



Jack Ward

## FUNDRAISING TO INCREASE ACCESS TO JUSTICE: OUR WORK OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS AND A TRIBUTE TO JACK WARD

By Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant to MIE

At the recent MIE Fundraising Conference, we paid tribute to Jack Ward, who is retiring after thirty-one years raising funds for Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) and serving the broader legal aid fundraising community as a mentor, trainer and role model. As part of this tribute, we looked at how funding for legal aid had grown during that time period, spotlighting the role that the Fundraising Project, MIE, early legal aid leaders, and current and past development staff in programs around the country have played in ensuring the survival of access to justice in the United States.

The story of the changes in funding for legal aid over the years belongs to every legal aid leader — staff and volunteer — who has worked hard to develop a culture of giving in their program and taken positive steps to increase and diversify their funding. This means most of you reading this article plus many others around the country. Legal aid would not exist today were it not for increases in funding from a wide variety of sources, and these increases have only been obtained because of your active commitment to fundraising.

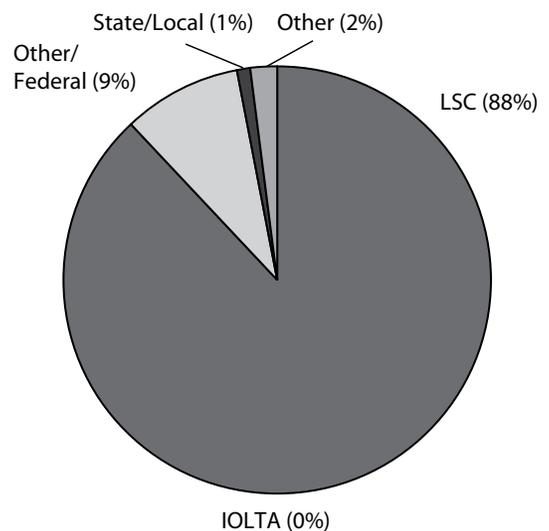
### A Brief History of Legal Aid Funding

Some of us remember legal aid in 1980. At that time, 88 percent of our funding came from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), and most legal aid leaders believed that LSC would remain a consistently high percentage of our funding. Even more importantly, when we added in the “Other Federal” funding, the total federal funding percentage was 95 percent. Funding for civil legal aid in the United States was a federal commitment.

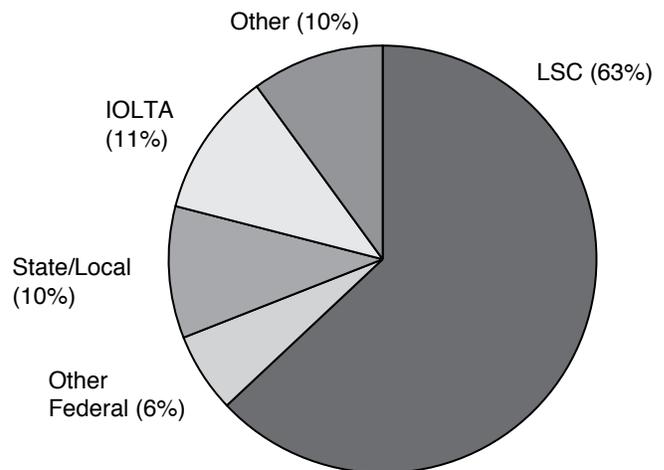
Between 1980 and 1990, LSC funding was slashed and legal aid was threatened with extinction. We began to get the idea that we had to change our thinking about our sources of revenue and resource development, or civil legal aid was not going to survive.

By 1990, the LSC percentage had fallen to 63 percent, primarily because of the addition of more

Legal Aid Funding, 1980



Legal Aid Funding, 1990



funding from a variety of other sources. (The total received from LSC in 1990 was up just 6 percent from 1980, not adjusted for inflation.) IOLTA had been identified and existed in most states, and state and private funding were on the rise. But this other fundraising was

© FUNDRAISING TO INCREASE ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
*Continued from page 9*

scattered around the country, and those of us who were doing it were working pretty much in isolation.

**The Birth of the Fundraising Project**

About this time, Steve Gottlieb, then and now the executive director of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, sent a letter to legal aid programs around the country, inviting us to get together to talk about this growing movement to increase revenue for legal aid from other sources, primarily private funding.

A bunch of us — I think maybe twenty-five people altogether — flew to Atlanta for the day and had this wonderful eye-opening experience. WE WERE NOT ALONE, and together there was so much more that could be accomplished!

We left that meeting having formed a steering committee of about eight people, including myself and several whose names are familiar because of their continued leadership in legal aid fundraising, including Steve Gottlieb, Jack Ward, and Dennis Dorgan.

We agreed that there needed to be a grassroots organization to provide training and support to what we hoped would be a growing number of legal aid fundraisers around the country. We held our first annual conference in 1991 and started trying to pull together a resource library.

It soon became clear to us that if we were to succeed, we needed some funding. We contacted the Ford Foundation, where a young program officer helped us obtain a grant that allowed us to really get our project off the ground. That program officer was

Mary McClymont, a name most of you recognize. Today, she continues her long-term dedication to the cause of access to justice as she leads numerous legal aid initiatives through her work as President of the Public Welfare Foundation.

Until 1998, the Fundraising Project was run with part-time staff out of the basement at the Atlanta Legal Aid Society. Then, the Project merged with MIE, providing it with a more stable and permanent home for this work so critical to the survival of civil legal aid. MIE provides training, technical assistance, consulting, listserv and other networking services, and a resource library.

**Legal Aid Funding Today**

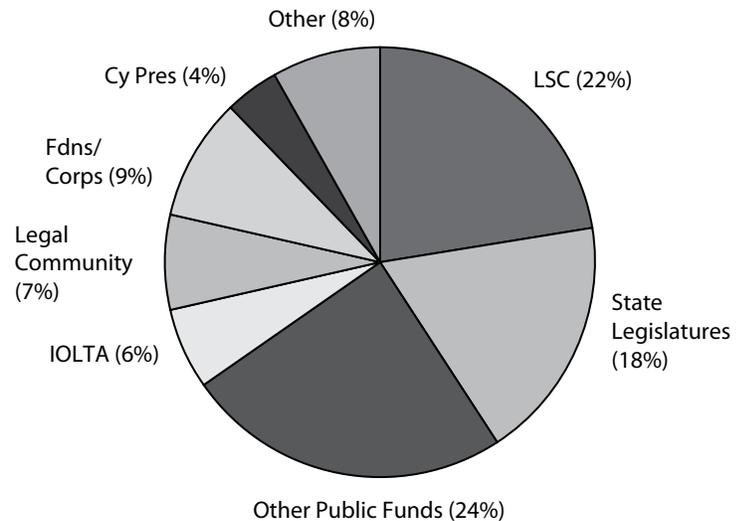
Fast forward to legal aid funding in 2012. We are raising \$1.334 billion, from a much more sophisticated and diversified funding base. Since 1980, we have moved from a primarily federally-funded system to a partnership that is about one-third federal, one-third state and local public funds, and one-third private contributions. We have achieved our success by mobilizing large numbers of volunteer leaders to join us in educating legislators, sharing information with philanthropic leaders, and engaging individual donors.

The \$1.334 billion being raised today beats inflation by about 42 percent. More impressively, if we take LSC (which is approximately the same dollar amount now as in 1980) out of the picture, we have gone from generating about \$38 million from a few sources in 1980 to over \$1 billion from multiple non-LSC federal sources, state legislatures, cities and counties, IOLTA,



*Jack in his major donor solicitation outfit!*

**Civil Legal Aid Funding by Source**



law firms, attorneys, judges and other individuals, foundations and corporations, cy pres, and United Ways.

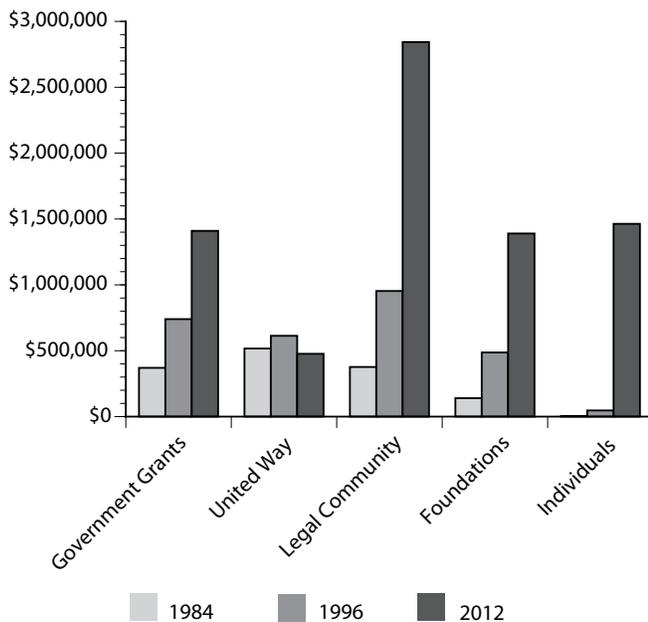
We have a long way to go to achieve equal access to justice, but we are making strides in the right direction. We — staff and volunteer leaders who are committed to raising funds for civil legal aid — are keeping legal aid alive in the United States.

### A Tribute to Jack Ward

Jack exemplifies the leadership qualities that have been needed to move civil legal aid on its path to more stable, diversified funding. First as the Director of Development, and then as Associate Director for Finance and Development, Jack led GBLS to a level of growth in private funding that has been an inspiration for many other programs over the last thirty years.

In the course of this progress, Jack has served as a role model and mentor to legions of legal aid fundraisers. He has shown us what is possible, if we make the decision to be tough, aggressive and committed for the long haul. GBLS has grown revenue from all sources, but private funding has increased particularly dramatically:

**Greater Boston Legal Services Revenue Growth by Source, 1984–2012**



### Key Steps in Achieving This Growth

- **The Right Leadership** — GBLS and Jack recognized the need to have executive directors committed to

raising funds. During his tenure, Jack mentored three high quality executive directors who became solid fundraisers, providing an environment that made major increases in revenue possible.

- **Development Director Stability** — In a profession where the average tenure of a development director is about eighteen months, it is almost unheard of for a program to retain the same highly qualified professional for over thirty years. Jack was fully committed to serving GBLS and legal aid, and the board and executive directors of GBLS recognized his value and supported him through the years.
- **Investment in Fundraising** — Over the years, GBLS, with Jack’s leadership, came to recognize the validity of the phrase we fundraisers hear over and over — you must spend money to make money. GBLS currently has a fundraising staff of five FTEs, and spends about \$670,000 annually. This investment yielded over \$6 million in private funding in 2012. (Feel free to use this example the next time you have a conversation with your executive director or board chair about the potential value of adding development staff!)
- **Strategic Diversification** — Over the years, GBLS has moved from raising private funds primarily from law firms to include a strong individual giving component. They added a mail appeal, then an associates’ drive. Board member giving became a priority. In 2010, they launched a very successful three-year campaign to generate major gifts from individuals, raising over \$2.5 million to preserve



McBurney presents Ward with award.

© FUNDRAISING TO INCREASE ACCESS TO JUSTICE  
*Continued from page 11*

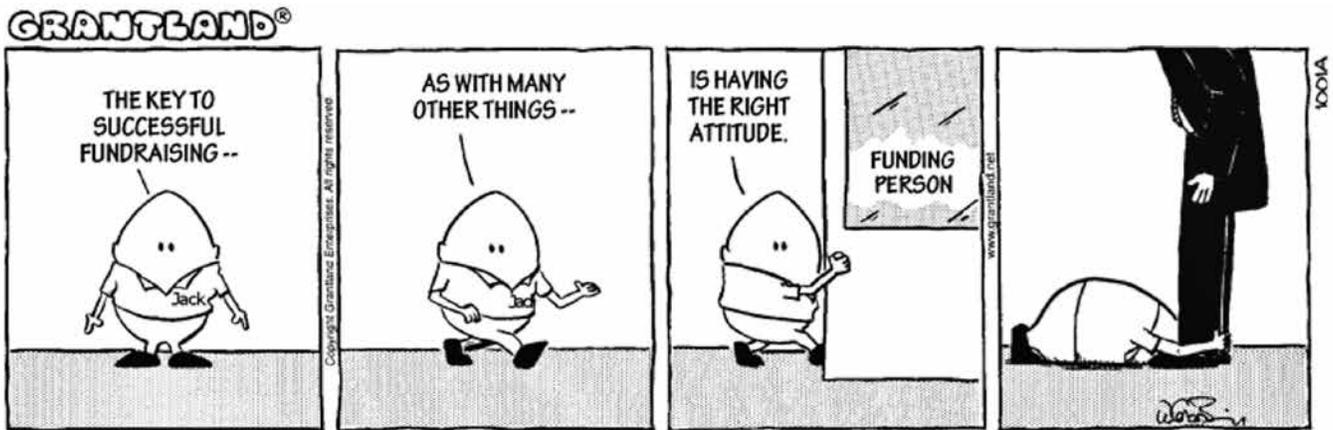
- individuals, raising over \$2.5 million to preserve eleven advocacy positions for three years.

While achieving these successes for his program, Jack has been a towering presence at the national level. He has been an organizer and trainer for all but perhaps three of our Fundraising Conferences over the past thirty years, helping make this the premier annual

event for legal aid fundraisers. He has counseled, trained, and mentored scores of legal aid fundraisers.

We hope that after a much needed and deserved break, he will be back working with us in some capacity — an active mentor emeritus, perhaps?!

We were happy to locate the cartoon below, which Grantland graciously allowed us to use (and which they personalized with the great t-shirt on our cartoon “Jack”) to create just the right tone for the plaque we presented to Jack:



### Board of Directors

Catherine Carr, Chair <i>Community Legal Services</i>	Charles Hey-Maestre <i>Puerto Rico Legal Services</i>
César Torres, Vice Chair <i>Northwest Justice Project</i>	Yvonne Maria Jimenez <i>Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County</i>
Michele Storms, Secretary <i>William H. Gates Public Services Law Scholarship Program</i>	Jan May <i>AARP/Legal Counsel for the Elderly</i>
Eric Mittelstadt, Treasurer <i>Utah Legal Services</i>	Linda Rexer <i>Michigan State Bar Foundation</i>
Mary Asbury <i>Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati</i>	Betty Balli Torres <i>Texas Access to Justice Foundation</i>
Jacquelynne Bowman <i>Greater Boston Legal Services</i>	Adrienne Worthy <i>Legal Aid of West Virginia</i>
Oxana Cardini <i>Legal Services of Greater Miami</i>	

### Journal Committee

Jan May, Chair <i>AARP/Legal Counsel for the Elderly</i>	Patrick McIntyre <i>Washington State Alliance for Equal Justice</i>
John Tobin <i>New Hampshire</i>	Elizabeth Wehner <i>Legal Aid of West Virginia</i>
Catherine Carr <i>Community Legal Services</i>	David Yoder <i>Legal Aid of East Tennessee</i>
M. Victor Geminiani <i>Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice</i>	Patricia Pap <i>Management Information Exchange</i>
Kimberly P. Jordan <i>The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law</i>	
Joann Lee <i>Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles</i>	
Aurora Martin <i>Columbia Legal Services</i>	

