



Legal Services Corporation  
Office of Program Performance

**FINAL**  
Report  
From the  
Program Quality Visit  
to

**LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI**  
**Recipient No. 526010**

**June 6-10, 2011**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background on the Program Quality Visit**

The Legal Services Corporation's (LSC) Office of Program Performance (OPP) conducted a Program Quality Visit to Legal Aid of Western Missouri (LAWMo) on June 6-10, 2011. The team members were OPP Program Counsel, Mytrang Nguyen (team leader), Tillie Lacayo, Cheryl Nolan, and LSC Temporary Employees, Nancy Glickman and Alex Gulotta.

Program Quality Visits are designed to evaluate whether LSC grantees are providing the highest quality legal services to eligible clients. In conducting its assessment, the team fully reviewed the documents LSC received from the program including: the 2011 competitive grant application to LSC, including budgets, technology and PAI plans, workforce analysis charts, case reports, and other service reports. The team also reviewed the documents requested from the program which were submitted in advance of the visit, including documents relating to the program's intake, legal work, and case management policies and systems, advocates' writing samples and the results of an online staff survey. On site, the team visited all five of LAWMo's offices and spoke with LAWMo staff, board members, judges, representatives from government agencies, members of the bar and community service providers.

In performing this evaluation of LAWMo's delivery system, OPP relies on the LSC Act and Regulations, LSC Performance Criteria, LSC Program Letters, and the ABA Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid. The evaluation and this report are organized according to the four LSC performance areas that cover: 1) legal needs assessment and priority setting; 2) engagement with the low income community; 3) legal work management and the legal work produced; and 4) organizational leadership and management including board governance, administration, resource development and coordination within the delivery system.

### **Program and Service Area Overview**

Legal Aid of Western Missouri is a forty-six year old organization with a rich history of delivering civil legal services in the state. It serves a forty county area which covers 23,368 square miles in the western region of the state. The program's service area has one large urban area (Kansas City) and two mid-sized cities (Joplin and St. Joseph) with a majority of the service area being rural. The program's Migrant Farmworker Project (MFP) covers the entire state of Missouri with a particular focus on apple pickers in Lafayette County in the west central part of the state.

LAWMo is one of four LSC-funded legal services providers in the state and the second largest LSC grantee in Missouri. It has an annual budget of approximately \$8.3 million with an FY2010 basic field grant from LSC of \$1.9 million and a migrant grant of \$89,914. The program has a total of over 100 staff including 53 attorneys and the executive director. The program has a total of five offices with two offices in Kansas City (Central and West), and offices in St. Joseph, Warrensburg and Joplin.

The service area has approximately 340,000 client eligible residents according to the program and most recent Census data. The state has a large seasonal migrant population and LAWMo's service area has seen recent growth in its immigrant and limited English speaking population.

In 2010, LAWMo closed 5,741 cases. Twenty nine percent of their cases were in family law, 18.7% in housing, 16.4% in health, 12% in income maintenance, 11.2% in consumer and finance matters. Their extended representation cases make up 36% of their total cases with limited representation cases constituting the remaining 64% of their cases.

Kansas City, the highly populated and largest city in the LAWMo service area, is the locus of most of the program's staff and central administrative resources. The program uses a specialist model with ten substantive area specialties in its main Kansas City offices, and attorney specialty assignments in its smaller outer offices. The branch offices are largely general practice offices with an emphasis on family law, public benefits, and consumer matters. The program also has a sizeable municipal court unit that provides defense representation on criminal city ordinance violations in Kansas City.<sup>1</sup>

Two weeks prior to LSC's program quality visit, on May 22, 2011, a terrible tornado struck Joplin, causing widespread destruction, hundreds of injuries and the highest number of human casualties in the United States from a single tornado in over half a century. The LAWMo Joplin office and staff were largely unharmed, but the personal and psychological toll on individuals and the Joplin community continues to be significant. John Eidleman, the longtime chair of LSC's National Disaster Legal Assistance Committee, joined the LSC team for one day onsite to provide immediate advice and technical assistance to LAWMo in the wake of the tornado. Months later, the impact of the tornado on the community, and on LAWMo's services to it, continues to unfold.

### **Summary of Findings**

In many ways, LAWMo is a remarkable and ambitious program. It has a history of engaging in quality legal representation and work that produces significant results for clients and communities. This work has been anchored by a number of career legal services attorneys with decades of grassroots experience and who are recognized as stalwart community leaders and advocates. The program has placed collaboration with community partners as a program-wide priority and, particularly through its flagship medical-legal partnerships, is seeing success with clients and with its strategic and entrepreneurial fundraising efforts.

The program is currently undergoing a very significant transition from a longtime founder to a successor executive director, and metaphors for this transition are being played out in many parts of the organization. The new executive director, who has been the deputy director for 7 years and the executive director for 3 years, is sharp, energetic, and very effective at fundraising and expanding LAWMo's programs. There is also a cohort of advocates who are more recent hires and newer to leadership positions, who have been eager to learn and help shape the program. The team observed that several aspects of the program's work, like LAWMo's intake system, are

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<sup>1</sup> The work of the Municipal Court Unit was not within the scope of this program quality visit.

not coordinated and are hampered by protocols and systems that are inefficient. The program has tremendous depth of experience and skill in their advocates, but the program's legal work outcomes and systems vary between units and offices and are also hindered by technology challenges. The staff spend an inordinate amount of time on unreliable and inefficient technology.

In 2009, LAWMo engaged in a strategic planning process and has been disciplined about implementing and evaluating the goals and objectives of the plan. Because this iteration of the strategic plan was not as focused on in-depth analysis of community and client challenges, the process did not appear to provide LAWMo's staff with a shared clarity of purpose with regard to critical legal needs. As it moves forward, LAWMo's leadership and management has an opportunity to make a focused effort to work more cohesively as a team, based on a shared, client-centered vision for the program and allow for changes, improvements, and investment that are in the best interest of low-income clients and the long-term sustainability of the organization. This includes investing in technology, coordinating intake and legal work and increasing communication, trust, and support in management. With LAWMo's rich history of achieving remarkable advances for clients and communities, deeply rooted and informed by what was in the best interests of low-income people at the time, it can leverage its dedicated and impressive staff to achieve great benefits and far-reaching solutions for low-income people and communities.

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **PERFORMANCE AREA ONE. EFFECTIVENESS IN IDENTIFYING THE MOST PRESSING CIVIL LEGAL NEEDS OF LOW- INCOME PEOPLE IN THE SERVICE AREA AND TARGETING RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS.**

***Finding 1. In 2009, LAWMo engaged in a strategic planning process and has been very focused and effective in implementing the goals and objectives of the plan.***

At the time of the visit, the program was in the second full year of their 2009 strategic plan and had committed staff resources and time to implement the plan in a structured and disciplined manner. Many members of staff have been assigned and are responsible for working closely with staff and board committees to develop work plans and action items and have met regularly to status progress on the plan. In a short period of time, a number of strategic plan goals and objectives, which largely focus on expanding visibility, resources and partnerships for the program, have been advancing as laid out in the plan.

While some strategic planning processes may stall without board and staff commitment to implementing the plan, LAWMo's board, executive director and deputy director have been, to their great credit, committed to seeing the goals and objectives of the plan through.

***Finding 2. In certain areas, the program has been developing strategies and allocating resources to meet changing client needs.***

The program uses a specialist model in Kansas City and attorney specialty assignments in its outer offices. The specialist model in Kansas City includes ten specialty units: medical legal partnership, housing, domestic, federal rights, public benefits, Medicaid recovery, low-income taxpayer, foreclosure prevention, immigration, and community economic development. The depth of legal expertise in these specialty units and with many of the staff in the outer offices was impressive and largely attributable to career legal service professionals with significant experience at the program and in a particular area.

In certain areas, LAWMo continues to identify and respond to emerging areas of unmet need. The program is expanding its highly successful medical-legal partnership to more suburban and rural communities. When the program saw an emergence of consumer law issues, the Volunteer Attorney Project along with individual staff from the medical legal partnership and foreclosure prevention team sought to address the issue with pro bono resources. Through its community economic development work, the program is seeking to prevent blight caused by the speculative purchases or large-scale auctions of foreclosed properties. The foreclosure prevention project has also expanded its work to assist renters being unlawfully evicted by foreclosing lenders.

***Finding 3. LAWMo's 2009 strategic planning process included a basic legal needs assessment.***

The process of developing LAWMo's strategic plan included surveys and focus groups of staff, clients, community partners, funders, the bar and board members. In the course of this process, staff and 14 clients provided summary input about legal needs and issues facing the community and these results were subsequently tabulated and summarized in "needs assessment" reports.

As part of its strategic plan goal, "To enhance and expand programs to better meet the needs of clients," LAWMo created a resource allocation committee to monitor clients' emerging legal needs and determine how to best use resources to meet those needs on an ongoing basis. The work of the committee has consisted of intake data review and meetings and quarterly written reports about "client need" from supervisors and managers who had interviews with over 50 external stakeholder agencies.

LAWMo's large and diverse staff are passionate and dedicated to helping low-income people and the Resource Allocation Committee is a manifestation of this. It appeared to the team, however, that staff did not share a sense of team or common language to describe LAWMo's core mission. In the next iteration of the strategic plan, the program has an opportunity to conduct a more rigorous and comprehensive review of internal and external data and trends, conduct interviews with a larger cross-section of low-income community members, and ask probing questions about the effects of the economy, unmet legal need, and barriers to access. This can provide a common clarity of purpose among the staff with regard to client interests which is fundamental to advancing LAWMo's mission and should be the cornerstone of its strategic plan.

With a greater shared vision and sense of purpose, the program can avoid experiencing challenges and a divergence of opinion as it seeks to resolve thorny and fundamental questions about its work such as: how to strategically respond to disaster and rebuild Joplin; how to best

serve rural and remote communities; how to structure and improve intake; and how to increase impact cases. LAWMo can approach these questions with a “client-centric” orientation to avoid inadvertently implementing “program-centric” plans. In the absence of a clear and shared sense of mission, aspects of the specialty units can give the impression that the program’s structure may be tied to longtime practice, rather than grounded in the most critical legal needs of low-income people or in the long-term interests of the organization.

***Recommendation I.1.3.1\*<sup>2</sup> Where possible, the implementation of the current strategic plan should incorporate an in depth analysis of client and community needs. The development of future plans should include a process to crystallize a shared mission and vision for the organization.***

## **PERFORMANCE AREA TWO. EFFECTIVENESS IN ENGAGING AND SERVING THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE AREA.**

### **Dignity and sensitivity**

***Finding 4. LAWMo has recognized an increasing immigrant and limited-English speaking population in its service area and is building its capacity to serve it internally and in its legal work.***

According to recent Census Bureau data and as noted by a number of people interviewed during the visit, LAWMo’s service area has also been experiencing a growing immigrant and limited-English speaking population. LAWMo’s migrant farmworker team and staff attorney responsible for immigration are well networked and trained to work with limited-English speaking clients. LAWMo recently trained its staff on the availability of Language Line and an arrangement with Jewish Vocational Services in Kansas City to provide translation services. Currently, the program has approximately 17 Spanish speakers on staff and could benefit from additional language capacity on staff and capacity to work with the largely Spanish-speaking population outside of Kansas City. LAWMo’s Medicaid recovery project has been tracking cases involving limited English proficient people and is considering litigation strategies that address language access issues.

### **Engagement with the low-income community**

***Finding 5. LAWMo has placed collaboration with community partners as a program-wide priority and vehicle to reach more clients.***

LAWMo has placed collaborations with community partners as a priority for the entire organization, and their commitment to this goal was impressive and highlighted for the team

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this report, Recommendations will cross-reference with the LSC Performance Criteria. The sequence of the reference is as follows: Performance Area (Roman numeral), Criterion (Arabic numeral), Finding (Arabic numeral), Recommendation Number (Arabic numeral), Tier (asterisk). Recommendations that are indicated with an asterisk are Tier One recommendations and are intended to have an important impact on program quality and/or program performance and will be incorporated into the program’s LSC competitive and renewal grant application process.

during the visit. Several LAWMo staff members are involved with tenant and neighborhood organizations, domestic violence shelters, and faith-based social service organizations, in instances this involvement has spanned decades. Staff attorneys in the community economic development unit are referred to as “neighborhood attorneys,” rather than staff attorneys, and appear fully integrated into their designated neighborhoods. Staff members in the St. Joseph office are very involved in the United Way’s Unmet Needs Committee, a network of service providers who actively coordinate services and maintain collaborations for individual clients and the larger community. The office’s longtime migrant and immigration attorney in Kansas City has built an impressive network of service providers who are Bureau of Immigration Appeals certified and trained to identify immigration issues appropriate for referral to LAWMo.

With national recognition, LAWMo’s medical legal partnership is redefining the scope and reach of the medical-legal model for a legal aid office and as a vehicle for client access. Now seamlessly integrated with over 100 social workers at Children’s Mercy Hospital, the medical-legal partnership has expanded to Kansas City’s largest hospitals, a family service center, and a free health clinic. LAWMo also has plans to expand the medical-legal partnership to a hospital near St. Joseph and seeks opportunities to expand to their other offices as well. As one national expert on medical-legal partnerships noted during the visit, “LAWMo is one of the stars of the national medical-legal partnership network.”

#### **Access and utilization by the low-income population**

##### ***Finding 6. LAWMo’s intake system is not coordinated and is hampered by protocols and systems that are inefficient.***

At LAWMo, the overall intake processes differed within and between offices and units. Much of the intake protocol and systems employed by the program were vestiges from the past, heavily dependent on paper forms including quadruplicate, multicolor carbon copies, multiple folders with duplicate information, and re-typing handwritten or already typed information into the case management system. Intake hours are open for most of the business day in branch offices and for specialty units with the offices closing for intake for one to two hours during lunch.

Intake is primarily effectuated by telephone call to the local office. Applicants are pre-screened by the receptionist. The process and time frames involved then varies among offices and units. Depending upon the office or unit, applicants may be called back by a paralegal or an attorney within 48 hours or, for divorces and bankruptcies for example, they are mailed a questionnaire and paper application before they can speak to any advocate. Applicants might be advised out on the second call or have to wait for such advice after the office makes a decision on the case.

In Kansas City, intake screeners and receptionists are supervised by the office computer specialist who spends 10% of her time supervising this staff and the screening process. Substantive intake is supervised by each of the supervising and managing attorneys for the respective teams and offices to which the calls are referred for full intake. The hours for general intake in Kansas City are limited to mornings on Mondays for 3 hours and 20 minutes, Tuesdays for 2 hours, and Wednesdays for 3 hours and 20 minutes. Staff reported that Kansas City callers experience long call wait times and possible drop-offs, are asked to call back another time, and

can often feel frustrated with the process. Callers with issues that fall into the specialty unit areas have more success getting through the system, at least reaching an advocate for further screening within 48 hours. The telephone system is dated and limited in functionality for callers and staff; the office having tried a DOS-based program which did not work. At the time of this report, the program had just received funding for a new phone system to be installed next year which will hopefully allow for the program to better coordinate intake and track call data such as wait times and drop offs.

The case management system (CMS), called “Zasu”, which drives many of the protocols around intake, was developed internally by LAWMo’s litigation director. The system accomplishes the basic functions required of a case management system, such as conflict checks. Access to create a record is limited which creates backlog and inefficiency, a pressure felt acutely now with the program’s ever-expanding, offsite projects. There are countless daily instances of re-typing handwritten or already typed information and manual tallying of data because either the CMS does not have the functionality or because staff lack the ability to manipulate or aggregate the data in the CMS. The process of opening and closing a case requires administrators to open three separate screens and systems. First, “Zasu” to create a record and run a conflict check, “Intake 2010” to key-in basic client information from the handwritten intake forms, and “Data Entry 2010” to code and status the cases. The instructions for this data entry process is contained in large hard-copy, printed binders which contain problem and closing codes. The system does not have drop-down boxes or pre-populated information.

An additional issue is allowing certain managers and staff to work outside the CMS. Veteran staff who do not like or use the system are simply allowed to operate outside of it, whether required by their work and cases or not. Others, who need and want a higher functioning CMS to help track project outcomes, their legal work, or docket, must create workaround systems to compensate for the shortcomings of Zasu. Without case handlers consistently accessing and using the CMS, it will remain incomplete, inefficient, and unable to provide real-time information to help staff, supervisors, and funders.

Intake is a key element of any legal aid delivery system and efficient, client-centered intake requires leadership and a program-wide desire to do it well. The need to make intake cost effective is an important one for LAWMo and is discussed further in the technology section of this report. There is a high staff cost and organizational risk in continuing to invest in a CMS system which is inefficient and is solely dependent on the knowledge and capacity of the individual who created it. Rather than narrowing access to general intake for clients, LAWMo should recognize and examine the significant efficiencies and gains it can achieve with better internal coordination and consistency and up-to-date CMS and telephone systems.

***Finding 7. LAWMo is considering a referral-only intake system in Kansas City which has benefits and drawbacks for the program and its clients.***

With a positive track record of referrals from the remarkably successful medical legal partnership and from their network of immigration service providers, the program is considering other referral models of intake in Kansas City, where LAWMo has the highest volume of eligible clients and cases. At the time of the visit, the program was finalizing plans to pilot an effort for

their domestic unit to rely on referrals from domestic violence shelters that enter into memoranda of understanding with LAWMo. If this pilot is successful, and according to LAWMo's executive leadership at the time of the visit, the program intended to explore this approach in their other Kansas City specialty areas.

The rationale behind the shift is to use service providers with more day-to-day, practical and immediate contact with clients to screen and vet cases, thus alleviating the Kansas City intake and advocacy staff from the volume of cases and clients that are not eligible for services or who do not follow through with services. The basis for the shift is also the very high rate of case acceptances from intakes referred to the Kansas City offices from either their immigration network or their medical-legal partnerships.

LAWMo will carefully consider the Kansas City referral-only shift from the perspective of clients facing access barriers, as it has the potential to further entrench the program in its specialty areas of practice without regard to changing needs. The program should also be cognizant of the important distinctions in the referral-models it emulates and seeks to replicate in Kansas City. The immigration referrals to LAWMo are highly dependent on relationships built over decades by a remarkable individual attorney who, by all accounts during the visit, approached her network with migrants and immigrants with messianic energy. "She's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year," "I don't know where she gets all of her energy," "She's always available anytime of the day or night," were comments heard often during the visit. Systems designed around individuals can be impractical to replicate and not sustainable in the long term. The medical-legal partnerships have also been developed, tested, and refined over many years through the national network. It is highly formal with significant planning for vertical integration at the outset (board, executive, mid-management, and front-line staff buy-in and "champions"). Again, it may be potentially challenging to replicate outside of a large institutional setting.

With a thoughtful approach to intake, the program can make the best use of staff and applicant time, avoid inadvertently turning away eligible people, prevent a separation of the program from its client community, and avoid missing critical opportunities to proactively spot individual and community issues before it is too late to help. LAWMo is interested in making intake an experience for clients that is open, affirming and responsive to people who need help and who often encounter many access barriers on a daily basis. As such, the system should be properly resourced with sufficient technologies, adequate and trained staff, and efficient procedures and protocols to allow for easy access for all low-income applicants in LAWMo's service area.

***Recommendation II.1.6.1\* LAWMo should establish a program-wide effort to analyze intake across the organization and consider how it could be better coordinated and streamlined in a manner that reinforces a client-centered approach and is sensitive to their individual circumstances.***

LAWMo should formally evaluate its intake system on a program wide-basis. This can allow for efforts which the team believes could improve intake such as:

- Having intake policies and procedures in writing and uniform to the extent possible.

- Conducting complete screening once at the initial contact, with the information being placed directly into the CMS.
- Having attorneys or paralegals advise the applicants early in the process so that advice and brief service can be provided expeditiously and the case will be quickly resolved if that is all that is needed.
- With the assistance of LSC, identifying other models of general intake in large cities that are streamlined and cost-effective without limiting client access.

**PERFORMANCE AREA THREE. EFFECTIVENESS OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES INTENDED TO BENEFIT THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION IN THE SERVICE AREA.**

**Legal representation**

***Finding 8. LAWMo has a history of engaging in quality legal representation and work that produces significant results for clients and communities. This work has been anchored by career legal services attorneys and the program hopes to build its capacity for impact cases.***

LAWMo’s work enjoys a strong reputation among the bar, judiciary, and social service community throughout their service area. Led by the career legal services attorneys on staff, LAWMo also has a productive history of engaging in both direct service work and initiatives designed to make a lasting impact on the broader client community.

Their groundbreaking *Tinsley v. Kemp* case, originally filed in 1989, placed the Housing Authority of Kansas City into receivership resulting in \$125 million in unit renovations and new public housing. The attorney who litigated the *Tinsley* case is the managing attorney for the Kansas City office and continues to remain very involved with the housing authority and its governing body, which oversees 1,900 units and 7,500 vouchers. She is also involved with and continues to foster an engaged residents’ council within the housing authority.

The program’s newer Medicaid recovery project at Truman Medical Center is directed by a 37 year career LAWMo attorney and enjoys a 90% success rate in winning Medicaid appeals for its clients, recovering \$1 million in coverage in its first year. Today, the project has brought in a total of \$8 million in net revenue for the hospital which largely serves low-income patients in Kansas City, and which is now providing LAWMo with significant funding to host staff’s work onsite. In the opening conference for the visit, the attorney in charge of the project shared her work and experience on a compelling, life-saving case, noting, “It is not just money and not just coverage. It is health care when you need it.”

The program has also made a comprehensive and long term investment in the urban core of Kansas City through its community development unit led by the supervising attorney, a 33 year veteran of the program, who currently chairs the city’s redevelopment authority and serves on its economic development council. The West End neighborhood of Kansas City, where LAWMo’s West office is co-located with a community development corporation, has seen property values increase ten-fold in the past 20 years with a significant investment of social capital and with legal and strategic support from the program. With foreclosures now plaguing the city’s urban core,

the community economic development unit recently sought to prevent further city blight by stopping Wells Fargo from selling over 200 foreclosed properties in bulk at auction. Sixty of those properties are now being donated by Wells Fargo to area nonprofits for rehabilitation into affordable housing. The team's attention has now turned to hundreds of other foreclosed properties in Kansas City that are at risk of being sold in bulk.

In the wake of the Joplin tornado, the managing attorney for LAWMo's Joplin office, a 26 year legal services attorney, is involved in the City's Long Term Housing Committee and weekly disaster response meetings, in addition to working tirelessly with her staff to address the myriad immediate legal problems for tornado survivors. During and after the visit, LSC also learned that LAWMo was planning a two year project to bring-in two Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps attorneys and two paralegals to assist with disaster legal assistance efforts in Joplin.

The program currently wants to build its capacity to develop new impact cases and had been developing a strong core of newer advocates who are eager to be trained, challenged, and integrated into impact work. As part of the strategic plan, LAWMo is pursuing strategies to retain these new advocates and has focused on financial considerations, addressing issues like salaries and loan repayment assistance. LAWMo has also created important professional development opportunities by allowing newer staff a chance to manage small projects, specialty grants and new areas of practice. Attorneys appear to receive sufficient and appropriate training and non-technological resources to perform their work, but the training opportunities for administrative staff and paralegals appeared to be very limited or nonexistent.

***Finding 9. LAWMo's legal work appears to be hampered by technology.***

Staff voiced numerous concerns about lacking appropriate technology to provide effective and efficient representation. With slow computers which can, for example, slow access to online legal research, at least one advocate resorts to looking up cases on a personal phone. The team heard instances where staff attorneys or paralegals received documents or discovery from opposing counsel on a CD, but with old desktop computers without a CD drive, they could only view the disk at the receptionist or managing attorney's desk. Staff also indicated that they do not have the capacity to view or participate in webinars, now increasingly an important vehicle for up-to-date, low-cost training and CLEs in the legal community.<sup>3</sup>

***Finding 10. LAWMo's legal work outcomes and systems vary between units and offices that do not actively collaborate on legal work.***

Of LAWMo's 53 attorneys, 20 have more than twenty years of experience and 24 have less than five. The overall productivity of LAWMo's offices is strong particularly considering the municipal court cases which are not reported to LSC. While the program has a diverse mix of strategies between direct service and impact work, this currently varies by unit and office. There is also a variance between and within units and offices in terms of caseload size and extended versus brief service case closures. The program has a supervision scheme and an overall approach to attorney development, but again, implementation varies among offices and units.

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<sup>3</sup> The program states in their comment to the draft report that staff have the capacity to access legal research 24 hours a day, all computers have CD drives, and that all staff are able to participate in webinars.

Collaboration among units and offices varied greatly and while some staff members are participants in statewide and national task forces in a few designated areas, there did not appear to be an intentional mechanism to bring together advocates on a program-wide basis to share the same specialties and strategies. The Lunch and Learn seminars are an effective tool in fostering program unity and the committees developed to implement the strategic plan have also provided the staff with an opportunity to work across offices and units on issues of importance for the program. The program's ambition to replicate the medical-legal partnership outside of Kansas City is another example of an effort that is leveraging a specialty unit's success outside of Kansas City.

In some legal aid programs, the specialty units or litigation directors play a robust role in serving as formal "backup centers" or clearinghouse of information for the program and provide overall cohesion in the program's approach to its legal work. The specialty unit and litigation directors also facilitate impact strategies on substantive issues. At LAWMo, this is being discussed in a committee and with the litigation director who carries two other near full-time responsibilities for the program as the supervisor of the Federal Rights Unit, carrying his own caseload, and as the technology director of the program. There does not appear to be a more intentional and sustained effort to think about issues like subsidized housing, community development, and Medicaid across the program. In Joplin, for example there may be an opportunity to apply community development strategies as the city rebuilds with state funding for housing recovery and development.

***Recommendation III.1b.10.1 LAWMo should review its legal work and technology systems to develop a more uniform and efficient approach that meets its need to build long term advocacy capacity.***

The program can benefit from sustained attention to program-wide protocols around legal work strategy, management, supervision, and attorney development. This could include consideration of issues which the team felt would further LAWMo's goal to build its long term advocacy capacity, including:

- Adopting best practices and set uniform program standards especially in the area of new attorney training and development.
- Allowing advocacy staff an opportunity to engage in work beyond the limits of their assigned unit and specialty.
- Developing advocates caseloads to contain an appropriate mix of routine direct service work and more complex, impact cases and advocacy campaigns.
- Developing a mechanism for advocates who handle similar cases to network across offices and units to share best practices, discuss common issues, and assess potential systemic issues.
- Encouraging all advocates to develop on-going and meaningful relationships with low income community groups.

## **Private attorney involvement**

***Finding 11. The Volunteer Attorney Project (VAP) utilizes private attorneys in a myriad of ways including on individual cases, co-counseling, and clinics. It has been effective in using new volunteers to address emerging and existing work.***

Currently, LAWMo's pro bono effort includes a diverse range of substantive areas and options for varying time commitments for their volunteers. When new issues and cases emerged, such as credit card debt collections cases, guardianships, and referrals from the medical-legal partnerships, the program was effective in leveraging pro bono resources to meet the new need. It engaged Kansas City law firms to serve as counsel to a neighborhood association and to adopt a neighborhood, stopping the development of a mercury disposal plant in the community and helping with the creation of a farmers market for fresh produce in the low income neighborhood.

They have a cohort of committed volunteers that repeatedly take cases from the program and last year had over 300 pro bono attorneys take more than 400 cases. With their contract case fee especially low at a \$35 – 40/hour rate, they have challenges building their contract attorney panels especially in the rural counties. The VAP director has been exploring strategies to address this and build their contract and pro bono attorney base in rural areas. This appears to be an area which could benefit from LAWMo board involvement.

When the Joplin tornado struck, the program was quick to respond to the overwhelming interest of volunteers and the private bar and assisted with volunteers providing emergency assistance at the disaster centers. With the situation in Joplin ongoing and still quite serious, the program has an opportunity to continue to leverage pro bono for the Joplin community and outside of Kansas City.

## **PERFORMANCE AREA FOUR. EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION.**

### **Board governance**

***Finding 12. The board members managed a significant executive director transition and members of its current leadership appear re-engaged in LAWMo's work and interested in strategies to improve board and organizational performance.***

The LAWMo board members with whom the team met appeared engaged and energized after successfully navigating the succession of a long time executive director three years ago. They expressed how they were pleased that LAWMo's executive director has been relying on them for direction on issues facing the organization and how they feel more educated as to program operations and engaged in the program's success.

Current and former LAWMo board members are actively involved in the program's fundraising activities, particularly in the Kansas City area. Recently, the development team has been leveraging board contacts in support of its grant requests to private foundations. The Finance and Audit Committee meets regularly, reviews up-to-date financial information and reports

salient issues to the board as a whole for discussion and resolution. The executive director was also evaluated by the board in 2010.

The board chair and vice chair attended a nonprofit board member training at the University of Missouri in Kansas City and brought back a number of new ideas to help the board function more effectively. Board meeting minutes exhibit efficiency (e.g. consent agenda), educational content (e.g. staff reports, strategic planning updates) and effective oversight (e.g. discussions regarding grant supervisor positions, the gift ethics committee, long term financial planning discussions). There is a system for regular board training and board members are invited to attend internal staff trainings such as the Lunch and Learn series. At the time of the visit, the board also has plans to visit the outer offices, cognizant of the need to balance their Kansas City predisposition and educate board members about LAWMo's diverse service area.

As with many boards, some of LAWMo's client and attorney board members are highly active, others less so. As part of the strategic planning process the board is actively looking at strategies for increasing board participation and engagement. Revised committee structures are being considered as are mechanisms for including new voices on the board.

### **Leadership, management and administration**

***Finding 13. LAWMo is undergoing a leadership transition from a founder to a successor executive director and is building a foundation for the succession of its most experienced leadership.***

LAWMo's executive director has been with the program for 10 years and has been the executive director for 3 years. Though tenured at the program, he follows a very well-established executive director, who had shaped the program over 37 years. This is a profound transition for any organization. In this context, LAWMo is still undergoing a leadership transition with the current executive director establishing his role and vision for the organization. In his short time as the executive, however, he has become a tireless, enthusiastic and very effective advocate for the program with funders and external supporters. He has brought new ideas to the program, strives for excellence, and championed the strategic planning process which has given LAWMo focus and results.

The deputy director has been with the program for 9 years and has been deputy executive director for 3 years. She has played an important role supporting the implementation of the strategic plan and working directly with staff, mentoring newer staff, and supporting the managing attorneys of the outlying offices. With continued opportunities to work substantively with staff, the deputy director serves an important liaison role for the executive team of this large, expansive organization.

Other members of the program's leadership have over 20 years as managers. As discussed earlier, these experienced leaders have also helped shape a number of significant and far-reaching solutions to problems facing LAWMo clients. Through its strategic planning process, the program has astutely identified the succession of these leaders as a future risk for the program and LAWMo has been thoughtfully and methodically addressing this issue by creating

leadership opportunities and engaging new staff and longtime staff in the process. Through many interviews, the team sensed that there is a widely-held perception that certain aspects about LAWMo's work are exempt from being questioned, sometimes unreasonably so. Some newer and veteran staff members are reluctant to push for reform of internal systems, having concluded that it is not worth the hassle.

At the time of the visit, LAWMo's administrative management team was planning to work with a consultant to help build a sense of cohesiveness within LAWMo leadership. LAWMo's management and leadership can benefit from more attention to building a strong relationship and day-to-day attention to community needs and client interests for the collective and long-term good of the organization.

As mentioned earlier in this report, LAWMo will benefit from a shared clarity of purpose for the organization. As the new executive director establishes his leadership, he can articulate a vision and mission about addressing the most critical legal needs of low-income people that resonates with LAWMo's entire staff. Veteran staff leadership can gain insights from newer advocates who are establishing new connections for LAWMo with clients and low-income communities that face ever-evolving challenges and newer advocates can also understand and draw from LAWMo's career advocates, who have a strong, grassroots perspective on strategies in low-income communities, having worked for decades in Kansas City's neighborhoods and outer offices representing thousands of poor people.

#### **Management and administration: technology**

***Finding 14. LAWMo's low-cost technology systems are out-of-date. Staff members spend an inordinate amount of time on unreliable and inefficient technology.***

The program's practice and history with regard to technology over many years has been to develop or acquire open source or low-cost systems that are now outdated or will become quickly obsolete. Currently, LAWMo lacks a complete program-wide network with modern data backup and storage networking. The team learned, during and after the visit, that local servers in each branch office and unit, and which contain a majority of the program's legal correspondence and pleadings for cases, backup to external USB drives and the program does not appear to have appropriate documented policies and procedures regarding the storage and security of those backup drives. The team learned of an instance in the Joplin office, where the USB drive was lost. Firewalls, security patches, and software updates are installed on a computer-by-computer basis or, according to some frustrated staff, not at all. In addition to using low-cost systems, LAWMo has adopted security policies, particularly with regard to client information, which appear to go beyond what most government agencies, private law firms, and companies that handle sensitive client information would consider reasonable or necessary.

As mentioned, LAWMo's phone and case management systems are dated. In addition, the program's email protocol and system is unusual. The program employs two different email systems, one for internal communications and a second, "Electric Web Mail," for communications to individuals and entities outside of LAWMo's intranet. Receptionists and secretaries are not allowed to email externally, limiting their ability to engage with the client

community and assist attorneys and paralegals in their work. Staff members do not have the capacity to access all the email communications they need remotely, either because they do not have privileges or because IT staff have not set up and tested the capacity for staff members who request and need it. Staff members who use email and who work offsite often travel back to their office at the end of the day to print out emails to read at a later time. The migrant farmworker team is functioning entirely outside of LAWMo's email system, using Gmail accounts to conduct LAWMo business. When the deputy director worked in LAWMo's Joplin office in the aftermath of the tornado, she had no access to her "internal" email the entire time in the midst of the crisis.

A number of staff people need laptops to do their job effectively, conducting outreach presentations or working at offsite intake locations. One office has waited nearly six months to receive a laptop. Offices are only now receiving scanners, after administrative staff and managing attorneys expressed a longtime need for scanners to maintain complete client files. Attorneys, offices, and units use paper calendars with some staff having up to 3 different paper calendars to track their work, appointments, and docket.

There was before, during, and after the visit a concern at LSC about LAWMo's "non-traditional" technology systems. As mentioned in the sections of this report discussing intake, legal representation, and staff training, LAWMo's technology infrastructure appears to be at the root of many inefficiencies and staff frustration. While some inefficiency can be attributed to staff members failing to use technology systems fully, it was clear to the team during and after the visit that LAWMo's overall technology infrastructure, as measured against other nonprofits and legal aid organizations, are not up-to-date for a law office and especially given the pace of advancements and innovations in the field.<sup>4</sup>

There is no redundancy of information or skill with regard to LAWMo's many, patchwork "non-traditional" technology systems leaving the organization at a destabilizing risk, if anything were to happen to their current IT staff who are also responsible for designing and maintaining LAWMo's case management system, installing and maintaining all of LAWMo's office equipment, software, and network systems. This is in addition to the other important responsibilities that the two part time IT staff carry as litigation director, supervising attorney for the federal rights unit and intake supervisor of Kansas City.

The patchwork CMS is simply not user-friendly or designed to meet the long term needs of an organization with ambitions to expand and deepen external partnerships and demonstrate accountability and reliable outcomes to diverse funders and donors. While the system is low-cost, it comes at an extremely high cost in staff time needlessly expended on duplicate entry, with hard copy applications and information "waiting" to be entered into the system. Based on interviews during the visit, stakeholders with whom LAWMo has partnerships have taken notice because of the time, often involving hand tabulation, required to produce simple data, reports and information on cases and project outcomes.

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<sup>4</sup> After the program quality visit, LSC's program counsel liaison to LAWMo and TIG program analyst requested and reviewed additional information about LAWMo's technology capacity and infrastructure to better understand it and to compare it with other LSC grantees and systems.

During and after the visit, LAWMo's executive director, deputy director, and litigation director have been open with the team and LSC staff during the sometimes difficult process of sharing information and discussing the program's approach to technology. The recommendation in this report is intended to provide both LAWMo and LSC with the technical expertise and an impartial perspective which will advance a shared interest in maximizing resources and services for clients and client communities.

***Recommendation IV.3.14.1\* LAWMo should retain a technology consultant to review and audit their current technology systems and report to LAWMo and LSC critical areas for immediate investment and longer term technology investments over the next five years.***

### **Finance and human resources**

***Finding 15. Within its staffing and resource limitations, LAWMo appears to maintain basic and well-functioning finance and human resource systems.***<sup>5</sup>

LAWMo's finance team consists of a CPA and former auditor who, along with the accounting assistant, make up the finance team. Together with the program administrator, deputy director and executive director, they also assist with the organization's basic administrative human resources functions and benefits administration.

LAWMo's accountant described how she participates in finance committee meetings with the board treasurer, executive director, deputy director, and administrator every other month and also described the financial reports she prepares for the board and management. The program's treasurer is also a senior managing consultant at one of the largest CPA firms in the country. The program uses Blackbaud Financial Edge as their accounting software and the accountant sees the change to this system as an improvement from their prior software because it is more powerful and allows for better financial analysis and reports. The accountant has had opportunities to attend trainings and conferences with the other mid-west project directors and staff in order to learn what systems they employ. LAWMo appears to have a well-functioning human resource capacity, with the program administrator maintaining overall responsibility for benefits administration, coordinating and participating in the hiring and orientation process of new staff, and for maintaining personnel records.

At the time of the visit, LAWMo's endowment was \$900,000 with a total in reserve of \$3.4 million or almost 6 months of operating expenses. With LAWMo's plans to grow the size and diversity of their investments and funding sources, the program is seeking advice and perspective on the appropriate size of a finance team given the increased administrative demands of funder and donor reporting requirements and a more recent focus from the funder community on financial oversight.

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<sup>5</sup> This visit was conducted by the Office of Program Performance (OPP) for the purposes set forth in the Introduction. OPP findings and recommendations under this criterion are limited to staffing, organization, and general functions. Assessment of fiscal operations is conducted by other offices at LSC.

## **Resource development**

### ***Finding 16. LAWMO has a remarkable and highly effective resource development effort.***

LAWMO's resource development efforts are aggressive and extremely effective. The executive director is a significant force in the program's revenue enhancement strategies and tireless in his efforts to broaden LAWMO's base of funding, programs, and support. LAWMO's fundraising and marketing staff members are also highly skilled and effective in producing tangible results for the program.

Between 2007 and 2010, LAWMO increased its revenue by 20% to a total of \$8.3 million. The program's funding is broadly diversified between government grants, foundation grants, fee-for-service contracts and private donations. LAWMO has also been building up its financial security with a reserve fund and launched an endowment and planned giving campaign spearheaded by the program's former executive director and which has raised over \$1.5 million in gifts and pledges to date.

The program has an ambitious private bar campaign, called the Justice For All campaign, that is organized in three-year cycles. The last campaign generated more than \$1.75 million over three years. The current campaign has a goal of \$2 million over three years. Recognizing its development team is in a strong position to greatly expand the private donor base into the broader charitable giving community, LAWMO is exploring opportunities to expand the Justice For All campaign, including the possibility of a concerted effort to include young professionals and non-attorney donors in the leadership structure of the campaign.

In addition to these efforts, LAWMO has capitalized on unique opportunities to bring financial resources into the program. The Medicaid recovery project with the Truman Medical Center is one such example. This fee-for-services contract arrangement yields LAWMO approximately \$700,000 per year. LAWMO was also active in helping to create a statewide coalition to direct cy pres awards and distributions from the Tort Victims Compensation Fund to the legal services programs in Missouri. These sources provide significant windfalls to the legal services programs including LAWMO.

## **Participation in integrated legal services delivery system**

### ***Finding 17. LAWMO is an effective and important partner in the justice community.***

In addition to the above, the four legal aid programs in Missouri regularly collaborate and participate in monthly conference calls to share updates and strategize and coordinate on areas of shared interest or concern. The executive director of LAWMO also actively engages with his peers nationally for support and advice. In addition to the well-coordinated efforts on fundraising, the Missouri programs also participate in a statewide training every 18 months so staff may have an opportunity to meet and share effective practices, questions and ideas.

## **MIGRANT PROGRAM**

*The following discussion is particular to LAWMo's Migrant Farmworker Program and LSC's Migrant Grant to LAWMo.*

### **Program and Service Area Overview**

Like the other areas of longterm investment at LAWMo, the Migrant Farmworker Project (MFP) has a deep history within the state of achieving significant improvements for the lives of many migrant farmworkers. Founded in 1985 by its current supervising attorney, MFP now has four full-time staff including: the supervising attorney, a project director, a medical case manager, a migrant advocate, and Jesuit and Mennonite volunteers who work with the project throughout the year. The project receives a grant from LSC to provide legal services to migrant farmworkers in the entire state. The project also receives non-LSC funding that it uses to provide supportive social services to migrant farmworkers in Lafayette County. In Missouri, the two areas which employ the largest number of seasonal migrant workers are Lafayette County, approximately an hour from Kansas City and the "Bootheel" region of the state which includes the south easternmost counties of the state and is a seven hour drive from Kansas City.

In Lafayette County, apples are the primary crop and depending on the expected size of the crop, the orchards can bring between 300-500 migrant farmworkers for the harvesting season which runs from August through Thanksgiving, and employ an additional 150-200 farmworkers year round. Many of the migrant families have come to work in Lafayette County year after year, brought to the area from Florida and Texas by crew leaders working for the smaller, family-operated orchards. The strong social service network for migrant families in Lafayette County – due largely to LAWMo's longtime efforts in the county – has made it an attractive workplace and community for migrant families.

In the Bootheel, the farmworkers come to work on row crops such as tomatoes, cucumbers, melons, sweet corn, potatoes, and in peach orchards. There is also cotton, whose season runs from June through October and involves weeding, cutting, and "ginning," the labor intensive process of separating cotton fiber from seeds. The MFP staff estimate that approximately 3000 migrant farmworkers arrive in the Bootheel each year.

Since its founding by the supervising attorney in 1985, the project has provided significant leadership and representation of migrant interests in the state, particularly in Lafayette County. In Lafayette, MFP receives substantial non-LSC funding to provide comprehensive and holistic health and education services for migrant farmworkers and their families. In the Bootheel region, MFP was an early convener of migrant service providers and assisted with the founding of a number of migrant organizations that continue to provide services to vulnerable migrant populations.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**PERFORMANCE AREA ONE. EFFECTIVENESS IN IDENTIFYING THE MOST PRESSING CIVIL LEGAL NEEDS OF LOW- INCOME PEOPLE IN THE SERVICE AREA AND TARGETING RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS.**

***Migrant Finding 1: LAWMo's 2009 strategic planning process did not incorporate the perspective of migrant farmworkers.***

The 2009 strategic planning and needs assessment process incorporated the input of MFP staff and one staff person from the Lafayette County Department of Health. It is unclear whether any representatives from the client-eligible migrant farmworker community were a part of the strategic planning process and needs assessment interviews, surveys, and focus groups conducted. No one from the Bootheel region, which has the highest number of migrant farmworkers in the state, appears to have been part of the strategic planning or legal needs assessment in recent years.

The program annually surveys farmworkers in the apple growing areas about their needs during outreach conducted at the beginning of the season. Because of the direct social services and medical case management being provided through MFP in Lafayette County, the project staff at LAWMo have regular contact with migrant workers and their families and thereby gain a valuable perspective on their immediate needs. The project primarily provides legal services to the migrant population in the areas of immigration and public benefits.

LAWMo's migrant priorities do not address a common and significant area of legal need among farmworkers: employment-related problems which include wages and working conditions.

***Migrant Recommendation I.1.1.1\* Where possible, the implementation of the current strategic plan should incorporate more in depth analysis of migrant client and community needs, placing a primary emphasis on these interests. The development of future plans should include a comprehensive legal needs assessment which includes the perspective of migrant farmworkers throughout Missouri and especially in the Bootheel region.***

**PERFORMANCE AREA TWO. EFFECTIVENESS IN ENGAGING AND SERVING THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE AREA.**

### **Dignity and sensitivity**

***Migrant Finding 2: The MFP team treats their clients with dignity and sensitivity and is attuned to the access barriers faced by their clients.***

During the growing seasons, MFP staff spent their time working onsite at the farmworker camps on orchard property in Lafayette County or at the low-income health clinic which largely serves migrant farmworkers. All of the MFP staff are bilingual in Spanish and the project makes an effort to translate relevant written information and materials into Spanish. As discussed in other

sections of this report, the Medical Case Management Program in Lafayette County provides intensive individual services for its patient clients, nearly eliminating all access barriers for migrant farmworkers and their families in the county.

### **Access and utilization by the low-income community**

***Migrant Finding 3: The MFP conducts onsite, in-person intake with the farmworker community in Lafayette County, but does not have a sustained presence in the Bootheel or other parts of the state.***

During the migrant season in Lafayette County, MFP staff conduct intake and outreach from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. five to six days a week. With their small staff supplemented with volunteers, MFP staff also travel to the Bootheel four times during the migrant season for an annual total of 3 to 4 weeks. They place an emphasis on face-to-face intake because it has been the most effective approach and because so few migrant farmworkers own telephones. MFP works collaboratively with other migrant service providers and receives some referrals of migrant clients through these networks.

While LAWMO is very connected to the migrant service providers in the Bootheel, their staff appear to be spending less time physically present in the region which is a 7 hour drive from Kansas City. The staff use personal cell phones for work and LAWMO does not have a toll-free number for migrant farmworkers to call the program when they are in the Bootheel or after they leave.

### **PERFORMANCE AREA THREE. EFFECTIVENESS OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES INTENDED TO BENEFIT THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION IN THE SERVICE AREA.**

#### **Legal representation**

***Migrant Finding 4: With one attorney serving the entire state and approximately \$93,000 in LSC migrant finding, the MFP has limited resources to provide legal representation to migrant farmworkers. It is not providing significant legal representation in the key area of employment.***

Though the MFP has four full-time staff, it has only one attorney to manage all migrant legal matters for the entire state of Missouri. The MFP does provide a fair amount of brief advice and services to migrant clients each year, but the team continues to question the extent to which these limited services constitute the provision of legal assistance or involve more than assisting farmworkers to apply for benefits and access health care services. The most significant area of extended representation legal work of the program on behalf of migrant farmworkers involves immigration and citizenship-related cases and securing public benefits for clients.

Employment issues and the employment related legal needs of the migrant farmworker population in the state are not program priorities for MFP and are therefore not addressed by the project whose priorities are public benefits, education, and immigration. No employment cases

have been closed on behalf of migrant farmworkers over the past three years. LAWMo's 2010 CSRs for migrant clients show 26 extended representation cases closed under the "Agricultural Worker Issues," which are cases where LAWMo verified the farmworker's employment with the Department of Labor to get food vouchers for the client.

Onsite interviews reflect that there are potential legal issues in the Bootheel area. For example, during the visit, the team learned that there is no housing for the farmworkers working in some crops and in the cotton industry. Migrant workers live in trailers for 2 - 4 months, working around the clock on old and sometimes dangerous cotton ginning machinery.

***Migrant Recommendation III.1c.4.1\* LAWMo should build its capacity to address the legal needs of migrant farmworkers in employment-related areas, particularly in the Bootheel region and with migrant populations outside of Lafayette County.***

***Migrant Finding 5: The MFP staff receive regular training that is relevant for their current work, but have not participated in trainings outside of health and immigration in recent years.***

The MFP director and project staff regularly attend the National Migrant Farmworker Health Program. In addition, she has completed her ESL certification and currently teaches ESL classes and has completed advanced interpreter training. The MFP paralegal has received training from the Catholic Legal Immigration Network on immigration law issues. The supervising attorney for the project has attended National Farmworker Law trainings in the past but it has been several years since she last attended and the current and past staff of the project do not appear to have attended the national trainings.

***Recommendation III.1a.5.1 As the opportunity arises and to build staff capacity, LAWMo's staff should attend farmworker law training that focuses on employment-related problems of migrant farmworkers.***

### **Other program activities and services to the eligible client population**

***Migrant Finding 6: LAWMo has established an original and tremendously valuable network of support for migrant families in Lafayette County.***

LAWMo's migrant project is extremely strong in holistic, wraparound services for Lafayette County clients. As mentioned, it provides social services to approximately 400 farmworkers and their families who come to Missouri annually to harvest apples. In 2001, LAWMo worked closely with the Lafayette County Health Department to co-found a low-income health clinic to better serve both migrant farmworkers and county residents. Since then, LAWMo has built upon their strong foundation as a leading medical-legal partnership program and expanded MFP to include the Medical Case Management Program which provides complete, wraparound health and social services to migrants in Lafayette County.

MFP case managers coordinate health care needs of each migrant patient and proactively coordinate appointments, interpretation and translation needs, medical records, medical follow-up, transportation, and prescriptions delivery or pick-up. The project staff has also set up an

evening medical and dental walk-in clinic for migrant patients and evening WIC application clinics at the beginning of the season. The MFP staff also coordinate school enrollments by obtaining all necessary records, they assist with educational needs and special education plans and they provide backpacks and school supplies for the children of migrant farmworkers at the apple orchards. Migrant staff also run weekly youth groups for migrant high school students. They have also helped establish satellite health clinics.

#### **PERFORMANCE AREA FOUR. EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION.**

##### **Resource development**

*Migrant Finding 7: As with its general resource development efforts, LAWMO has been innovative in leveraging new resources for MFP.*

The LSC migrant grant for LAWMO is approximately \$90,000. The Migrant Project also gets a small subgrant of about (\$13,000) from Kansas Legal Services to serve the migrant population in that state. The migrant project has been extremely successful in supplementing its migrant funding with funding from other sources including the county health department. This funding has been used to provide services to the migrant farmworker population in Missouri.

#### **CONCLUSION**

LAWMO is an organization with a significant history of accomplishments that have improved the lives of low-income clients and changed communities for the better. With a newer staff joining and building from the foundation established by veteran staff, LAWMO is interested in maintaining a clear sense of its current and potential strengths and areas to change or develop so it can continue to maintain its focus on clients, while strengthening its long-term capacity to further expand its reach and impact in low-income communities. The program has ambitious plans for its future and strong potential to achieve it with a shared clarity of purpose and mission.