



Public comment
BCC special 7/13/21

**Special Meeting of the Clark County Board of County Commissioners
Hardest Hit Communities
Tuesday, July 13, 2021**

Good evening, Commissioners.

My name is Michelle Larime and I am here tonight representing Nevadans for the Common Good. We are a broad-based community organization made up of over 40 institutions across the Valley representing over 100,000 individuals. We are an organization of residents who organize to get things done for the benefit of our community particularly our most vulnerable. Over the last several months we have heard stories from hundreds of people across the Las Vegas Valley in need of social and economic assistance due to the pandemic who are often unable to access services available in Clark County.

Nevadans for the Common Good advocates an investment of American Rescue Plan Act funding toward a more robust community navigation system, open to the public, that helps people figure out how to access available resources.

As we saw with the CHAP funds for rental assistance, there was and is A LOT of money to help renters and landlords, but it is not getting where it needs to go. There are other resources to help people who are struggling as a result of the pandemic, but particularly in the hardest hit communities, people do not always know how to find them or how to navigate the systems required to take full advantage.

We think there needs to be a navigation system that employs case managers trained in understanding the available resources within the Valley that partners with community-based organizations located in the communities with the greatest need such as congregations, neighborhood groups, and small-scale food pantries that can also assist residents in identifying resources and the process.

Nevadans for the Common Good is advocating for this investment in case managers and community partnership as a long-term and overall investment in human infrastructure within the social services, safety net system. This will result in long-term savings as we prevent individuals and families from falling into the court system, or emergency health or shelter systems due to loss of housing, healthcare, or legal entanglements. Doing this can enable families and communities to build a better future. Failing to make this investment is a waste of human potential and dignity.

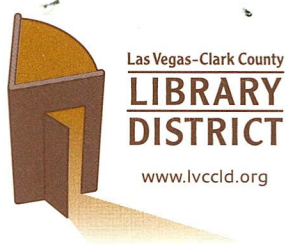
NEVADANS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

PLEASE SEND CORRESPONDENCE VIA MAIL TO:

c/o Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, 6670 West Cheyenne, Las Vegas, NV 89108

EMAIL: NCG.LasVegas@Gmail.com

[f/NEVADANSFORTHECOMMONGOOD](https://www.facebook.com/NEVADANSFORTHECOMMONGOOD)



M E M O

To: Clark County Commission Chairman Marilyn Kirkpatrick; Commissioners James Gibson, Justin Jones, William McCurdy, III, Ross Miller, Michael Naft, and Tick Segerblom; County Manager Yolanda King; and Social Services Administrator Timothy Burch

From: Kelvin Watson, Executive Director *Kelvin Watson*

Date: July 13, 2021

Re: Distribution of \$44 Million American Rescue Plan Funds

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is a governmental entity that serves 1.6 million residents in Clark County, Nevada. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District Foundation is a non-profit funding arm of the Library District. Both the District and Foundation have been up and running with full services since May, 2020, in all of our 25 library branch facilities across Clark County.

We have seen first hand, the massive disruption and impact of the pandemic on residents, businesses, service providers, and employers. From our perspective, the biggest challenges that came out of the pandemic are

- Unemployment that still hovers over 200,000
- a massive and growing digital divide
- an increase in people experiencing homelessness
- an increase in small business failures
- students, both K-12 and college, struggling with online learning
- a collapse of the early child care sector which is key to the revival of economic activity in our region.

The Library District has been a second responder to many of these issues over the past 16 months:

- We provided free WiFi and devices to homes and businesses on the wrong side of the digital divide.
- We expanded hours, mobilized Vegas Strong Academy spaces, purchased more devices, and maintained in-person Teachers-in-the-Library tutor for local K-12 students to attend classes and progress academically.
- We continued expanded our partnership with Workforce Connections of Southern Nevada to provide employment, business, and social services at library One-Stop Career

Centers and the Employ NV Business Hub. We continued to have Adult Learning classes all year, as the Library District operates the state's largest program for free English language instruction and free Career Online High School for students who only missed 3-5 credits and were not able to graduate from High School.

- We continue to connect youth with technologies that are part of foundational 21st Century workforce skills in our Teen Tech Labs.
- We provide safe, cool shelter and a learning environment for many people experiencing homelessness.

Fortunately, the Library District was able to tap into small library grants available through our national Institute of Museum and Library Services and the NV State Library to defray a small portion of these expenditures. Today, we ask to be considered for additional Clark County ARPA funds to provide assistance to scale with community need.

We are providing a list of additional initiatives we are prepared to launch immediately, should additional funding be available:

CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE There are several initiatives related to getting more WiFi and devices into the hands of local residents, families, students, seniors, and businesses:

- Hotspots. Lending hotspots bring free internet to local families, students, seniors, and businesses. We would like to double the current number of hotspots (from 500 to 1000) and lengthen the time those devices can be checked out (\$550,000 including purchase of additional devices and monthly service costs for 1,000 hotspots for one year)
- Lending Tablets. We would like to double our capacity to provide free lending devices to locals. Our solution involves a device vending machine that checks out equipment and wipes it clean upon return. The cost of two additional vending machines and 80 devices is \$54,000.
- Early Literacy Tablets. We would like to make early learning tablets available free to families and care takers with young children so that they develop literacy skills early and are ready for Kindergarten and success in school. We would like to purchase 100 at \$3,200 each for a total of \$320,000.
- Career Online High School. Licenses for local students to finish high school when they have dropped out due to family or employment needs cost \$1,000 each. We would like to expand this program from 30 to 100, for a total of \$100,000.
- Teacher Tutors. We would like to secure one year of funding for the Library Foundation's "Teachers in Libraries" program that hosts CCSD teachers at tutors in 8 library locations. The Foundation was able to keep this program live last year and saw tremendous demand from very diverse families and students in neighborhoods with low-performing schools, and in households that have below levels of education and no internet or devices. The annual cost of this program is \$250,000.
- Teen Tech Labs. The Library Foundation initiative for youth workforce skill building provides teens with free access to digital media, coding, and other STEAM project-

based learning opportunities. Equipment and mentors for the existing 4 sites could be expanded with an additional \$100,000.

This menu of potential Library District and Library Foundation initiatives have already proven beneficial to many local families, students, seniors, businesses, and people seeking employment. The Library District is a welcoming, inclusionary, and catalyst institution in Clark County, that provides a wide variety of services, technologies, programs, and places where people can find essential resources to improve their educational, economic, and social well-being.

We request that the Library District and Foundation be considered for ARPA funding that provides essential services and assistance that will lead to broad Countywide rescue and recovery.

LVR REALTORS

LAS VEGAS REALTORS®

6360 S. Rainbow Boulevard Las Vegas, NV 89118
702.784.5000 | LasVegasRealtor.com

July 12, 2021

Clark County Commission Chair Marilyn Kirkpatrick
Clark County Government Center
500 S Grand Central Pkwy
Las Vegas, Nevada 89155
ccdistrb@ClarkCountyNV.gov

Re: Special Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners—community stakeholders re: the immediate and long-term needs of the community [as a result of the]pandemic and its negative economic impacts....

Dear Clark County Commission Chair Kirkpatrick:

On behalf of the Las Vegas REALTORS® (LVR), we appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter concerning "...the immediate and long-term needs of the community as a result of the pandemic and its negative economic impacts and, in particular, the needs of households that were disproportionately and negatively impacted by the public health emergency." LVR's leadership appreciates the Clark County Commissioner for community input, as LVR continues to work with the County for immediate and long-term solution from the property owner and tenant-renter perspective.

As Southern Nevada's largest trade organization with over 15,000 members, LVR is committed to the property rights of all owners. Property owners that are able to rent a property to a tenant provide a valuable service to our community—and thus, have taken added risk particularly during the pandemic and especially "mom and pop" single family rental properties.

Many mom-and-pop property owners, that rent out a property or a few properties, have had to bear a heavy financial burden during the pandemic. As a result of not receiving rental payments from tenants, many mom-and-pop property owners now face mounting bills to pay. Prior to the pandemic, the rent that a mom-and-pop property owners received from a tenant was used to help offset bills—and for many in their retirement. It is important to keep in mind that not all retirees have a pension—and income from a rental property often helps to sustain our senior citizen population. Moreover, if a tenant does not pay rent the property owner still has the responsibility of paying bills that go with owning a property such as property taxes. Many property owners that have an investment in a rental property also have a mortgage to pay, so LVR's concern there is



LVR REALTORS

LAS VEGAS REALTORS®

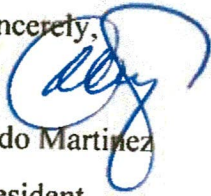
6360 S. Rainbow Boulevard Las Vegas, NV 89118
702.784.5000 | LasVegasRealtor.com

that the County needs to be careful about the potential of mounting foreclosures as a result of no rental income.

The Nevada REALTORS® played a key role during the recent legislative session in AB 486, recently passed by the state legislature, and signed into law by Governor Sisolak—and LVR is working with the County regarding its implementation. LVR appreciates the County's efforts to address concerns as our community comes out of the pandemic. LVR stands ready to assist the County in viable solutions.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with comments on this issue. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Mr. Joe Locatelli, Government Affairs Director, at 702-569-2704.

Sincerely,



Aldo Martinez

President

cc: Commission Vice-Chairman James B. Gibson
Commissioner Michal Naft
Commissioner Ross Miller
Commissioner Tick Segerblom
Commissioner Justin Jones
Commissioner William McCurdy III
Joe Locatelli, Carrara Nevada
Rocky Finseth





**CLARK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING (STAKEHOLDER LISTENING)
VEGAS PBS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Community Need and Barriers Addressed:

- Throughout the last 15 months of covid-19 closures, pre-K kids have suffered from a lack of structured educational, social, and emotional learning they'd typically receive (before the pandemic) through formal and informal childcare options.
- Now, as we reopen and kids return to childcare settings, there is a need to provide supplemental learning opportunities to fill some of the gaps in basic skills development, and also provide hands-on engagement in important coping and recovery areas like communication, self-awareness, and self-confidence.

How the services provided will assist in the community's overall recovery:

- During this period of pandemic-related closures, to fill gaps as best they could, parents and other family members assumed the daunting roles and steep learning curves of full-time childcare providers and educators alike. It was a tough time for every family throughout Clark County - regardless of background.
- And many parents utilized television and digital platforms to supplement learning loss - PBS KIDS free over-the-air television and additional digital materials has been one such resource. Well, now - as our families recover - parents and PBS KIDS - again - can play very significant roles in kids regaining learning they lost during the pandemic.
- First off, many pre-K kids engaged with PBS KIDS characters themes, and learning strategies for months on end. They're familiar with and trust the content.
- Secondly, research shows that kids learn more from PBS KIDS media if adults in their lives are engaged as well. This is particularly true with kids from LMI backgrounds who make the greatest gains.

What's the Program?

- To this end, Vegas PBS is proposing to provide 5 family engagement workshops to any new, expanded or enhanced early learning programs located or serving families living in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT), supported through Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act.
- Vegas PBS would also provide kids/parents in this program with 12 additional "book of the month" books to build home libraries.
- This program would serve approximately 1,900 families.
- PBS KIDS Family Engagement Workshop content is designed to extend learning experiences on familiar PBS KIDS television programs and educational digital content by sparking kids' and parents' further curiosity to explore the world around them far beyond the screen.



- “Engagement” means hands-on activities that families can do together to extend learning themes, concepts and topics covered through our programming. Families receive books and information about free PBS KIDS educational mobile apps after each workshop. And all materials are bilingual.

County Strategic Priority

- Collaborative Community Engagement:
 - subset: Invite community allies willing to enhance service delivery and value
- Serving the Community:
 - subset: Rethink, innovate and modernize service delivery
- Strong Communities:
 - subsets: Focus resources on programs that support individuals and families that promote safe and healthy environments
 - Invest in programs which support self-sufficiency

Intended Outcomes/How We Measure:

- The key outcome is evidence that parents use the information and tools from the workshops to support their children’s social, emotional and educational learning at home.
- We measure these outcomes via end of session and follow-up surveys administered to participating families.
- During the 19-20 school year, 94% of family engagement participants said they use the information from the workshops to support their children’s learning at home.

Cost:

- The cost of this program - to run a total of 265 family engagement sessions (\$132,500) and
- 12 books for 1,900 families (22,800 books total / \$125,400)

ARE YOU A JUSTICE IMPACTED UNLV STUDENT NAVIGATING CAMPUS?

Some UNLV students face societal barriers as a result of their interaction with the criminal justice system. Having an arrest, criminal charge or record of conviction can impact career and educational opportunities. UNLV is dedicated to providing guidance and support services that enhance the academic experience from orientation to graduation and beyond.

The UNLV Intersection helps justice-impacted students by serving as a resource and point of contact, call 702-895-0459.

For more information and links to campus and community resources visit:
<https://www.unlv.edu/sdsj/justiceimpacted>



Contact

Dr. Harriet E. Barlow
harriet.barlow@unlv.edu
702-895-0549

UNLV

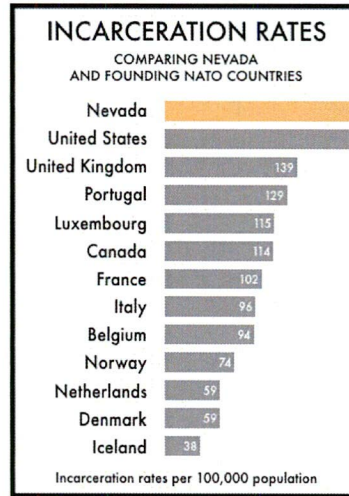


Rebel Rebound Proposal

UNLV is seeking funds to expand a comprehensive program providing formerly incarcerated and justice impacted individuals in Clark County with access to higher education and the tools necessary for academic success, graduation, and lifelong employability.

Community needs and barriers

- Nevada has an incarceration rate of 763 per 100,000 people (including prisons, jails, immigration detention, and juvenile justice facilities).
- Disparities in the criminal justice system ranging from arrests to sentencing decisions disproportionately impact individuals of color.
- According to the Nevada Department of Corrections, 58 percent of Nevada's inmates come to prison without a high school diploma or GED and 78 percent of inmates have minimal job training.
- Nevada has about a 30 percent recidivism rate — meaning Nevada is a state that has a high likelihood of someone convicted to reoffend.



Source: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>

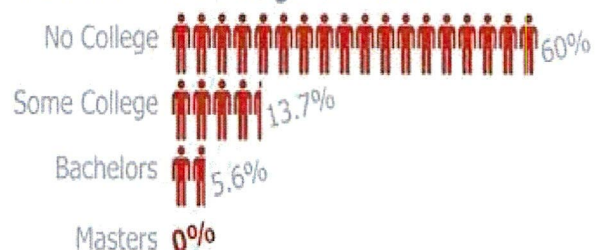
Alignment with Clark County Strategic Priorities

- Collaborative community engagement – Rebel Rebound partners with Hope for Prisoners 501C, NSHE Prison Education Program, and the Department of Corrections.
- Strong communities – Rebel Rebound supports justice impacted individuals and provides a safe environment. Graduates of Rebel Rebound are self-sufficient.
- Affordable and livable communities – Rebel Rebound participants have access to wrap-around services including housing, counseling, academic support, and career development.

Assist in community recovery

- Higher Education is proven to reduce recidivism
- Rebel Rebound Services**
 - Assistance with college and financial aid application process
 - Technology assistance and ability to check-out loaner laptops
 - Academic support services and coaching
 - Disability support services
 - Professional psychological counseling
 - Career counseling and job placement
 - Legal education and advice
 - Peer mentor program
 - Safe space on campus
 - Access to scholarships, housing stipends, and emergency funds

Recidivism and College-in-Prison



**Address root causes / sustainable improvements**

- Education is a gateway to social and economic mobility. Every \$1 spent on education programs saves \$4 in incarceration costs.

Individuals impacted – UNLV justice impacted students and future students

- UNLV admissions application does not require students to disclose convictions - this makes college more accessible but also means exact numbers are not tracked.
- Estimate up to 10% of UNLV students are justice impacted [based on other urban universities]. There are hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students that are justice impacted at UNLV.
- UNLV's program for Justice Impacted students started in 2020 in response to student advocacy. This proposal will greatly expand services by providing full-time staff that will:
 - Outreach with Hope for Prisoners 501C, NSHE Prison Education Program, and the Department of Corrections to provide admissions and financial aid application assistance.
 - Ensure justice impacted students have access to wrap-around services such as academic support, counseling, and career development and placement.
 - Advocate for needs of justice impacted students within Nevada System for Higher Education and the Nevada Legislature.
- Rebel Rebound will serve all justice impacted students. Proposal includes direct financial assistance for up to 112 justice impacted students:
 - Annually provide 40 \$2,000 scholarships. Must be formerly incarcerated or have a record of conviction; off or on parole or probation. Must be living or paroling in Nevada. Must maintain satisfactory progress toward degree completion.
 - Annually provide 12 \$4,000 housing stipends on campus apartment housing in Legacy, U-District. Exterior building access allows for parole officer visits.
 - Annually provide up to 60 justice impacted students with access to \$500 to \$1000 in emergency funds for catastrophic events that may prevent them from continuing their education.

Estimated cost of the program

- Annual cost, \$490,000
 - \$222,000 Staffing – Director, Coordinator, Graduate Assistant, student staff.
 - \$158,000 Financial assistance – scholarships, housing stipends, emergency funds
 - \$110,000 Operations – supplies, printing, facility use

Note, first year \$82,000 under staffing will be used for start-up costs such as office furniture, fixtures, equipment, signage with staffing increasing the second year. Priority hiring will be for those who have succeeded in overcoming barriers similar to those confronting the project's target population.

Intended outcomes and how measure

- UNLV will track outcomes for program participants by entering cohort. For Justice Impacted individuals Project Rebound will:
 - Reduce recidivism – target is 90% will not be re-convicted
 - Increase college graduation rates – target is 70% will graduate within 6 years
 - Increase employment – target is 70% will be employed while attending UNLV and 80% employed post-graduation
- National recognition - aspirations for the program to serve as a model. Plan to host national conference in Las Vegas by 2024 to elevate the need to address justice impacted student needs to the national level and spark innovative action.

Since 1958
LEGAL AID CENTER

■ ■ ■ ■ *of Southern Nevada*

BARBARA E. BUCKLEY, ESQ.

Executive Director

725 E. Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89104
www.lacsn.org

702-386-1070 ext. 1406
Direct/Fax 702-386-1406
bbuckley@lacsn.org

Mission

The preservation of access to justice and the provision of quality legal counsel, advice and representation for individuals who are unable to protect their rights because they cannot afford an attorney.



Recovery Act Funding Priorities

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Clark County families with the loss of jobs in Las Vegas' main tourism industry, along with the industries that depend on it. According to a Brookings Institution report in February of this year, "[o]ver a quarter of Las Vegas workers are in the hard-hit leisure and hospitality industry, and the metro's information, financial activities, and professional business service industries also fared the worst of our comparison metros.¹" Additionally, people of color in Nevada were dealing with lower rates of education, overrepresentation in low-income jobs, and lower levels of employment before COVID.² In the recently published "2021 Kids Count Data Book," by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Nevada ranked 41st in economic well-being, 46th in education, and 45th for overall child well-being.³ Nevada is also listed as "...among the worst-performing 20 states for most or all of the pandemic indicators..."⁴

Loss of employment not only means loss of income, but often means loss of health insurance as well. In Las Vegas, 1 out of 12 Latino individuals contracted COVID, compared to 1 in 20 white people.⁵ African-American Nevadans had the highest rate of hospitalizations – double the rate of white residents.⁶ On top of job loss and disparate health impacts, the COVID pandemic exacerbated existing education disparities. African-American students account for approximately 15% of the Clark County School District (CCSD) population, are only 6% of G.A.T.E. students, but make up 39% of students referred to the Juvenile Justice system. African-American CCSD students are nearly twice as likely to be suspended without educational services and are 2.3 times as likely to be referred to law enforcement by schools than white students.⁷ Distance learning during the pandemic exposed educational deficiencies and issues with internet capabilities and consistency.

About Legal Aid Center:

Established in 1958, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada is the largest and most respected legal aid service in Nevada. We are the primary legal safety net in our community, a trusted community nonprofit organization turned to by both local nonprofits and community residents in need. Our mission is the preservation of access to justice and the provision of quality legal counsel, advice and representation for individuals who are unable to protect their rights because

¹ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/explaining-the-economic-impact-of-covid-19-core-industries-and-the-hispanic-workforce/>

² <https://guinncenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Guinn-Center-Impact-of-COVID-19-on-Communities-of-Color-in-Nevada.pdf>

³ <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2021kidscountdatabook-2021.pdf>

⁴ Footnote 10, page 29, <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2021kidscountdatabook-2021.pdf>

⁵ [brookings.edu/research/explaining-the-economic-impact-of-covid-19-core-industries-and-the-hispanic-workforce/](https://www.brookings.edu/research/explaining-the-economic-impact-of-covid-19-core-industries-and-the-hispanic-workforce/)

⁶ <https://www.nevadacurrent.com/2020/09/02/reports-data-detail-how-pandemic-exposes-long-standing-nevada-inequities/>

⁷ <https://nevadapartners.org/2020/05/29/the-data-racial-disparities-in-education/>

they cannot afford an attorney. Our longevity is a result of our commitment to respond to the needs in our community. Our Executive Director, Barbara Buckley, has been with us for over 30 years and the rest of the management team has worked at Legal Aid Center for an average of 16 years. Legal Aid Center is one the most diverse large law firms in the state. We have a commitment to hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences to bring different perspectives and strengths to our team. Every day, we impact the lives of the most vulnerable residents in Nevada through the variety of free legal services we offer. Our award-winning programs are regarded as national models. In 2020, we provided 162,662 services through direct representation, classes, Ask-A-Lawyer sessions, community events, calls, and emails. Our websites were visited over 2,499,554 times.

Strategic Priority Requests:

Assistance to household or populations facing negative economic impacts due to COVID-10

1. Meeting Community Needs for **Consumer Protection** through Legal Aid Center's Consumer Rights Project.

Legal Aid Center's consumer protection unit provides legal assistance for low-income consumers in danger of losing their homes and life savings due to foreclosure, fraud, predatory lending, and unlawful practices. Disproportionate rates of COVID-19 and lasting unemployment are affecting families of color and the financially vulnerable. People are struggling to keep a roof over their heads and rebuild their lives after a devastating year. As the recovery takes effect, families will face bill collectors, wage garnishments, and evictions. Our experience and history tells us that unscrupulous scammers will proliferate during this time, promising deceptive or unlawful solutions that leave vulnerable people in more debt, or worse. Last year during the pandemic, over 17,000 people contacted our Consumer Rights Project seeking help and we believe that number will only go up.

At the same time, the National Mortgage Settlement funding which funds a significant portion of our work is ending, and we face falling off a financial cliff due to the loss of funding. We obtained long-term funding for consumer protection, but we are in need for bridge funding. Funding for 4 years will allow us continue our mission to provide free quality services during this time so our community members can stay in their homes, find employment, avoid financial ruin, and build better lives, while providing continued stability for Legal Aid Center.

- Funding ask: \$1.6 million a year for current staffing levels. For 4 years: \$5,600,000

2. Investing in a Long Term **Eviction Prevention Program**

Our community is reeling from the inability of many in our community to be able to pay for rent and rental arrearages. The numbers are staggering. Some estimates indicate that 14 percent of Nevada renters, roughly 128,000 residents, were behind on rent at the end of June. For those unlucky families, the collateral consequences of eviction can be serious and long-term and can include homelessness, worsening mental/physical health, loss of possessions, lower quality or unsafe housing, negative impact on children's education, and financial strain and job loss.

Due to a unique partnership of Clark County, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, the county's justice courts, the Nevada Supreme Court, and legislative/gubernatorial leadership, a number of measures were adopted to avoid preventable evictions by creating a diversionary program and a process to marry eviction mediation with legal aid and the rental assistance funding. This coordinated effort allows tenants to be evaluated for rental assistance early in the eviction process so that, by the time the case reaches mediation, the great bulk of unnecessary evictions can be avoided. In 2021 alone, we provided counsel and assistance to 24,700 tenants and hosted six "pop up's" to help tenants respond to eviction notices.

The County has funded Legal Aid Center's work thus far; funding is now sought for the entire four years, as this crisis will not end soon, especially with nearly 200,000 losing their unemployment assistance as of September 6, 2021. Furthermore, as pointed out by President Biden and county leadership, the efforts to avoid eviction whenever possible should continue long past this crisis. Studies show that only 3 percent of tenants have representation compared to 81 percent of landlords. Having quality representation in court makes a difference in the outcome of an eviction case. Tenants with counsel are statistically more likely to remain in their homes or otherwise win or settle their cases. Represented tenants are even more likely to get their cases sealed so the evictions do not follow them as they seek new housing.

Scaling up our staff to dedicate attorneys to directly represent tenants in addition to the services Legal Aid Center created during the pandemic will help to stabilize communities, keep families from homelessness, and provide stronger foundations for families to rebuild a stable life.

- Funding ask: \$1.2 million a year for 8 FTE attorneys, 4 FTE paralegal/advocate/support/clerk. For four years: \$4.8 million.

3. Expanding Legal Aid Center's **Education Advocacy Program** by funding additional staff to represent vulnerable school age children.

We are not reaching all the students in need. Expanding the Education Advocacy Program to review every child in foster care and to represent at-risk families with struggling students who are unable to advocate for themselves would improve educational outcomes. Our small staff (1 attorney and 3 advocates) works to identify educational barriers and fights to provide accommodations, thereby giving vulnerable students the best opportunities to begin their future and stop the cycle of poverty and the school to prison pipeline. In 2020, our team helped 507 students. Expanding our staff to create teams for specific areas of need in Clark County will allow us to triple the number of students and children in the juvenile justice system we can help.

- Funding ask: \$805,000 a year for 2 FTE attorneys & 4 FTE /advocate/support. For 4 years; \$3.22 million

4. Investing in a stable location the **Children's Attorneys Project** for the delivery of legal assistance to children in foster care and those in need of educational advocacy.

The Children's Attorneys Project of Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada began in 1999 with one attorney and one child client. Two decades later, we reached a milestone in representing every child in foster care in Clark County. The same year, the Children's Attorneys Project

received the inaugural Outstanding Children's Law Office award from the National Association of Counsel for Children. This award recognized the attorneys and staff of the Children's Attorneys Project (CAP) who fight every day to provide stability and the foundation for a bright future for each client.

We currently represent about 6,000 children each year. The CAP team grew significantly over the years to meet the needs of the children and this growth required several moves to accommodate an expanding staff. Every move has been costly and temporarily disrupts the working efficiency of the CAP team. The Children's Attorneys Project should have an appropriate and stable location so the attorneys and staff can focus on providing the services our clients need to have a voice in their case and in their future. The space we are currently renting is in a prime location near the Family Court, which means less time traveling to and from court and more time to dedicate to our young clients. Unfortunately, the space is not big enough as it consists of the first floor of a 2-story office building. The square footage of the first floor is simply inadequate for the needs of the Children's Attorneys Project. Legal Aid Center has the option to purchase the entire building. With some rehabilitation to fit the needs of the Children's Attorneys Project and their Education Advocacy Program, this building could become a permanent home for CAP. Investing in this project will bring long-term benefits to our efforts serving some of the State's most vulnerable children.

- Funding ask: \$3,500,000 for acquisition of the building & \$2,000,000 for renovation; \$5,500,000 total

5. Scaling up the **Family Justice Project** staff to assist more victims of domestic violence and violent crime, and immigrant victims of violence and crime, including children.

Times of significant stress increase incidents of domestic violence. During the pandemic, with stay at home directives in place, victims were unable to escape their abusers and abuse escalated.⁸ Domestic violence hotline calls went up by 20% in 2020.⁹ During the shutdown, Legal Aid Center and our Family Law Self-Help Center worked with the courts to provide access for survivors to obtain TPOs by phone, email, and online, but the need continues to be overwhelming. Legal Aid Center staff assist victims with obtaining temporary protective orders and our attorneys represent victims through divorce, custody, and immigration cases to help each client break the cycle of violence, without the fear of losing their children or being threatened with deportation. We also represent victims of crime who have civil and family law problems that result from their victimization and assist battered immigrants petition to remain lawfully in the United States. Expanding the staff of Legal Aid Center's **Family Justice Project** will allow us to meet the elevated needs and assist more victims of domestic violence and violent crime and more immigrant victims of violence and crime, including children escaping violence in their home country. In 2020, the Family Law Project represented 1,466 domestic violence victims and over 1,300 immigrant victims of violence. Investing in this project will result in over 500 hundred additional victims of violence receiving direct legal representation each year so they each can begin to build a life free from violence.

⁸ <https://www.unlv.edu/news/release/domestic-abuse-and-covid-19>

⁹ <https://www.reviewjournal.com/crime/pandemic-fueled-more-domestic-violence-calls-in-2020-2342773/>

- Funding ask: \$690,000 per year for 1 Family Law attorney, 1 Immigration attorney, 1 family law advocate, and 2 immigration advocates for 4 years: \$2.76 million

6. Building a centralized **Victims' Rights Center** to serve victims of crime who are facing adversity.

The Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 1, 2017, was a senseless tragedy like no other resulting in thousands traumatized and 58 individuals killed that night. The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center (VSRC) was created to serve as a multi-agency resource and healing center. It provides victim advocacy and support; case management; counseling and care referrals; assistance applying for services such as FBI victim assistance and the Nevada Victims of Crime Program; as well as civil legal help for various matters including insurance matters, medical billing issues, debt collection, housing and eviction, family law matters, and more. In 2019, Clark County asked Legal Aid Center to take over management of the VSRC. In 2021, the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center received the 2021 National Crime Victims' Service Award from the Office for Victims of Crime.

The VSRC has been housed in a rented facility since it was forced to relocate from its original location at the end of 2019. With the passage of Legislation in AB481, which designates a statewide center to provide assistance to certain crime victims, it is imperative that the VSRC prepares to support and expand services for October 1 victims and victims of other crimes. Fortunately, Legal Aid Center acquired the old US Bank building, which is across the street from Legal Aid Center's main office, at a discounted price. The old US Bank building will serve as the permanent home for the statewide victims of crime center and will include a new case management system to handle the client expansion. This centrally located building will house the VSRC team along with domestic violence and immigration units. Services provided at this location will include legal representation, assistance, and support services to victims of violence so they can build a life free from violence or trauma. The evolution of the VSRC and the designation of the first ever statewide victims' rights center providing behavioral health services along with legal services, is a huge step for the State of Nevada in ensuring that survivors and their families have access to the supports needed to heal and recover. Congresswoman Titus is championing this cause and has requested federal funding to help bring it to fruition.

- Funding Ask: \$18,000,000 for rebuilding and renovation.