



# 2020 Annual Report

Unmasking Our Impact



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Adapting to changing circumstances, staying true to our mission – that sums up the work of the disAbility Law Center of Virginia in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic posed special threats to the life, well-being and safety of people with disabilities. We saw the virus devastate our community, as it raced through facilities, large and small, striking our friends with complex health needs especially hard. The pandemic shut down critically important job training and employment opportunities, day services and community activities, and added to the isolation that so many people with disabilities already feel.

The disAbility Law Center of Virginia is dedicated to fighting abuse and neglect; we are driven to ensure equal access and fairness for all Virginians with disabilities. In 2020, our commitment was as strong as ever. We had to temporarily switch to remote monitoring of facilities, but thanks to the sophisticated reporting system and data analysis that we have developed in recent years, we were able to track systemic issues related to COVID all over Virginia.

We offered our advice to the Commonwealth as various agencies proposed and revised policies related to resources and services in response to the pandemic, including special education plans and health care access issues.

We rapidly developed training tools and videos to help constituents understand the stimulus checks and their impact on social security or ABLE accounts, to help people understand changing rules in Medicaid, and to help people navigate frequently changing rules about absentee voting, among many other COVID concerns.

As you see the stories and details of our advocacy in these pages, I invite you to consider joining in our work – Virginia needs more advocates everywhere! You can volunteer with us, support us with your talent or your resources, or educate yourself about the issues to be a better voice for people with disabilities in Virginia. Check out our website at [www.dLCV.org](http://www.dLCV.org) or visit us on Facebook or Twitter @disAbilityLawVA to find out more!

**COLLEEN MILLER**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



# EMPLOYMENT

## Edward needed modifications to drive safely. dLCV helped him get the assistance he needed to pay for it.

Edward requested dLCV assist him to get van modifications from DARS. dLCV jumped into action! We requested mediation after DARS made a determination to deny Edward's van modification for a third time. Edward felt lost as he could not understand why DARS would continue to deny his van modification. Edward was pursuing a bachelor's degree, worked for years to get a license so he could be independent, and saved for years to purchase a van. The only thing in his way to complete independence was the approval from DARS for his van modification.

dLCV and Edward worked together to gather information from his physician and others. dLCV presented the evidence and DARS made the correct decision to provide Edward with the van modification! Edward can finally independently and safely travel in the community!

**In spite of a very difficult 2020 for everyone:**

*dLCV advocated for over sixty individuals with disabilities to have the supports they need to get or keep a job.*





# COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

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**When an individual with disabilities wants to live, work and spend time in the community, dLCV can help.**

Kayla asked dLCV to petition the court on her behalf seeking termination of the legal guardianship over her. We agreed and filed the petition. Thereafter we negotiated an agreed order and successfully argued for the judge to grant it without even holding a hearing. Our client is now free of the guardianship and can live her life on her own terms!

**dLCV helped:**

*88 People with disabilities live in the most appropriate integrated environment in FY20 and reviewed 18,623 critical incident reports that impact the safety of individuals living in the community.*

# VOTING

## LANDMARK VICTORY!

dLCV filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of individuals with print disabilities and visual impairments to require the Virginia Department of Elections to provide an accessible way for persons with print disabilities to vote absentee in a private manner. We worked with The National Federation of the Blind of Virginia and the American Council for the Blind of Virginia, along with co-counsel from the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, and the law firms of Brown, Gold & Levy, and Sheppard Mullin, to pursue this cause.

Together we sought a motion for preliminary injunction – however, on the eve of that hearing, the parties reached an agreement: Virginia would provide a remote accessible vote-by-mail tool for the 2020 election. The Court approved the agreement, and Virginia quickly educated its registrars on how to implement the new tool and educated the public about the new option. dLCV used private funding for the litigation, and used our federal voting rights grant to educate the public and the registrars about the result. The agreement we reached will benefit some 178,000 Virginians with visual and print disabilities.

**dLCV surveyed more than:**

*440 polling places during 2020  
and found access violations in  
more than 80% of the locations.*

“  
*“I am crying with joy,  
literally. It has been very  
hard to vote but it can be  
done. Thank you for all  
the hope you bring the  
world”*  
”  
- dLCV Client



# REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE PROGRAM

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**When Social Security beneficiaries are subject to fraud or exploitation, dLCV's Representative Payee program can help.**

dLCV did reviews of Representative Payees and provided informational materials to over 170 clubhouse and day program locations throughout the Commonwealth. The information included "Why Do I Have a Payee?"; "Who Will Be My Representative Payee?"; and "What Happens If I Think My Representative Payee is Misusing (Stealing) My Benefits?" Additionally, we met with constituents at four sheltered workshops. Thousands of people with developmental disabilities and mental illness across Virginia are now better informed about their rights and know how to request assistance from us.

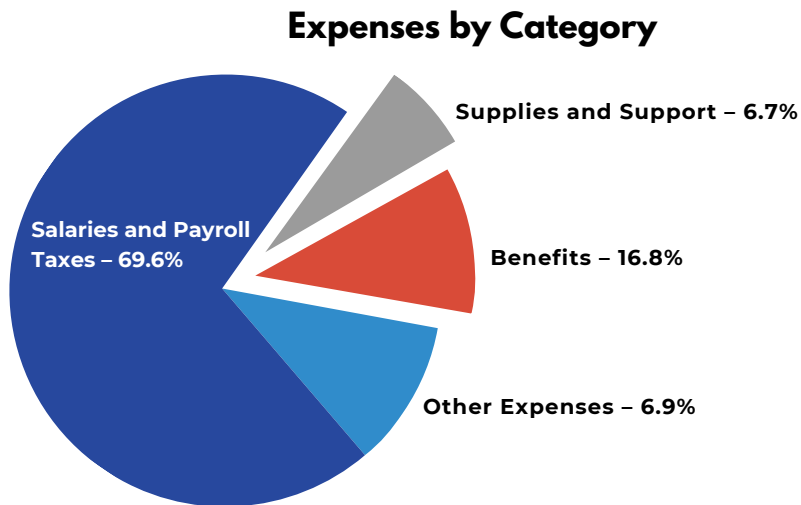
**dLCV's Representative Payee program ensured:**

*that 78 Social Security recipients who have representative payees were free from exploitation in FY20.*



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	FY 2020	% OF TOTAL
Developmental Disabilities – PADD	\$ 991,132	28.51%
Mental Illness – PAIMI	\$ 706,568	20.32%
Individual Rights – PAIR	\$ 476,948	13.72%
Client Assistance Program – CAP	\$ 237,400	6.83%
Other Grants & dLVC Foundation	\$ 125,000	3.60%
Beneficiaries of Social Security – PABSS	\$ 128,045	3.68%
Voting Access – PAVA	\$ 175,303	5.04%
Assistive Technology – PAAT	\$ 127,980	3.68%
Traumatic Brain Injury – PATBI	\$ 107,139	3.08%
Representative Payee – REP	\$ 401,421	11.55%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 3,476,936</b>	<b>100%</b>



## FINANCIAL PICTURE

The disAbility Law Center of Virginia receives support from core federal grants that provide the basic foundation for our work as the protection and advocacy system. We also receive additional funding from individual donors and corporate sponsors to provide additional programs and services that advance our mission.

### Core Federal Grants

- PADD:** Advocacy for individuals with Developmental Disabilities, to promote full inclusion.
- PAIMI:** Advocacy for individuals with Mental Illness to address conditions in mental health facilities.
- CAP:** Client Assistance Program to help people with disabilities to be employed.
- PAIR:** Protection and Advocacy for individual rights, to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal laws.
- PAAT:** Advocacy to assist people with disabilities to find appropriate assistive technology.
- PAVA:** Voting Rights advocacy to ensure that people with disabilities have full access to voting.
- PATBI:** Advocacy for improved services for people with traumatic brain injuries.
- PABSS:** Advocacy to assist beneficiaries of Social Security to be able to return to work.
- PABRP:** Advocacy to protect beneficiaries of Social Security who have with representative payees to be free from exploitation.

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## JOIN US IN OUR MISSION

Our mission is to advance independence, choice and self-determination; protect legal, human and civil rights; and eliminate abuse, neglect and discrimination of people with disabilities through zealous and uncompromising legal advocacy and representation.

We envision a Commonwealth free of legal barriers for individuals with disabilities.

With your support, the disAbility Law Center of Virginia is able to continue to provide legal rights protection PAIMI Council members: and advocacy services for individuals with disabilities.

