



LEGAL AID  
SOCIETY  
OF SAN DIEGO

100

YEARS  
1920-2020

# CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF JUSTICE IN SAN DIEGO



*"San Diego was a pioneer in organized  
compensated legal aid activities."*

LELAND STANFORD

# Supporting social justice

We strive to be a true catalyst of change, building the foundations that forever transform the ways we live, work, and connect with each other. That's why we're pleased to support the **Legal Aid Society of San Diego** in celebrating 100 years of justice.

Qualcomm

# Welcome!

*to The Legal Aid Society of San Diego*  
**CENTENNIAL GALA**

**Dear friends, colleagues, and guests,**

Thank you for joining us tonight as we celebrate the Centennial Anniversary of the Legal Aid Society of San Diego. In honor of our 100th anniversary, we are excited to come together in person as a community to salute our supporters, clients, staff, community partners, board of directors, and volunteers.

Tonight is truly an opportunity to honor our past and look toward our future. This evening, as we gather at the historic US Grant Hotel, we are situated across the street from the Spreckels Theater where the Office of the Public Attorney opened its doors to the public in 1919. It is only fitting that we celebrate the past century only steps away from San Diego's original Hall of Justice.

Tonight, we are pleased to honor Bill and Dorian Sailer with the inaugural Advocacy Through Philanthropy award, in recognition of their long-time support and dedication to our organization and its mission.

Over the last one hundred years, supporters such as the Sailers and you have enabled us to help low-income individuals and families in San Diego County protect their most basic civil and human rights: shelter, economic stability, access to quality health care, protection from fraud, education, and much more.

As we celebrate our past and present work improving the lives of San Diegans, we thank you for your support and we look forward to continued progress in the coming decades.

Sincerely,



*Gregory E. Knoll*  
**GREGORY E. KNOLL, ESQ.**  
CEO/Executive Director/  
Chief Counsel



*Mark G. Rackers*  
**MARK G. RACKERS, ESQ.**  
President, Board of Directors

The logo for The Morrison & Foerster Foundation. It features the words "THE MORRISON FOERSTER FOUNDATION" in a white, sans-serif font. The word "THE" is small and positioned above "MORRISON". "FOERSTER" is on the next line, and "FOUNDATION" is on the line below that. A small square icon is placed between "MORRISON" and "FOERSTER".

THE  
MORRISON  
FOERSTER  
FOUNDATION

We salute Morrison Foerster's pro bono partner

# Legal Aid Society of San Diego

on 100 years of delivering justice  
to those in need



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Capsule



LEGAL AID  
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# CONGRATULATIONS ON 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

## FROM THE PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO



BRIAN KRAMER • LINDA LANE • TONY STIEGLER

MICHAEL BATTIN • DON RUSHING



## CENTENNIAL GALA HONORARY CO-CHAIRS

# *Bill & Dorian Sailer*

Bill and Dorian Sailer are the Honorary Gala Chairs for The Legal Aid Society of San Diego's (LASSD) Centennial Gala. Bill is Senior Vice President & Legal Counsel at Qualcomm. He received his J.D., cum laude from the University of Michigan Law School, and Dorian received her J.D. from the University of San Diego Law School.

The Sailers are long-time supporters of the LASSD's mission and share our passion for supporting access to justice for everyone. Bill has served on the LASSD board for over 30 years, including serving as president of the Board of Directors. He has also held board positions on the San

Diego County Bar Foundation, the Rady Children's Hospital Foundation, Voices for Children, Kids Included Together, Inc., The Junior Seau Foundation and the Rolf Benirschke Legacy Foundation. Bill has been thrice awarded the Wiley E. Manual Award by the State Bar of California for his pro bono work and been recognized as the "Corporate Lawyer of the Year" by the San Diego Chapter of the Corporate Counsel Association. Dorian has served as a CASA for Voices for Children, teaches yoga and sings with various groups in San Diego. They are proud parents of two wonderful daughters, Jacqueline and Hope.





Proud Supporter of

# **Legal Aid Society of San Diego**

Thank you for providing 100 years  
of access to justice.

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# 100 YEARS OF THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO

What was happening in 1919? Prohibition began in the United States, The Treaty of Versailles was signed, ending World War I. Our nation mourned the death of Teddy Roosevelt.

Locally, it was a momentous year for San Diego. Our small coastal town had grown to 75,000 residents. We had recently built Balboa Park. Our leadership continued to build a world class city. This was also the year that the Office of the Public Attorney, which would later be incorporated as The Legal Aid Society of San Diego (“LASSD”), was created.

For over 100 years, LASSD has improved the quality of life in San Diego by providing free legal services to low-income people throughout the county. LASSD has grown from one attorney to a staff of 220, including over 80 full-time staff attorneys and an additional 200 volunteers, offering both a practical and holistic approach to helping people access and achieve justice. The society has been headed by CEO Gregory E. Knoll for the last 49 years.

LASSD specializes in housing issues, consumer protection, foreclosure prevention, access to healthcare, nutritional security, disability benefits, immigration, family law, taxes, unemployment benefits and special education law.

The organization has three offices and operates free legal clinics at county courthouses and libraries and is the largest provider of free civil legal services in the county.

***“Improving lives by advancing justice through effective, efficient, and vigorous legal advocacy, outreach, and education...”***

Improving lives by advancing justice through effective, efficient, and vigorous legal advocacy, outreach, and education, LASSD provides these free legal services to people on the margins of society so that they can effectively address the situations that impact their rights as citizens.

We, at The Legal Aid Society of San Diego, are proud of our century-long dedication to improving lives by helping our clients achieve self-sufficiency in a challenging legal world, and we look forward to continuing our compassionate mission: protecting our clients’ civil and human rights, for years to come.



LEGAL AID  
SOCIETY  
OF SAN DIEGO

# THE EARLY PUBLIC ATTORNEYS



**1919 P. A. Whitacre**  
The First Public Attorney

**1924 J.A. Hahn**

**1920 George L. Flagg**

**1923 Benjamin Franklin Tyler**  
Benjamin's brother-in-law, Harry Wegeforth, founded the San Diego Zoo in 1916 and was a key player in bringing the Star of India to San Diego in 1926.

**1928-9 Frank Pomeranz**



**1932-3 Clarence F. Terry**  
Municipal Court Judge



**1941 Alec Cory**  
Husband of our Board Member Barbara Cory and Founder of San Diego law firm Procopio. He was among the first lawyers in the San Diego legal community to embrace pro-bono work and provide legal services to the poor.



**1948-9 John C. Barber**



**1918 Founder Dewitt C. Mitchell dies.**  
Dewitt Mitchell's 1918 will left \$20,000 (the equivalent of \$387,000+ today) to the San Diego County Bar Association for the creation of the first Office of the Public Attorney. The office opened in 1919 in the Spreckels Theater building. There were 75,000 San Diegans at the time. People living in poverty would now have access to a free civil lawyer.



**1924-6 John A. Hewicker**  
Former Superior Court Judge

**1934-5 Duane Carnes**



**1930-1 Carlyle O. Buckner**



**1940-1 Howard Turrentine**  
U.S. District Court Judge  
Turrentine was the San Diego County Bar Association President in 1948. Prior to this, as an intelligence officer, he briefed Gen. MacArthur on the capabilities of the Japanese forces as learned through his sources including the secret ULTRA program.

**1945-6 Cleveland Smith**

**1946-7 Thomas M. L.**

**1950-1 R.**

**1949-50 Charles**  
Also a Bo

**1936-7 Robert L. Barber**

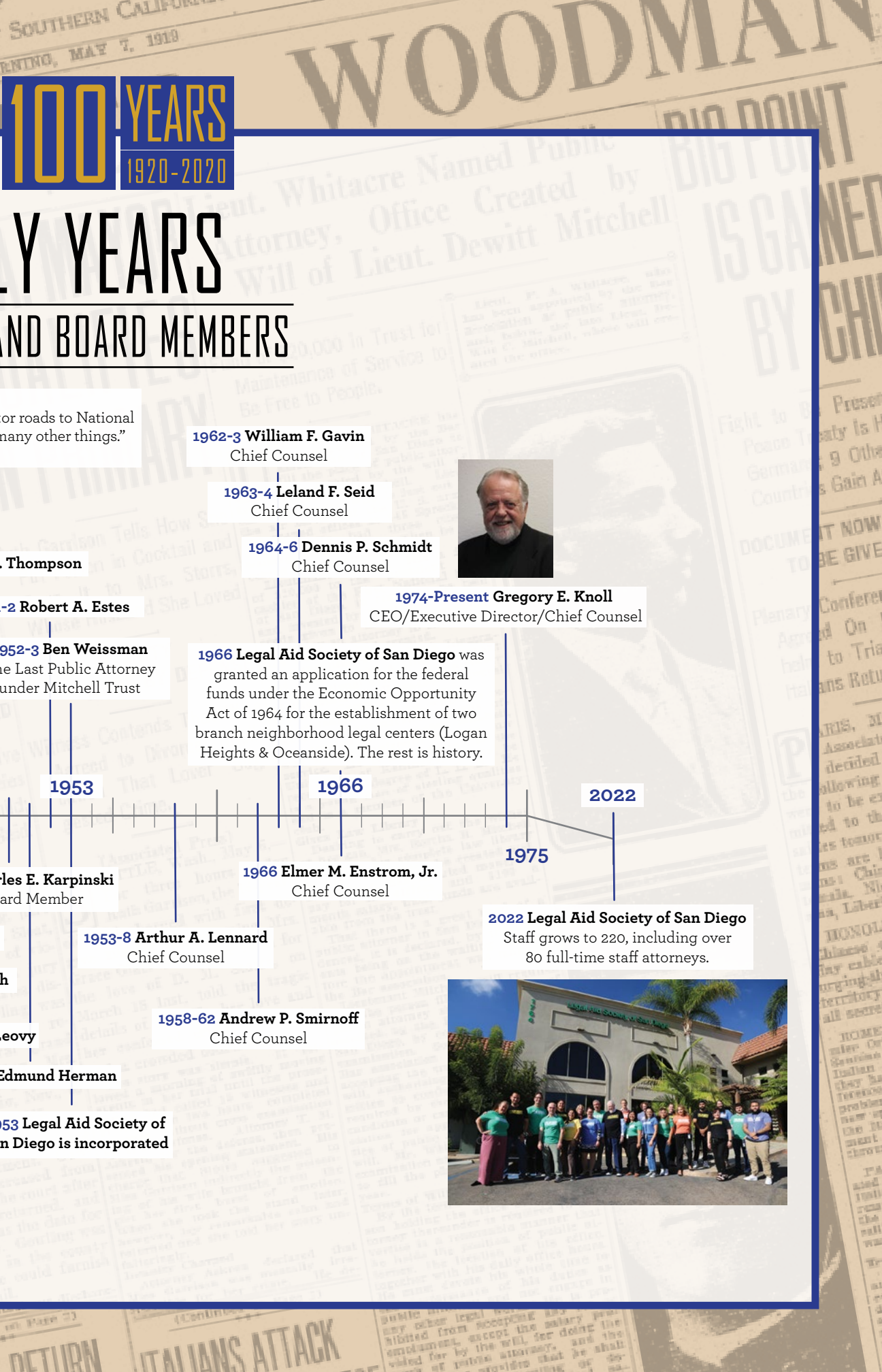
**1938-9 Robert B. Burch Jr.**

**1941-5 Wood F. Worcester**

1915

1920





**100 YEARS**  
1920-2020

# 100 YEARS AND BOARD MEMBERS

for roads to National  
many other things.”

**1962-3 William F. Gavin**  
Chief Counsel

**1963-4 Leland F. Seid**  
Chief Counsel

**1964-6 Dennis P. Schmidt**  
Chief Counsel



**1974-Present Gregory E. Knoll**  
CEO/Executive Director/Chief Counsel

**Thompson**

**-2 Robert A. Estes**

**1952-3 Ben Weissman**  
The Last Public Attorney  
under Mitchell Trust

**1966 Legal Aid Society of San Diego** was  
granted an application for the federal  
funds under the Economic Opportunity  
Act of 1964 for the establishment of two  
branch neighborhood legal centers (Logan  
Heights & Oceanside). The rest is history.

**1953**

**1966**

**2022**

**les E. Karpinski**  
ard Member

**1966 Elmer M. Enstrom, Jr.**  
Chief Counsel

**1975**

**2022 Legal Aid Society of San Diego**  
Staff grows to 220, including over  
80 full-time staff attorneys.

**1953-8 Arthur A. Lennard**  
Chief Counsel

**1958-62 Andrew P. Smirnoff**  
Chief Counsel

**h**

**eoovy**

**Edmund Herman**

**1953 Legal Aid Society of  
n Diego is incorporated**





# Congratulations

San Diego Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans  
congratulate the Legal Aid Society of  
San Diego on 100 years of delivering  
justice to those in need!



Promise Health Plan



# EMCEE AND AUCTIONEER

## Frank Kitchen



Frank Kitchen is “The Mindset Master Chef.” He works with Organizations around the world who want their people to break through Mental barriers to cook up the

Professional Dreams they Hunger For. Frank teaches his proven recipe for transforming your professional aspirations into reality with professional associations, corporations, schools, colleges, universities, nonprofits, and civic groups around the world.

The same recipe he used to go from unemployed to being recognized by the National Speakers Association as one of the top Professional Speakers on the planet.

When he isn’t speaking, Frank practices what he teaches. He serves as Board Chair for the Non-Profit organization Hustle PHX. Their team of staff and volunteers provide aspiring entrepreneurs in underserved urban communities with the resources needed to start and operate thriving businesses. He also raises millions of dollars annually for non-profits as one of the First African American Fundraising Auctioneers in the world.

To learn more about Frank, please visit [www.FrankKitchen.com](http://www.FrankKitchen.com)



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Congratulations on celebrating 100 years of delivering justice to those in need.

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Congratulates the Legal Aid Society of San Diego on their Centennial Anniversary!



University of San Diego  
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# Thank You to Legal Aid Society of San Diego for 100 Years of Access to Justice for Everyone

Your work is vital to helping  
members of our community  
who need it the most.

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Break through.

**Cooley**

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**Kilpatrick Townsend &  
Stockton LLP proudly supports  
the Legal Aid Society of San  
Diego and celebrates with  
LASSD at the Centennial Gala.**

Congratulations on an incredible milestone. LASSD's efforts to close the justice gap not only serve our community but make us better attorneys. Thank you for your contributions to San Diego County and the legal profession.

[www.kilpatricktownsend.com](http://www.kilpatricktownsend.com)  
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# YOUR SUPPORT

*Your support helps us serve the public free of charge in these areas*

- Conservatorship Clinic
- SSI for Children
- Landlord Tenant Issues, Public Housing and Foreclosure
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Patients' Rights
- Consumer Protection and Bankruptcy
- Name and Gender Marker Changes
- Education Rights
- Public Benefits Appeals
- Eviction Defense
- Restraining Orders
- Family Law
- SSI Benefits
- Health Care and Coverage
- Taxpayer Rights and Education
- Housing Discrimination
- Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB)
- Immigration
- Walk-In Legal Clinics
- Civil Appeals

## CLIENT STORIES

### OUR NAME & GENDER MARKER CHANGE CLINIC

Elise, an elderly grandmother, came to our Name & Gender Marker Change Clinic with her grandchild. The child's parents had essentially abandoned the child because the child was transgender. Elise was the legal guardian of her grandchild who wished to change their name and gender. The legal process for a guardian is a bit more complicated than for a parent, however, we were able to assist with the forms required and explain the process to Elise. Elise was successful in her petition and her grandchild was able to use the petition to change vital documents to reflect their true gender identity.

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to support Legal Aid Society  
and celebrate 100 years  
of delivering justice  
to those in need.



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## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO

**ON 100 YEARS OF  
EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE  
TO OUR COMMUNITY**

WITH GREAT RESPECT,

**BLOOD HURST &  
O'REARDON, LLP**

Supporting  
every corner  
of our  
community.

**Proud to support  
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CONNAUGHTON is honored to  
congratulate The Legal Aid Society  
for 100 years of contributions to  
justice in San Diego**

**P  
S  
P  
C** **PAUL, PLEVIN,  
SULLIVAN &  
CONNAUGHTON LLP**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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CALIFORNIA | [PAULPLEVIN.COM](http://PAULPLEVIN.COM)

## CLIENT STORIES

# MAKING THE SYSTEM WORK FOR OUR CLIENTS

Celia was diagnosed with severe mental and physical disabilities after she sustained a traumatic head injury. Because of her injury, she was no longer able to work as a track and field coach. In addition to her head injury, she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, panic disorder, and major depressive disorder with psychotic features. We represented Celia and submitted an appeal to federal district court which was successful. The judge sent her case back for a new hearing after the administrative law judge failed to evaluate whether her traumatic head injury was disabling, discounting the opinions of her mental health providers.

**211 San Diego Thanks  
Legal Aid Society of San Diego  
for their leadership and  
commitment to serving our  
region for 100 Years!**



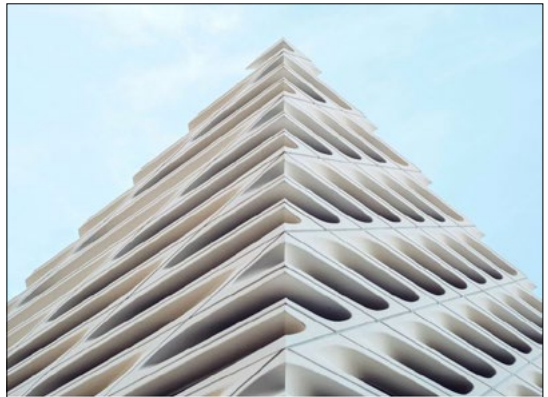
LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO  
**CENTENNIAL GALA**  
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF JUSTICE IN SAN DIEGO

**We are proud to stand beside  
Legal Aid Society of San Diego  
as a partner in strengthening  
our community and fighting  
for justice by providing free  
and critical legal aid to those  
that need it most.**

*Congratulations on this  
Centennial Milestone!*



Community  
Information  
Exchange



**Alvin M. Gomez**  
and the

**GOMEZ™**  
**LAW GROUP**

**congratulate the  
Legal Aid Society  
of San Diego  
on a century of  
pursuing justice.**



## CLIENT STORIES

# OUR COMPASSIONATE VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

Our Family Law Team assisted Mary, who needed to extend child support for her disabled son who was turning 18. Our volunteer attorney Curtis represented Mary in her case. Mary's son is in a post-high school transition program and is unable to care for himself. His father opposed the extension of child support and the case was highly contested. Curtis went to court with Mary. They were able to obtain support for Mary's son until he turns 22 or leaves the transition program.

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San Diego

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100

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# MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Legal Aid Society of San Diego is to improve lives by advancing justice through effective, efficient and vigorous legal advocacy, outreach and education.

# VISION STATEMENT

A San Diego County where all people enjoy equity and equality allowing them to live and thrive because of our efforts.

Consider a legacy gift like our founder Dewitt C. Mitchell did in 1918! To learn more, contact Development Director Lorena Slomanson at [LorenaS@lassd.org](mailto:LorenaS@lassd.org) or 619-471-2656

For more information, please visit [lassd.org](http://lassd.org)