

**CONNECTICUT BAR FOUNDATION
2021 IICJ GRANT APPLICATION FORM
INTEREST ON LAWYERS' TRUST ACCOUNTS
INTEREST ON TRUST ACCOUNTS
COURT FEES GRANTS-IN-AID
JUDICIAL BRANCH GRANTS-IN-AID**

September 18, 2020

Date

Center for Children's Advocacy

Name of Organization/Program

65 Elizabeth Street

Address

Hartford

CT

06105

City

State

Zip Code

Martha Stone

860-570-5327

Contact Person

Telephone

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Email Address

\$592,699

Amount of Funds Requested

Funds

1. Describe the organization's expected use of IICJ funds during the next year. Include:

- a. A one paragraph summary of the primary functions, goals and objectives of the organization and how, if at all, they have changed in the past year

The Center for Children's Advocacy's (CCA) primary functions are to advocate for low-income children and youth through individual legal services, advocacy for system reform and the provision of training and resources. CCA's goals are to improve the access of low-income children and youth to appropriate education, health and other critical services and to reduce environmental and social conditions that are negatively impacting children's health and well-being, children's cognitive, physical and social-emotional development, and children's educational achievement. CCA's objectives are to: partner with non-legal community organizations to identify and provide legal services to low-income children and youth who need legal help to access services or reduce harmful social or environmental conditions; identify systemic problems and advocate through litigation, legislative advocacy and administrative advocacy for systemic reforms; and provide training and resources to children and youth, parents and professionals. While these primary functions, goals and objectives have not changed in the past year, CCA is prioritizing COVID-related legal issues, as described later in this proposal.

b. The role of IICJ funds in achieving the goals and objectives

The IICJ funds will support CCA's achieving its goals and objectives by enabling CCA to staff its programs with the necessary attorneys and support staff and provide appropriate office space and related overhead items. The IICJ funds will be used to fund current staff salaries and benefits and support a portion of the necessary program costs, including printing and publications, rent and utilities, professional fees, telephone and increased technology costs to allow CCA staff to participate in meetings and hearings that are conducted virtually during the pandemic. While CCA recognizes the limited IICJ funding at this time and takes seriously the revenue challenges facing the Connecticut Bar Foundation, we are asking for an increase of \$24,979, which is a 4% increase over CCA's 2020 funding award, to respond to urgent needs resulting from the COVID crisis. CCA has requested an increase in IICJ funding from the Connecticut Bar Foundation for 2021 to help CCA:

- Retain CCA's Reentering and Homeless Youth attorney, who was hired for CCA's Connecticut Bar Foundation Bank of America Settlement grants. The two-year Bank of America Settlement grant that supported .5 FTE of this attorney will end this year, and CCA must secure funding to fill the revenue gap created by the end of this grant, sufficient to support .5 FTE of this attorney's salary and benefits. Retaining this attorney is especially critical during this public health crisis. Youth homelessness has been exacerbated by COVID. Group homes and supportive housing programs have delayed or suspended admissions during the pandemic, and adults are much less willing to let unrelated youth stay temporarily in their homes, leaving youth without stable housing and at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19. Because community providers are providing reduced services and making fewer referrals of homeless youth to CCA, CCA is increasing its community outreach efforts to be available to homeless youth. CCA has developed an outreach plan for its Mobile Legal Office and is making modifications to the interior of the Mobile Legal Office to allow the Reentering and Homeless Youth Attorney to increase outreach visits in the community and safely meet with youth in the Mobile Legal Office.
- Leverage IICJ funding to secure additional funding sources to add a full-time education attorney to respond to the woefully inadequate education and early intervention services that are being provided to young low-income children in Bridgeport and Hartford during the COVID pandemic. This attorney will provide legal services to children who are eligible for special education but are not receiving appropriate special education services and provide legal services to children who should have been identified as eligible for special education or Birth to Three early intervention services, but were not identified as eligible because the shift to conducting well-child visits by telehealth, and the reduction in in-person school hours, has reduced providers' opportunities to identify children's developmental delays and special needs. CCA has secured some funding for this position, and increased IICJ funding will allow CCA to leverage this increased funding to secure additional grants to fully fund this critical position.

CCA was started with a planning grant of \$9,000 from the Connecticut Bar Foundation, and CCA has worked since its founding to leverage IICJ funds to grow and sustain CCA's services. CCA has grown its revenue to more than \$2.5 million; 77.5% of CCA's projected revenue in 2021 is from sources other than IICJ funding.

One of the foundational beliefs of the Center for Children's Advocacy is the importance of minimizing reliance on state and city funding, to avoid being in a position where CCA's advocacy against state or

city agencies could be compromised. As a result, CCA is dependent on non-government funding and works diligently to maximize efficiencies in its service provision, and to amplify the value of its donations by using pro bono attorneys and other volunteers.

c. The organization's geographic service area and client base

The majority of the clients served live in Greater Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, New Britain, Norwalk, Stamford and Waterbury or in out-of-home juvenile justice facilities, correctional institutions and DCF placements throughout the state. Nearly all of CCA's clients are between the ages of 0 and 21 years; several are 22 – 23 years old. More than half have a disability. Approximately 90% are Black or Latinx. CCA serves some of the most vulnerable children and youth in Connecticut, including youth who are homeless and on their own, undocumented children, and youth in institutional care. More detailed information about the categories of children and youth served are in a prior Connecticut Bar Foundation submission.¹

2. Describe the organization's use of IICJ funds during 2020. Include:

a. Any variation from the 2020 application submitted.

CCA is using IICJ funds to support staff salaries and benefits as well as some overhead expenses including rent and utilities, professional fees, printing and publications, telephone and travel expenses. Staff salaries and benefits account for nearly 90% of IICJ funds.

b. Caseload information using the attached Caseload Report Forms.

3. List your organization's sources of funds other than IICJ for 2020, including grants, donations, matching funds, and in-kind contributions, and include an explanation of any projected significant changes in funding (positive or negative) expected in the 2021 grant year.

CCA's sources of funds in 2020 other than IICJ are:

Grants, Donations and Earned Income

AAML Foundation
American Savings Foundation
Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
Community Chest of New Britain and Berlin
Connecticut Community Foundation
CT Health Foundation

¹ In its 2016 verbal guidance on completing the Connecticut Bar Foundation's application for 2017 funding, the Connecticut Bar Foundation asked that applicants reduce the length of their application narratives and not repeat information that had been provided in a previous application. Applicants were instructed to reference the fact that additional information was available in a prior application. In addition, CCA is available to provide more information as requested by members of the Grants Committee (please contact Martha Stone at mstone@cca-ct.org).

Ensworth Charitable Foundation
Fairfield County's Community Foundation
Herbert & Nell Singer Foundation
Hartford County Bar Foundation
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Immanuel Congregational Church
J. Walton Bissell Foundation
Launders Charitable Trust
McPhee Foundation
Melville Charitable Trust
Middlesex County Community Foundation
Near and Far Aid
New Alliance Foundation
People's United Foundation
Sassafras Foundation
Skadden Foundation
Tow Foundation
United Technologies
St John's Community Foundation
Rotary Club of Westport
Westport Young Women's League
General Campaign
Fundraising Events
Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Village for Children and Families
Office of Public Defender Contract
UConn Law School Stipend
Publication and Video Proceeds
Yale New Haven Hospital
Department of Children and Families
Children's Community Programs
Tow Youth Justice Institute
St. Francis Medical Center
Court Support Services Division

Funds that supported CCA in 2020 also included:

- A federal Payroll Protection Program (PPP) small business loan of \$326,920, which will not be available in 2021.
- A Connecticut Bar Foundation Bank of America Settlement Fund grant, which funded a .5 FTE attorney and a community organizer and will not be available in 2021.

In-Kind Contributions

In-Kind Donations
Yale-New Haven Hospital
Connecticut Children's Medical Center
Abby Alter
Eileen Brennan
Boston Red Sox
Leslie Bulion & Rubin Hirsch
City of New Britain Parks and Recreation
MaryBeth & Doug Colosky
Connecticut Science Center
Datto, Inc.
Dillion Stadium
Effie's Place
Empower Leadership Sports
Essex Steam Train and Riverboat
Garden Catering
Marisa Halm
Hartford Flavor Company
Reginald Harwell
Jackie & John Hastings
Innovative Network Solutions
Island Queen Ferry
Cathy Jackman
Tasha Jackson
JSF Knits
Jen Kabakoff
Kidcity Children's Museum
La Gondola Providence
Debra & Charles Landrey
Angelne Ioannou
Patricia Marealle & Kelechi Ndu
Michael Danchak Woodworks
Susan & Douglas Miller
Mary Lee Morrison
Mystic Seaport
Nails by Gail
Noah's Ark Animal Workshop
Lori Nordstrom
North Country Rivers
Nurturing Hands, LLC
Janet Ortiz

Parkville Management
Playhouse on Park
Polsky Sports & Entertainment
Durham Fair Needlework Dept.
Rhode Island Seafood Festival
RISE Brewing Co.
Carmen & Samuel Rivera
Penny Robiner & Dr. David Miner
Alice Rosenthal & Noah Bloom
Bonnie Roswig & Michael Kurs
RPM Raceway
Melissa Rua
Stacy Schleif
Alice Schumacher
Colleen Shaddox
Alyse & Jay Sicklick
Michael Singer
Starlight Gardens
Deborah Staub-Luft
Susan & Craig Stein
Stress Factory Comedy Club
Steven Szafman
Dan Chorost & Sabrina Tavi
TheaterWorks
Thomas Hooker Brewing Company
Total Fit Studio
Ann Tremont
Anne Valsangiacomo
Stacey Violante Cote & Stephen Cote
Annyta Vizard
David & Janice Wenzel
Brendan Wenzel
John Buckner Winfield
Adam Yagaloff

4. Give details of the organization's system for the safekeeping and investment of grant funds, including IICJ funds.

CCA holds all grant funds and working capital in its Webster Bank checking account. The operating reserve funds, and any cash not needed in the short term for operations are kept in a Webster Bank and a Merrill Lynch investment account. These funds are invested in money market funds only. These accounts are reconciled monthly. The Board's Finance Committee has developed a policy regarding

investing funds to generate a higher investment return, and some funds have been reinvested in a higher yield fund.

5. Provide financial information as requested on the attached Budget Forms. The 2020 Budget to Actual Expense Reports are due by March 31, 2021. The forms will be emailed to you.

NOTE: If the organization wishes to carryover up to 10% of the 2020 grant year IOLTA/IOTA/CFGIA funds to the 2021 grant year, a written request and revised budgets for 2020 and 2021 must be submitted by March 31, 2021. Such request will be subject to approval by the Connecticut Bar Foundation Board of Directors. JBGIA funds cannot be carried over to the following grant year.

6. If you use, or if within the past three years you have used, IICJ funds in connection with representation of other organizations (as distinct from the representation of individuals):
 - a. List any organizations that have received such representation during the previous twelve months.
 - b. Describe any guidelines established for the use of IICJ funds in such representations.

CCA represented Make the Road Connecticut, a grassroots community organizing agency for low-income and working class Latinos living in Bridgeport and Hartford.

7. Describe any contingency or other plans to continue the operations and programs of the organization in the event that IICJ funds decrease or cease, including the agency's projected reserve funding available for operating expenses at the start of 2021, expressed as a percentage of the proposed annual operating budget.

IICJ funds provide core operating support for CCA and are integral to its existence. CCA has been able to leverage its IICJ funding to secure non-IICJ support, significantly diversifying its funding sources so that IICJ funds are only 19% of CCA's revenue this fiscal year. CCA has secured more than 25 competitive grants to date for 2020. In addition, CCA has undertaken a variety of fundraising strategies to increase non-grant contributions to sustain its programs and build its reserve; these strategies include:

- Soliciting and supporting third-party fundraisers;
- An online outreach campaign for fall and spring "Giving Day" events;
- Creating a fund named after a Board member, with outreach to the Board member's contacts to solicit contributions to the fund;
- Cultivating private law firms, to secure in-kind support and secure financial contributions;
- Charging non-CCA attorneys for attendance at CCA trainings for which CLEs can be earned;
- Collaborating with other nonprofit organizations and academic institutions to solicit competitive grants; and

- Conducting outreach and making presentations to Rotary Clubs, churches, community groups and service organizations.

CCA's diversification of revenue would allow some of its programs to continue if IICJ funds were to decrease or cease, but as IICJ funds constitute CCA's single largest source of funding for individual legal services, the revenue loss created by a decrease in IICJ funds would be difficult to fill and would likely necessitate laying off legal staff. CCA would attempt to replace the lost funds by working to identify and seek support from new grantmaking foundations and by implementing an emergency fundraising appeal to its donors, however, the current economic climate coupled with CCA's need to use these strategies to fill an anticipated revenue gap from the cancellation of CCA's annual fundraising events, make it unlikely that CCA would be able to fully replace the lost IICJ revenue.

CCA has a reserve fund that it could draw on for a very limited amount of time. This reserve fund will be approximately \$987,000 at the start of 2021, which represents slightly more than four months of the proposed annual operating budget.

Client Services, Community Involvement and Collaborative Efforts

8. Describe the goals, activities, and accomplishments of any collaborations between your agency and other services providers or organizations (including government agencies) that serve your client community.

CCA's deepest collaborations to bring legal services to low-income children and youth are:

Medical Legal Partnership Project (MLPP), a collaboration with Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC), Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center and Yale-New Haven Hospital. The goal of the MLPP is to partner with pediatric providers to ensure children access appropriate levels of health care and to reduce social and environmental conditions that are harming a child's health. The MLPP attorneys train the health care partners' pediatric providers about children's legal rights and provide consultation regarding legal issues impacting their child patients, and the pediatric providers refer child patients who need legal services to the MLPP attorneys. The attorneys have office hours at CCMC and Yale New Haven Hospital 3-5 days each week. The health care partners provide the attorneys with office space, technology and supplies. The MLPP also provides training and consultation to pediatric providers and service agencies in New Britain and Middletown. In addition to individual case successes, recent system reform accomplishments include:

- The MLPP has played a lead role in advocating for utility protection with the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). In the fall of 2019, the Project testified at hearings of the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) to advocate for the many indigent families who had lost utility service and were unaware of the full range of payment options and energy assistance programs available to them; PURA's decision cited CCA's testimony and ordered the utility companies to take a number of specific actions to increase families' awareness about and access to the winter protection program and other special programs that are available to low-income families. CCA expects that these sweeping systemic reforms will significantly reduce the number of low-income families who do not have heat and lights during the cold months of the year. This month, PURA granted the MLPP's Motion to expand the Moratorium on utility terminations

from September 9 to October 1 and mandated that the companies contact each person before they are terminated, tell them about their special programs that protect people from termination and do extensive reporting.

- The MLPP filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of children with diabetes whose schools were not helping them with their insulin pumps. In a groundbreaking mandate, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Connecticut said that personnel in the four Connecticut school districts must comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by having school personnel trained to treat students with diabetes.
- The MLPP filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of a child with epilepsy whose child care center refused to administer Diastat, a medication that treats epilepsy. In a precedent-setting agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, the child care center, which operates 22 centers in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, agreed to administer Diastat to children with epilepsy.

An ***immigrant advocacy collaboration*** with the grassroots advocacy organization Make the Road CT and with the organizations Building One Community and Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants, which provide legal representation in immigration proceedings. The three agencies and CCA work together to help immigrant youth and families understand their legal rights and advocate for themselves, help youth access legal services, and advocate for system reform. Building One Community and Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants refer youth to CCA for representation in matters related to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), and accept referrals from CCA for representation in immigration proceedings. In response to reports that Bridgeport Public Schools was segregating English Language Learner (ELL) students in a handful of schools, not providing ELL services in some neighborhood schools, and counseling high school ELL students to drop out of school and enroll at Adult Education, CCA recently began training parents of ELLs about their children's educational rights, while gathering individual case stories and conducting research in preparation for systemic reform advocacy. Currently, CCA is co-counsel with Disability Rights Advocates in representing Make the Road Connecticut to address systemic problems with the provision of interpretation and translation services to parents and guardians of ELL students receiving special education services. Bridgeport Public Schools has agreed to enter a structured decision-making process to address CCA's concerns and the parties have made substantial progress in negotiating a Settlement Agreement that will set forth procedures for the Bridgeport Board of Education to follow in providing interpretation and translation services in the context of planning meetings for students eligible for special education services.

A ***Hartford reentry collaboration*** targeting adolescents aged 16 – 24 from Greater Hartford who are transitioning out of justice system confinement. The collaborating agencies include Hartford's Reentry Welcome Center, probation officers, Manson Youth Institution, Hartford Public Library and Our Piece of the Pie (OPP). The project provides holistic, developmentally appropriate legal services to this population to help them access the services and supports they need to transition successfully to independence. The legal services target the collateral consequences of justice system involvement, as well as rights to access appropriate services from agencies, including the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Developmental Services and local school systems. The project also provides reentry rights training for incarcerated youth inside Manson Youth Institution (MYI), and legal consultations to increase opportunities for early and preventative legal

intervention. Information provided by youth during the training and during legal consultations provide CCA with current, on-the-ground information that helps direct CCA's systemic reform advocacy. Recently, CCA successfully advocated for increased access to visitation for detained and incarcerated youth during COVID-19 closures, including video visits and two free phone calls each week for youth incarcerated at MYI during the COVID-19 crisis. CCA is currently working with the National Center for Youth Law and the Juvenile Law Center to address the Department of Corrections' (DOC) practice of placing youth who require COVID-19 medical quarantine into solitary confinement, as well as other illegal conditions of confinement during COVID regarding access to mental health and education. CCA and its partners have sent a demand letter to the DOC regarding the identified violations of youths' rights.

CCA is preparing to roll out a collaboration with the Yale Child Study Center, which provides behavioral health services to children in Greater New Haven. In this collaboration, which will be fully funded by Yale, a full-time CCA attorney will provide legal services to children regarding issues, including access to education and social and environmental conditions impeding children's mental health, to children referred by the Child Study Center's behavioral health providers.

CCA collaborates with many other service providers, organizations and government agencies that participate in CCA's children's legal rights trainings, refer clients to CCA, and work with CCA to bring about systemic reforms. A prior submission to the Connecticut Bar Foundation contains more detail.

CCA also collaborates with state and local agencies to bring about transformative systemic reform. This collaborative work includes:

- ***Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Reduction Advocacy.*** CCA is leading RED Reduction Committees in Bridgeport, Hamden, Hartford, New Haven, Norwalk and Waterbury to reform the policies and practices of the education, law enforcement and justice systems that lead to overrepresentation of Black and Latino youth at various points in the justice system. CCA is working with the Center for Children's Law and Policy, a national organization with expertise in reducing RED, the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD), DCF, and local Juvenile Courts, Juvenile Probation Offices, public schools and law enforcement, to identify causes of RED on the local level and develop, implement and evaluate system reforms to reduce RED.
- ***Restorative Justice Reform.*** CCA is spearheading a trailblazing program with the Center for Restorative Justice at Suffolk University, CSSD, DOC and DCF that replaces punitive behavior management systems used in juvenile justice and congregate care facilities with a system of restorative justice practices. The restorative justice system was successfully implemented at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School prior to its closure, where it reduced major incidents, arrests and behavioral health symptoms (e.g., depression, anxiety, oppositionality). CCA and its partners have begun the process of implementing the restorative justice system at two pre-trial detention programs, three secure post-disposition facilities (secure juvenile justice facilities and Manson Youth Institution), and five step-down residential facilities.

9. If any government agency is obligated to provide any of the services that your agency provides, explain and include a description of how your work relates to that provided by the government (e.g. how it differs, how your agency has influenced the government agency's work, how your agency collaborates with the government agency).

The Juvenile Public Defender's Office is obligated to provide training and supports to attorneys who contract with the state to represent children and parents in child protection cases. The Office contracts with CCA to provide a portion of this training and support. CCA's child protection attorneys have extensive experience and actively practice in the child protection field, which allows them to offer valuable consultation to contract child protection attorneys on a level not offered by the Juvenile Public Defender's Office and not paid for through any other governmental source. This consultation is particularly valuable to the contract attorneys because the majority are solo practitioners who do not have office colleagues who can provide advice and mentorship.

10. Identify and briefly describe other legal services providers, government agencies or entities which provide legal services similar to those offered by your agency within your service territory.

Other agencies providing legal representation for children within CCA's geographic service areas are Connecticut Legal Services, Greater Hartford Legal Assistance, Statewide Legal Services, the Children's Law Center, Lawyers for Children America and New Haven Legal Assistance, which are all funded by the Connecticut Bar Foundation, and Building One Community and Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants. The Children's Law Center provides children with representation related only to custody and divorce matters, not matters related to health care access, child protection, juvenile justice and education. Lawyers for Children America provides a small number of pro bono attorneys to children only in the child protection area; its representation does not cover the same breadth of areas as CCA's representation, and it does no systemic advocacy. Building One Community and Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants only represent a small number of youth in federal immigration proceedings; the bulk of their legal services are provided to adults. The two agencies concentrate on providing representation in federal immigration proceedings, and handle almost no cases in state courts regarding Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) matters. The Juvenile Public Defender's Office and private attorneys under contract with the Juvenile Public Defender's Office provide representation to minors involved with the juvenile justice system or DCF.

11. Detail and provide examples of community involvement and support for your organization's programs.

A wide range of community organizations, churches, parent groups and organizing groups are involved in and support CCA's programs.

- Community organizations and groups host and participate in CCA's training programs. Some recent examples are:
 - The Child and Family Guidance Center in Bridgeport hosted a CCA training for their behavioral health providers.

- The Coalition for Juvenile Justice and the Partnership for Strong Communities partnered with CCA to provide webinars for Stamford area providers on the intersection of juvenile justice and youth homelessness.
- The Directors of Domus Kids Inc. and Connecticut Junior Republic joined CCA as panelists on CCA's seminar for providers on "Advocacy for Youth and Young Adults Re-Entering from Confinement."
- The law firm McCarter & English hosted CCA's pro bono training program on administrative advocacy to contest DCF involuntary discharges from care.
- The law firm Robinson & Cole hosted CCA's pro bono training program on representing immigrant youth in State courts in matters related to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.
- Many businesses donated items for CCA's online auction at its 2020 virtual Spring for Kids fundraising event.
- Hartford youth-serving organizations, including Our Piece of the Pie and the Hartford Youth Corps, have made their staff available to receive training in "legal issue-spotting" from CCA, to improve their abilities to identify at-risk youth who need legal services, and refer those youth to CCA's Mobile Legal Office.
- Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Reduction meetings are held at community programs, including RYASAP in Bridgeport, Waterbury Youth Services and Parker Memorial Community Center in Hartford.
- Private businesses make their employees available to assist with CCA's Utility Clinics.

12. Describe your most recent priority setting process including the involvement of your clients and other stakeholders.

CCA's Board and staff developed a five-year strategic plan, which identifies CCA's priorities, in 2015-2016. The strategic plan expires in December of 2020. The in-depth strategic planning process began in 2015 with mini-retreats of small groups of CCA staff, one of which included external healthcare partners, where participants brought in local level data from different cities regarding education, health, juvenile justice and child protection services and outcomes, shared anecdotal information provided by community members, and identified areas of client need, gaps in services and potential collaborations that would leverage CCA's existing resources and maximize CCA's effectiveness. CCA then secured a technical assistance grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to hire consultants to facilitate planning retreats for Board members and for all staff, and development of CCA's strategic plan that identifies priorities. This priority setting process led CCA to develop its Immigrant Children's Justice Project.

In 2017 - 2018, CCA completed its most recent update of the strategic plan's implementation plan. CCA reviewed anecdotal information from community partners and data from state agencies, as well as recent reports and other literature from experts in fields related to child well-being. CCA also conducted individual interviews with ten adolescent males who had reentered their community from justice system confinement, about their experiences with the education, health care, social service and criminal justice systems and their suggestions for improvements to those systems. In small meetings of CCA's Executive Director and attorneys working on each issue, CCA explored this background information and discussed whether CCA should make any changes to CCA activities and the strategic plan's implementation plan in response to emerging issues. Two program changes that were initiated through this process were:

- The Greater Hartford reentry project, which is described in more detail in response to question 8.

- The DCF 800 Pro Bono Project, in which CCA trains and provides technical assistance to pro bono attorneys representing youth at risk of involuntary discharge from DCF services after turning 18, in administrative hearings contesting the proposed involuntary discharge.

In 2019-2020, in response to external and internal data showing an increased need for legal advocacy for many different populations of Connecticut children, in different geographic areas, CCA began a complete strategic planning process rather than simply updating the 2015 strategic plan. CCA applied for and received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to hire a consultant to begin this process. A Board Task Force and CCA's Executive Team worked with the consultant to develop recommendations for a broad strategic vision and priorities for CCA for the next 2-4 years, in light of revenue challenges and opportunities. The full Board recently approved the Task Force's recommendations, which target racial and ethnic inequities in Connecticut by identifying two major civil rights initiatives that CCA will implement, regarding education and mental health, and recommending the creation of a new position of Director of Civil Rights Litigation. CCA's next steps in the development of its 2021-2024 strategic plan are to:

- Work with a consultant to assess CCA's organizational Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and make recommendations.
- Work with CCA's Youth SPEAKS group, a group of 8-10 youth leaders with lived experience with homelessness, child abuse, under-resourced schools and juvenile and criminal justice, to identify youth priorities for CCA's goals and activities. The Youth SPEAKS group is facilitated by CCA's youth organizer and meets weekly. The group is currently conducting a survey of Hartford youth with housing instability to identify legal barriers to stable housing.
- Synthesize the Board Task Force's recommendations with CCA's DEI assessments, input from Youth SPEAKS and staff priorities to develop a multiyear strategic plan with aligned action steps and revenue generation strategies.

CCA expects this strategic planning process will culminate in February of 2021 in a new strategic plan.

Management and Staffing

13. Describe the organization's management and staffing and include how changes in IICJ funding have impacted the organization (i.e., hiring, downsizing, furloughs, reduction in services, if any) over the past two years. Please attach an organizational chart showing your staffing structure.

CCA's management includes its Executive Director, Deputy Director and Director of Operations, who also provide direct client services, training and systemic advocacy. CCA has a lean staffing infrastructure, with minimal paralegal and clerical support: CCA's 12 attorneys, who staff offices in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven, share 2.5 FTE paralegals (two full-time positions and one part-time position), a part-time administrative support person and a portion of the time of CCA's full-time Office Manager. As a result, some of CCA's attorneys receive almost no paralegal or clerical assistance. CCA's goal has been to increase all of its part-time paralegals to full-time positions, but CCA has been unable to fund the increased hours.

CCA has a part-time project coordinator for its restorative justice systemic work, and a full-time community organizer for its youth organizing work in Hartford.

CCA's back office staffing includes a Communications Director, Director of Development, Development and Communications Associate, Director of Foundation Relations and part-time Finance Director. CCA also contracts with an Education Consultant for assistance with cases, and with technology consultants.

CCA's increased IICJ funding in 2019 allowed CCA to retain its qualified attorneys, and thereby maintain its services, by continuing to follow the GHLA salary scale and by avoiding reductions in health benefits; the salary scale and health benefits were both threatened by the end of a large grant from a national foundation that ended when the foundation shifted focus areas. CCA's increased funding in 2020 allowed it to retain its Reentering and Homeless Youth Attorney when one of CCA's Bank of America Settlement Grants ended, and avoid reductions in health benefits.

14. Describe your organization's use of volunteers, students, interns, and other non-full time employees to provide any or all of the services offered or to support the provision of such services. Explain any limitations or constraints on the use of such resources.

Volunteers

- Volunteers from the Aetna Legal Department, Pullman and Comley, Murtha Cullina, Locke Lord, Yale New Haven Hospital, University of Connecticut School of Law, Yale Law School and the State Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) have assisted with CCA's Utility Clinics.
- Last year, CCA implemented a pro bono program that trains pro bono attorneys to represent youth who have turned 18 in DCF care and are being threatened with involuntary discharge from DCF care, in administrative hearings contesting the proposed discharge. CCA provides technical assistance to the attorneys who take these pro bono cases.
- Since 2015, more than 125 pro bono attorneys have participated in CCA's Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) pro bono training and agreed to represent one child on a pro bono basis in an SIJS-related matter. CCA provides technical assistance to the attorneys on their SIJS-related cases.
- Professional speakers and panelists in CCA's training programs donate their time, and volunteer attorneys in private practice and from law firms provide assistance with cases.
- When the office is fully opened, CCA usually has at least six volunteers who assist with a variety of tasks, including translation services, outreach, administrative duties and data collection.
- CCA's StreetCred Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, located inside the Yale New Haven Hospital Primary Care Center, uses volunteers from the community and students to prepare basic tax returns for families eligible for the earned income tax credit.

Students and Interns

- CCA has three law students from the University of Connecticut School of Law who work in the Hartford office in the summer, funded by Public Interest Law Grants provided by the School of Law. In addition, three law students who are enrolled in a class taught by Martha Stone at the University of Connecticut School of Law intern at CCA during each semester.
- CCA's Director of Operations co-teaches a clinical class at Yale Law School; law students in that class conduct research for CCA.

- CCA has two Yale Law School student externs each semester who work in CCA's Medical Legal Partnership Project in New Haven through the Solomon Center for Health Law and Policy and one who works in the summer in CCA's Bridgeport office.
- Student volunteers from the Yale School of Public Health, Yale Law School and UConn Law School have provided research to support CCA's systemic advocacy work.
- CCA's Medical Legal Partnership Project at Yale New Haven Hospital typically has two undergraduate student interns from Yale each semester and had one Yale President Public Service Fellowship undergraduate intern during the summer of 2020.

Non-Full Time Employees

CCA's current non-full-time employees are:

- A part-time attorney who works on research projects and amicus briefs.
- A part-time attorney who handles education cases in Fairfield County.
- A part-time project coordinator for CCA's restorative justice project.
- A part-time administrative assistant and a part-time paralegal in the Bridgeport office.
- A part-time Finance Director.

15. Explain your quality assurance practices and procedures, including a description of:

a. Methods for case and work assignment

Law students perform intake and case-related functions under the direct supervision of CCA's Executive Director and legal staff, using a rotation to ensure an even distribution of the caseload. The attorneys are responsible for all cases on their caseload. Documentation of the workload of staff and students is maintained on a weekly basis in the Legal Files database and monitored by CCA's Executive Director.

b. Procedures for reviewing/supervising work

A regular monthly staff meeting is held with the legal staff, at which time cases are discussed, issues identified and training conducted. In addition, each staff attorney meets formally with the Executive Director, Deputy Director or Director of Operations monthly. Because CCA's office suite in Hartford is small, law students receive constant supervision by the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Director of Operations and staff attorneys. The Medical Legal Partnership Project (MLPP) Director meets regularly with the MLPP staff attorneys off site. The attorneys who work in Fairfield County have weekly phone contact with the Executive Director, Deputy Director or Director of Operations, and attend monthly staff meetings. Employee evaluations are conducted annually by the Executive Director or Deputy Director. The Executive Director is evaluated annually by the Chair of the Board of Directors.

c. Methods for obtaining and responding to client feedback

In all of CCA's projects, staff members are trained to solicit feedback from child clients and their families throughout the course of the client's case.

d. Any other significant quality control methods or practices

CCA conducts a twice-yearly review of case outcomes of reentering Greater Hartford youth, and a twice-yearly review of case outcomes of Bridgeport, Norwalk and Stamford children and youth. CCA's Immigrant Children's Justice Project engages in regular follow up with the Project's pro bono attorneys to provide technical assistance and determine progress of cases. CCA uses retrospective pre-post tests and participant evaluation forms at its trainings to assess the effectiveness of the trainings. The MLPP attorney meets regularly with the MLPP's Medical Director to focus on program objectives and operations to ensure the project is congruent with the medical community and practices.

Evaluating Programs and Operations

16. Describe any evaluation and assessment tools the organization uses to measure effectiveness.

CCA records outcomes of its individual cases in its electronic case database at the time of case closure. The outcome measures were developed by a committee of CCA staff and Board members, and include outcomes specific to various legal issues, as well as the client's school attendance status and change in school attendance status.

Pro bono attorneys who participate in CCA's Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) training complete a course evaluation form that asks them to evaluate six features of the course on a scale of 1 to 5: (emailed Patricia to confirm)

- 1) How informative the course was
- 2) The course's usefulness
- 3) The presentation's clarity
- 4) The training venue and format
- 5) Written materials
- 6) Quality of the technology

Evaluation forms are also given for CCA's trainings for child protection contract attorneys.

CCA evaluates its trainings for incarcerated youth at MYI by administering a retrospective pre-post test to the youth attending the training, and surveys youth who participate in CCA's youth organizing trainings and activities. The Center for Children's Law and Policy is helping CCA evaluate its RED Reduction and Restorative Justice work.

In the past two years, CCA's Medical Legal Partnership Project (MLPP) has conducted two in-depth program evaluations of the MLPP at Yale New Haven Hospital. Dr. Anne Mainardi, an adult pulmonologist/critical care doctor, assisted the MLPP by performing a comprehensive medical records review of all referrals to the MLPP since inception, with a focus on whether MLPP interventions improve hospital utilization rates among patient clients with asthma. The study found reduced hospital utilization in primary care, emergency room, and hospitalization rates for patients with asthma who interfaced with the MLPP, when comparing the year before their interaction with the MLPP with the year after the interaction. Dr. Mainardi gave a poster presentation of her findings at the "Health Disparities in Asthma" symposium of the American Thoracic Society in May 2019.

The MLPP also worked with Danya Keene, a professor at the Yale School of Public Health, to perform a qualitative evaluation of the impact of the MLPP on the culture of health care provision at Yale New Haven Hospital. This qualitative evaluation included interviews with patient clients, residents, providers, social workers and staff at the Hospital. The research found that MLPP improved provider knowledge and comfort with social determinants of health and improved provider and patient satisfaction overall. The research findings were presented in two posters at the National MLP Conference in Washington, D.C. in September 2019, and in a third poster at the Interdisciplinary Association for Population health Science conference in October 2019. The results of the research are being published in a forthcoming article in the Journal of Legal Medicine. Additional findings were developed in a second article to be published in the future.

17. Identify current priorities and provide any existing documents that identify such priorities.

CCA's current service and organizational development priorities are outlined in CCA's strategic plan, which is attached. As described in response to question 12, CCA is currently engaged in a strategic planning process; CCA expects this process will culminate in February of 2021 in a new strategic plan. The current service priorities, which guide CCA's selection of individual legal services cases and systemic advocacy targets, are to:

- Increase educational opportunity for low-income children and children of color, reduce disproportionate school discipline and improve special education and other educational services for low-income children.
- Promote successful transitions to adulthood for youth with child welfare or juvenile justice system involvement by increasing access to developmentally appropriate services and supports.
- Reduce involvement in the juvenile justice system and address racial disparities therein.
- Promote health equity for low-income children and children of color, by increasing access to care and accommodations and addressing health-harming social conditions.
- Increase low-income children's access to court and high-quality legal representation by improving the skills and knowledge of child protection attorneys and increasing the number of pro bono attorneys.

The current organizational development priorities are:

- Build capacity to demonstrate impact.
- Build an effective and dynamic staff and a staffing infrastructure to support strategic priorities.
- Build an engaged and skill-based Board that supports CCA in oversight, strategy and cultivation.
- Prepare organization for seamless transition of leadership and key staff.
- Develop sustainable resources and allocate strategically.
- Build a brand and compelling case for support that influencers value (recognize and support).

18. Provide any evaluation reports, along with any management response from any formal or informal, internal or external, evaluations of your programs or operations received within the past twelve months.

As described above, Professor Danya Keene from the Yale School of Public Health performed a qualitative evaluation of the impact of the MLPP on the culture of health care provision at Yale New Haven Hospital. The research findings were presented in two posters at the National MLP Conference in Washington, D.C. in September 2019, and in a third poster at the Interdisciplinary Association for

Population health Science conference in October 2019. Two of the posters are attached.

19. Provide any outcome reports or measurements and describe any program or delivery service changes made in response.

Outcomes of Advocacy for Bridgeport and Norwalk Children and Youth for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019:

- 135 children and youth received short advice, ongoing advice or representation.
- 102 non-legal professionals received legal consultation to help them advocate for a specific child.
- 100% of Bridgeport and Norwalk school-age clients whose school status is known were still attending school or had graduated.
- 100% of students represented regarding access to education, accessed increased or improved educational services.

Outcomes of Advocacy for Hartford Reentering Youth, 6-month period 7/20/19 – 1/19/20:

- 100% of the youth who received legal services for whom advocacy on an issue concluded during the 6-month period (22 of 22), accessed increased services or supports needed to transition successfully to independence or averted the threatened loss of existing services or supports.

Results of November, 2019 reentry legal rights training provided to youth at Manson Youth Institution (MYI)

- 83% of youth said the training made them aware of new ways that an attorney could help them when they are released.

Other

- 20 Describe efforts your organization engages in to promote racial and/or gender equity in areas such as staffing, employment policies, board composition and recruitment, and/or client services, if any. If available, please include staff and board demographics for your organization.

CCA's Executive Director and Board Chair participated in a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) workshop last fiscal year to learn about strategies to increase DEI at CCA. The Board is currently engaging a consultant to work with the Board to improve its DEI. CCA makes intentional efforts to recruit Board members of color; of the four most recent members to join CCA's Board, three are people of color.

CCA has modified its outreach and recruitment practices to increase diversity in the pool of applicants for CCA positions. In its hiring process for Fellows and other staff, CCA makes a concerted effort to reach out to law students of color through law student affinity groups, bar affinity groups and other similar organizations.

CCA recently created internal DEI Committees to improve the organization's DEI practices. Across the organization, staff members are willing and excited to participate in DEI initiatives. CCA is

seeking funding to hire a DEI consultant to conduct an organizational assessment and work with CCA to help it move to becoming an anti-racist organization.

CCA has a nondiscrimination policy that prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religious creed or national origin, including a prohibition on asking about prior arrests or convictions on CCA's employment application.

44% of CCA's Board members are female and 56% are male. 13% are Black, 56% are White, 25% are Latinx and 6% are multiracial. 87% of CCA's staff members are female and 13% are male. 21% are Black, 8% are Asian, 54% are White and 17% are Latinx.

21. Describe any effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on your organization, including:
- a. Effects of reduction in CFGIA funding from the levels projected in the 2020 grant award on the organization's operations, services provision, and planning and steps taken in response

CCA responded to the reduction in CFGIA funding from the projected 2020 levels by freezing salaries and not providing any raises this year and by not immediately filling open positions. CCA also negotiated a small rent reduction on its office space.

b. Unanticipated reductions in revenue other than IICJ in 2020

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted CCA's revenue from sources other than IICJ:

- Two private foundations that have regularly funded CCA in the past reduced the amounts of their 2020-2021 grants to CCA, by a total of \$20,015, for reasons related to the pandemic and resulting economic crisis.
- Social distancing restrictions imposed due to the pandemic forced CCA to cancel its two spring fundraising events that were together projected to raise \$159,000. While CCA actively worked to immediately replace those events with alternative fundraising appeals, CCA still lost \$51,000 from those cancelled events in its fiscal year 2019-2020, has had to cancel its fall 2020 fundraising event and will likely be forced to cancel its spring 2021 event.
- At least one of CCA's community partners, which contracts with CCA to provide legal services to the children it serves, is currently serving a reduced number of children and referring fewer children to CCA; the loss from that contract is \$9,500 in 2019-2020, and may be as much as \$28,500 in CCA's 2020-2021 fiscal year.

c. New or supplemental funding awarded or anticipated for 2020 and 2021 related to the Covid-19 pandemic

CCA applied for and received a small business loan from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP), in the amount of \$326,920. This was a one-time forgivable loan that has been fully expended.

CCA has secured two small "COVID response" grants, from Fairfield County's Community Foundation (\$5,000) and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (\$9,800). These grants do not support CCA's normal operations; they are limited to supporting direct aid to clients and expenses necessary to open CCA's offices (purchases of personal protective equipment and hand sanitizer,

increased cleaning, office modifications, technology for remote work and modifications to CCA's mobile legal office.)

CCA has an application pending with the Herbert & Nell Singer Foundation for funding to replace the revenue that CCA has lost due to the pandemic.

CCA anticipates significant challenges raising sufficient revenue to replace the decrease in revenue caused by the pandemic. CCA's revenue from its health care partners, which has been stable in the past, is uncertain, as those partners are themselves losing a tremendous amount of revenue during this public health crisis. In addition, many foundations have pivoted to focusing on supporting front line health care providers and meeting the basic needs of families that have lost incomes due to job layoffs. As a result, there will be a reduced amount of grant funding available to support services that are not food banks, shelters, health care or similar services. If CCA is unable to fully replace the lost revenue, it will be forced to draw from its limited reserve fund or lay off staff.

22. Briefly share any other information about your organization which will assist the Grantmaking Committee in evaluating your application.

CCA's caseload has been smaller than usual due to the closure of schools and the closure and reduction in services of many community providers. Many of CCA's referrals come from school personnel – school-based health centers, social workers, guidance counselors and teaching staff – and from community providers. Because schools and providers were not seeing as many children, they were not identifying children who needed legal help and referring them to CCA. The majority of referrals CCA received in March through July came from health care providers, who continued to treat children through the early months of the pandemic. The most frequent case types during this period were consumer (public utilities) and housing. The number of education cases, which have typically been CCA's first or second most frequent type of case, fell dramatically, due to school closures.

CCA created an outreach committee and implemented strategies to reach out to low-income families in Bridgeport and Hartford. In August and September, the number of intake calls to CCA has increased. CCA anticipates a continuing wave of education and early intervention cases in the coming year. There will be a critical need for legal services to help children with disabilities and other special needs and English language learners access appropriate education and intervention services. Remote learning is not appropriate for many of these children, who lost critical special education time this spring and will continue to fall behind if schools do not provide appropriate online learning services. Other children have disabilities or health conditions that prohibit them from physically attending school during the pandemic. These children need advocates to ensure they receive an education despite not being able to physically attend school.

In addition to a wave of education cases involving children with disabilities and special needs and children who are English language learners, CCA anticipates an increased need for legal intervention for children in several additional target populations, whose health, well-being and education are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. These additional populations are:

1. Disengaged youth and youth with housing instability. Disengaged youth became even more disengaged from school after schools switched to providing instruction online this spring.

Thousands of youth in Connecticut's largest cities simply disappeared from the school system. COVID-19 has also increased housing instability and homelessness among youth, as supportive housing programs slowed new intakes and community support programs closed their doors.

2. Institutionalized youth in the juvenile or adult criminal justice systems. Due to COVID-related slowdowns in admissions to less secure facilities, youth in more restrictive confinement have been stuck in secure facilities for longer periods of time. Inside those facilities, youth are experiencing increased isolation as facilities use solitary confinement to respond to COVID-19, and inferior education services, as some facilities do not have the technology to provide youth with virtual learning. Once youth are discharged, they reenter their communities with fewer supports available from community programs and probation and parole.

3. Low-income children from racial and ethnic groups disproportionately impacted by COVID. Children from Black and Latinx communities, where rates of severe illness and death from COVID-19 are significantly higher, are experiencing traumatic stress from the ongoing threats to their families and communities. Low-income children from those communities, which have disproportionate rates of job losses and economic pain from the pandemic, are at increased risk of utility shutoff and a lack of basic needs.

CCA is responding to this increased need with training and legal information, focused legal services, and advocacy for systemic reform. CCA is providing virtual children's legal rights trainings to health care providers, probation officers and social service providers regarding COVID-related legal issues, and is sending weekly email updates on COVID-related legal issues to health care providers across the state and maintaining a COVID-19 information page on its website for non-legal professionals. CCA is also creating short videos for older youth about their legal rights with regard to specific COVID-related issues.

CCA's COVID-related individual legal services will address issues including:

- Unemployment, employment rights and income supports, including SNAP and SSI.
- Protection from utility shutoff.
- Education rights, including special education, distance learning and access to technology, and bilingual education.
- Rights of children involved with the child welfare system, including visitation and timely progress in the child's case.
- Housing rights, including access to supportive youth housing programs and utility shutoffs.
- Conditions of confinement during the pandemic and rights of institutionalized youth confined in secure facilities.

CCA is working to raise sufficient funding to hire a new attorney to represent children in Bridgeport and Hartford who do not have access to appropriate special education or bilingual education during the pandemic.

CCA's systems change advocacy will advocate for reforms to ensure the systems upon which low-income children depend are responding appropriately to children's needs during the pandemic. CCA will:

- Advocate with the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) for a long-term plan to protect thousands of families from utility shutoffs when the current shutoff moratorium ends and families owe large arrearages.
- Advocate with the State Department of Social Services (DSS) for pediatric screening of children insured by HUSKY, to identify COVID-related traumatic stress symptoms and ensure children traumatized by the crisis can receive treatment early to address trauma. These children include children who lose family members, children traumatized by isolation and a family's economic stress, and children of health care workers who understand that their parents' jobs endangered their lives.
- Advocate for the State Department of Children and Families (DCF) to prevent youth homelessness during this crisis by extending its moratorium on discharges from DCF care of youth 18 and older who have aged out of care until youth can be safely discharged from care.
- Advocate with the State Department of Education (SDE) to increase support and resources for under-resourced districts during the pandemic, and with SDE, the Court Support Services Division and the Department of Corrections to increase resources for schools serving youth in secure facilities, so youth have access to teachers.

If there are any questions, please contact Liz Drummond at liz@cbf-1.org or anne@cbf-1.org or [Anne Goico](#).