Advocacy Impact Report
2013-2014

A Summary of LAWO’s Impact Litigation and Systemic Advocacy Work in 2013 and 2014
In 1964, President Johnson launched the War on Poverty, making 2014 its 50th anniversary. As part of the War on Poverty, the federal government funded legal services for persons in poverty for the first time in U.S. history. The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the agency that administered the War on Poverty, with support from the organized bar at the national level, began initiating local legal services programs with the federal funding. By the end of fiscal year 1966, OEO had established grants for 130 legal services programs. By 1968, OEO grants supported 260 such programs, which were located in every state except North Dakota.

Throughout the history that followed, legal services programs brought cases that urged the courts to recognize the constitutional rights of clients and correctly interpret statutes designed to protect their legal rights. Some of these cases reached appellate courts and successful decisions on these cases changed the legal circumstances of countless persons. Equally important, legal services attorneys have always represented clients before lower courts and administrative bodies to help individuals enforce their legal rights and access opportunities to improve their employment, income support, education, housing, and working and living conditions.

After political struggles threatened federal funding of legal services for persons in poverty, a study committee of the ABA and the President’s Advisory Council on Executive Reorganization recommended creation of a separate corporation to receive funds from Congress and distribute them to local legal services programs. In 1974, the Legal Services Corporation Act was enacted and signed into law. The Legal Services Corporation continues to provide funding for much of LAWO’s legal work.

LAWO continues the tradition started during the War on Poverty in its daily work and in implementing the Strategic Advocacy Initiatives. This Advocacy Report provides examples of affirmative litigation, appellate work, and community education that effects or has the potential to change the legal circumstances of large groups of persons in poverty. It does not reflect the countless cases in which individual clients experience a change in their legal circumstances as a result of being represented by an LAWO advocate. 2013 and the first half of 2014 was a time of change within LAWO, however, on every day of every week, LAWO advocates, alone and in partnership with ABLE, continue the vital work that was born out of the War on Poverty. I hope that you are inspired and heartened by the skill and dedication of these poverty law advocates, as well as the short-term results and long-term effects of their work.

Janet Hales
Director of Advocacy
ABOUT THIS REPORT

Through a joint strategic planning process, LAWO and ABLE have developed program advocacy priorities known as the Strategic Advocacy Initiatives. The firms reorganized their advocacy units and their management and supervisory structure around these Strategic Advocacy Initiatives. Beginning in July 2013, using the Strategic Advocacy Initiatives as a foundation, LAWO and ABLE organized, planned and supervised their legal work through the following practice groups:

» Healthcare and Public Benefits
» Housing and Community Economic Development
» Meaningful and Appropriate Education
» Independence and Self-Determination for Women and Children in Poverty
» Migrant Farmworker and Immigrant Rights
» Meaningful Access to Justice: Closing the “Justice Gap”

Pro bono advocacy is led by LAWO, which funds a Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) Plan as a requirement of its LSC funding.

This report focuses on significant cases and projects in which LAWO attorneys were the lead counsel in 2013 and 2014. All of the cases and projects involve broad-based implications for LAWO and ABLE client communities and involve legal issues that were identified as advocacy priorities in the Strategic Advocacy Initiatives.
Affirmative Litigation and Appeals

SPECIAL PROJECTS – AFFIRMATIVE LITIGATION

Sheila Ann Mercer v. Wilshire Commercial Capital LLC and Ohio Neighborhood Credit Solutions, LLC dba Cashland
Toledo Municipal Case No.: CVF-14-06288; and In re Mercer, United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Case Number 14-32586

LAWO filed one of the first cases in Ohio to challenge a new disturbing lending practice that is affecting low-income people in Ohio. Payday lenders are taking car titles as collateral for loans. Known as “title loans,” the payday lenders act as brokers for other lenders, charging exorbitant interest rates and excessive fees, and then repossessing borrowers’ cars if they fall even slightly behind on their payments. The practice deprives low-income persons of one of their only assets and their means of obtaining and keeping employment.

A consumer task force of legal aid attorneys in Ohio has been closely monitoring the development of this practice. LAWO actively participates in the task force. When a client applied to LAWO for assistance after her car was repossessed, LAWO attorneys identified the client as a victim of this new lending practice. The client had pledged her 2005 Dodge Neon as collateral for a loan of $1,700 in December 2012. The client was charged a brokerage fee of $1,475 for the $1700 loan. She paid approximately $2,200 in repayment of the principal and brokerage fee before falling behind due to further financial difficulties. Her 2005 Dodge Neon was repossessed in March 2014. Through participation in the consumer task force, LAWO was able to identify the case as presenting a systemic issue.

LAWO attempted to negotiate with the lender and broker and informed their counsel of the violations of Ohio law. After the lender informed the LAWO attorney that the car was scheduled for sale, LAWO immediately filed suit and a motion for a temporary restraining order (TRO). The complaint alleges violations of the Ohio Mortgage Loan Act, the Ohio Consumer Practices Act, the Ohio Consumer Protection Act, the Ohio Credit Services Organization Act, and common law causes of action. The court granted the TRO and the parties have entered into an agreed order that the car will not be sold at auction pending the outcome of the case.

The TRO saved the client’s car from being sold at auction, however, protracted litigation would be required to obtain the return of her car. Because the client needs her car to maintain her employment, a pro bono attorney volunteered to represent the client in a Chapter 13 bankruptcy, which will likely result in a more expedient return of her car. If the title loan companies file proofs of claim, LAWO will work with the attorney to litigate the issues involving exorbitant interest rates and excessive fees.
HOUSING – AFFIRMATIVE LITIGATION

**Jordan v. Greater Dayton Premier Management**  
*United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio, Western Division*

LAWO’s client, Renee Jordan, began attempting to obtain a reasonable accommodation from her public housing provider in 2009. As an accommodation for her disability of a visual impairment, Ms. Jordan requested that all correspondence be provided to her on microcassette tapes. In 2012, after Greater Dayton Premier Management (“GDPM”) had assumed authority for administering the Section 8 Voucher Program, LAWO, on behalf of Ms. Jordan, began contacting GDPM and the Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority (“DMHA”) about the repeated failure to provide audiotapes of written correspondence. GDPM had originally agreed to provide communications by use of audio recordings of written communications. However, GDPM discontinued this practice and began refusing to make any further accommodations regarding written materials.

After it became clear that the reasonable accommodation request was denied, LAWO partnered with Disability Rights Ohio to bring a lawsuit in federal court against GDPM and DMHA alleging violations of the Fair Housing Amendments Act (“FHAA”) the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). GDPM maintained that the client’s request constituted an undue administrative and financial burden and denied her request. The lawsuit, filed on August 22, 2013, sought a preliminary injunction. LAWO senior attorney Deb Lavey first chaired the evidentiary hearing on the motion for a preliminary injunction in December 2013. In early 2014, Judge Rice granted the motion and entered an order requiring GDPM to make the appropriate accommodations for Ms. Jordan by providing her with all written communications by audio recording. The case is set for mediation.

Without the injunction, the client faced an ongoing risk of unknowingly missing a required appointment or a deadline, and subsequently being terminated from the Voucher Program. Because she cannot afford to pay rent without the subsidy, termination could have resulted in homelessness. This case not only assisted the client with her immediate need, but also resulted in a reasoned and informative preliminary injunction decision respecting reasonable accommodation requests in the context of public housing. It has educated GDPM and DMHA, large housing providers in Dayton, of their duty to provide reasonable accommodations without asserting unsupported administrative and financial burdens to avoid their obligations to persons with disabilities. In addition, any settlement will address systemic issues involving persons with disabilities in GDPM and DMHA housing.
SPECIAL PROJECTS – APPELLATE ADVOCACY

Jackie Lee v. Vistula Management Company, Agent for Madonna Homes
Toledo Municipal Court Case No. CVG-13-17969; Sixth District of Ohio Court of Appeals No. L-14-1059

This appeal, currently pending in the Sixth Appellate District, Ohio Court of Appeals, challenges a HUD housing provider’s practice of failing to follow HUD guidelines, which require timely notice of an increase in rent after completion of a recertification process. Vistula filed an eviction action against Ms. Lee for failure to pay increased rent that was the result of her additional income from employment. Vistula failed to provide adequate notice specifically mandated under HUD regulations, which would have allowed Ms. Lee time to adjust her budget. Vistula manages a significant number of HUD-subsidized properties and it is essential to LAWO’s client population that Vistula adhere to regulations designed to protect their due process rights.

Eureka Multifamily Group, Successor to Intercoastal Group of Companies, dba Greenbelt Place Apts. v. Elizabeth Terrell
Toledo Municipal Court Case No.: CVG-14-01971; Sixth District Court of Appeals

Another important legal defense with ramifications for many LAW0 clients is involved in this appeal. In this case, the judge acknowledged that the landlord accepted the client’s rent, which served as a waiver of the landlord’s right to evict the client for alleged conduct during the time period covered by the rent, but allowed the eviction anyway. Protection of well-established defenses is vital to our client population because an eviction can result in not only a loss of housing, but also a loss of the client’s voucher allowing the HUD subsidy. Without the subsidy, many tenants are at risk for homelessness. After LAW0 filed the appeal, the municipal court requested that LAW0 seek a remand for reconsideration. The motion for reconsideration was denied and the appeal will proceed as originally planned. Meanwhile, the eviction against the client is stayed pending the appeal.
DOMESTIC RELATIONS - ADVOCACY FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

**Giese v. Morris**
*Sandusky Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2008-SU-041  
Sixth District Court of Appeals No. E-13-045*

LAWO and mental health clients achieved a significant trial win in 2013 for a parent with mental health challenges. After more than five years of litigation that included a civil protection order, five contempt motions for denying the LAWO client his visitation time, two custody trials, and one successful objection to a Magistrate’s decision from a 2009 custody trial, the trial court awarded custody to LAWO’s client. In a 188 page Judgment Entry, the court granted full custody to our client and limited, supervised visitation for the opposing party. The final custody trial involved 33 witnesses and 200 exhibits, as well as significant evidentiary rulings based upon LAWO trial counsel’s successful arguments. The court also found LAWO’s expert witness to be credible. The expert testified that LAWO’s client was mentally capable of being the custodial parent, despite having mental health issues significant enough to warrant full social security disability income. This case is significant because persons with mental health issues often lose custody of their children because of an implicit belief that they are not capable of parenting.

ADVOCACY IN A COMPLEX CIVIL PROTECTION ORDER (CPO) CASE; COLLABORATION WITH PRO BONO ATTORNEY TO IMPROVE RESULTS

**Monroe v. Ries**
*Wood County Common Pleas Court, Case No. DV 0031*

LAWO utilized the wrongful tactics of a respondent and his attorney as evidence of a pattern of stalking in this 2013 civil protection order case. The client, a pregnant mother with significant health conditions and limited education was being stalked and threatened by her former boyfriend, who claimed to be the father of her child. An administrative paternity action in Lucas County had already determined he was not the father. Ignoring the earlier determination, the respondent hired an attorney and filed a paternity and custody action in Wood County’s Juvenile Court and obtained an injunction restricting the client’s ability to move. The client, coping with a high risk pregnancy due to pre-existing medical conditions, had planned to move out of state so that her sister could care for her and the children while she was on medically-ordered bed rest. The
opposing party also showed up at the client’s door with a gun and made threats that she should not move. This deceptive second paternity action and injunction was considered an instance of stalking and the court granted a temporary, followed by full, civil protection order against the respondent. Through LAWO’s PAI program, a pro bono attorney represented the client in the custody action. Through the combined expertise of LAWO and the leverage of the pro bono attorney, the client was free from the threats of the man trying to claim control of her child and her family’s freedom to relocate.

ADVOCACY FOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

Feng-Endicott v. Endicott
Erie County Common Pleas Court, Case Number 2014-DR-0099

Through the Human Trafficking Protection project, several human trafficking victims have been identified. LAWO attorneys in Sandusky are providing legal services to enable a victim of severe trafficking and her daughter to disengage from legal entanglements with the abuser and trafficker. LAWO represented the client in a civil protection order proceeding to protect the client and her daughter. LAWO attorneys are also representing the client in an action to evict the abuser from her home and have filed a divorce action against her husband and trafficker. LAWO attorneys have also assisted the client in working with her public defender in a case in which she was sexually exploited.

ADVOCACY FOR SENIOR CITIZENS – PAYDAY LENDING PRACTICE

Springleaf Financial Services of Ohio Inc. v. Wreede
Auglaize County Court of Common Pleas, Case No. 2013 CV 0071

Springleaf Financial Services of Ohio, Inc. v. Wreede, et al.
Third Circuit Court of Appeals, Case No. 02 2013 0020

LAWO represented a senior citizen in a replevin action filed against him in an attempt to take his only vehicle, which he had allegedly pledged to secure a loan. LAWO filed counterclaims and a third party complaint against the debt collector, alleging violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act based on telephone harassment the client received on an ongoing basis. After significant discovery and summary judgment motions, the Common Pleas Court declined to enforce an arbitration clause and agreed with LAWO’s argument that the clause was unconscionable and unenforceable. Springleaf appealed the decision and the case settled while on appeal.
PRISONER REENTRY ADVOCACY AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR PERSONS WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

Second Chance Adult Reentry Demonstration Grant

In 2013, LAWO was named a grant participant in an innovative new Prisoner Reentry project in collaboration with the Lucas County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The CJCC received a grant of $416,000 through the highly-competitive Second Chance Act Adult Reentry Demonstration Grant Program administered by the United States Department of Justice. LAWO wrote the legal services portion of the grant application, which also includes services for case management, family support, and housing.

LAWO is coordinating with case managers to construct a plan for identifying legal barriers to successful reentry from prison into the community. The work under this grant is unique because the case management component allows for follow up on client participants to determine whether legal and case management interventions reduce recidivism. Data on outcomes for clients will be compiled and analyzed by the University of Toledo and reported to the Department of Justice.

After completing a planning phase with the case manager agency, LAWO is now scheduled to begin providing legal services to alleviate barriers to employment by assisting in driver’s license reinstatement, sealing records, releasing fines, and addressing child support obligations. In addition, LAWO continues to partner with the Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio to address systemic barriers to public housing and to provide many forms of assistance to the reentry community. In Lima, an LAWO attorney continues to attend Open Gate, a monthly gathering of social service providers and advocates for reentering citizens, to provide legal education and information about LAWO services.

CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Filed under seal
Montgomery County Common Pleas Court

In 2013, LAWO filed a petition for a Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE) on behalf of a client. Senate Bill 337, which created the CQE, became effective September 29, 2012 (Ohio Revised Code 2953.25). The CQE allows persons living in the community who have a previous conviction to apply to the court to
Lift the collateral sanction that bars them from being considered for employment in a particular field. Very few petitions have been filed in Montgomery County. Without the CQE, the LAWO client was barred from an unrestricted license and relegated to low paying positions in her degreed profession. Successful CQE petitions have a significant impact in helping clients move out of poverty through gainful employment made possible only when restrictions are lifted. The CQE was granted in early 2014.

**Sealing Criminal Records**

Training and schooling may be futile to persons trying to turn around their lives unless they have an opportunity to seal their criminal records. In Lucas County, the pro bono program through the Toledo Bar Association assists numerous jobseekers in preparing paperwork to petition the court to seal their criminal records. In addition, the clinic helps participants determine whether they are eligible for record sealing under Ohio law. Monthly pro bono clinics are known as “Second Chance Tuesdays” and are held at The Source, a county program operating under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). WIA is designed to streamline employment and training programs, help job seekers find work, and help employers find workers. Working with the Source, the pro bono program helps job seekers remove barriers to successful employment.

**COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION**

**Family Justice Center of Northwest Ohio**

In October 2006, the Family Justice Center of Northwest Ohio opened serving domestic violence survivors in six rural Ohio counties -- Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Williams, Putnam and Van Wert -- and at the Migrant Rest Center. The Family Justice Center resulted from a Presidential Family Justice Center Grant the U.S. Department of Justice awarded in 2004 to a multi-agency collaboration involving the Defiance Municipal Court, LAWO, and approximately 60 law enforcement agencies, victim services advocates, prosecutors, judges and other court personnel, probation and parole officers, and other community-based agencies.

In addition to establishing the Family Justice Center, LAWO attorneys have worked with Domestic Relations judges and magistrates to develop pro se clinics in four counties. The clinics assist those who may or may not be in abusive relationships to address the numerous forms that are required in separating from and divorcing a spouse. The clinics allow LAWO attorneys to identify and represent clients who are domestic
violence survivors and quickly address their immediate need for protection and representation in divorcing their abuser. In addition, LAWO attorneys identify other vulnerable clients and assist them in their divorces. The clinics have been welcomed by all of the courts and in 2013 expanded to another county in LAWO’s service area at the request of the common pleas judges and magistrates. In 2014, LAWO received the Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award from the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts in recognition of the effectiveness of this project.

Human Trafficking Victims: Community and Law Enforcement Education

Human trafficking has emerged as a major problem in Northwest Ohio due, in part, to the highways connecting the area to metropolitan crime centers. A challenge to identifying and providing legal services to trafficked individuals is that law enforcement and social service professionals have not received information and training on how to identify and refer them for legal assistance. LAWO expanded its advocacy and community education work in 2013 to include the area of human trafficking through a Skadden Fellow who began working with LAWO’s Family Justice Center to establish a human trafficking protection project. This work involves both the justice system and the domestic violence advocacy community.

Human trafficking victims often go unidentified and they are prosecuted for solicitation and other related crimes. Since the fall of 2013, LAWO’s trafficking protection project has trained more than 460 law enforcement professionals, community advocates, social workers, homeless shelter staff, legal professionals, and others to increase awareness and identification of trafficking victims. Through community training and collaboration, LAWO is seeing a growth in victim identification. The impact on the eligible client population is that previously invisible victims are now being identified as victims and referred to LAWO for legal services to address the numerous legal problems stemming from their exploitation.

When a survivor is identified, she needs comprehensive legal services to assist her in freeing herself from the abusive relationship and addressing the numerous legal problems stemming from her exploitation. As a full-service legal provider, LAWO provides comprehensive legal services to help survivors free themselves from the abusive relationship and addressing the numerous legal problems stemming from their exploitation.
Advocacy on Behalf of Senior Citizens

In the Dayton area, with the support of funding from Montgomery County through a Human Services Levy (HSL), LAWO actively participates in a multi-agency coalition that addresses the needs of the frail elderly, many of whom do not have the ability to leave their homes to access services. Caseworkers at the Area Agency on Aging, Adult Protective Services, the Ombudsman’s office, and elsewhere turn to LAWO when their frail elderly clients need legal assistance to address barriers to health, safety, and security. Through education, cross-trainings, referrals, advocacy, and individual legal representation, LAWO addresses legal issues such as domestic violence, elder abuse (including financial exploitation), housing problems (including landlord/tenant and foreclosures), consumer/financial problems, access to Medicaid, wills, and durable powers of attorney.

With HSL funding, LAWO can provide assistance to clients with household incomes above its usual 125% of poverty guideline, which allows the firm to assist many persons who would not have access to a private attorney. The project provides assistance using several models, including home visits, which also allow staff to assess the competency of a potential client; referrals from Adult Protective Services, the Area Agency on Aging, the Ombudsman’s office, East End Community Services, and other local senior service providers; extensive coordination of services with other providers and family members; and the provision of legal education to assist with the timely identification of legal issues and referrals.

Many elderly individuals, in particular those who have physical or mental disabilities, have difficulty accessing services outside of their home. The traditional methods LAWO uses to reach elderly clients – visits to senior centers, materials distributed to other service providers, access through the telephone or over the internet – provide no meaningful access for these clients. Their access to LAWO’s services under this project is through LAWO’s coordination with community partners who conduct home visits or otherwise have access to this population. In addition, due to their isolation, these individuals often experience physical and financial abuse at the hands of their relatives or caregivers. The frail elderly project has been uniquely successful in identifying and rectifying situations of abuse among this client community. LAWO also coordinates with the local pro bono program – the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project – to secure pro bono counsel to provide assistance with advance directives and powers of attorney.
Medical-Legal Partnership for Children

LAWO’s Medical-Legal Partnership for Children (MLPC) represented numerous primary and secondary school students during 2013. Among the MLPC’s significant accomplishments was the representation of a client whose school prevented her from returning to high school after her hospitalization with mental health issues. Due to the extensive networking of the MLPC attorney, a counselor was aware of MLPC’s advocacy work and referred the student and her mother to the MLPC attorney. The attorney successfully negotiated with the school to allow the client to return to school and worked with the client and school to develop a 504 plan that provided necessary accommodations and support. The student graduated in 2013 with honors and was awarded a presidential scholarship to her college for the fall.

In 2013, the MLPC expanded into the Dayton area. As part of the reorganization, MLPC moved to ABLE in 2014.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE; PRO BONO ADVOCACY

Legal Aid Line/LAWO Pro Bono Clinics

Legal Aid Line and LAWO’s pro bono program continued to host on-site corporate attorney and attorney affinity group pro bono counsel and advice clinics. The clinics offer pro bono attorney volunteers the opportunity to provide scheduled counsel and advice to clients by telephone. Clients from throughout the 32-county service area receive assistance through these clinics. Without the clinics, the clients would not otherwise receive legal services due to limited resources. Marathon Petroleum Corporation continues to staff clinics twice yearly.

In 2013, ABLE’s Communication Director, Legal Aid Line, and LAWO’s pro bono program developed an instructional video designed to recruit additional volunteers as well as train volunteer attorneys. The production of the video was funded by an LAWO and ABLE board member and a pro bono attorney clinic volunteer.
Virtual Office Project – Brief Counsel and Advice via Skype™

In 2013, LAWO pro bono programs based in Dayton and Toledo piloted a new Rural Virtual Office Project (RVOP) to leverage attorney resources available in Dayton and Toledo to serve low-income persons in underserved, rural counties. The project involves monthly pro bono legal clinics using video telephone calls through Skype™ to connect clients in several rural communities in LAWO’s service area with attorneys in Dayton and Toledo. The clinics help redress the geographic misalignment of attorneys and clients – medium and large law firms centered in the Toledo and Dayton areas and low-income clients with unmet legal needs in the surrounding rural counties.

Pro bono advocates partner with local libraries and community organizations where intake and live brief counsel and advice clinics are offered. Attorneys at law firms in Dayton and Toledo provide counsel and advice via Skype™ at ongoing monthly clinics. In addition, several attorneys from rural communities have become engaged in serving clients due to the increased visibility of pro bono activities in the targeted counties.

Through the project, LAWO and the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyer’s Project have increased the number of clients who receive pro bono legal assistance in their rural counties. The rural communities’ receptiveness is illustrated by several examples of cooperation. In one such example, the Director of a Shelby County library branch believed so strongly in the need for legal services for low-income people that she gives up her own office – one of the only private places in the small library – for the monthly virtual clinic.

TIG Live Help Project

LAWO is expanding access to legal assistance and information through a Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grant (TIG). This innovative project received the TIG award based on its proposal to adapt Live Help/LiveChat technology to allow pro bono counsel to provide online counsel and advice to clients located throughout the service area – without ever leaving their offices. This new project leverages existing online communication tools and matches low income persons with pro bono attorneys based on availability and expertise. The project will involve more attorneys in our mission and work by offering pro bono attorneys practicing in the rural counties in our service area a new and flexible volunteer opportunity.

The LiveHelp project will expand the capacity of LAWO to provide legal assistance to its clients that otherwise would not have access to legal assistance due to limited resources. During 2013, staffs designed and implemented several aspects of the project, have recruited and trained volunteers, and are on schedule to launch the project.
ADVOCACY FOR LOW-INCOME TAXPAYERS

*Low Income Taxpayer Clinic*

LAWO’s Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) provides legal representation to low income taxpayers with disputes with the I.R.S. Because IRS liens are not dischargeable in bankruptcy, it is vital that LAWO’s client population has access to this service. During 2013, LAWO conducted education to community partners and saw an increase in client numbers over the same period of time in 2012. LAWO refers some of the tax cases to pro bono attorneys as part of the grant requirement, as well as providing outreach and education to the community on low income taxpayer issues.
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