

BAY AREA

LEGAL SERVICES FUNDER NETWORK (LSFN)

Introduction & Overview

The LSFN is a network of funders who fund civil legal service organizations as a poverty alleviation strategy. While several of us have been collaborating for years, we officially “formed” in the fall of 2014.

We are dedicated to being “multi-sectorial”. As a result, we have funder representatives from community foundations, private foundations, private law firms, donor advised funds, government, the California Bar Foundation and “crowd source” funders. Our vision is to create a community for those who fund legal services. Specific goals include:

- *Raising the profile with regards to how legal services organizations help address poverty alleviation*
- *“Connecting the dots” for funders who “don’t fund legal programs”, but want to address issues that legal service providers can champion (ex. disability and education rights, medical conditions resulting from substandard housing and foster care issues)*
- *Help more philanthropic dollars flow to legal services organizations*
- *Correct misinformation such as: (1) “the government gives plenty of \$/ the lawyers give plenty of \$ to these groups” (2) pro bono covers all the unmet needs and (3) the existing legal aid programs cover/meet all needs*
- *Provide an example of sector-collaborative work by having a mix of types of funders (including the City & County of San Francisco) “at the table” working together*
- *Provide a network/community for legal services funders*
- *Collaboration with other funders when it makes sense (e.g. funding a study)*

Our Planning Committee is comprised of:

James Head, East Bay Community Foundation
Patti D'Angelo Juachon, Marin Community Foundation
Nancy Wiltsek, van Loben Sels/RembeRock Foundation
Claire Solot, Bigglesworth Family Foundation
Sonia Gonzales, California Bar Foundation
Yali Lincrof, Walter S. Johnson Foundation
Colin Lacon, SF Mayors Office
Stacey Keare, Board Chair of Legal Aid of San Mateo & Donor Advised Fund
Thomas Loran, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw & Pittman
Douglas Winthrop, Arnold & Porter
Julia Wilson, OneJustice (advisor)

Our “kick-off” event featuring Martha Bergmark of Voices for Justice will take place on March 10th, 2015. In the coming months our Planning Committee will be working on the LSFN’s design plans. We anticipate brown bag lunches, educational meetings, social programs, a shared online hub and more. Please come join us!