

# Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, Inc.

## Jacksonville

### Snapshot of Achievements, 2010

In 2010, JALA streamlined its Family Law intake, resulting in a significant saving of time for JALA Family Law attorneys. JALA's Predatory Lending Unit maintained a two (2) attorney office providing foreclosure defense in the hardest hit area of Jacksonville.

On the advice of the Florida Bar Foundation (FBF) Site Review Team, JALA has hired a new Director of Advocacy and joined its Fair Housing and Housing Units to create the JALA Housing Defense Unit. JALA has also joined its Pro Bono and Resource Development Units.

In 2010, JALA's Community Development Unit took on its first ever commercial project when a local community development corporation client started the development of a commercial office and retail project on a brown field site in an area of town that rarely sees any new construction. The project will be the first "Leadership In Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) project for the group and its projected cost is \$3,300,000. JALA recruited two (2) law firms to help with legal issues; law firms have devoted over 300 hours to the project.

### Population Served:

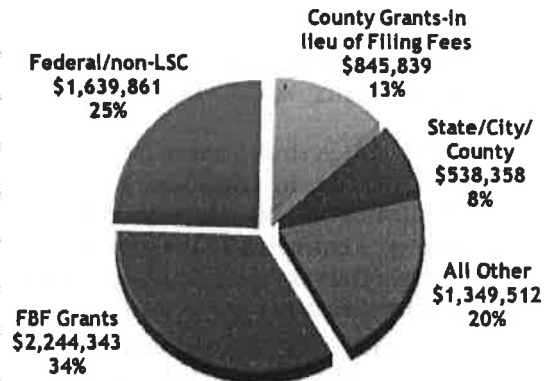
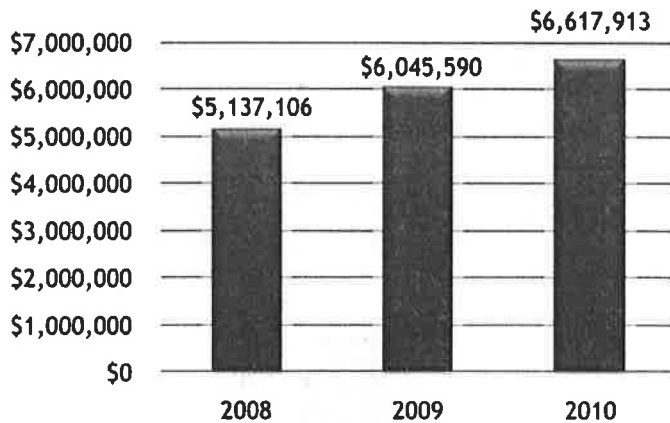
#### General Low Income Population



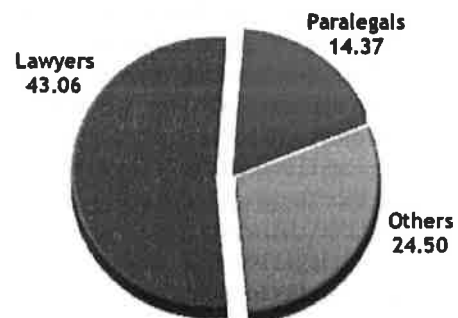
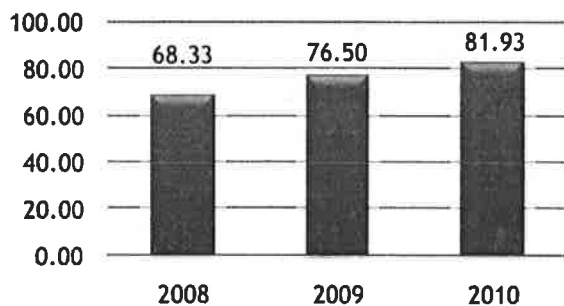
### Service Area

County	Cases Closed
Duval	8,593
St. Johns	967
Nassau	395
Clay	338
Miscellaneous	233

**Program Funding**  
**2010 Funding: \$6,617,913**



**Staffing**  
**2010 Staffing: 81.93 Full Time Equivalent**



**Pro Bono and Other Volunteer Programs**

**Statistics:**

- 538 private attorneys participated in 2010.
- 8,637 attorney hours of service were provided valued at \$1,295,550 (\$150 per hour).
- 1,234 cases were closed by pro bono attorneys.
- 176 attorneys contributed \$188,911 in funding.

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## Case Services For Individuals Cases Closed in 2010: 10,526

### Housing: 2,864 Cases

Legal problems include unlawful eviction, denial of access to public or government-subsidized housing, and illegal foreclosure.

### Family: 2,783 Cases

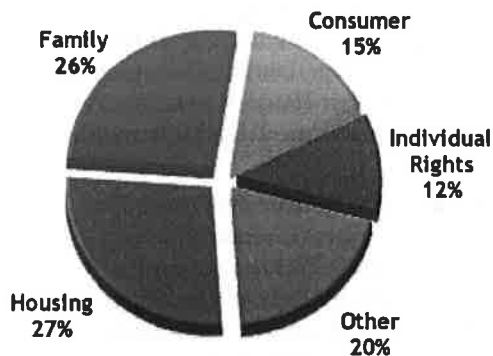
Legal problems include domestic violence, divorce, child custody, parental rights and guardianships.

### Consumer: 1,577 Cases

Legal problems include illegal taking of property, wage garnishment, denial of credit and fraudulent consumer practices.

### Individual Rights: 1,215 Cases

Legal problems include denial of access to public services and accommodations and denial of rights to institutionalized people.



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## Case Examples:

Client is an orphaned 17-year-old. Client was abandoned by his older sister, who was his custodian, and by his older brother. He was left homeless when his siblings were evicted from their apartment. Client was taken in by a Good Samaritan, the coach from his basketball team and the coach's wife. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) refused to shelter the client, even though the client was abandoned and orphaned. JALA brought a Motion to have dependency order back dated and convinced the Good Samaritan family to get licensed as a foster care family so the client would qualify for the Road to Independence (RTI) Scholarship valued at \$45,000. The client aged out of foster care on December 31, 2010. The Client is still living with his foster parents and receiving \$1200 a month in RTI funds. Client has a nest egg for college because his foster parents are placing his RTI funds in savings. The Client is a basketball star, is making good grades, and is entertaining college recruiters.

Client, a wheelchair-bound disabled military veteran, received a satisfaction and release of his mortgage obligation on his home after benefitting from JALA's active foreclosure defense efforts over five (5) years. The foreclosing plaintiff, a trustee of a securitized trust, could not prove ownership of the client's 1998 home loan. The Client now owns his home free and clear of any debt. The reduction on client's stress level has made a difference in his medical and psychological health and well-being.

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## Other Program Services and Activities:

### Services to Individuals.

JALA's Fair Housing Unit performs community legal education to a diverse community. JALA has created audio CDs for the blind, and DVDs featuring American Sign Language interpreters for the deaf to explain Fair Housing laws. JALA's Fair Housing brochures are available in multiple languages.

JALA's Foreclosure Defense and Prevention Lawyer Training Project is responsible for creating and educating Florida's nationally recognized Foreclosure Defense Bar, which in turn is effecting a much-needed enforcement and protection of rights of Florida homeowners facing foreclosure and the loss of their homes and the destruction of their consumer credit.

JALA's Foreclosure Defense and Prevention Lawyer Training Project obligates every lawyer receiving training to perform twenty (20) hours a year in pro bono legal services through their local legal aid program. This strategy has created a reservoir of pro bono private legal services available in every community throughout Florida.

The companion to training foreclosure defense attorneys is the JALA foreclosure list serv. The list serv provides back up, support and mentoring to legal aid and private attorneys who are actively engaged in defending Florida homeowners in foreclosure. The list serv is restricted to attorneys without conflicts with homeowners and counts over 700 lawyers as members working together every day to share pleadings, orders and determining best practices.

### Support Services for Other Agencies.

- **CLE Training Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys Available to all Legal Services Agencies Statewide:** Pro Bono JALA continued to develop two-hour CLE webinars focusing on substantive areas applicable to low-income clients such as Basic Landlord/Tenant Law; Education Advocacy; and Guardian Advocacy/ Temporary Relative Custody. These resources are shared statewide with other pro bono coordinators for training and support of pro bono attorneys and legal services staff attorneys. Florida Legal Services with facilitation by Kelly Carmody is developing a comprehensive training resources library for pro bono attorneys. We are learning that training is nearly synonymous with recruitment, as pro bono attorneys are more likely to accept a case if they are given the specific documents and procedures necessary to assist a client. Trainings are accessible upon request and can be viewed from a personal computer. This format addresses two documented concerns of pro bono attorneys: "I'm afraid I'll do more harm than good" and "I don't have time to research how to proceed with a case".
- **Statewide Discussion Facilitated Among Legal Services Agencies Involved In or Starting Medical Legal Partnerships:** The Northeast Florida Medical Legal Partnership has facilitated communication among legal services agencies in Miami, West Palm Beach, Orlando, Jacksonville, and Tallahassee, to share resources and experiences as partnerships are established and continue to grow. This unified voice will become more valuable as opportunities to influence state and national legislation and approach funding sources beyond The Florida Bar Foundation. In August, representatives from the NFMLP and Legal Services of North Florida traveled to Boston to meet with national representatives.