



JOEL K. B. WINFUL: PROFILE OF A RECENTLY APPOINTED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN THE POVERTY LAW COMMUNITY

Interview by Patricia Pap, Executive Director, Management Information Exchange

Note from the Journal Committee: Many legal aid directors have been lawyers for over thirty years. If our organizations are like other nonprofits, many of these executive directors will consider leaving in the next five years. This suggests a growing number of new executive directors are being selected by boards of legal aid programs and that many of them represent the next generation of legal aid leaders. We at the MIE Journal are introducing a new feature profiling new poverty law directors. If you know of a new executive director whom we should contact for this feature, please email jmay@aarp.org.

Joel K. B. Winful, Attorney & Chief Executive Officer,¹ Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas



MIE Journal: Why did you decide to make the commitment to become CEO of Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas?

Joel Winful: Immediately prior to becoming CEO, I had served for the previous two years as the Chair of the Board of Directors of Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas (LANWT). While I was board chair during 2012, the Executive Director and Deputy Director left the organization; then after an interim Executive Director and interim Deputy Director were appointed, the Chief Financial Officer resigned unexpectedly. After the end of my term as Board Chair, in January 2013, I resigned from the Board so that I could focus on my law practice. LANWT had not received many suitable applicants for the ED position, and since I had a great deal of familiarity with the issues confronting the organization as well as a great deal of historical background information, the Board approached me to consider the ED position. My wife and I discussed it and jointly realized that if a person could get paid to do something

that they would do or had been doing for free, because they cared about it, it would probably be the most ideal and rewarding job that a person could have. I agreed to take the job as ED and have found it very challenging but also very fulfilling.

MIE: Describe your legal aid background. What inspired you to make legal aid your career?

Joel Winful: During law school I had a strong desire to do public interest work. I was in the inaugural class of law students to receive a John J. Curtin, Jr. Fellowship awarded by the American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness and Poverty. The fellowship provided a stipend for three law students across the U.S. to be able to work at a legal aid provider addressing housing and homelessness issues within the poverty population. Thereafter, I served as the law student member of the Board of Directors of the Texas Young Lawyer's Association (TYLA) during my 3L year. The TYLA Board was a dedicated group of young lawyers that had a heart for serving low income people and helping to provide greater access to our justice system. The TYLA Board members inspired me and helped teach me that all attorneys had a duty to provide service to others as a part of our profession. I spent the majority of my legal career as an Assistant District Attorney, a public servant, making much less money than many of my law school peers. So, while I wasn't employed at a legal aid organization, I was pursuing a parallel career path of putting service to my community above financial gain as a motivating factor in my career. By 2013, I had served on the Board of Directors of LANWT and its predecessor organization, Legal Services of North Texas for fourteen consecutive years. My years on the Board of Directors of LANWT had made it extremely clear to me how inspirational and important the mission of legal aid is. When I decided to make it my career, I felt like I was answering a calling to serve in an area that I cared deeply about.

MIE: What are the three main challenges you faced on day one as the new ED of LANWT?

Joel Winful: First, our collective bargaining negotiations with the labor union had bogged down under the interim management, so I joined management's bargaining team to help jumpstart the process. Secondly, the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) Office of Compliance and Enforcement was coming to LANWT for a week-long program visit the very next week, which would be my second week on the job, so we had to finish preparations for the LSC visit. Thirdly, Congress was at a federal budget impasse so sequestration of federal funding was being implemented for the first time in history, forcing us to immediately cut our budget projections by 5%. Yes, it was a very challenging first week on the job in March 2013.

MIE: Did you implement or initiate any major changes in your organization after becoming ED? How did you overcome any obstacles in doing so?

Joel Winful: During my first six months on the job, I was very involved in helping to lead Management's bargaining team in negotiating our new collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The economic forecast was somewhat gloomy at the beginning of 2013, and we needed concessions from the Union in order to avoid implementing layoffs of staff. Management and the Union were able to reach agreement on concessions on healthcare coverage costs, implementation of a pay freeze, and a pension reduction as part of the 2013 CBA negotiations. The way we were able to overcome the critical differences between Management and Union positions and get a deal done was that Management agreed to language indicating that if funding was restored or increased beyond an agreed upon level, Management would restore the step increases and pension if possible. Getting to "yes" in our negotiations required give and take. We had to let the Union know that if they shared in the sacrifice in bad times that they would share in the prosperity in good times. In 2014, when our overall funding and budget had increased, Management implemented step increases for 2014 and fully restored the pension contributions to normal levels for 2014. Also in 2014, Management was able to substantially raise the salary scale for all of our bargaining unit-eligible employees. Management went above and beyond in honoring our commitment to restore benefits and salary for our bargaining unit-eligible staff. We

hope the higher pay scale will help attract and retain good employees. Also, I wanted to show that Management really cares about the organization and respects the work our staff does for LANWT and for our client population. I am hopeful that demonstrating my commitment in this way helps to build trust in Management, so that it becomes easier to move initiatives forward in the future, based on my track record.

MIE: You attended the MIE New Executive Director Training. Was there any one thing at the training that you can point to as a useful nugget that has helped you in your position? Have you been able to apply lessons you learned there?

Joel Winful: The MIE New Executive Director Training was very helpful. One of the most important things that I learned is that it is critically important whom you hire into your program, especially with regard to managers and staff attorneys. Therefore, you should take the hiring of critical positions very seriously and try to bring in people with a passion for the work that you do. I have had numerous opportunities to apply this hiring lesson as we have had to replace Managing Attorneys for six of our fifteen branch offices since 2013. However, we took a slow and deliberate approach to each hire, and I honestly feel that each of the new hires has been a great addition to our management team.

MIE: Now that you have a number of months under your belt, what advice do you have to emerging legal aid leaders who are considering becoming an ED of a legal aid organization?

Joel Winful: Once you become ED, don't try to change everything at once. You may become aware of several things that you think need changing or tweaking as soon you arrive. However, as a new leader, it works best if you take "baby steps" if possible. Many people are resistant to change in general, especially the longer tenured staff at an organization. Too much change implemented at once, especially at the very beginning of a management transition can be too much of a "shock to the system" for the staff of your organization to absorb. I have found that change is often more successful if it is implemented incrementally. That approach allows the staff to have a chance to get used to one change, and hopefully see that the change was best for the organization, before dealing with the next change.

© JOEL WINFUL: NEW-TO-YOU
Continued from page 15

MIE: Similar question: What would you tell a law student considering a career in legal aid?

Joel Winful: As a newly minted legal aid lawyer, you can learn a lot about litigation very early and you will be able to begin helping people very quickly. You will be able to see and appreciate the impact of your work on the lives of the clients that we serve. If you embark on this career path, you can truly make a difference on an individual level and hopefully on a systemic level as well. It is very challenging but very rewarding work. Whether you stay for two years, five years or twenty years, it will definitely be a life changing experience.

MIE: Tell us a little about your program: What does it do and what is unique about it compared to similarly situated programs?

Joel Winful: LANWT has a rather unique partnership with the Dallas Bar Association (DBA). In 2014, the joint fundraising campaign between the DBA and LANWT raised over \$1.1 million from the Dallas legal community. The goodwill that is generated through attorney involvement in our jointly run pro bono initiative, the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program (DVAP), has allowed our joint fundraising campaign to flourish over the years. Pro bono attorney involvement with our clients and cases is what has fueled the desire of the local legal community to contribute financially to our mission over the years. I think that other legal aid programs could benefit from cultivating similar partnerships with their local bar associations.

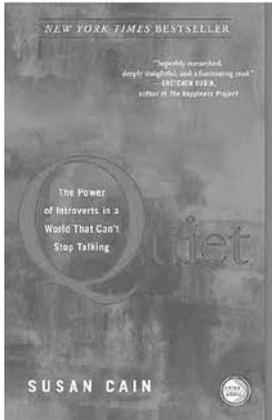
law firm in Dallas, in the areas of taxation, bankruptcy, civil litigation, and representation of governmental entities. Before being hired as CEO of LANWT in 2013, Joel was a member of the LANWT Board of Directors and its predecessor program, Legal Services of North Texas for fourteen years, including serving as Board Chair in 2011 and 2012. Joel served several years on the Dallas Bar Association's Board of Directors, and served as Secretary-Treasurer of the DBA in 2007. Joel was the recipient of the Dallas Bar Association's Outstanding Minority Bar Leader Award in both 2001 and 2002. Joel also served in 2003 as President of the J.L. Turner Legal Association, the African-American Bar Association of Dallas, Texas.

Joel and his wife Terilyn have three daughters: Chandler (five years old) and twins, Mallory and Megan (both three years old). Joel may be reached at winfulj@lanwt.org.

As a newly minted legal aid lawyer, you can learn a lot about litigation very early and you will be able to begin helping people very quickly. You will be able to see and appreciate the impact of your work on the lives of the clients that we serve.

1 In March 2013, the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas (LANWT) hired Joel Winful as its new CEO. LANWT has provided free legal services to low-income members of the North and West Texas community since 1951. LANWT, with its headquarters in Fort Worth, serves 144 counties from fifteen offices.

Joel received his BA in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; his Juris Doctorate degree from Southern Methodist University School of Law; and has practiced law in Texas since 1996. Joel spent over a decade as an Assistant District Attorney for the Dallas County District Attorney's Office in its Civil Division, focusing on civil litigation as well as contracts and various transactional matters in defense of Dallas County. Thereafter, he worked for a



QUIET: THE POWER OF INTROVERTS IN A WORLD THAT CAN'T STOP TALKING BY SUSAN CAIN

(Broadway, Paperback, 2014, 352 pages, \$16)

Reviewed by Sharon Browning, *JUST Listening*¹

What do Albert Einstein, W.B. Yeats, Emily Dickinson, Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss), Eleanor Roosevelt, Gandhi, Rosa Parks, and Warren Buffet have in common? They're all introverts, as are somewhere between 30 and 50 % of your staff and colleagues. In all likelihood, as an adaptive response to a culture that has generated and popularized "The Extrovert Ideal," many of them are pretending to be extroverts. Chances are high that they are an untapped resource whose gifts and potential contributions are routinely overlooked and undervalued.



In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, Susan Cain painstakingly documents the differences between extroverts and introverts, and frankly discusses what is lost by our failure to recognize and empower the introverts among us. While reading this book, it occurred to me more than once that perhaps we are mired in the seemingly intractable

muck of poverty and gross inequality in part because we only rarely hear alternative, deeply held viewpoints buried in the minds and hearts of introverts. Beautifully written and researched, *Quiet* is a surprising page-turner, filled with meticulous research, stories, mini-diagnostics and assessments, and invaluable advice for how to recognize and empower introverts.

What exactly is an introvert? Experts differ, but Cain uses the term broadly, as conceptualized in Western culture, incorporating insights from multiple disciplines and researchers. Rather than a strict definition, she describes the most common characteristics of the type: Introverts are more likely than extroverts to dislike conflict, relish deep conversations, prefer smaller social groups, and enjoy empowering others. They are risk-averse, focused and deliberative thinkers, persistent, and contrary to the stereotype, often possess enviable social skills; they are not necessarily shy: quiet and shy are not the same thing.

Introverts favor working alone and need "restorative niches" — places and times where they can recharge and return to themselves. They prefer less stimulating environments, work slowly and deliberately, would rather listen than speak, and think before they speak. As a popular adage has it: "If you don't know what an extrovert is thinking, you aren't listening. If you don't know what an introvert is thinking, you haven't asked."

Quiet is a must-read for managers. Cain offers detailed and insightful advice on how to work effectively with introverts. Ranging from tips for effective communication to suggestions for congenial office space, Cain's guidance is indispensable for anyone trying to understand and accommodate difference in the work force. A sampling:

- The introvert's ideal work environment? Plenty of privacy and personal space, with nonjudgmental, informal social time with co-workers. The now-popular open work spaces are an introvert's

In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, Susan Cain painstakingly documents the differences between extroverts and introverts, and frankly discusses what is lost by our failure to recognize and empower the introverts among us.

nightmare and impair their concentration and productivity.

- Introverts' strengths are an invaluable asset: they can help you "think deeply, strategize, solve complex problems, and spot canaries in your coal mine." Introverts are more likely than extroverts to provide reliable perspective and advice during crises.
- Introverts will not appreciate office birthday lunches and staff "team building" retreats. They would rather get to know people one on one or in small groups.
- To take greater advantage of introverts' thinking, innovation, and creativity, incorporate reflection into decision making. Don't ask introverts to brainstorm unless you first provide reflection time.²
- Both extroverts and introverts make good leaders, but for different types of people. Extroverts tend to dominate social situations, and shine when managing passive individuals. Introverts, on the other hand, listen to others and are more likely to hear and implement the ideas of others, and then motivate them to be proactive. They are more effective than extroverts when leading initiative-takers.

Cain provides a balanced view of the gifts of extroverts as well; she emphasizes the need to value and empower both personality types and for both to learn skills necessary to interact effectively with everyone. Extroverts, though, have been preferentially valued, their virtues taught in our schools, extolled and celebrated in our private and personal lives. Our cultural notion of an effective and powerful leader is, after all, the iconic extrovert: forceful, dynamic, articulate at all times, quick to respond, willing to take risks. It is time, she suggests, to empower The Quiet, many of whom hold undiscovered treasures of great value within.

As Cain points out, if you are not an introvert, then you are certainly working with, parenting, or partnered with one. She provides useful guidelines for raising introverted children, advice on how to navigate introvert-extrovert relationships, and an important cross-cultural perspective, citing the strong preference for more introverted traits in Asian and other cultures.

Introverts, you will love this book and perhaps find a new appreciation for your way of being in the world. Extroverts, you will gain new insights about and understanding of nearly 50% of the population who live largely under your social radar. For both, this is a gem of a book, and sure to alter how you interact with people you encounter every day.

Now more than ever, at this critical juncture in the pursuit of justice for all, we need to have all voices heard. Perhaps the innovative idea that will blow wide the doors of justice is gestating this very minute inside that person who never speaks at meetings, not because she has nothing to say, but because she is never given the chance. Ask. Listen. Empower. Sometimes, be quiet.

- 1 Sharon Browning, Esq., shepherds JUST Listening, a social enterprise fostering personal and social change and transformation through the practice and teaching of conscious, intentional, compassionate, and non-judgmental listening and communication skills. Sharon is an attorney and former Executive Director of Philadelphia VIP, pro bono legal services in Philadelphia. She facilitates training workshops, staff retreats, and "difficult" conversations for lawyers, mediators, healthcare professionals, social services workers, and educators, focusing primarily on those working with marginalized individuals and groups. She also does spiritual accompaniment work, and facilitates retreats and workshops on a variety of topics. For more information, see www.justlistening.net.
- 2 It is doubtful that brainstorming without reflection is a productive exercise for ANY personality type. Read Jonah Lehrer's informative article "Groupthink: The Brainstorming Myth" in the January 30, 2012 *New Yorker*.



What Good is Data or Using Data for Good

*By Colleen M. Cotter, Executive Director¹
The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland*

2014 was the year of data for The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. We have long discussed taking our use of data to a higher level. A Legal Services Corpora-



tion Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) grant provided us with the resources and the focus required to do that. In this article I will describe our project from an organizational/strategic perspective. To get the full picture of this project you will also need to read the article which follows in this *Journal* by

Rachel Perry and Brian Mikelbank which describes the actual data analysis.

This was a joint project between Cleveland Legal Aid and Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA). We worked closely throughout the project to make our decisions, narrow down the data focus and analysis and develop data tools. This article, however, focuses primarily on the Cleveland Legal Aid part of the story.²

Our Goal

Our original goal for this project was very broad and, to be honest, pretty vague. I will admit that I find data in itself interesting. But, we didn't set about this project to examine data just for the sake of it. We wanted to figure out how data could help us become more efficient and more effective. We are building an organizational culture in which we regularly assess what we are doing, to make sure that we use every staff hour most effectively for our clients. Because we must turn away more than half the people who come to us, we need to make sure that we are effective in what we do for our clients. Meaningful data analysis is one set of tools that can help us with that assessment.

But with that broad, noble goal in mind and now the money, where to go next? We knew that we wanted to better use the data we capture in our case management system. While reporting to funders is one important use of our data, we wanted to lessen the focus on

funder needs and increase the focus on our own strategic uses of data to better serve clients. We also wanted to start using externally available data more regularly than just in our legal needs assessment every few years. At the end of this process, we wanted to have developed some data analyses that would be meaningful to our staff and that the staff would want to use on a regular basis, and that could be made easily accessible to them. It took us a few months to decide on our focus.

Our Team

MLSA is a very different organization than Cleveland Legal Aid: rural v. urban; different client demographics; different sized organizations; and different case management systems (Pika v. Legal Server). And, Cleveland had more data experience while MLSA had more technology expertise. But, we are both organizations that strive to be the best we can be, and we shared the view that using data at a higher level could help us achieve that goal.

After finding the right partner organization for this project, we next went in search of outside expertise. Rachel Perry, our Research and Data Analyst³ was an important leader of this project, but we needed additional expertise. Through this project we wanted to stretch ourselves, to move beyond what we had been doing. We entered into a contract with the Northeast Ohio Data Collaborative (NEODC). NEODC brought to us a nonprofit think tank (Center for Community Solutions) with data analysis and visualization expertise.

Also part of the NEODC is the Cleveland State University (CSU) Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs. After some exploration of the resources from CSU, we settled primarily on a geographer and a couple of students. The geographer, Professor Brian Mikelbank, worked closely with us throughout this project. He came to understand our culture and our data, and to provide an outside perspective and expertise. CSU also brought us students. One student, Kacey

Cummings, transitioned from a part-time student working on the project to taking a position on staff for one year between undergrad and graduate school. Her level of knowledge of Excel was critical to this project.

It was, however, important from the beginning that this project be grounded in Legal Aid so that it was not just academically interesting, but practically useful to us. To achieve that goal, the team was led by myself, our Deputy Director for Advocacy Tom Mlakar, and our Managing Attorney for Community Engagement Anne Sweeney. MLSA also pulled together a senior leadership team to lead their part of the project. The Cleveland data team worked with both MLSA and Cleveland Legal Aid throughout the project.

We also put together an advisory group of other legal aids from around the country who are doing work with data, so that we could obtain their advice and input.⁴ Smart people always make a product better, plus we wanted to make sure that what we did would be valuable to others.

Finally, as you will see later, we pulled in most of the Cleveland Legal Aid staff for key parts of the project. Their level of engagement is the best evidence of the project's success.

Data Analysis — To What End?

At the start of the process, our data team dove into our data. We wanted to make sure that the data was reliable. We also wanted them to really understand how and why we gather the data. They spent a lot of time in this analysis phase and made some recommendations about changes we could make to our case management system and our data gathering processes to help improve our data reliability.

Once they completed this assessment of our data, they recommended several different avenues for our data analysis. But honestly they all seemed very complex to me, the non-data person. We needed to focus on an area that would help us in our work. We ended where we probably should have begun — with our strategic plan.

One of the goals of our strategic plan is to develop a plan to address the needs of particularly vulnerable populations. We wanted to focus on a few populations to expand our outreach, community education, and advocacy. But we first had to decide which populations we would focus on. Clearly, data analysis – both internal and external – had to be an important component to that decision-making process. It was a perfect match. The data analysis that resulted from this project would help us make hard decisions about using our limited

resources. And, we would establish committees focused on vulnerable populations which would be primed to continue to use the data analysis in the future to help guide and support the committees' work.

Using the Data

Now we really got rolling. We started with a list of several dozen vulnerable populations, but narrowed that list to eight populations with whom Cleveland Legal Aid had the most experience and current initiatives: African Americans, Hispanics, veterans, seniors, persons with disabilities, persons who were formerly incarcerated, persons with limited English proficiency, and children. We needed to pare this number down to a manageable three or four on which we would give special focus in the next few years. MLSA also devised its initial list. We would use the same data analysis tools for their populations, helping them focus in on just a few. MLSA's initial list was: seniors, rural, domestic violence survivors, Native Americans, unemployed, and veterans.

We worked closely with our data experts. They helped us determine what data to examine and in what format. They shared many types of charts, graphs and maps. They were all interesting, but it became clear that some of the data analysis was more accessible to non-data people than others, and some provided more meaningful information for us. During this phase of our project we also sought input from our Legal Aid Advisory Group. Their feedback was invaluable. They helped us settle on a set of graphs, charts and maps that the data experts developed for each population.⁵ The data analysis helped us understand the number of each of the populations in our communities, the numbers we were serving, and what we were doing for each population.⁶

By this time, the team working closely with the data

We wanted to figure out how data could help us become more efficient and more effective. We are building an organizational culture in which we regularly assess what we are doing, to make sure that we use every staff hour most effectively for our clients.

experts was totally sold on the value of this project. Then came the real test. We invited the entire staff to participate in a series of meetings. The first meeting was a presentation of the data. This allowed staff members to ask questions to better understand the data, and to challenge the data when it conflicted with their own experiences. At the end of that presentation it was clear to everyone that the data was legitimate and useful.

At the subsequent meetings, we applied the decision-making criteria set out in our strategic plan. We had agreed that priorities were and will continue to be established by taking into account:

1. The number of clients who need our services
2. Potential benefit if we provide the service (#, type, degree)
3. Potential harm if we don't provide the service (#, type, degree)
4. Availability of alternative effective quality program and service providers
5. Expertise and capacity of staff and volunteers
6. Ability to produce outcomes and long-term impact for clients and low income communities
7. Availability of resources to cover delivery of service
8. Ability to leverage work we are already doing for clients and low income communities

We methodically discussed each of these eight decision-making criteria for each of the eight vulnerable populations. Many, but not all, of these criteria are grounded in data. Using this framework forced us to come back to the data and to make decisions that are grounded in, although not controlled by, the data. In some situations, the data confirmed what we knew from our experiences. In others, it surprised and challenged us to examine our assumptions and think harder about the communities we serve.

During this process, it became apparent that the data had become part of the fabric of the conversation. Staff members would frequently reference back to the maps and graphs to illustrate or support their position.

Results of the Process

At the conclusion of the process we decided to establish staff committees focused on four of the eight populations: African Americans, persons with disabilities, persons who were formerly incarcerated, and persons with limited English proficiency. I am confident that if we had tried to achieve that goal of our strategic plan without the data provided through this project, our conversations would not have been nearly as productive, and our decisions would have

been based much more on individual experiences and impressions than on the realities of the community. This data did not answer the strategic questions for us, but the data kept us grounded.

As a result of this process, a number of the Cleveland Legal Aid staff caught the data bug. A survey of the staff revealed that most staff believe it will be helpful to have the data graphs and maps refreshed every year or two. Our new vulnerable population committees are exploring what additional data analysis will be useful in their plan development, and in their work with and for those communities on which they are focused.

Dashboard

One valuable tool for the vulnerable population committees will be our new Dashboard, which we developed as part of this project. The Dashboard is an interactive spreadsheet that presents live case data from various angles in very accessible charts. Having gotten the staff interested in using data more, this dashboard makes the data from our case management system accessible in a whole new way.⁷

The Dashboard has three sections: case volume data, client data, and outcomes. The Dashboard displays different data, pie charts and trend graphs based on the choices made from a series of drop down menus and buttons. For example, the case volume data can be displayed based on case staffing (volunteer and staff), total intakes (served and not served), cases handled (cases closed and remaining open), and level of service. This data can be displayed for different years and case type. The client data can be displayed based on various demographics and case types, and outcomes can also be displayed based on different case types.

A staff member can choose to look at all the intakes for foreclosure, for example, or all the cases served by volunteers, or the demographic breakdown of clients with education cases. The trend graphs, tables and pie charts update automatically based on the button or drop down option chosen. With this Dashboard, it's easy to see where we have been and get a handle on where we are going. The Dashboard will be a critical tool for managers and for the vulnerable population committees.

Sustainability and Lessons Learned

We are determined to ensure that our work with data continues beyond this project. I am confident we have achieved that because of a number of factors and because of the lessons we have learned, which include:

- We learned that while there are many lessons to be

© WHAT GOOD IS DATA?
Continued from page 35

learned from our data, first we need to be diligent about making sure we understand what it means and that we are consistent in recording it.

- Partnering with MLSA helped us look beyond ourselves.
- We did not need to, nor did we, rely on the data analysis and presentation our case management system could provide us. We just had to get the data out of our system and use other, more robust tools for analysis.
- We have developed great relationships with data experts to whom we can turn in the future for small or big analysis projects. We could not have done this without them, and working with them has been remarkably easy.
- We have a Research and Data Analyst on staff. She helps us understand our data on a daily basis, and she can bridge the gap between lawyers and data experts, since we so often do not speak the same language.
- We established a relationship with a partner organization that has expertise in data analysis and in data visualization.
- We did not have to spend a lot on fancy data analysis software for this project. We purchased Arc GIS for mapping at a very low nonprofit price. The Dashboard uses Access and Excel, software everyone already has in the Microsoft Office Suite.
- We engaged our staff throughout this process. We were able to provide answers to the questions they presented, so they have experienced data analysis

as a helpful tool in their work. We made it clear that while data could not answer all our questions, it does provide some very important insight, if we know how to use it.

- 1 Colleen M. Cotter is the Executive Director of The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. She was an English and History major in college, so has no formal data training, but that never stopped her before. She has been ED at Cleveland Legal Aid since 2005, and previously worked at Indiana Legal Services and Pine Tree Legal Assistance and as a consultant. She received her BA from University of Notre Dame and her JD from Indiana University – Bloomington. Colleen may be reached at cmcotter@lasclv.org.
- 2 Alison Paul, Executive Director of Montana Legal Services Association, and Rachel Perry of Strategic Data Analytics provided valuable input for this article.
- 3 At the beginning of this project, Rachel Perry was on the Cleveland Legal Aid staff. During this project she left to start her own firm, Strategic Data Analytics. She remained a critical part of the team for this project. We now have a new Research and Data Analyst on staff.
- 4 The legal aid advisory team consisted of: Atlanta Legal Aid Society; Northwest Justice Project; Prairie State Legal Services; and Utah Legal Services.
- 5 Because of various data challenges, not all of the maps, charts and graphs were available for every population. For more about this, see the accompanying article.
- 6 The accompanying article describes in more detail the type of analyses used.
- 7 The Dashboard is completed for Cleveland Legal Aid, pulling data from Pika. It is in process for MLSA, pulling data from Legal Server.

At the conclusion of the process we decided to establish staff committees focused on four of the eight populations: African Americans, persons with disabilities, persons who were formerly incarcerated, and persons with limited English proficiency.
