

2015



Michael Lopez, of Minneapolis, has had a wide range of experiences in his lifetime. He has been a lumber and food delivery driver and a salesman. He has been homeless. But most importantly, he is a thinker, driven by a robust entrepreneurial spirit. When he was just 11 he started working for his parents' business. He has been moving forward ever since. With his supportive fiancée, through good times and bad times, one dream has persisted: owning and running his own business.

Today, Michael is finishing up the first production run on his invention – a swiveling delivery truck ramp. Michael spent years in both the front office and driver's seat of the delivery business, learning it backward and forward before starting his own transportation service. But before Michael even got that business off the ground, he "woke up from a nap in a cold sweat, with the idea of this swiveling ramp just ingrained in [his] head." A first drawing turned into a second more detailed one that turned into a 3D design and model. Soon Michael realized he had something important in his hands.

Then one day, on a chance delivery, he began talking to a fellow inventor's wife whose son happened to be an intellectual property attorney and LegalCORPS volunteer. That volunteer, Daniel Bruzzone, has become one of Michael's greatest advisers. After

the first few meetings, Daniel suggested that Michael be fully represented on a pro-bono basis by LegalCORPS. Through LegalCORPS's groundbreaking Inventor Assistance Program, Daniel continued to assist Michael in filing his patent, ensuring that his design was legally protected against possible infringements. Meanwhile, another LegalCORPS volunteer – Kathleen Eick – helped Michael register his company, Halo Ramps LLC.

As his invention goes into production, Michael continues to work closely with LegalCORPS and the volunteer attorneys. When his ramp is finalized and the first production run has taken place, Michael will be ready to spring into business. In a satisfying turn of events, the food service delivery business that once employed him very likely will become his first client.

"In many respects LegaCORPS has helped change my life as I see it, forever going forward," he says.

Inventors like Michael are the backbone of American enterprise. LegalCORPS's greatest honor lies in empowering innovators to carry out their vision. LegalCORPS hopes Michael and all other inventors, entrepreneurs and nonprofits it assists enjoy success in 2016 and beyond.



Clients Served and Client Sites...



Video Conference Sites



In-Person Sites

5

Clients in Northwest Minnesota



20

Clients in Northeast Minnesota



19

Clients in West Central Minnesota



47

Clients in Central Minnesota



377

Clients in the Twin Cities



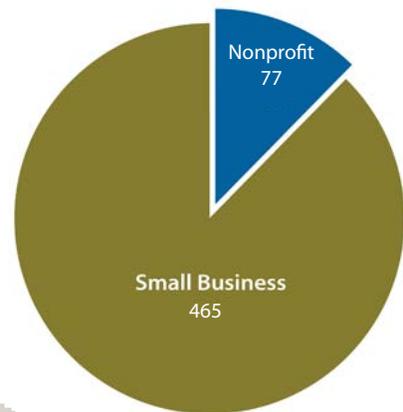
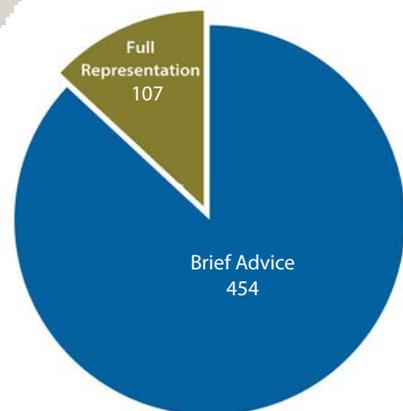
35

Clients in Southwest Minnesota



36

Clients in Southeast Minnesota



Transforming Aspirations into Actual Practice...

In 2015, LegalCORPS continued to spread our message of hope and empowerment for the low-income populations that we view as community assets to nurture -- rather than as problems to solve. We continue to provide 500 to 600 low-income entrepreneurs and small nonprofits with access to business law assistance every year. The number of volunteer attorneys on our rosters has surpassed 550. Once again, we reached all corners of Minnesota.

We also enjoyed the transformation of some recent aspirations into actual practice.

This year, we saw tangible results from our recent efforts to better serve immigrant, American Indian and other entrepreneurs of color. By the fall, joint programs began operating with the Latino Economic Development Center, the African Development Center, African Economic Development Solutions, Asian Economic Development Association, the Red Lake Nation Entrepreneur Program, and the CERT Program in St. Paul. In just a few months, we were able to provide legal guidance to dozens of clients in communities we had not been reaching in the past. Further collaborations are developing.

Key to achieving this progress in our Entrepreneurs of Color Initiative has been the work of the two VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members LegalCORPS hosted in 2015, through a program sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. The energy and talent of Dana Jaehnert (from August 2014 through July 2015) and Louis Enriquez-Sarano (from August 2015 to the present) has provided the boost LegalCORPS and our prospective partners needed.

Meanwhile, LegalCORPS's pioneering Inventor Assistance Program (IAP) served as a model for dozens of new patent law pro bono programs developing across the nation. In 2015, the number of IAP participants who have successfully received patent protection for their innovations reached 20 (since mid-2011).

Even while continuously expanding its reach, LegalCORPS has remained an extremely lean organization -- somehow accomplishing what it does with a paid staff of two full-time equivalent employees. We will need to grow in order to keep up our momentum. In the meantime, we find plenty of inspiration from our talented, generous volunteers (including LegalCORPS board members) and the creative, optimistic and hard-working entrepreneurs they assist through LegalCORPS.



Martin R. Rosenbaum
President



Michael Vitt
Executive Director

Clients Served in 2015..

Small Businesses

- A small business owner got tax and other legal advice about a large debt so he could continue his business and enter a new business partnership.
- A Somali-American entrepreneur received guidance regarding trademarks and infringement protection for her fragrance and accessory business.
- The chef owner of a pastry food truck received advice and assistance about buying out her partner's share.
- The creator of a health care invention received help in converting his business to a legal form of organization that would better protect his invention and assets as his company grows.
- The African American owner of an assisted living home received taxation advice.

Nonprofit Organizations

- A nonprofit serving children and adults received guidance on trademarks and liability.
- Operators of a nonprofit thrift store got answers about employment law and volunteer positions.
- A civic group in Greater Minnesota dedicated to reconnecting military service members to the community received help with obtaining tax-exempt status.
- An organization focused on the rights of individuals with disabilities received help with intellectual property rights for a new product.
- A Native American organization working to preserve ancestral teachings and empower future leaders received advice on risk management.

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Financial Report

July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

Revenue

Grants	\$97,395.68
Individual Donations	\$9,112.97
Special events	\$15,161.03
Client Fees	\$2,500.00

Admin. Fees & Other	\$57,850.00
Interest	\$59.50

TOTAL **\$181,938.62**

Expenses **\$148,321.78**

Net Income **\$33,476.00**

Balance Sheet June 30, 2015

Assets

Cash	\$63,284.05
Grants Receivable	\$566.67
Other	\$374.34

TOTAL **\$64,765.06**

Liabilities **-\$857.16**

Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$52,721.06
Temporarily Restricted	\$12,901.06

TOTAL **\$64,765.06**

LegalCORPS assists small businesses and nonprofits, especially those that strengthen Minnesota's low-income communities, by providing individuals and organizations with business law services they could not otherwise afford. It seeks to provide quality pro bono legal services to increasing numbers of clients throughout Minnesota, so they can focus their time and resources on pursuing their objectives.