

# Justice. Compassion. Service.

## New Intake Sites for Indianapolis Communities

### Indianapolis Central Library

There are many homeless people in downtown Indianapolis—people who, oftentimes, remain homeless due to long-term legal issues. These issues are both financial, like crippling child support delinquencies, and physical, such as a disability that keeps the man or woman from being able to work. NCLC attorneys have experience in helping folks in both of these harsh circumstances.

Thus, NCLC began working with local partner organizations who directly work with the homeless to decide how NCLC could best serve the homeless. At the same time, NCLC learned of the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library's (IMCPL) desire to provide space at the Central Library in downtown Indianapolis for homeless outreach teams to use. It was a great fit: the Main Branch is frequented by homeless folks for shelter and resources, and NCLC has at the core of its mission the desire to serve "the least of these", Matthew 25:40.

On Tuesdays at 10:30 am, homeless individuals can seek legal advice and representation from NCLC at the Central Library and take a pivotal step in their journey out of homelessness and the cycle of poverty. For more information regarding the Central Library Intake, email VISTA member Faith Batzinger at [fbatzinger@nclegalclinic](mailto:fbatzinger@nclegalclinic).



### The BEACH

The Brookside area in Indianapolis is known as an area rich in history, but having bleak prospects for the future. Indeed, the 46201 area code, which encompasses much of the Brookside area, has a median income of just \$27,723—the national median income is \$56,604. 20% of the population lives on an income less than the national poverty-level: that is about \$902 a month. Legal issues affecting impoverished people are ubiquitous in the area. NCLC joined with College Park Church this past September and added a new intake site in the Brookside area known as the BEACH House, with BEACH standing for "Brookside Eastern Alliance Community Hub". It is the second intake site that NCLC has in the 46201 area: the first was at Shepherd Community Center.

The BEACH House is a multi-purpose facility that houses several ministries. There is a food bank, a youth-mentoring program, and a ministry focused on young mothers in need—all of these ministries are affiliated with College Park Church. The addition of an NCLC intake makes College Park's dream of a facility delivering more holistic services a reality for those most in need.

Brian Dunkel, NCLC Staff Attorney and College Park member, believes that the site will grow and hopes that more volunteers will give of their time, whether it be as an attorney who goes to the BEACH House for intake once a month, an administrative person, or a prayer volunteer. Through giving of your time or money, you can be a part of helping exchange Brookside's bleak future for a bright one. The BEACH House intake is held on Tuesday evenings at 6 pm.

# New Partnerships for NCLC-Fort Wayne

As Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic expands into other regions of Indiana, it is critical that strong partnerships are made in order to holistically and successfully serve the low-income and immigrant families within those communities. With NCLC's expansion into Fort Wayne in 2009, it is those partnerships that have helped NCLC staff continue to serve more and more families in Allen County.

**YWCA** and NCLC refer clients to one another on a regular basis; there are also plans to work together to provide domestic violence education to the low-income and immigrant communities. The YWCA provides shelter and a myriad of other vital services to some of NCLC's most vulnerable clients.

NCLC also partners with **Cancer Services of Northeast Indiana** to provide their clients with legal aid which allows them to focus on taking care of themselves and their families during a difficult time. Cancer Services has a broad client base and provides NCLC with advertising and distribution of flyers and educational materials as well.

**The Burmese Advocacy Center** works with NCLC to refer clients from the Burmese community. They also help NCLC find volunteer Burmese interpreters, and help to inform the Burmese community about NCLC's services.



**Crime Victim Care**, an organization that refers victims of crime to NCLC and that NCLC can help with VAWAs and other legal filings, is also a major partner in serving NCLC's client base. NCLC frequently refers clients back to CVC to be connected with counseling from a member of their own culture, as well as assistance such as courtroom advocacy, transportation, and other important services.

NCLC has an agreement with **Community Housing Concepts**, which renovates Section 8 housing and makes it available for rent based on what the resident is able to pay. CHC will inform NCLC when vacancies occur so that NCLC staff can refer clients who may be in need of affordable housing.

## New Additions to NCLC Board of Directors

On January 15, 2010, NCLC's board of directors elected two new members to serve as fellow board members. The new board members, Janet Stephenson and Timothy R. Dooley, came to NCLC's board with impressive backgrounds and skill sets.

Janet Stephenson (JD/MBA) is an active community volunteer in Fort Wayne where she serves on the board of organizations such as Cancer Services of Northeast Indiana, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Young Life Fort Wayne and Fort Wayne Urban Ministries. Ms. Stephenson lived in Indianapolis with her husband, Todd,



and their two daughters until 1998. As a former Indianapolis resident, Ms. Stephenson worked for Melvin Simon & Associates (now Simon Property Group) in their corporate law department and volunteered part-time with NCLC when it was still the Mapleton-Fall Creek Christian Legal Clinic. In 1998, Ms. Stephenson moved to Fort Wayne and became an influential leader with several nonprofit organizations.

*"There is a significant underserved need for legal assistance in our low income neighborhoods. It is a privilege to support NCLC in serving this unmet need in a way that reflects God's love for each of us."*

Timothy Dooley has been with Republic Airways since 1998 and is currently their Vice President of Finance. Before working for Republic Airways, he worked with the auditing firm of Ernst and Young. He is a 1996 graduate of Indiana University's Kelly School of Business with degrees in Accounting and Marketing, and he attends Common Ground Christian Church where he is an active volunteer. Mr. Dooley has served as an elder for the last six years and served as chairman of the elders during 2009. Mr. Dooley serves on the church's worship team with his wife Christina. The Dooleys have three sons, including their youngest who was just born on Superbowl Sunday.



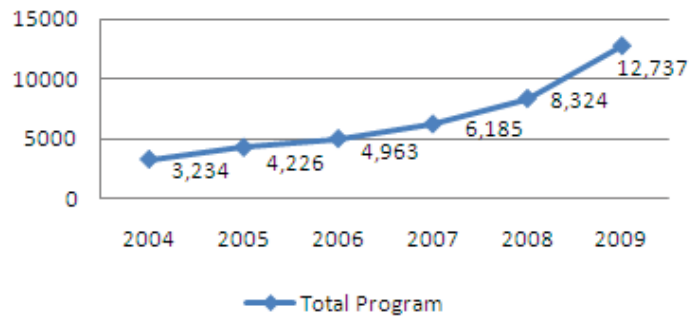
The newly elected board members will join 15 other board members from a variety of backgrounds and careers. NCLC welcomes these new members to the board and looks forward to having them help further the organization's mission to promote justice!

# ...and we're growing AND GROWING

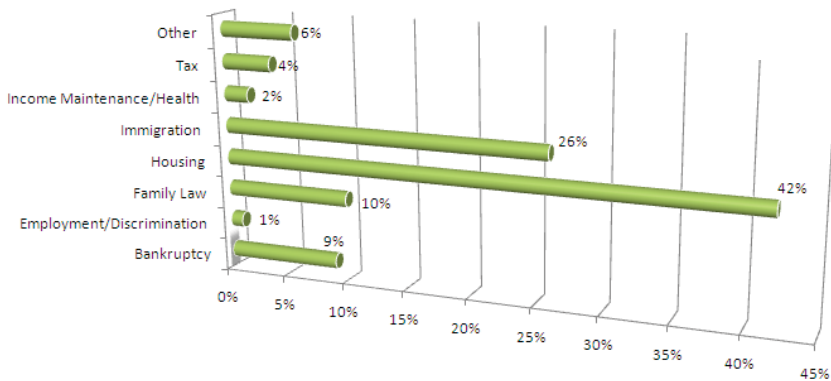
2009 was once again a year of tremendous growth for the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic. Aside from leadership changes, office renovations, and the celebration of NCLC's 15th Anniversary, NCLC programs grew by 53% over 2008. How does NCLC keep growing at this rate?! Fueled by a mixture of knowledgeable attorneys, eager support staff, dedicated volunteers, and community support, NCLC is meeting the demand for our services head on. Especially in times of national crisis, NCLC sees and feels the needs of Indianapolis and Fort Wayne low-income and immigrant communities and is

even more zealous to "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed; rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." Psalm 82:3, 4.

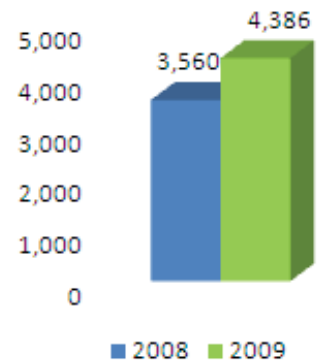
**NCLC Program Growth**



**2009 Case Types**



**Preventive Legal Education**



## Making a Difference in a Client's Life

Every intake is different; every client is unique, but every client's story leaves a lasting impression on the attorneys, paralegals, and volunteers working to ease the burdens of NCLC clients. And it is the hope of NCLC that the time each client spends with staff and volunteers will be favorable and hopeful to them as well.

During this time of year, there is neither change in weather nor a holiday to celebrate; families don't get together to eat too much food and watch football. In fact, this season is dreaded by many and welcomed by few, and here at NCLC, tax season just doesn't fall between February and April.

NCLC's Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC), funded by the IRS, helps numerous people a year through legal representation over tax controversies and preventive legal education workshops informing audiences about their rights and responsibilities. NCLC's LITC staff work hard to analyze tax returns, paystubs, financial statements, and assets in order to reduce the stress of those individuals seeking tax assistance by figuring out their tax issue and educating them on how to avoid such issues in the future.

Caroline (name has been changed), a single mother of two, came to the clinic with a tax issue that had been lingering since 2003. She had not filed her returns since then, as her issue from that year had yet to be resolved. Because of this, the IRS had prepared a return for her and determined that she owed \$10,000 in taxes, penalties, and interest. Caroline was shocked by that figure, and she sought the help of NCLC. Dee Dee Gowan, our staff tax attorney sat down with Caroline to try and resolve the problem. After correcting 2003's tax liabilities involving earned income tax credit, head of household status, and dependents, Dee Dee determined that Caroline's tax liability for 2003 was \$0 AND she was eligible to receive \$10,000 back in overpaid taxes.

This is just one of many client success stories that NCLC is able to share, and as a volunteer, donor, grantor, family member or friend, NCLC wants you to also share in the joys of serving "the least of these", Matthew 25:40.

# SAVE THE DATE!

**What:** Justice for All Celebration

**Where:** Woodstock Country Club

**When:** April 29, 2010 at 6:30pm

The Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic will be holding its annual Justice for All Celebration to raise funds to support the Clinic in serving low-income and immigrant families in Central and Northeast Indiana. Funds raised at previous Justice for All Celebrations, have enabled NCLC to help thousands of clients, including a mother find and reclaim her internationally abducted children, a military father save his home for his family while he fought over seas, and a journalist in asylum proceedings so that she wouldn't be sent back to her country where she would be met with immediate capture and death.

The Justice for All event will feature dinner, drinks, a testimony from one of NCLC's clients, and keynote speaker Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller. Attorney General Zoeller is a native of New Albany, IN, and graduated from IU Maurer School of Law in Bloomington. He was



awarded the Sagamore of Wabash award in 1988 for his work with Senator Quayle. He has also served as the president and director of the World Trade Center of Indiana.

Please mark your calendars for this upcoming event. Tickets will be \$125 a person, online registration

preferred. For more information regarding sponsorship opportunities and to register, please visit our website:

[www.nclegalclinic.org](http://www.nclegalclinic.org)

**What:** Silent Auction

**Where:** NCLC Indianapolis Office

**When:** August 27, 2010 at 5:00pm

NCLC is pleased to announce its 2nd annual Silent Auction! There will be exciting auction items from local artists and businesses sure to tempt any buyer. Whether it is a gift for yourself or someone you love, you can give with the assurance that all proceeds go towards clinic programs.



*Serigraph by Noel McClain [mcclaindesigns.com](http://mcclaindesigns.com)*

As many of you know, last July NCLC hosted its first Silent Auction in conjunction with the grand opening of its newly renovated main office. Community partners, volunteers, family and friends came out in great numbers to support NCLC's mission. NCLC would like to thank those that attended and the generous businesses and individuals alike who donated items for auction. Items ranged from handmade wearable art and art work, to family fun night packages, and vacations - many of which resulted in a bidding frenzy.

NCLC's guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and a 15 year commemorative slideshow as they strolled from one auction item to the next. Staff members were also on hand to offer tours of the new office space and talk about each department, allowing NCLC guests to become better acquainted with the names and faces of the staff team.

So come join NCLC staff and supporters for another fun night of socializing and fundraising. We hope to see you there!

# GET INVOLVED

Without the constant dedication and hard work of volunteers, NCLC would not have been able to serve the 12,737 families that we helped in 2009. Last year, 112 volunteers donated over 10,500 hours to NCLC. There are always plenty of volunteer opportunities available and we would love to have you serve along side us!

**Prayer Ministry:** We are currently looking to expand our prayer ministry and would love to have your help! NCLC currently has ten different intake sites in Indianapolis and one in Fort Wayne, where clients come to meet with an attorney for the first time. Our prayer ministry allows clients a chance to pray with someone before they meet with an attorney. Many clients come to intake burdened, stressed, and in desperate need of someone who will simply listen. If you have a heart for those in tough situations and would like a chance to pray with some of our clients, this opportunity to serve may be a great fit. We are also in great need of prayer partners who speak Spanish and would be willing to pray with our Spanish speaking clients.

**General:** We are always in need of those individuals who would be willing to help NCLC staff with filing, organizing, networking and various other tasks that are crucial to the functioning of NCLC.

**Pro Bono Case Referral:** We are always looking for volunteer attorneys to take pro bono cases for us. All volunteer referrals are first reviewed by our staff attorneys to ensure quality case referrals. NCLC's Volunteer Coordinator can refer you a case in an area of law that you specify, and if necessary, NCLC attorneys can mentor you through the process as well.



**Intake:** Intakes, NCLC's walk-in clinic sites, take place at various locations and times all over the Indianapolis area and surrounding counties, as well as in Fort Wayne. We are in need of volunteer attorneys who can meet with individuals who come to intake seeking legal help, and volunteer Spanish interpreters who can translate. Volunteer attorneys and translators usually commit to volunteering at the same intake each month (e.g., the first Monday of the month), and each intake lasts about two hours.

**Preventative Legal Education:** NCLC does regular outreach to refugees, students at inner city schools, and to individuals at other social service agencies in the way of preventative legal education. Volunteer attorneys help us by volunteering their time to speak at a preventative legal education event. These events include: Basic Traffic Laws in the U.S., The U.S. Legal System, Human Trafficking, and Financial Literacy.

If you are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities, please email our VISTA Volunteer Coordinator Angela Pandoli at [apandoli@nclegalclinic.org](mailto:apandoli@nclegalclinic.org) or call our office at 317.429.4131 for opportunities at our Indianapolis office. If you would like to volunteer in Fort Wayne, please email our VISTA Fort Wayne Development Associate Amy Skelton at [askelton@nclegalclinic.org](mailto:askelton@nclegalclinic.org) or call 260.456.8969 ext. 311.

\*All of our volunteer attorneys are covered under our malpractice insurance.

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## Want To Get Involved But Don't Have The Time?

The second largest need at NCLC besides volunteers is financial support. As more and more people are seeking our services, NCLC must expand its staff team, office space, and equipment in order to efficiently and holistically serve those in need.

Go online to give a secure donation at [www.nclegalclinic.org](http://www.nclegalclinic.org) or mail one in the enclosed envelope. Also, sign up at [iGive.com](http://iGive.com) and select NCLC as your contributing organization.

We Truly Appreciate Your Support!