



# STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2021-2024



# MISSION STATEMENT

In partnership with its clients and community stakeholders, Neighborhood Legal Services Program (NLSP) helps DC residents, families and communities eliminate barriers to overcoming poverty and secure justice.

Using all available legal and other advocacy tools, NLSP enables underserved DC residents to make their voices heard in the courts and other forums where their rights and protections are at stake, to secure fair and lasting solutions to their problems and to attain their individual, family, and community goals.



# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles influence everything we do: our advocacy, our community partnerships, the way we treat each other, and the way we treat anyone who comes into contact with NLSP.



## **RACIAL EQUITY**

We believe that the law is a tool that is too often used or designed to enforce and continue racial oppression. We are committed to using the law, instead, to promote justice and racial equality. View our Racial Equity Statement on our website.



## **DIGNITY & RESPECT**

We believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect, always.



## **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

We believe that everyone should have equal access to justice and equal treatment under the law.



## **FIGHTING POVERTY**

We use the law to fight poverty and create pathways out of poverty.



## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

We believe that presence and engagement in our communities is vital, and that the communities we serve should guide our practice.



## **BASIC NEEDS**

We believe every person has a right to their basic needs: a safe, affordable, accessible home; a quality education; income security; clean water; sufficient, nutritious food; and quality health care.



## **VOICE**

We believe that people should have a voice in the laws and policies that affect their lives and that decision-making processes should be structured to make that possible.



## **FAMILY PRESERVATION**

We believe that people have the right to define their own families and that those families are entitled to preservation and protection.



## **SAFE CHILDHOOD**

We believe that children have the right to a physically and emotionally safe childhood. They have the right to parenting and parents.



## **STRENGTHENING CLIENTS' CAPACITY**

We believe that our clients are strong, capable people, and we are committed to strengthening their capacity to advocate for themselves.



## **SAFE SPACE**

We are committed to making our organizational environment physically and emotionally safe and accessible for everyone.

**NLSP identified goals under four pillars that will guide our work for the next three years (2021-2024) as we strengthen our impact.**

**I.  
Fully sustain the  
organization  
financially**

**II.  
Make NLSP  
one of the  
best places to work**

**III.  
Identify and address  
client needs more  
holistically and  
efficiently**

**IV.  
Promote  
racial equity  
in our communities**

# I. Fully sustain the organization financially

## Goals:

1. Increase revenue by at least 6 percent annually to fund new strategic goals.
2. Diversify the funding base, specifically:
  - Broaden the scope of federal and DC government funding/grants;
  - Secure grants from more foundations;
  - Increase the number of individual major donors;
  - Expand law firm and corporate law department giving; and
  - Secure *cy pres* funding.
3. Develop an investment policy and strategy for current cash assets.
4. Increase value of NLSP's reserve funds.
5. Obtain and revitalize a donated building in the District of Columbia that reduces long-term rent expenses.
6. Establish a Board engagement policy to increase Board-driven fundraising.

## II. Make NLSP one of the best places to work

### **Goals:**

1. Recruit, hire, retain and promote diverse attorneys and staff to provide top notch services.
2. Ensure employee salaries and benefits are competitive with other regional legal services programs.
3. Ensure all employees have adequate supervisory and support staff.
4. Ensure all staff have the technology tools to perform their job efficiently.
5. Ensure staff have opportunities to grow professionally. This includes skills and knowledge training, professional development, and opportunities for networking and advancement.
6. Preserve opportunities for workplace flexibility and creativity that allows staff to pursue purposeful and meaningful work.
7. Promote a culture for all employees to maintain a healthy work/life balance.

### III. Identify and address client needs more holistically and efficiently

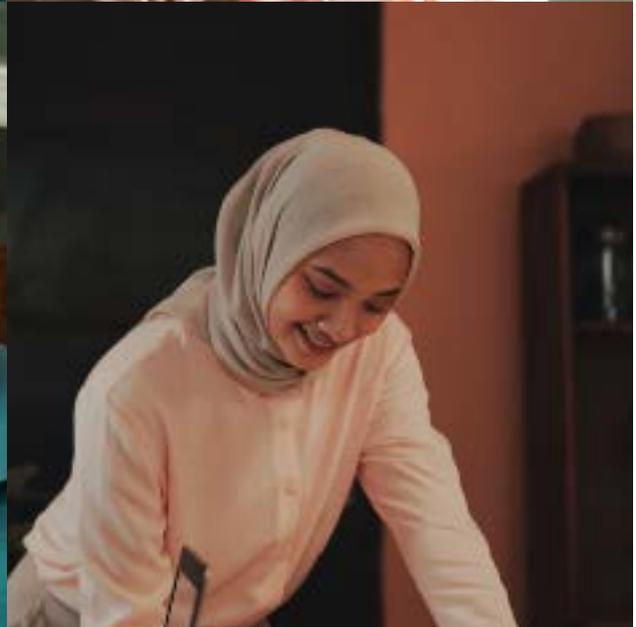
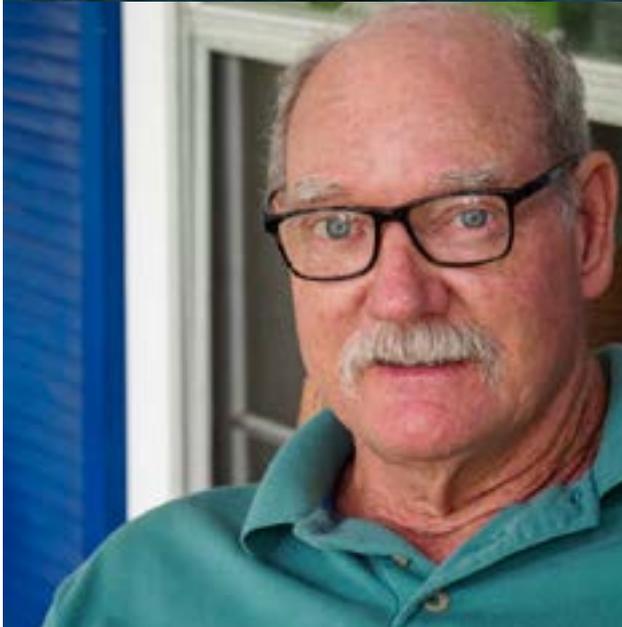
**Goals:**

1. Improve internal systems to better enable NLSP staff to identify all of our clients' legal needs and provide assistance in multiple areas of NLSP's priorities.
2. Help clients better access more resources by improving and strengthening partnerships/ referrals with other social services and legal services providers.
3. Improve our communications and outreach strategies to meet potential clients where they are and ultimately increase the number of D.C. residents served.
4. Improve internal tracking and case management to identify community trends and emerging legal needs (this will assist NLSP in planning and setting priorities accordingly).
5. Identify and address systemic challenges affecting our client population.

## IV. Promote racial equity in our communities

### **Goals:**

1. Continue and refine approach to ensuring racial equity in interactions with clients.
2. Ensure internal racial equity and inclusion.
3. Assess substantive areas in which NLSP can address structural and systemic racism through direct client services, and develop a process for ongoing assessment.
4. Expand use of affirmative cases to address structural and systemic racism, including partnering with pro bono partners where appropriate.
5. Increase outreach to limited English proficiency populations to identify legal challenges unique to their communities.



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