

CATHOLIC CHARITIES LEGAL NETWORK

ANNUAL
REPORT
2025 | 2026
37 YEARS



Throughout Fiscal Year 2026, Catholic Charities Legal Network (CCLN) helped clients obtain custody of their children, stop evictions, fight wrongful terminations, and assert their rights. Clients' stories vary, but their gratitude for CCLN and its services is consistent, as the testimonials below attest.

"You made sure I got everything I needed, and that meant so much to me because I don't think I could have managed it on my own."

- Mr. P, a Client of CCLN



CCLN prevented Mr. P's eviction, restored his government benefits, and reduced his debt.

"Throughout the process, everyone was kind, respectful, patient, and professional. They explained everything clearly and made us feel comfortable and supported. We truly appreciate the time and effort they dedicated to helping our family."

- Mrs. S, a Client of CCLN

CCLN helped Mrs. S, who is limited-English proficient, prepare estate planning documents in Spanish.

"Thank you for listening to me and helping me get justice."

- Ms. H, a CCLN Client

CCLN helped Ms. H, who was illegally terminated due to her disability, obtain a favorable settlement.

"Without you, I wouldn't have my kids."

- Ms. M, a CCLN client

CCLN helped Ms. M get joint physical custody of her children.



Under the leadership of Director Jim Bishop, the Catholic Charities Legal Network continues to offer outstanding free legal services to members of our community

who need them most. The Legal Network's work spans a wide range of practice areas, including bankruptcy, consumer law, employment law, family law, government benefits, housing, and estate planning. And it serves those most in need – those who are struggling to make ends meet and have nowhere else to turn – and represents them with top-notch advocacy, compassion, and professionalism.

Running the Legal Network is a challenging endeavor that requires the unwavering commitment of countless selfless people. For many years, the Legal Network's Advisory Council has provided invaluable guidance and assistance to the organization. The Council has been fortunate to have the devoted service of John E. McCarthy, Jr., Senior Counsel at Crowell & Moring, LLP. John was named Chairperson Emeritus of the Legal Network several years ago, and I hope he will continue in that capacity going forward. His commitment to the Legal Network, and to so many other charitable causes, has been invaluable and inspirational.

Our annual golf tournament, the Legal Network's primary fundraiser, has enjoyed outstanding success, thanks to the exceptional organizational efforts of Kristine Dunne Maher and Andrea Halverson Harper, along with the tireless work of the golf tournament committee: Denis Mitchell (Co-Chairperson), Robert Shaffer (Co-Chairperson), Thomas J. Kelly (who generously made the Bretton Woods golfclub available to us), Miguel Eaton, Daniel P. Archuleta, and John E. McCarthy, Jr., among other invaluable members listed later herein.

The Legal Network's staff also deserves much credit. They work each day to make the

organization an enormous success. Attorneys Deacon Darryl Kelley and Alberto Ruisanchez represent clients with exceptional skill, compassion, and humility – an inspiration to us all. And Emma Johnston, the Legal Network's bilingual paralegal, works tirelessly to establish law-related seminars to educate the public about its rights, in both English and Spanish.

The Legal Network could not function without the help of its fabulous volunteers and interns. Howard "Hank" Hyatte, who has interned with the Legal Network every summer since 2022, has played a critical role in helping develop reports and track volunteer hours. College student Ruiqi Huang made numerous important contributions to the office during his summer internship. Joyce Chung, who volunteered with us this year and last, also deserves recognition for organizing Know-Your-Rights seminars, coordinating pro bono placements, and compiling statistical reports on the Legal Network's work.

None of the Legal Network's success, however, would be possible without the leadership and heart of Jim Bishop. A brief anecdote illustrates my point: one morning last year, Jim was approached outside his office by a man whose family was homeless; they had nothing but the clothes on their backs. Through Jim's efforts and the support of Catholic Charities, the family secured housing, food, job placement help, and school enrollment for the children. It is a testament to the heart and soul of the Legal Network: Jim Bishop.

Thank you, Jim, for your compassion and for making 2026 another remarkably successful year for the Legal Network.

Sincerely,
Andrew N. Cook, Esq.
Chair
Catholic Charities Legal Network Advisory Council



Dear Friends,

This past year marked my 32nd as Director of the Catholic Charities Legal Network, and I am pleased to report that we had an extremely successful year. In Fiscal Year 2026, the Legal Network delivered legal services and legal education seminars to 1,363 individuals throughout the District of Columbia and Maryland. I'm also proud to share that our volunteers reported working 2,675 pro bono hours, valued at more than \$2.2 million.

But more compelling than the numbers are the stories of the clients we help. A 75-year-old veteran and amputee came to us facing eviction from his assisted living facility after a family member misused his power of attorney and left him \$12,000 in debt. Staff Attorney Alberto Ruisanchez worked with the client to revoke the power of attorney, restore his government benefits, and prevent eviction. He negotiated a payment plan that reduced the client's debt and enabled him to stay in his home. Catholic Charities' St. Leo Project also contributed funds to lowering the client's debt. It is one of many examples of how the Legal Network partners with other programs at Catholic Charities to leave clients in a better position.

Another example occurred in March 2026, when two Legal Network volunteers agreed to represent a client who was seeking greater custody of her children. After giving birth to twins last year, the client suffered severe postpartum depression and was placed in various mental health facilities. Around this time, a court entered an order giving the father temporary physical and legal custody, significantly restricting our client's ability to spend time with her children. After months of intensive

therapy and treatment, the client's condition improved, and she asked the Legal Network to help her obtain greater custody of her children. As she said, "I love my children and want them in my life." The Legal Network volunteers worked diligently to represent the client and ultimately negotiated an agreement that permits her to have joint physical custody, which the court approved in July.

Despite these (and many other) success stories, every year the needs of our clients in the D.C. metropolitan area continue to expand. And the cost of providing free legal services also continues to rise, while grants seem harder to secure.

But even amidst these challenges, the Legal Network has much to celebrate. We are blessed to have the Catholic Charities Grants Department and the Development Office working to secure funds for us.

I am also thankful for the support of the Legal Network's Advisory Council and the leadership of its Chairman, Andrew Cook. Their guidance, good counsel, and commitment are pillars on which the Legal Network rests.

I also want to thank our selfless volunteers, who give so generously of their time to help the neediest, including Hank Hyatte, Ruiqi Huang, and Patrick J. Kennedy. Their generosity and dedication are a model for all of us.

I am equally grateful to the Legal Network's staff for their dedication to serving the poor and underserved in our community.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the many donors and partners whose generosity sustains the Legal Network. While there is much work ahead, I am proud of what we accomplished this past year, and I invite you to read this report to learn more about our successes.

Sincerely,

James D. Bishop, Esq., Director, Catholic Charities Legal Network



On October 5, 2025, the John Carroll Society presented three attorneys and a law firm with its Pro Bono Legal Service Awards. The honorees – Nicholas Mowbray, Andrea Halverson Harper, Kristine Dunne Maher, and the law firm Crowell & Moring – provided generous support to the Legal Network’s clients, fundraising efforts, and operations.

In the photo above, Msgr. Peter Vaghi (front row center), the John Carroll Society’s longtime chaplain, and Washington Cardinal Robert W. McElroy (far right) joined the honorees. From left to right in the front row are honorees Nicholas Mowbray, Esq. and Andrea Halverson Harper, Esq.; Msgr. Vaghi; honoree Kristine Dunne Maher, Esq.; John E. McCarthy, Esq., Senior Counsel at Crowell & Moring, LLP, whose law firm was honored; and Cardinal McElroy. Standing behind them are David Florenzo, the president of the John Carroll Society; and Edward O’Connell, the chair of the 2025 Red Mass Committee.

(Photo by Christopher Newkumet of NewkPhoto)

2025 | 2026

Catholic Charities Legal Network's (CCLN) Impact

The Legal Network relies on the generosity of volunteer attorneys from law firms, government agencies, and solo practices to carry out its mission of providing free legal assistance to underserved populations. These volunteers take on pro bono cases, conduct client intake, and staff the Legal Network's telephone intake line. They also lead Know Your Rights seminars for low-income communities and mentor fellow attorneys handling pro bono matters.

The Legal Network serves families and individuals earning at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. In 2026, that translates to an income limit of \$39,900 for an individual and \$82,500 for a family of four.

In total, the Legal Network served 1,363 low-income individuals across Maryland and Washington, D.C., during the fiscal year.

In FY 2026, volunteers worked 2,675 pro bono hours, valued at more than \$2.2 million, and served 1,363 low-income individuals

What We Do

The Legal Network addresses:

- Bankruptcy & Consumer Debt
- Employment Law
- Family Law
- Government Entitlements
- Landlord and Tenant Law
- Wills and Advanced Medical Directives

The services we provide:

- Direct legal representation
- Case placement with volunteer attorneys
- Information and referral
- In-person client intake
- Seminars on civil law topics for low-income audiences
- Legal training seminars and mentorship for volunteer attorneys

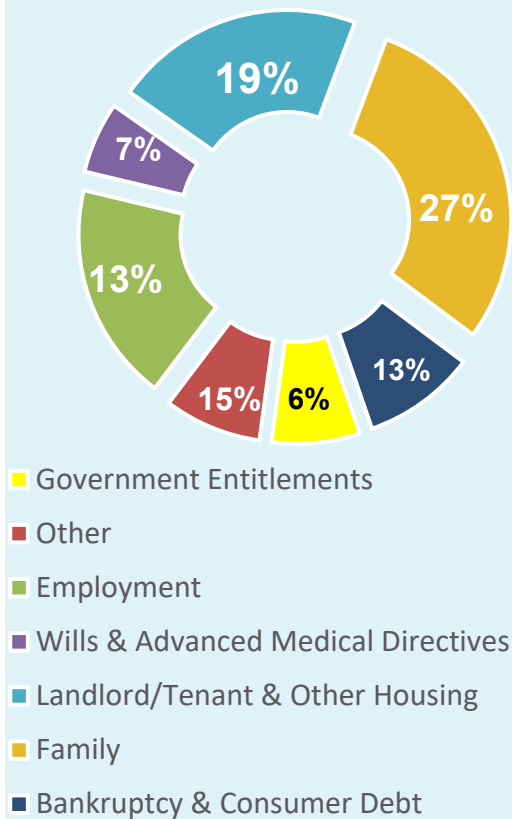
Where We Help

Washington, D.C.
Montgomery County, MD

Calvert County, MD
Prince George's County, MD

Charles County, MD
St. Mary's County, MD

Makeup of Case Types in FY 2025-2026



In FY 2026, CCLN conducted 16 seminars, educating more than 200 people on their rights

2025 | 2026 Special Thanks

We are very grateful to all the firms that contributed to our mission through donations and volunteer work. Their support enables the Legal Network to change lives: to prevent evictions, stop wrongful terminations, help parents get custody of their children, and navigate bankruptcy.

We are particularly grateful to the following firms that help staff our intake line:

BakerHostetler
Crowell & Moring LLP
DLA Piper
Hogan Lovells Cadwalader US LLP
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Miller & Chevalier Chartered
O'Melveny & Myers LLP
Steptoe & Johnson PLLC
Wiley Rein LLP



The 22nd Annual Golf Tournament was held at the Bretton Woods Recreation Center in Germantown, Maryland in September 2025. We thank all those who contributed to making it a success, especially the generous donors listed in this report.



The Legal Network is also tremendously grateful to our grant sponsors, which provide us with generous funding, legal training, and superb guidance, including:

The DC Bar Foundation
The Bar Association of the District of Columbia

Pepco, an Exelon Company
Clark-Winchcole Foundation
Miller & Chevalier Chartered Foundation

DC BAR FOUNDATION

WE INVEST IN JUSTICE

DCBF

2025 | 2026 CCLN Staff Volunteer Spotlight

As we end another successful year providing pro bono legal services to those in need, the Legal Network would like to recognize some of our most dedicated volunteers. Their efforts are a lifeline to the underserved, and we are grateful for their service.



LISA K. MANFREDA is an associate at Wise Family Law, where she specializes in family law, protective order cases, domestic violence, child support, complex custody litigation, property division, and divorce. She is a brilliant resource for the Legal Network, zealously representing clients and providing expert counsel. "Volunteering with Catholic Charities Legal Network has been incredibly rewarding, both professionally and personally. I am grateful for the opportunity to use my legal experience to help people navigate a difficult time, and hopefully make things a little easier for them."



PAUL E. GLEASON (center) is a retired attorney who has represented numerous clients for the Legal Network. Relying on his wealth of family law experience, he represents clients with dedication, superb judgment, and compassion. "Working as a volunteer attorney with Catholic Charities has been personally very fulfilling. It is deeply gratifying when, at the conclusion of a case, a parent shares how the efforts of the Legal Network have had a profound impact on their life and, more importantly, on the lives of their children."



KEVIN N. DORN is an associate at BakerHostetler whose practice focuses on general litigation. He began volunteering with the Legal Network in 2023 and has helped numerous clients through the intake line. His attention to detail, incisive questions, and desire to help those in need ensure that clients receive the best intake experience.

2025 | 2026 CCLN Staff

James D. Bishop, Esq. **Director**

For nearly 40 years, Jim has devoted his career to serving low-income individuals and people experiencing homelessness, 33 of those years directing CCLN. Before becoming Director in 1993, he spent eight years at the mandatory District of Columbia Bar in various public interest roles. He is a parishioner of Saint Patrick's Catholic Church in downtown DC and a third-generation native Washingtonian. For over 30 years, he also served as a family mediator in the Superior Court's Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division. He has served on the Board of Governors of the John Carroll Society, the Civic Board of the Council for Court Excellence, and the DC Bar Foundation's Scoutt Prize Committee. His honors include the Equal Justice Award from UDC's David A. Clarke School of Law, the Bar Association of DC's Suzanne V. Richards Award, the Jerrold Scoutt Prize, the John Carroll Society Medal, the Archdiocese's 75th Anniversary Cardinal's Award, and Catholic Charities' Griffin Award. Under Jim's leadership, CCLN has assisted approximately 85,000 low-income and homeless residents of D.C. and Maryland with civil matters ranging from child custody to Social Security to bankruptcy. Jim is a magna cum laude graduate of Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, and holds a law degree from Howard University School of Law. He received a certificate from the Nonprofit Business Excellence Program for Catholic Leaders at the University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business. He is admitted to practice law in the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania.



Chairman of the Maryland Juvenile Services Education Program Board. Previously, he served as a Maryland State Delegate for the 26th Legislative District and as Legislative Assistant for Education and Labor to former U.S. Senator Paul S. Sarbanes. For many years, he also worked in federal law enforcement as an Inspector/Deputy United States Marshal. He completed the Capitol Hill Fellowship Program at the Government Affairs Institute at Georgetown University and earned his law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law and his Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Virginia. Deacon Kelley is licensed to practice law in both Maryland and the District of Columbia, and in 2024 became the first deacon and layman to deliver the homily at the Red Mass. He is currently studying canon law at the Catholic University of America.

Alberto Ruisanchez, Esq. **Staff Attorney**

In February 2026, Catholic Charities Legal Network welcomed Alberto Ruisanchez, our bilingual Staff Attorney, who brings a wealth of experience and a passion for advocating on behalf of vulnerable communities. Fluent in Spanish, Alberto spent years as an attorney in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Alberto graduated summa cum laude from Georgetown University and magna cum laude from Harvard Law School. He was an editor on the Harvard Law Review and clerked for Judge Juan Torruella on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. He is admitted to practice law in the District of Columbia and Maryland.



Deacon Darryl A. Kelley, Esq. **Staff Attorney**

A resident of Prince George's County, Deacon Kelley maintains a law practice in Camp Springs, Maryland, and has accepted many pro bono matters from CCLN since 2018, handling cases in family law, estates, landlord/tenant disputes, and bankruptcy. He serves as deacon at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, is a member of the John Carroll Society, and is the



Patrick J. Kennedy, Esq. **Volunteer Attorney**

Patrick J. Kennedy has been a dedicated CCLN volunteer since 2004. Before COVID-19, while employed at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, he helped with in-person client intake and supported staff on challenging client matters. Now retired from federal government service, Patrick continues to assist the program with intake and administrative work. He has volunteered for CCLN's Annual Golf Tournament for many



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years and has served as an annual financial sponsor. Patrick earned his undergraduate and Master of Divinity degrees from the University of Notre Dame, along with a master's degree in public administration from the University of Virginia. He received his law degree from George Mason University's Antonin Scalia School of Law and is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

Emma Johnston **Bilingual Paralegal, Catholic Charities** **Legal Network**



Emma Johnston joined CCLN as our bilingual paralegal in July 2023 and has been an invaluable resource to Spanish-speaking clients and staff. She brings genuine enthusiasm to CCLN's mission, and the team is grateful to have her on board. Emma graduated from Trinity Washington University with a bachelor's degree in general studies and earned an associate's degree in paralegal studies from Everest College in Arlington, Virginia. Before joining CCLN, Emma worked at Legal Services of Northern Virginia, and she successfully earned her law degree from Novus Law School. She is currently obtaining her LLM at George Mason University Antonin Scalia Law School and has a 3.20 GPA. Emma is planning on sitting for the DC Bar in 2027. A mother of three, Emma is an avid runner who has completed several marathons, including the Marine Corps Marathon three times.

Joyce Chung **Data and Systems Volunteer**



For years, Joyce Chung has been an indispensable part of the Legal Network, tracking its outputs, conducting statistical analyses, and creating regular reports that enable CCLN to evaluate its performance and impact. Joyce received her undergraduate degree from Johns Hopkins University and has a Master of Science in Public Health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Howard (Hank) Hyatte **Volunteer Intern**

Hank Hyatte is our senior intern, having volunteered at CCLN each summer since 2022. His deep familiarity with CCLN's processes allows him to assist Director Jim Bishop,

oversee the work of other interns, and take on larger, semi-independent projects. In the Fall 2026, he matriculated as a first-year law student at the Georgetown University Law Center. He is an alumnus of the University of Chicago and a graduate of St. John's College High School's Scholars Program.

**"I AM SO PROUD OF OUR STAFF AND
VOLUNTEERS – TOGETHER, THEY
MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF
THE NEEDIEST MEMBERS OF OUR
COMMUNITY."**

Director James Bishop



CCLN Staff (from left to right) Deacon Darryl Kelley, Emma Johnston, James Bishop, and Alberto Ruisanchez

2025 | 2026 Advisory Council



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Esq.*
Chaplain
John Carroll Society



James D. Bishop*
Director
Catholic Charities Legal Network

**Ex Officio members*

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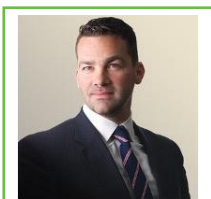
Daniel Archuleta
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Troutman Pepper Locke



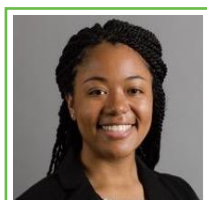
Miguel Eaton
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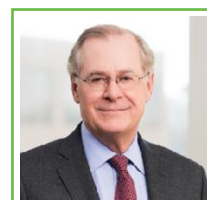
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King & Spalding LLP



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Legal Counsel - Development
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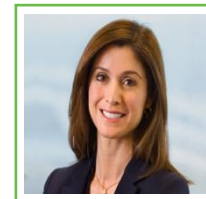
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Vice President, Assistant General
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Year End Review

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The Foundation of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia
The John Carroll Society
John J. Pohanka Family Foundation
Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue Foundation
Northpoint
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Law Rocks, Inc.
The Miller & Chevalier Charitable Foundation
Our Lady of Mercy Church
The Sidley Austin Foundation
St. Patrick's Catholic Church
Steptoe Foundation

IN MEMORIAM



Catholic Charities Legal Network Posthumously Recognizes Volunteer Carol Elizabeth Dinan

Catholic Charities Legal Network was blessed to have Carol Elizabeth Dinan as a longtime volunteer. Generous, kind, and selfless, Carol dedicated her life to helping others. After teaching mathematics for more than 27 years at Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, Carol began volunteering with the Legal Network in 2011. Her sharp organizational skills ensured that client files were always in order and that the office ran smoothly. She approached each task with zeal, professionalism, and a wonderful attitude.

Mrs. Dinan was preceded in death by her parents Clarence and KathleenENZler and her sisters Mary Pat Breitfelder and Jean Rossi. She is survived by her husband, Jack; six children; 15 grandchildren; two great grandchildren (with one on the way); and 10 sisters and brothers, one of whom is Msgr. (Father) JohnENZler, former President of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington.

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Jim Bishop with Kirra Jarratt, the CEO of the DC Bar Foundation



Superstar volunteer attorneys Paul Gleason and Madison May (center) with Jim Bishop and Alberto Ruisanchez



Jim Bishop with wonderful volunteer interns Hank Hyatte and Ruiqi Huang



Jim Bishop attended the 2026 Equal Justice Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, courtesy of Miller & Chevalier

CATHOLIC CHARITIES LEGAL NETWORK

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On behalf of the Catholic Charities Legal Network,
thank you for supporting us in serving the most
vulnerable.

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A special thank you to the DC Bar Foundation for its
generous support of the Catholic Charities Legal
Network.

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