

December 14, 2016

Dear Friends,

As 2016 comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their hard work and dedication to our client community and our organization. We have seen many successes this year, and have assisted thousands of individuals who otherwise would have nowhere else to go for help.

For the calendar year thus far, we have assisted more than 46,300 clients in Orange County and southeast Los Angeles. Each month, more than 3,800 persons call our Hotline for help. We have seen more than 5,000 clients in office appointments, and our LRS program has referred more than 13,500 persons to attorneys in private practice for assistance.

We have provided thousands of services through clinics and individual representation in numerous areas including expungement, family law, special education, limited conservatorship, bankruptcy, tax, SSI, domestic violence, and workers' rights. We truly are a service community.

None of this would have been possible without you. The dominant issue in the lives of most of our clients is survival. Our clients are too often forced to rely upon the laws and the legal system to obtain the basic necessities: food, shelter, clothing, medical care, a job, and an education. Because of you, our clients have access to all of these. **The impact of our work is measured not in numbers, but by the countless words of thanks, cards, letters, hugs, and tears of joy our clients share with us every single day.**

I know Legal Aid faces challenges in 2017, but I also know Legal Aid is a strong and resilient program which has consistently been serving its client community since 1958. Principles the Legal Aid Society worked for back then remain true today. Equal access to justice and equal justice under the law are fundamental promises to all our citizens. **For our clients in Orange County and southeast Los Angeles County, we will continue to work to keep that promise of equal justice.**

As you know, I am retiring next month, which will provide many new opportunities for my wife, See Kean, and me. At first, we hope to do some traveling, and then we'll see what sounds like fun and seems important. It was imperative for me to know that Legal Aid would be in good hands before I embark on this next chapter in my life. Under the leadership of our new Executive Director, Kate Marr, **I feel at ease knowing Legal Aid will be in good hands.**

I've spent a career of 36 years at the Legal Aid Society, and knowing our staff and our wonderful volunteers, **I'm confident that no matter what challenges are faced, Legal Aid will continue to work in the most professional and effective manner possible to build a program that will truly provide equal justice for all.**

I appreciate all of your great work; it is because of you that I have such great confidence in the future of our organization. I offer my best wishes and happiness to you and your families this Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Bob