



2017 CLAM Campaign Case Statement

OUR HISTORY

Now in our **30th** year of providing exceptional legal services to the poor and marginalized in the greater St. Louis area, The Catholic Legal Assistance Ministry (CLAM) is a key component of St. Francis Community Services. Over the past three decades, we've seen our agency steadily grow to meet the needs in our community. CLAM's seven attorneys, one BIA Accredited Representative, and three support staff, plus numerous law school interns and volunteers, work to represent hundreds of clients annually in the areas of ***immigration law, family law, housing law, and veteran's advocacy.***

The work is noble, but not inexpensive. Even with funding from our parent organization, St. Francis Community Services (one of the eight federated Catholic Charities agencies), from other generous benefactors and foundations, and with space provided by Saint Louis University School of Law, it is always a struggle to fund our work.

A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

In 2014, with seed funding from the Brown Sisters Foundation, CLAM initiated its first-ever, year-end campaign to raise awareness of the need in our community and to gain financial support for our legal ministry. Local attorneys and law firms have embraced this annual campaign with enthusiasm and our donor roll has nearly doubled each year. The generous gifts to last year's campaign helped us to:

- represent clients in 924 immigration cases, 486 family law cases, 250 veterans civil matters, and more than 60 people in housing crises
- add two new support staff members
- host 9 *Power of Attorney* workshops and 15 *Know Your Rights* sessions with our partners that assisted more than 700 immigrant families in crisis
- conduct intake at various locations across the city and counties of the Archdiocese to reach vulnerable individuals
- provide legal aid for over 200 DACA clients eligible for renewal, plus additional workshops
- expand our work with veterans through engaging new pro bono volunteers



Certainly, support from our annual CLAM campaign has become a key element of our service to the poor and vulnerable throughout the Archdiocese of Saint Louis.

THE NEED IS ENORMOUS, CRITICAL – AND PERSONAL

Our clients cannot afford legal representation, and in addition to economic distress, many have suffered abuse, neglect, and/or trauma. In 2016, the dedicated staff attorneys of CLAM represented individuals in more than **1,700** cases within the agency's four key focuses. It is important for all of us to remember that they are not just cases—***each one is a person***, with hopes and dreams for a future, just like us.



Antoinette and her two small children lived all winter in North County without heat in her home. The landlord refused to fix the system, and continued to charge her rent, saying, “you have a roof over your head, don’t you?” In their poverty, this little family had no power. One of our volunteer attorneys helped her win a lawsuit against the landlord, providing enough to move to a new and warmer place.

Our hard-working attorneys frequently work at maximum capacity, and we continue to receive urgent referrals daily. ***This fourth annual CLAM Campaign is more important than ever.***

CAMPAIGN GOALS

With the demonstrated generosity of the St. Louis legal community, we expect this year's campaign to raise more than \$50,000 in unrestricted revenue. This will allow us to:

- **retain our talented, hardworking staff**
- **continue to provide intake at outposts within the Archdiocese and engage additional pro bono attorneys in those communities**
- **work with the underserved immigrant population in their journeys to citizenship**
- **continue to represent the marginalized whose legal problems stand in the way of a better life**

The challenge in trying to meet the tremendous needs in our community can sometimes feel like a burden, but the privilege of helping others can bring pure joy. ***Through this annual CLAM Campaign, we offer you an opportunity to share in the challenge and the joy!***