Envision a kinder future.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

THE LAW CENTER
CHILDREN'S

[Image of children smiling]
The mission of The Children’s LAW Center is to promote the best possible outcomes for children and families in transition or crisis by providing access to legal services and support they could not otherwise afford and by advancing collaborative, non-adversarial options for resolving conflicts outside the court system.

Through its programs and services the Children’s LAW Center strives to create safe, stable environments for children whose parents are in chronic conflict.
Dear Friends,

2020 was an extraordinary year by any measure. It was a year in which each of us faced difficult personal challenges. It was a year when the parents of our child clients were disproportionately affected by joblessness and poverty. And most significant, it was a year when The Children’s LAW Center discovered the strength and commitment of our supporters.

You, our donors, never wavered in your support of our mission. With your generosity and strong leadership from our Board of Directors, we were able to continue our critical work while keeping our clients, our staff, and the community safe.

We thank you for being dedicated and exceptional supporters. You have our endless gratitude for helping to carry CLC during this unprecedented time. With your support, CLC was able to navigate 2020’s challenging circumstances, allowing us to continue the work needed to be done with the children and families we serve.

Because of your support, we are able to help parents provide safer, more stable environments for their children, now and in the future.

With immense gratitude,

Justine Rakich-Kelly
Executive Director

Tim Buckley
President, Board of Directors

It is an honor and privilege to lead this organization and I am truly grateful for our friends and supporters. The CLC staff has worked so incredibly hard throughout the pandemic this year, never missing a beat. 2020 posed unthinkable challenges for everyone and I am hopeful that we are well on the road to “normal”. At CLC, we remain dedicated to the work that is so important to kids and families, regardless of the obstacles we encounter.

— Justine Rakich-Kelly
Jacob's mom, Carla, became unemployed in 2020. She had found a job working in Florida and wanted to relocate there with Jacob. She did not have stable housing in Connecticut and was burdened with the task of continuously trying to figure out where she and Jacob would be sleeping next. While the pandemic raged on, housing opportunities became less predictable. A move to Florida meant that Carla would have reliable income and that she and Jacob could stay with family members until she saved up for an apartment.

The court had ordered that Jacob's father, John, have alternating weekend parenting time, but instead he chose to take Jacob just on alternating Saturdays. Carla notified John of her plan to move to Florida, yet he did not respond until nearly five months after her move, filing a motion in court. The court appointed Children's Law Center attorney, Aisha Roche, as Jacob's guardian ad litem to ensure that his best interests were being represented in this dispute.

Aisha had numerous remote conversations with John about the possibility of Carla remaining in Florida. At first John was very resistant. He explained that he wanted
to be able to see Jacob often and was nervous that the relationship would suffer if Carla remained in Florida. Aisha set up a Zoom conference call with Carla and John. Carla talked of her concern that if the hearing went forward she might be ordered to move back to Connecticut, and she would have no income or a place that she and Jacob could live. Jacob had always lived with his mom.

With CLC’s help, John came to understand that he could continue to develop his relationship with Jacob and also allow Carla to provide Jacob with a stable home. Carla reassured John that he could have extended parenting time with Jacob in the summer and on school breaks. Since Carla was living in the same Florida town as John’s cousin, John would be welcome to stay with his cousin any time he came to Florida to visit Jacob. Carla also agreed that John could have telephone and FaceTime access with Jacob nightly.

CLC’s involvement in this case enabled Carla and John to reach a compromise that would meet their needs and, more importantly, benefit Jacob. They understood that their focus needed to be on what was best for Jacob and that each could have a meaningful relationship with their child, even if Jacob lived in Florida.

Today, Jacob lives in Florida with his mom, who has reliable income, stable housing and available child care for Jacob from her family. On most days, Jacob talks to his dad and he knows that he will get to spend time with his dad soon, either in Florida or in Connecticut. Now Jacob can enjoy the love and support of the two most important people in his life.
2020 Staff

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Staff Attorney

David Coughlin
Staff Attorney

Randa Hojaiban
Deputy Director

Brendan Holt
Staff Attorney

Artila Lubonja
Staff Attorney

Kathryn Phillips
Staff Attorney

Aisha Roche
Staff Attorney

Monique Ryan
Staff Attorney

Deb Shulansky
Director of Development

Nicole Silva
Staff Social Worker

Jenna Trott
Development & Marketing Associate

Tonia Tubaya
Professional Assistant

In 2020, we said farewell to:
Artila Lubonja & Kathryn Phillips

And welcomed:
Brendan Holt
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Ama Frimpong Ansah
Olivia Benson
Jennifer Cooney
Catherine Craig
Gianna DeMasi
Bailey Frankel
Leslie Macedo
Emma Robertson
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Thank you for making our Gala a success!

On November 13th, 2020, World Kindness Day, The Children’s Law Center Gala was hosted virtually. With technology at our fingertips, we delivered an unforgettable event with inspirational stories, unique auction packages, plush animals for donation and purchase, plus so much more! Radio personality, Renee DiNino of iHeart Radio served as the evening’s emcee. We also proudly celebrated Justine Rakich-Kelly’s 20th anniversary as CLC’s Executive Director!
2020 Gala Committee

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Do You Hear What I Hear?

Led by presenters Attorney Kim Duell and Dr. Elizabeth Thayer, attendees to this training session learned the factors that promote or interfere with effective listening, how to listen to families in conflict and what listening skills will allow them to resolve disputes more efficiently and effectively.
Thank you to our generous supporters!

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The Children’s Law Center Gala Committee
The Children’s Law Center Board of Directors
ClayArtPlay
Christian Colon
Financials

REVENUE
$1,201,765
- Grants & Foundations $709,340
- Legal Representation $255,171
- Event Income $107,986
- Individual & Corporate Contributions $45,130
- Rebuilding Families $6,332

EXPENSES
$1,028,579
- Program Services $802,056
- Fundraising $149,597
- Management & General $76,926
The Children's Law Center’s Year-End financial strength is thanks to emergency relief funding made possible by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, as distributed through various agencies and government partners at the federal, state and local level. These funds, and the expenses they cover, include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY AND PROGRAM</th>
<th>AMOUNT OF FUNDS RECEIVED</th>
<th>EXPENSES COVERED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program</td>
<td>$167,062</td>
<td>Administrative and Staff Salaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development</td>
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<td>General Operating Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>The U.S. Small Business Administration Covid-19 Economic Injury Disaster Advance</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>General Operating Expenses</td>
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</tbody>
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*The Children's Law Center is especially grateful to Webster Bank for helping CLC secure the Paycheck Protection Program funds.*