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# LEGAL AID JUSTICE CENTER

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March 15, 2010

Lisa A. Frazier  
Director of Finance and Administration  
United Way - Thomas Jefferson Area  
806 East High Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
VIA EMAIL: [lfrazier@unitedwaytja.org](mailto:lfrazier@unitedwaytja.org)

Re: Responses to Review Committee Questions

Dear Lisa:

Following are the responses to the three additional questions that the Review Committee for the United Way – Thomas Jefferson Area posed in response to our application for funding for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012.

1. Please provide detail for miscellaneous revenue (p. 13, line 17) and expenditures (p. 13, line 25).

The miscellaneous revenue line (p.13, line 17) includes revenue from new funding sources and donations to be raised. The increase in this line from FY11 to FY12 is due to anticipated reductions in state funding and grants. The miscellaneous expenditures line (p.13, line 25) includes insurance, fundraising, litigation, library and other expenses.

2. How many foundation grants have you submitted for this program?

In addition to generous support from United Way – Thomas Jefferson Area, our Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) program in Charlottesville has received specific support during FY11 from the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation's (CACF) Community Endowment and the Bank of America's local grant program for projects supporting low and moderate income families, in addition to in-kind partnership contributions from our medical partners. We are currently under consideration as a finalist for CACF's Youth Service Award for work done by our MLP program, which would come with financial program support. We have been working with our medical partners to develop additional grant support for this work through line items in grants they are applying for.

The MLP program also extends beyond Charlottesville to our other offices, and we have been actively pursuing support from private foundation funders in Richmond, Petersburg, and Northern Virginia for aspects of our work conducted in our offices in those areas. As you are no doubt well aware, it has recently been a particularly challenging time to procure new grants from private foundation sources, which have been struggling to provide continued support for existing grantees due to reductions in investment value, although there are some signs that this may be improving.

3. Please provide the amount of financial recovery or savings secured for your clients. Why is this not included as an outcome?

For the period July 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010, we saved or recovered our MLP clients

\$53,924 in lump-sum recoveries/costs avoided or annualized monthly payments/costs avoided. We do not include financial recoveries or savings secured for clients as an outcome measure of success because we do not want the financial stakes for our clients to drive our case selection criteria, or have the incentive to for grant reporting purposes. A housing client whom we help with housing conditions problems may not have a discernable financial benefit that we are able to record in the way that a client who avoids eviction does, but we do not consider the help that we provide to these two clients more or less important than one another.

In fact, the beauty and great value of the MLP program is that we are able to provide clients with advice on nascent legal issues before these clients are on the verge of crisis, and thus support their energies to attend to the medical needs of their families and improve their children's health outcomes. As we often say, if a client does not know that they have a legal issue until she has been served an eviction notice, our ability to help is limited by all that has transpired to that point. If we are able to help that same client resolve problems in her housing conditions earlier in the timeline (such as resolving a heating or mold issue through negotiations with the landlord), her child may not require the intensive medical interventions that will cause her to miss work and fall behind on rental payments.

As a final point, please note that as a result of significant reductions in the organization-wide state financial support for the Legal Aid Justice Center, subsequent to when we met in February with our United Way grant proposal reviewer, Catherine Boucher, we have had to implement certain staff reductions. As all of our positions are considered essential, this reduction in force was implemented primarily based on seniority. Carolyn Pointer, one of our MLP attorneys, was among the staff members affected by this reduction in force. This change notwithstanding, we and our MLP partners at UVA remain committed to the continued provision of services through the MLP program. Our senior paralegal, Liz Moore, who has more than 25 years of experience at the Legal Aid Justice Center will be the active on-site resource for our MLP work at UVA, and will work closely with several of our other attorneys to provide the training, written materials, and legal advice required to continue the delivery of high quality services we have been providing to our low-income neighbors through the MLP program.

I hope this information is helpful to the review committee. If they would like additional information, please feel free to contact Alex Gulotta or me.

Sincerely,



Laurel Reiman Henneman  
Foundation Relations Manager