



## CASE FOR SUPPORT



**Prepared by**  
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LIBRARY DIRECTOR

**Approved by**  
LAW LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES



View of the "stacks" in our Reading Room.

## Our Mission Statement

“It is the mission of the Law Library Association of St. Louis to operate a Law Library in the Civil Courts Building in the 22nd Judicial Circuit to provide legal research materials, education, support services and facilities to the bench, the bar, its members and the public. The Law Library provides support to other law libraries in the region by acting as a repository of legal materials not otherwise available or accessible. The Law Library strives to acquire, develop and maintain a collection of legal research materials and to offer educational services to meet the needs of our diverse patron community.”



Attendees at the opening of *Faces of Dred Scott* exhibit

## Our Vision Statement

“The Law Library Association of St. Louis is where members of the bench, bar and public come to be educated in the law and law-related topics.”

***Testimonials from our patrons:***

*"This place has been a godsend for my practice. "*

*"Thank you so much for your help. Your support and commitment have been invaluable."*

*" I could not afford legal information services of this quality . . . without the library."*

*"Thank you for providing this invaluable resource! And great leadership!"*

## **Our Values Statement**

**Excellence:** Maintain the highest level of legal resources, print and digital

**Expertise:** Provide the highest level of service to all users

**Innovation:** We continue to explore new ways of doing things better

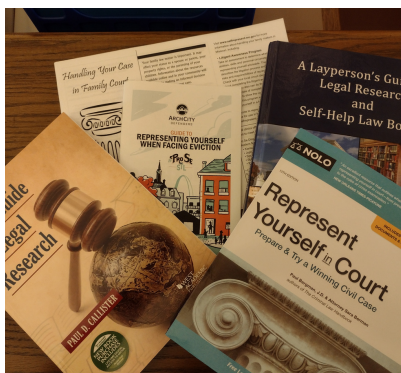
**Community:** Provide opportunities for people to meet, learn and network

**Collaboration:** Work with community partners to accomplish goals based on common missions



Students from Little Flower Middle School at  
*Faces of Dred Scott* exhibit

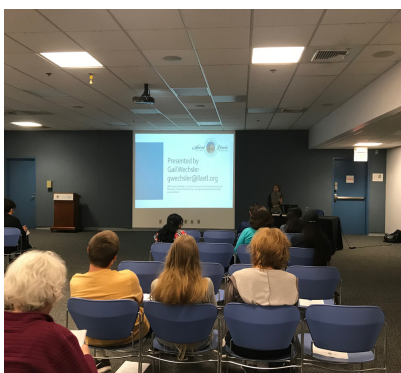
## Access to Justice Work



Resources for Pro Se Patrons

In a perfect world, every individual who needed legal help, regardless of income or the nature of the legal issue, would be able to receive high-quality affordable representation from a lawyer. However, 80% of low-income people in the United States do not get the legal assistance they need. While the right to an attorney is guaranteed for criminal matters, it is not for civil legal matters, such as landlord-tenant disputes, family law matters, and small business disputes.

Saint Louis has several wonderful organizations that offer free and reduced-price legal services in civil law cases for those in need. Yet all of them must turn away many potential clients due to a lack of staff and funding. Many organizations have strict guidelines determining who they can help and with what types of legal matters. Also turned away by these organizations are those who earn above certain income thresholds. They earn too much to receive free legal aid from these organizations, but still cannot afford to pay an attorney at standard hourly rates.



Presentation of *Legal Research for the Non-lawyer* at a Saint Louis County Library

If you need a lawyer and cannot get one, you are in a scary place. Not having legal representation could mean the loss of your home, having to file for bankruptcy, or not getting a good custody agreement so you can see your children after a divorce.

## Access to Justice Work

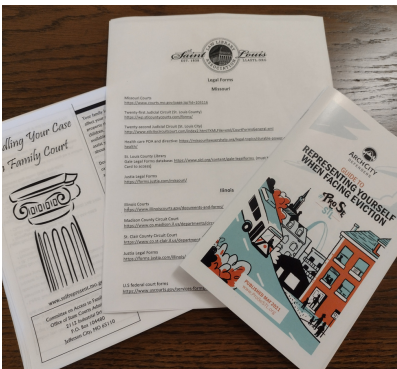


Presentation of *Legal Research for the Non-lawyer* at a Saint Louis County Library

Our library is the only law library currently open to the public in the City of St. Louis. We do not turn anyone away. We help patrons with a wide range of legal research matters. Every week, we see patrons in the library who need this kind of help. We also help those who call in and email us from all over the state.

In the larger St. Louis region, we give presentations in conjunction with Saint Louis County Library on Legal Research for the Non-Lawyer. This is another way we help those who cannot get an attorney learn how to do their own research.

The majority of the people we help with access to justice needs are of low income.



Some handouts for Pro Se Patrons

The Law Library Association is equipped with staff who can help people who cannot afford or cannot find an attorney. While we cannot provide legal representation or give legal advice, we can be a guiding hand showing those who come to us how to do legal research and which forms to fill out. We can direct them to the numerous print resources we have at the library, such as how-to guides for family law matters and manuals on how to navigate the municipal court system. We help provide peace of mind for people afraid of navigating their own legal crises.

## Success Stories Accessing Justice

It costs \$3,473 per month to provide the legal materials and staff expertise to help our non-attorney patrons who need legal research help.



### **Meghan's Story:**

Meghan called the Law Library Association one afternoon desperate for help. She wanted to know what forms she needed to use for a small claims matter and a state court action that were both worrying her. Fifteen minutes later, after speaking to a staff member at our library, she had the tools she needed to begin representing herself.

"You're an Angel. Thank you so much!" said Meghan to the staff member who helped her.

### **Arthur's story:**

Arthur was representing himself in a federal appeals case. During the time the library was closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he emailed library staff numerous times to get copies of United State Code Annotations relevant to his case. He was able to complete his brief with our help and submit it to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

He wrote to the two staff members who helped him, saying, "I want to thank you both for your assistance in helping me put my brief together for the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals."

# Helping Solo, Small Firm, Newer and Older Lawyers

## Lifting the Profession



Michael Downey, Esq., Ethics CLE Presentation

Another major part of the mission of the Law Library Association is to be a resource for attorneys who may be new to law practice or who work on their own or in a small law firm. These attorneys typically cannot afford their own subscriptions to print volumes or digital legal resources vitally important to practicing law. They rely on us to be there for them, using our books and databases. We provide them with the tools they need to strengthen their skills and to keep their practice thriving so they can help more of the individual clients they typically serve. Some join the library as members for a small fee, allowing access to needed legal education credits and other resources they cannot afford to pay for on their own at full market value.

## Testimonials from lawyers

It costs \$953 to support an attorney with an individual library membership for one year. Membership dues do not cover the actual cost of providing service



Jackie Matreci, Esq, presenting.  
a CLE on family law in Missouri

**Allen's Story:** Allen is an older attorney who practices on his own. He is not very comfortable doing online legal research, having learned to do research using law books. During the COVID-19 lockdown, a library staff member worked with him and his daughter to guide him on how to use an online legal database because access to the law books in the library was not an option. He was able to do the research he needed to do with our help.

Said his daughter: "Thank you so much for your help. Your support and commitment have been invaluable."

**From a new lawyer with a solo practice whom we helped remotely during a winter storm:** "I love getting lost in the hard copy resources of the library and following the trail of cases and additional references, but with the double whammy of pandemic and polar vortex, I understand and am so grateful for your willingness to help remotely."

**From a solo lawyer who joined the library as a member in 2018:** "This place has been a godsend for my practice. The [membership fee] is a small price to pay for the CLEs [continuing legal education classes] and access to every legal research resource under the sun. The librarians are great and always there to help. I only wish I had discovered it sooner."



# Educating the Public on Historic and Legal Issues

## Educating the St. Louis community



Lynne Jackson, the great-great-granddaughter of Dred and Harriet Scott, speaking at the opening of *Faces of Dred Scott* exhibit

The Law Library Association is committed to putting on programs and hosting exhibits that enlighten the entire St. Louis community about important legal issues and historical events. We take seriously our vision statement, which states “The Law Library Association of St. Louis is where members of the bench, bar, and public come to be educated in the law and law-related topics.” Since 2020, the Law Library has hosted two exhibits and related programming on important touchstone historical events.

Our most recent exhibit was *Faces of Dred Scott*. This exhibit ran from March 7 to April 17, 2023. There were three related programs offered leading up to and during the run of the exhibit. All had a focus on the Dred Scott case and the Missouri Freedom Suits. Our program on the *Life, Times, and Freedom Suits of Dred and Harriet Scott* was called “exceptional” and “amazing” and the historical perspective provided by Dred Scott descendant Lynne Jackson was called “a moment in living history.” Several hundred people attended one or more events connected to this exhibit and were enriched by what they learned.



## Educating the Public on Historic and Legal Issues

It costs \$2,029 to mount an exhibit and organize related events.



Dr. William Meinecke speaking at *Lawyers Without Rights* exhibit opening



Audience at opening event for *Lawyers Without Rights*

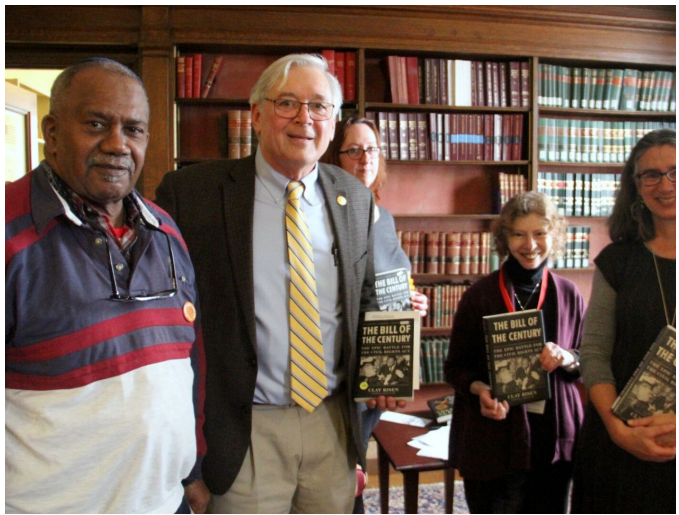
*Lawyers Without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in Germany Under the Third Reich* was shown from March 2020 through December 2021. The exhibit and four lectures connected to it attracted hundreds of attendees of diverse backgrounds. Our program on the creation of the International Criminal Court was called “fascinating and informative.” Our program on Jewish lawyers and the fight against fascism was called “excellent,” “fascinating” and “engaging.”

Simply put, our exhibits and related programming provide our visitors with real stories about real people in history and law. By diving into these stories, we foster important and necessary conversations about historical and contemporary questions.

Photo credits on this page: Philip Deitch

## Legally Reading Book Discussion Group

It costs \$1,050 to run the Legally Reading book club for a year



Members of the *Legally Reading* book discussion group

Our Book Club reaches readers throughout the region.

"I so enjoy the books that are selected and the robust discussions." Althea R.

"Thank you so much for going above and beyond to keep me in the loop as a participant in your [book] discussion group. It makes me proud to continue learning and discussing the times we live in." Nancy J.

Since 2018, our Legally Reading Book Discussion Group, co-sponsored with Saint Louis Public Library, has provided a vehicle for members of the St. Louis community, lawyers and non-lawyers alike, to read and discuss books with legal and social justice themes. Topics covered have included racial justice (*Caste, The Other Wes Moore*), disability rights (*Haben: The Deafblind Woman who Conquered Harvard Law*), and St. Louis history (*The Last Children of Mill Creek*). Our book club members are diverse in age, race, and geographic location. It takes staff time and resources to run this program. Your donation will help support Legally Reading.

## Judicial Legacy Project

It costs \$358 to create, edit, and display each interview for our website.



**Judge Nicole Colbert-Botchway, Judge Evelyn Baker and Commissioner Anne-Marie Clarke**

Conceived by the Honorable Nicole Colbert-Botchway, a Law Library Association of St. Louis Board Member, the Judicial Legacy Project is a program that involves interviewing retired judges and jurists in our 22nd Judicial Circuit. Many of the judges profiled were among the first women and members of the African American community to serve in this role. Their reflections and insights are preserved through this project. Video highlights of their remarks are available for all to view and learn from on our website. The Law Library is proud to be a repository for the stories of these local judicial giants.

## Opportunities for Support

You can help the Law Library Association fulfill its mission and vision by supporting one or more of our programs. Your generous donation can help give a self-represented person the skills and materials they need to address their legal issue with confidence and support. Or help us provide a scholarship to a new lawyer just starting out on their own and unable to pay for legal research books and digital aids without our assistance. Finally, you may decide to support our educational efforts, through our well-regarded exhibits and educational lectures or our Judicial Legacy Project. By supporting the library, you will be making a difference in the community.

Fund a Judicial Legacy Project interview and video \$358

Fund a scholarship for a new lawyer seeking a one-year membership \$953

Fund an exhibit \$2,029

Fund an opening event for an exhibit \$240

Fund the cost of supporting our Access to Justice efforts: for one month \$3,473

Fund the cost of supporting our Access to Justice efforts: for one week \$868

No donation is too big or too small: Other opportunities include:

Fund presentation of Legal Research for the Non-Lawyer at a public library \$185

Fund the cost of one Legally Reading Book Club meeting \$175

Fund purchase of a new self-help book for patrons who are not attorneys \$50