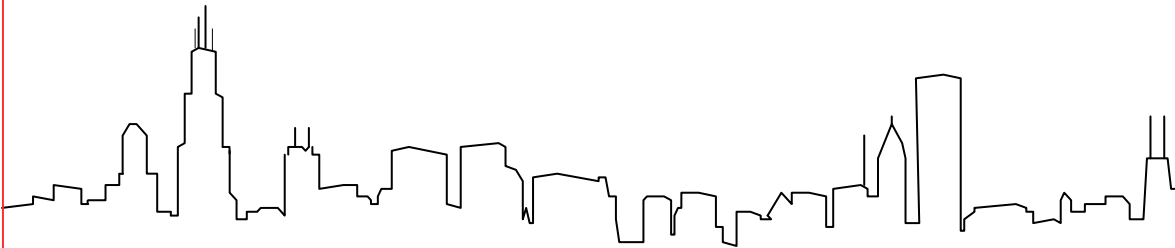




AIDS LEGAL COUNCIL of CHICAGO

Preserving, Promoting and Protecting the Rights of People with HIV



ANNUAL REPORT 2010

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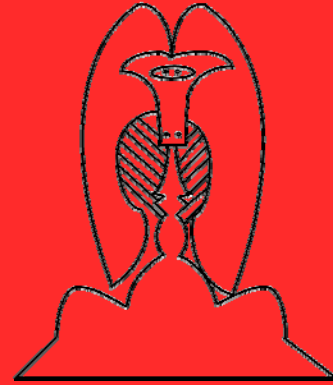
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AIDS LEGAL COUNCIL OF CHICAGO

The AIDS Legal Council of Chicago exists to preserve, promote and protect the legal rights of men, women and children in the metropolitan Chicago area living with HIV/AIDS. The Council provides direct legal services to people in need; educates consumers, service providers and the public about HIV-related legal issues; and advocates for social policies that ensure fair treatment of all people affected by HIV.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The AIDS Legal Council of Chicago stands for many things, but one of the most important is our flexibility.

As the demographics of the epidemic have changed, we've adjusted our priorities, expanded our outreach and developed new programs to reach those in greatest need. As laws have changed, we've been the first to figure out how those changes will affect our clients' lives. As the economy has shifted, we've anticipated clients' needs and responded with critical information, legal counseling and referrals.

This year, many of the major changes were for the better. The federal HIV immigration ban was finally lifted, meaning that foreign-

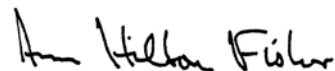
born individuals with HIV will no longer be unfairly kept from visiting family in the United States or adjusting their status. Health care reform finally passed, a first step towards closing the gap in access to health care between the insured and the uninsured. The Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program, a vital link to prescription medication for thousands of low-income people with HIV, escaped drastic cuts and will continue to provide life-saving drugs to those who need them the most.

But huge challenges remain, not only for those we serve, but for organizations like ours that depend on community support to survive. Continued weakness in the economy and cuts in funding have put significant pressure on

programs that work with the most vulnerable populations. While ALCC managed to end FY'10 on solid financial footing, the prospect of further cuts, particularly in foundation awards and government contracts, makes the future less certain.

Fortunately, ALCC has a wonderful Board of Directors that is committed to the financial health of the organization, as well as friends and donors who support our mission every day through their generous gifts and pro bono contributions of time and expertise. It is thanks to them that ALCC's dedicated staff can continue to provide critical and high quality legal services to hundreds of low-income individuals with HIV and their families every year.

On behalf of those clients, thank you again for believing in ALCC and the work that we do. We invite you to read our report and hope that it will shed some light on the AIDS Legal Council's accomplishments and challenges during the previous year. Of course, if you have any questions about the Council's work or simply want to learn more about how you can help us in our mission, please do not hesitate to call.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Hilton Fisher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Hilton Fisher, Esq.
Executive Director



CLIENT SERVICES

BILLY

It was nine years ago when we met Billy, age one, and his mother Catherine, age 34. Catherine was dying of AIDS and wanted to make arrangements to have her mother designated as Billy's guardian. ALCC attorney Linella Gavin met Catherine at the hospital to begin the process and suggested that she should have another person in mind as well, in case her mother could not care for Billy. She took our advice, and designated her sister, Mary.

Although Catherine rallied after we first met her, she died six months later. Her mother was appointed Billy's guardian and her sister was designated as the stand-by guardian.

Billy did well in his grandparents' loving care. But then, last year, in the space of a few short months, both grandparents

died. At age eight, Billy had lost both his mother and his grandparents. By this time, Catherine's sister Mary had moved to Minnesota, which meant that Billy would have to move there to live with her. ALCC Family Options attorney Colleen Boraca worked with Mary to find her an attorney at the Minnesota AIDS Project who would help her establish guardianship in Minnesota and get Billy a Medicaid card. Colleen also helped Mary establish Social Security survivor's benefits for Billy and helped her with the paperwork to enroll Billy in school.

Today, Mary is Billy's guardian and Billy is thriving once again. He has been through heartbreak and challenges most children his age never see, but his spirits are high and he is doing well in school. He was just elected president of his fifth grade class.

DIRECT SERVICES 2010

Demand for ALCC services declined in FY'10 from the record-breaking numbers we saw last year. Between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010, ALCC staff assisted **917** clients with **1,544** legal matters, a 7% drop in clients and a 6% drop in caseload from the previous year. Although ALCC has given back some of the gains it made in FY'09, these numbers are still significantly higher than those recorded before the start of the economic crisis, pointing to continued difficulties for low-income clients in this struggling economy.

One clear sign of this impact can be found in the elevated number of public benefits cases that we opened last year – nearly **640**. Although this area of legal assistance has always been in high demand, the speed with which our

public benefits numbers grew exposes just how vulnerable our clients are to poverty and loss of stability. More than ever, our work today is linked to helping people with HIV access the financial and medical assistance programs without which many of them simply could not survive.

The economy has also spurred greater demand for insurance-related help, particularly around COBRA benefits. As job losses have mounted over the past two years, our insurance caseload has risen by more than 30%. The debate around health care reform legislation also helped fuel an increase in insurance-related calls this year. However, most of the bill's signature reforms will not come into effect until 2014.

The one area where a decline was most pronounced this year was immigration, down 12% from FY'09 and 28% from FY'08. The drop is most likely due to recent changes in federal immigration policy; namely, the lifting of the HIV travel ban in January 2010. While this is wonderful news for foreign-born individuals with HIV who were previously barred from entering the country, it is not likely that immigration-related problems will disappear altogether for our HIV-positive clients. We will watch

demand closely before deciding to make any substantive changes to our HIV-Positive Immigrants' Rights Project.

Finally, it is worth noting that the number of cases from non-Cook County residents rose again for the fourth consecutive year in 2010, even as our overall case numbers fell across the board. This points to the continuing need for HIV-focused legal services outside Chicago and an increased role for ALCC to play throughout the state.

ALCC Case Profile, FY'10

PUBLIC BENEFITS	41.3%
ESTATE PLANNING	14.1%
INSURANCE	8.5%
DEBTOR / CREDITOR ISSUES	6.4%
IMMIGRATION / CONFIDENTIALITY	6.0% (each)
EMPLOYMENT	5.4%
DISCRIMINATION	4.3%
OTHER	7.9%

AFRICAN AMERICAN

49%

WHITE

32%

LATINO

17%

OTHER

2%

MALE

77%

FEMALE

22%

TRANSGENDERED

>1%

MSM *Men who have sex with men*

53%

HETEROSEXUAL

38%

OTHER / UNKOWN

9%

UNINSURED

35%

NO INCOME

29%

AGE 1 -19

1.5%

AGE 20 -29

10.5%

AGE 30 -39

19%

AGE 40 -49

39.2%

AGE 50 -59

23.6%

AGE 50 -59

6.4%



SUSAN

Susan needed help. She applied in 2009 for Social Security Disability Insurance, but due to a long history of mental health problems and cognitive impairments, she often missed critical deadlines, misplaced important documents or failed to understand basic instructions. With her situation becoming increasingly difficult, Susan's counselor reached out to ALCC and asked if we could help.

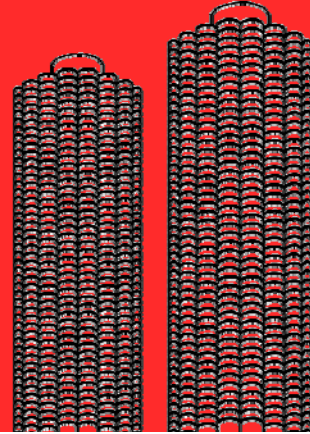
ALCC had to work hard to gain Susan's trust but we were eventually able to put her at ease with our staff and assist her with a new application for Social Security. With ALCC at her side, Susan finally qualified for the benefits she desperately needed back to

the date of her original application. She was now on a path to the peace of mind and stability that had eluded her for so long.

Susan's counselor no longer works at the agency where she receives services, but Susan's trust in ALCC and her confidence in our work means that she now feels comfortable to call us herself whenever she needs help. Most recently she reached out to us as a result of a situation of domestic violence. We linked Susan to an agency that went to court on her behalf and obtained an order of protection for her.



OUTREACH AND EDUCATION



Educating the public about the legal rights of people with HIV is central to the Council's mission. For this reason, we partner annually with dozens of organizations across the state and deliver critical information about HIV and the law to hundreds of consumers, case managers, students, service providers and professionals in a variety of fields.

During FY'10, ALCC staff delivered **90** trainings, reaching **1,195** individuals. The most requested topics were confidentiality and testing, followed closely by public benefits and return-to-work issues for people with HIV. Another frequently requested training was our "HIV 101" introduction to HIV and the law. Trainings are conducted in English or Spanish and are provided at no cost to our HIV and

service provider partners throughout the state. Community Outreach Coordinator Anne Schmidlin recently left ALCC to pursue her law school studies in Ohio. Our new Community Outreach Coordinator is Mary Hankey.

ALCC began collaborating this year with a professional marketing and creative team headed by **Enrique Chang** and **Lilia Arroyo-Flores** to develop new messaging and outreach strategies for HIV legal services. Their *pro bono* work included a series of five focus groups with ALCC consumers and non-consumers to discuss their experiences with legal services and their knowledge about ALCC programs. These interviews led to recommendations on messaging that we are reviewing and hope to implement in the near future.

TOM

Tom was diagnosed with cancer in 2009 and began receiving chemotherapy. Because of his illness, Tom requested a part-time schedule at the restaurant where he worked, but eventually his employer fired him, alleging a series of performance problems that Tom had never experienced before. Without work and in poor health, Tom came to us for help.

Speaking with Tom, we realized that these were not the only problems he was facing. Earlier in the year he had submitted an application for Medicaid benefits, but had never received a response. We decided to look into his situation and discovered that

the denial letter had been sent to a wrong address. In the meantime, Tom had missed a critical appeals deadline by several months.

Fortunately, ALCC was able to get his application re-opened and get him Medicaid benefits back to the date of his original application. We also represented Tom in his complaint against his employer and helped him get a settlement. By this time Tom was too sick to return to work, so we helped him apply for Social Security benefits and worked with him to prepare a power of attorney for health care.



ADVOCACY



Advocacy informs policy makers about the unique and critical challenges facing people with HIV, a goal that has taken on renewed urgency as the weak economy continues to put pressure on vital programs. The Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), for example, faced enormous financial strain and looming cuts earlier this year—cuts that threatened to gravely impact its ability to provide life-saving HIV drugs to people in need. Working with other members of ADAP's Advisory Board, Executive Director Ann Fisher participated in the difficult task of searching for ways to maximize cost-savings in the program with as little disruption as possible for enrollees. Fortunately (thanks to the tireless advocacy of many), the Governor

unveiled a budget this year that fully funds ADAP, making those recommendations unnecessary.

ADAP has been on the Council's radar a lot lately. In addition to trying to find ways to keep the program solvent, ALCC has been working with ADAP personnel to develop a solution for individuals with HIV who must continue to pay exorbitant co-pays for their medications because their insurance plan "locks" them into a pharmacy provider (in this case, MedCo) that does not allow them to access ADAP benefits. One client who was willing to drop his health insurance so that he could access ADAP was told that he could not simply choose to drop his insurance

coverage without being fired. ALCC is now working with ADAP, State Senator Greg Harris and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago to try and resolve this complicated situation for its clients who need urgent and affordable access to HIV medication.

Advocacy around ADAP has not been the Council's sole concern during the past year. Ann Fisher has been involved in helping to shape the state's new high-risk insurance pool (mandated under landmark health care reform legislation passed earlier this year) and was involved in important discussions around the development of a national AIDS plan. Of particular interest to the AIDS Legal Council in the development of this plan: ensuring that it encourages and supports the vital role of

HIV-positive peer educators, counselors, testers and advocates, men and women who are doing extraordinary work to disseminate information, promote testing and make sure that people with HIV are accessing treatment and getting the most out of their care. Because their work exists in a gray area between employment and volunteerism, they have sometimes encountered a range of legal issues that range from whether they can be "discharged" for not adhering to their health care regime to the obligation to report their work to Social Security. ALCC wants to make sure that these workers are able to continue doing terrific work without being penalized for it because of short-sighted regulatory obstacles.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Ryan White Treatment Modernization Act, Part A & B
Illinois Department of Public Health

FOUNDATION SUPPORT

\$70,000 OR GREATER
Family & Children's AIDS Network

\$40,000—\$49,999
Polk Bros. Foundation

\$30,000—\$39,999
Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois

\$20,000—\$29,999
United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
Chicago Bar Foundation

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AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Chicago Area Foundation for Legal Services
Public Interest Law Initiative

\$5,000—\$9,999
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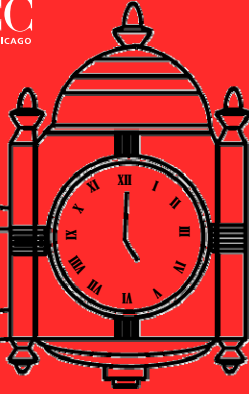
**Top fundraisers for ALCC's Legal Beagles AIDS Run Walk team.*



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets
Year Ended June 30, 2010

Revenues & Other Support	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Public Support			
Grants from Government Agencies	\$ 545,073		545,073
Grants and Contributions	221,958	41,000	262,958
In-Kind Professional Services	141,605		141,605
Net assets released from restriction	92,000	(92,000)	
Cy Pres distributions	114,192		
Special events			
Gross Proceeds	71,425		71,425
Direct Expenses	(32,710)		(32,710)
TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT	1,153,543	(51,000)	1,102,543
Other Revenue			
Program services fees	13,102		13,102
Investment Income	1,447		1,447
TOTAL REVENUE	1,168,092	(51,000)	1,117,092
Expenses			
Grants from Government Agencies	\$ 882,923		882,923
Grants and Contributions	66,576		66,576
Net assets released from restriction	104,347		104,347
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,053,846		1,053,846
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	114,246	(51,000)	63,246
NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR	914,957	132,000	1,046,957
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	1,029,203	81,000	1,110,203



FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

Expenses by Category

PROGRAM SERVICES	84%	\$882,923
FUNDRAISING	10%	\$104,347
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	6%	\$66,576

Revenues by Category

RYAN WHITE PART A	35%	\$372,084
VOUCHERED SERVICE GRANTS	16%	\$172,988
FOUNDATIONS	16%	\$169,072
INDIVIDUALS / EVENTS	15%	\$158,453
CY PRES	11%	\$114,192
LAW FIRMS / CORPORATIONS	6%	\$58,033
MISCELLANEOUS	1%	\$14,549

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