  
Michael Kozak  
Michelle Oishi  
Michi Momose  
Na Lan  
Nainoa J. Watson  
Napoleon Taylor  
Nathaniel Higa  
Nelson Kinoshita  
Nick Kacprowski  
Nicole Altmann  
Paul Hamano  
Paul Sato  
Peter Brescian  
Peter Kubota  
Peter Olson  
Rachel Zelman  
Ray Hasegawa  
Rebecca Colvin  
Rebecca Michelle Salwin  
Rechelle Anna Midori Barbour  
Regan Iwao  
Remy Kealohiokailiwai Akina  
Rex Y. Fujichaku  
Rio Kwan  
Robert Olson  
Robert Triantos  
Roland Talon  
Ronald Federizo  
Ronald Hung Wai Lum, Jr.  
Ronald Ibara  
Ronald Tang  
Ryan Summers Little  
Sabrina M. Kawan  
San Shnider  
Samantha Chan  
Sarah Frances Yan-ling Williams  
Sash A. Hamada  
Scot Matayoshi  
Sean Baz  
Sean Hartlieb  
Selina Rose Swatek  
Sergio Alcubilla  
Shan Wirt  
Shanlyn A.S. Park  
Shimpei Oki  
Stanley Majka  
Stephanie E.W. Thompson  
Stephen Frye  
Steve Brittan  
Steven Strauss  
Sue Vo Hansen  
Sunny S. Lee  
Susan Kim  
Thomas Berger  
Tim Partelow  
Tori Hughes  
Tracy Jones  
Travis M. Agustin  
Travis T. Moon  
Tred Eyerly  
Trent Miyashiro  
Veronica A Nordyke  
Vlad Devens  
Voltaire Cansit  
Walter Hebblethaite  
Wendy Hanakahi  
Wil K. Yamamoto  
Will Tungol  
William Bagasol  
Winston Wong  
Yukari Murakami