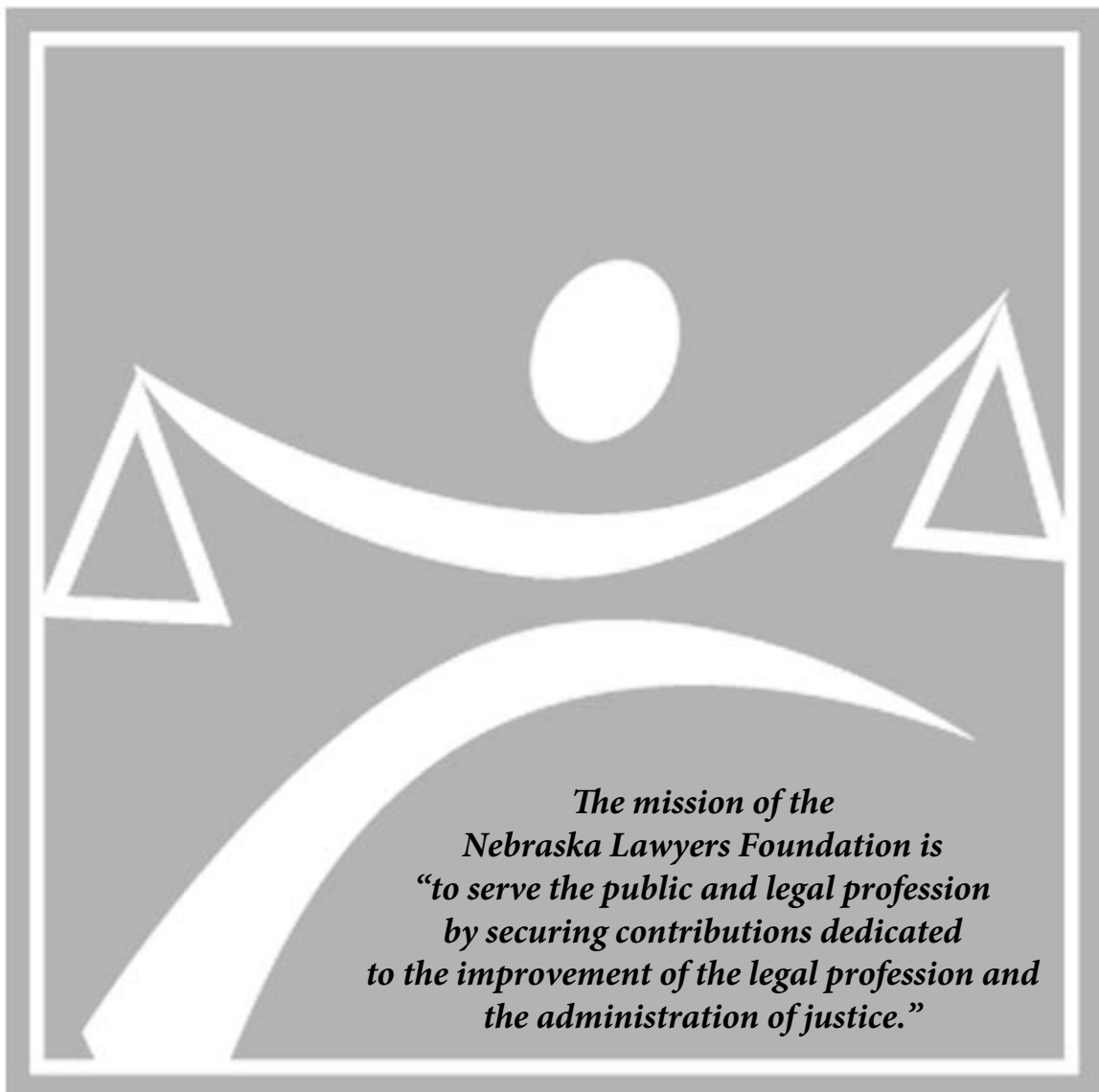


NEBRASKA

Lawyers Foundation

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

FOR FISCAL YEAR JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2015



*The mission of the
Nebraska Lawyers Foundation is
“to serve the public and legal profession
by securing contributions dedicated
to the improvement of the legal profession and
the administration of justice.”*



Since 1982, the Volunteer Lawyers Project has developed and facilitated pro bono opportunities for Nebraska lawyers. VLP programs offer hope to people turned away each year by legal service providers who lack the resources or staff to help every person who needs free legal services. Without VLP, many Nebraskans are left to navigate a complex judicial system on their own.

The number of Nebraskans living in poverty has increased each year. Studies show that only 20% of the civil legal needs of low-income persons are being met. Thousands of people who cannot afford an attorney feel desperate, hopeless, and alone.

VLP programs are developed based on critical legal needs in Nebraska communities, and each program is assessed according to those needs. Historically, VLP has managed two major pro bono projects: Self-Help Centers and connecting unrepresented people with a volunteer lawyer.

Self-Help Centers

Self-Help Centers are located in courthouses in Buffalo, Douglas, Hall, Lancaster, Madison, and Scotts Bluff counties. In 2015, volunteers met with 4,160 visitors to provide general information about the court and civil court process, give information about legal resources and legal services that may be available, answer basic questions about divorce, custody, support, guardianship, protective orders, landlord/tenant, debtor and other civil matters, and help visitors understand and complete approved court forms.

Referral to a Volunteer Attorney

Since 2014, Legal Aid of Nebraska has provided a centralized intake and referral system to VLP. Last year, Legal Aid referred 478 applications to VLP. Priority cases included guardianship, divorce, paternity, custody, name change, small claims, bankruptcy, and select civil cases. VLP matched 102 of the referred applicants with an attorney from the VLP network.

Telephone Requests for Assistance

VLP staff processed nearly 3,500 calls for legal assistance or referrals. Staff provides callers with information about available resources, information, and referral to legal aid service providers.

“A lawyer should be mindful of deficiencies in the administration of justice and of the fact that the poor, and sometimes persons who are not poor, cannot afford adequate legal assistance. Therefore, all lawyers should devote professional time and resources and use civic influence to ensure equal access to our system of justice for all those who because of economic or social barriers cannot afford or secure adequate legal counsel.”
—Preamble, Neb. Ct. R. of Prof. Cond.



Collaboration with Nebraska Families Collaborative

During the first ten months of 2015, in collaboration with the Nebraska Families Collaborative, VLP facilitated placement of NFC clients with volunteer lawyers. NFC paid volunteers \$500 to represent NFC clients who needed a District Court Order regarding children subject to the jurisdiction of the Douglas and Sarpy County Juvenile Court. During 2015, volunteers assisted nearly 50 individuals needing custody, parenting time, and stability for their children. The partnership for this program ended in November 2015.

“There are people like me who fall through the safety net. If it wasn’t for the volunteers it would make our lives so much more difficult.”---VLP Client
“Thanks for all of your assistance. Your knowledge and commitment to help oneself is beyond measure. You are so appreciated.”---Visitor, Self Help Center

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT,
CONTACT CAROL CLEAVER, (402) 475-7091, CCLEAVER@NEBAR.COM**



Thank you to the volunteer lawyers who, in 2015, helped more than 4,000 low-income Nebraskans access a judicial system too difficult to navigate on their own.

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Melodie Bellamy
Jack Besse
Brandon Dugan
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Michael Synek
Jeffrey Wirth

Douglas County

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Michael Kinney
David Koukol
Kendall Krajcick
Steven "Steve" Lefler
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William Minich
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Hall County

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Matthew Boyle
Kevin Brostrom
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Jerom Janulewicz
Jennifer Kearney
Susan Koenig
John McDermott
Michelle Oldham
Mark Porto
James Truell
Michael Rickert
Audrey Rowley
John "J.D." Sabott
Galen Stehlik
Mitch Stehlik
Erin Urbom
James Wagoner
Lori Wilson

Lancaster County

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Jocelyn Golden
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Darren Hartman
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Adam Hoelsing
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Luke Klinker
Jane Langan Mach
Danny Leavitt
John Lentz
David Lepant
Jeremiah Luebbe
William "Bill" Lindsay, Jr.
William Madelung
Alan Martin
Craig Martin
Charles "Chuck" Maser
JoAnn Maurer

Megan McDowell
Gretchen McGill
Ryan McIntosh
William Minich
John Morgan
Ann Moshman
Dennis Mullin
Damilola John Oluyole
Patrick Oman
Daniel Pape
Andrew Pease
Daniel Pederson
Matthew Pederson
Ralph E. Peppard
Darren Pekny
Arturo Perez
James Place
Sanford "Sandy" Pollack
James Reisinger
Thomas "Tom" Rowen
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Anastasia Wagner
Jeffrey Wagner
William "Bill" Warnes
Mara Wilde
Ryan Wolfe
Thomas Zimmerman



By addressing systemic barriers to equity and access, the Minority Justice Committee (MJC) improves the justice system and strengthens public trust and confidence in the courts and legal profession.

The mission of the Committee is to:

- Ensure equal access to justice for all Nebraskans
- Address racial disparities in both the juvenile and adult justice systems
- Increase the diversity of Nebraska’s judicial and legal workforce

Contributions to the Nebraska Lawyers Foundation support the work of the Minority Justice Committee. Below are just a few initiatives your contributions support:

Reducing Language Barriers

The Minority Justice Committee was recently awarded a grant from Woods Charitable Fund to pilot an on-call interpreter service for attorneys. In 2013, the MJC conducted an assessment of interpreter services in Nebraska’s state courts. One of the primary findings was that while the Nebraska Judicial Branch does a good job of providing high-quality interpreter services for all in-court proceedings, the quality of communication for out-of-court communications, particularly between attorneys and their clients, is lacking. The assessment revealed that many attorneys frequently use family members (including children) as well as “jail house” interpreters (other jailed defendants who claim to be bilingual). When these practices are utilized, serious concerns about both the quality of communication and attorney-client privilege are raised. When Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients are not able to effectively communicate with counsel prior to their hearings, it inhibits their ability to strategize a defense, develop a client-attorney relationship, contact witnesses on their behalf, etc. It may also deter them from using the court system to resolve issues (seek orders of protection, modify child support, etc.). The MJC also feels that the importance of accessing quality interpreter

services has been heightened recently by a case from Iowa that found that an attorney provided ineffective assistance of counsel when the attorney did not use a qualified interpreter for attorney-client communications.

Looking Towards the Future - LSAT Prep Scholarship Program

The LSAT Prep Scholarship Program provides scholarships for Kaplan LSAT Prep courses and covers the cost of LSAT exam fees for recipients who are historically underrepresented in Nebraska’s law schools, demonstrate economic need, and reside in Nebraska.

The number of scholarships awarded annually is dependent on charitable contributions. The scholarship program reaches both traditional and non-traditional students from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. On average, students receive an 8 point increase on their LSAT exam score.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MINORITY JUSTICE PROGRAMS,
CONTACT LIZ NEELEY, (402) 475-7091, LNEELEY@NEBAR.COM**



NLAP is a confidential program designed to assist lawyers, judges and law students through hardship, illness, addiction and other circumstances that may affect their professionalism or ability to practice law.

NLAP Programs

- Firm and case management assistance in the occurrence of unexpected death, sickness or disability
- Help with aging and retirement issues
- Confidential substance abuse/mental health support, consultation and treatment referral
- Substance abuse education and prevention

Large Firm, Small Practice and Solo Support

NLAP maintains a network of support for firms or solo practices that face hardship due to death, severe illness, accidents or disability within the practice. In these instances, management support and case referral and adoption are handled by the NLAP director or veteran Nebraska attorney volunteers.

Dealing with Substance Abuse and Depression

The Nebraska Lawyers Assistance Program offers help to lawyers, judges and law students troubled by substance abuse problems, stress, depression or any other disorder which may impair their ability to perform in a competent and professional manner.

The foundation of NLAP is a statewide network of judges and lawyers who understand. The NLAP director and the network of NLAP volunteers stand ready to assist their colleagues in all areas of recovery.

It is no "overstatement" to observe and confess that I, as an alcoholic pursuing recovery from a hopeless state of mind and body, quite literally and unreservedly owe my very life to the Nebraska Lawyers Assistance Program.

The state of mind which prevailed upon and literally controlled virtually every element of my existence prior to making the decision to "live" and do so in a state of sobriety defies explanation. In the absence of timely intervention and the generous provision of recovery services to address that which I have come to accept as my illness, I am certain I would have perished.

If unknown benefactors believed I would recover if I was provided the opportunity to do so I was clearly obliged to do my part. The ability to "imagine" a life without alcohol was restored. The hope of a new beginning became truth. It is this "hope" that sustains me. Because of the great kindness shown me nearly four years ago and the opportunity to participate in a recovery program which I could ill afford, I walk a different path today.

I am eternally indebted to the Nebraska Lawyers Assistance Program (NLAP). I am proud to be a member of a profession which cares so much for its membership.

NLAP Recipient

Education and Prevention

Education continues to be an important component of NLAP. We believe recognition and prevention are the first line of defense in an effort to assist individuals and avoid harm to the public caused by impaired members of the legal community.

For assistance or to learn more, visit www.nebar.com or call our toll-free hotline listed below.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE NEBRASKA LAWYERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,
CONTACT RICK ALLAN, (402) 475-6527, RALLAN@NEBAR.COM
NLAP TOLL-FREE HOTLINE - 24 HOURS/7 DAYS A WEEK - (888) 584-NLAP (6527)**



NEBRASKA LAWYERS FOUNDATION RURAL PRACTICE INITIATIVE

The Nebraska State Bar Association increased its efforts in 2015 to manage the shortage of small town lawyers in Nebraska.

Bus Tour

In partnership with the law schools, the NSBA hosts a bus tour which allows law students and new attorneys in practice two years or less to have the opportunity to travel to areas of Greater Nebraska during the law schools' spring breaks. Participants meet with local attorneys and business leaders and experience what each community has to offer a new attorney.

Rural Practice Interview Event

In 2015, the NSBA hosted its first Rural Practice Interview Event to connect law students and attorneys with potential employers.



“Twenty years ago, Chadron had 10 lawyers; Alliance had a dozen. Now, they each just have two or three. Clients in rural Nebraska who used to find a lawyer across the street may now drive 50, 60, sometimes 100 miles to find one.”

- Howard Olsen, a lawyer in Scottsbluff, and a former president of the Nebraska State Bar Association



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE RURAL PRACTICE INITIATIVE,
CONTACT SAM CLINCH, (402) 475-7091, SCLINCH@NEBAR.COM**



NEBRASKA LAWYERS FOUNDATION

SOLACE PROGRAM

(SUPPORT OF LAWYERS/LEGAL PERSONNEL - ALL CONCERN ENCOURAGED)



If you are aware of anyone within the Nebraska legal community (lawyers, law office personnel, judges, courthouse employees or law students) who suffers a sudden, catastrophic loss due to an unexpected event, illness or injury, the NSBA's SOLACE Program can likely assist that person in some meaningful way. Contact Mike Kinney and/or Liz Neeley for more information.

We have a statewide-and-beyond network of generous Nebraska attorneys willing to get involved. We do not solicit cash, but can assist with contributions of clothing, housing, transportation, medical community contacts, and a myriad of other possible solutions through the thousands of contacts available to us through the NSBA and its membership.

"Losing my son has been the hardest struggle ever. I am proud to be a member of such a compassionate bar. I moved to Arizona over a year ago and I am amazed at the love and generosity from my friends and from strangers that I received from you all. My children and I THANK you for lightening the burden. Bless you."

"I have received an awesome response from people. I'm just so overwhelmed! When I'm back on my feet . . . I hope to be an active member in the SOLACE program. It is such a lifesaver!"

"Our entire office is very thankful for the generosity the SOLACE program has shared with Jennifer. The kindness of our friends, colleagues, and complete strangers is something we will all carry with us in the future. Knowing that the legal community has helped Jennifer be able to recover from each chemo treatment without worrying about whether her family can afford for her to miss that day of work is comforting, as are all of the generous housing offers for her trips to and from Omaha. Please keep up the great work this program does!"



NEBRASKA LAWYERS FOUNDATION

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The mission of the NSBA Leadership Academy is to help attorneys make greater contributions to the legal profession and their community by helping them to develop leadership skills. The Academy is targeted at attorneys that will be in their third to fifteenth year of practice.

The goals of the Academy are:

- To nurture effective leadership with respect to ethical, professional and community service issues
- To build relationships among legal leaders from across the state and from across disciplines within the profession
- To raise the level of awareness among lawyers regarding the broad range of issues facing the legal profession
- To enhance the diversity of leaders within the legal profession and the community as a whole

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LEADERSHIP ACADEMY,
CONTACT SAM CLINCH, (402) 475-7091, SCLINCH@NEBAR.COM**



On April 18, 2015, over 400 guests celebrated the evening and helped raise money to support the Volunteer Lawyers Project. Russ & Caroline Westerhold of Lincoln served as co-chairs of the 2015 Barristers' Ball.

Proceeds from the Barristers' Ball support the VLP's case placement and the courthouse self-help desks in Grand Island, Kearney, Lincoln, Madison, Omaha, and Scottsbluff.

This year's Ball was a success and raised almost \$67,000 to help the VLP assist those who have nowhere else to go for legal assistance.

Individuals recognized for their efforts and support of the VLP were:

Visionary Award Winners

SENATOR DANIELLE M. CONRAD

Lincoln

MICHAEL F. KINNEY

Cassem Tierney Adams Gotch & Douglas,
Omaha

Robert M. Spire Pro Bono Award Winner

AVIS R. ANDREWS

Andrews Law Office, Fremont

The following firms and corporations graciously supported the 2015 Barristers' Ball

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- Workers' Compensation Section
- Young Lawyers Section

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- Husch Blackwell LLP



Twelfth Annual Greater Nebraska Golf Tournament

Deep in the heartland of America, on the rim of the Snake River Canyon near Valentine, Nebraska, is The Prairie Club. 73 golfers took to the first tee for the twelfth annual Greater Nebraska Golf Tournament on June 22, 2015. With the help of over 50 sponsors, the tournament raised over \$15,000 to support the Volunteer Lawyers Project.

Proceeds of the event benefit the Volunteer Lawyers Project, the NSBA/NLF's statewide pro bono legal assistance program helping low-income Nebraskans with civil legal problems.

The NLF would like to sincerely thank all participants, sponsors and raffle item donors. Your contributions have made a big difference toward making Nebraska more just and equitable for all.

Thank You to the Sponsors of the 12th Annual Greater Nebraska Golf Scramble!

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Hole-In-One Contest

Sponsored by Mercer Consumer

One Round of Golf for 4 with Cart

Donated by the Prairie Club

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\$100 Gift Certificates for Championship Winner

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*2015 Barristers' Ball
NLF President Robert F. Rossister, Jr., and Avis Andrews,
2015 Robert M. Spire Award winner.*



*2015 Barristers' Ball
NLF President Robert F. Rossister, Jr., and Mike Kinney,
2015 Visionary Award winner.*



*2015 Barristers' Ball
NLF President Robert F. Rossister, Jr., and Danielle Conrad,
2015 Visionary Award winner.*



*2015 Greater Nebraska Golf Scramble in Valentine
Flight 1 winners from L-R: Jack Besse, Larry Beucke,
Dan Bahensky, and Elizabeth Lydiatt.*



*2015 Greater Nebraska Golf Scramble in Valentine
Flight 2 winners from L-R: Brad Dawson, Bob Lindemeier,
Judge Donald Rowlands II, and Kent Florom.*



The following is a list of donors and sponsors for fiscal year 2015. (January 1 - December 31, 2015)
We extend our heartfelt thanks for their generosity.

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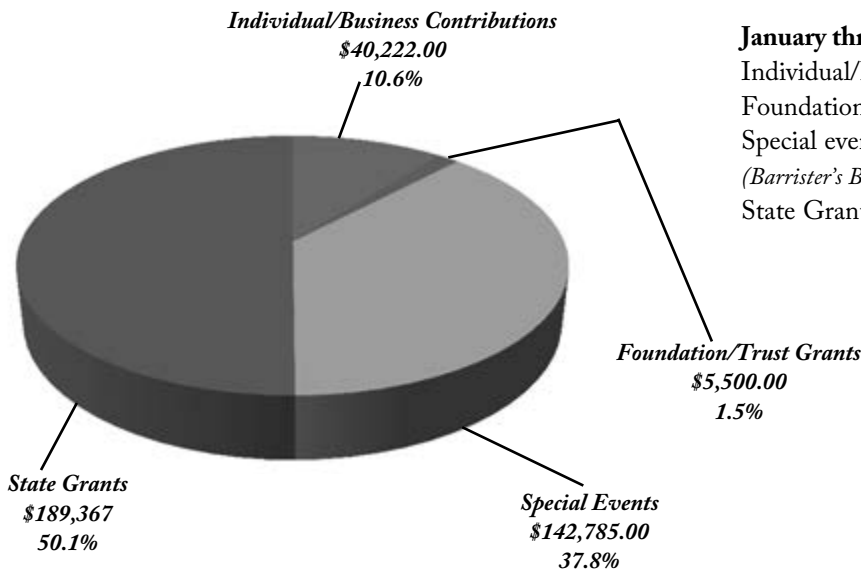
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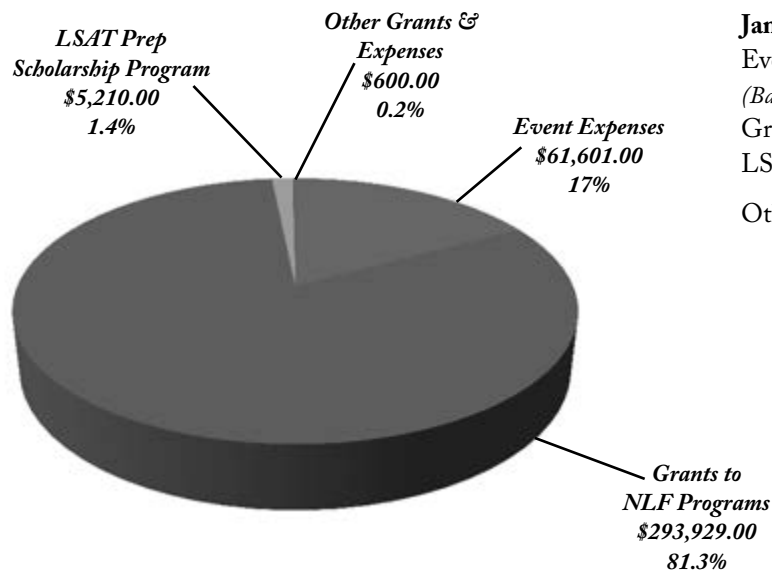
The Nebraska Lawyers Foundation Program Revenue Summary



January through December 2015

Individual/Business contributions	\$40,222.00
Foundation/Trust grants	\$5,500.00
Special events (Barrister's Ball, Golf Tournament)	\$142,785.00
State Grants	\$189,367.00
Total	\$377,874.00

The Nebraska Lawyers Foundation Program Expense Summary



January through December 2015

Event Expenses (Barristers' Ball, Golf Tournament)	\$61,601.00
Grants to NLF Programs	\$293,929.00
LSAT Prep Scholarship Program	\$5,210.00
Other Grants & Expenses	\$600.00
Total	\$361,340.00



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