

FY2024 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	Pisgah Legal Services	
Project Name:	Justice For All Program	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)		Quarter 1 (July 1, 2023 - September 30, 2023)
	X	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023)
		Quarter 3 (January 1, 2024 - March 31, 2024)
		Quarter 4 (April 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Please provide a brief summary (no more than 1500 characters). You may attach supplemental documents if needed.

Quarter 1	Pisgah Legal Services has provided legal services to 581 families, helping 1,180 people in the first quarter of the grant. In the 32 cases closed for Buncombe County immigrants this past quarter, we helped provided representation to 25 clients to help them obtain legal status and/or employment authorization. The vast majority of the 581 cases Pisgah Legal provided assistance on this quarter were for help with immigration-related issues. However, the remaining cases are for immigrants seeking assistance with issues across Pisgah Legal's areas of practice, including housing, health, domestic and interpersonal violence, employment, and consumer law. In addition to the 32 cases closed for Buncombe County immigrants we helped to obtain legal status or employment authorization, Pisgah Legal closed 60 cases in which we helped immigrant clients secure driver's licenses or identification cards, prepare wills, avoid eviction, obtain child custody and child support, escape violence, protect essential property, stop illegal creditor harassment, and otherwise manage their limited resources.
Quarter 2	Pisgah Legal Services has provided legal services to 647 families, helping 2,071 people in the two quarters of the grant. Of the 26 cases closed for Buncombe County immigrants this past quarter, 57% were related to obtaining legal immigration status and the other 43% of cases were related to obtaining employment authorization. For the cases related to employment authorization, 37% specifically obtained employment authorization for domestic violence victims. In addition to working cases directly for our clients, Pisgah Legal's immigration team along with the assistance of a local pro bono attorney have two pending cases against the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services related to U Visas. Only 10,000 U Visas are set aside each year, which are for immigrant victims of crimes who have cooperated with law enforcement. Currently, the waitlist is 15 years and growing. There are, however, interim benefits written into the regulatory framework that immigrants should be receiving if they get an interim review designation. These benefits have been taking 5 years or longer. This practice is unreasonable and harming Pisgah Legal's clients (among all immigrants on the U Visa waitlist) and causing more work for our attorneys, which is why they sued. In December, the government agreed to begin giving most of the 175 clients in one of the lawsuits their interim benefits, which is great news for our clients and offers positive signs for U Visa petitioners across the country.

Quarter 3

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Progress toward annual goals

		Actual Results (Enter Data) Please only include new data for the specific quarter				Progress toward Annual Goal
Measure	Annual Goal	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
# of Buncombe County people (immigrants and their children) helped by the Justice for All program	1390	1880	191			2071
# of Buncombe County cases handled (closed and pending) through this grant	485	203	190			393
# of closed Buncombe County cases supported through this grant	32	11	9			20
Success rate obtaining a positive outcome	90%	100%	100%			100%

Comments:

Note: Cases reported in the first quarter include cases for immigrants opened prior to the grant period that continued to be worked as well as cases opened during the quarter. Subsequent quarters will only include new case numbers.) This quarter, Pisgah Legal Services closed a case for Ariel (name changed) who was born in Honduras and who Pisgah Legal Services has been working with for six years since she arrived in the United States as a minor. Ariel's mother left Ariel in the care of her father in Honduras when she was very young so Ariel's mother could come to the United States to work and provide for Ariel and her sibling. Unfortunately, Ariel was abandoned by her father and has had no contact with him for several years. Hoping for a better life, Ariel came to the United States in December 2016 when she was just 15 years old. She was detained and placed with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). ORR placed Ariel with her mother in Buncombe County in January 2017 who then reached out to Pisgah Legal Services for help in obtaining legal status for Ariel. Attorney Shoshana Barton was able to help Ariel's mom get official custody of her and then file a petition for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, which is a special classification for noncitizen children who need the protection of a juvenile court because they have been abused, abandoned or neglected by a parent. Ariel was also in removal proceedings which meant the government had an active deportation case open. Attorney Barton was able to get the removal proceedings terminated, which provided Ariel with additional stability to build a life in the United States. The road to staying in the United States is long and challenging for immigrants, but Pisgah Legal staff do all they can to offer support and navigate the process for our clients. Throughout her time working with them, Attorney Barton advised Ariel and her mother on health insurance eligibility, travel, and citizenship. Finally, after six years and meeting all the necessary requirements Ariel's green card was approved through 2033. With legal immigration status and work authorization, Ariel can work and drive legally and access resources to help meet her basic needs, making her life much brighter and hopeful for the future.

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting Budget	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount Remaining
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 64,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000			\$ 32,000
Training						\$ -
Supplies/Materials						\$ -
Meetings						\$ -
Equipment/Furniture						\$ -
Printing/Marketing						\$ -
Licensing/Memberships/Dues/Subscriptions						\$ -
Client Support						\$ -
Contracts						\$ -
Professional Services						\$ -
Insurance and Bonds						\$ -
Building Maintenance						\$ -
Total	\$ 64,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 32,000

Comments: