

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

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**LCR | LAWYERS FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS
BOSTON**

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The overarching challenge to our respective institutions is to fit the rule of law into the rule of life.

Federal Judge Wendell Arthur Garrity Jr.
commenting on LCR's landmark school
integration victory in *Morgan v. Hennigan*.

Table of Contents

Mission & History	2
Message from the Executive Director	3
Intake Statistics	6
Voting Rights	7
Census 2020	9
Education	11
Immigrants' Rights	13
BizGrow	17
Employment	22
Police Accountability	24
Medical–Legal Partnership	25
Race and Climate Justice	27
Snapshot of Community Outreach	29
Timeline & Case History	31
Board of Directors	38
Member Firms & Organizations	40
Staff & Volunteers	41
Edward J. Barshak Fund for Justice	42

Mission & History

Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR) fosters equal opportunity and fights discrimination on behalf of people of color and immigrants. We engage in creative and courageous legal action, education, and advocacy in collaboration with law firms and community partners.

Our organization was founded in 1968 in the midst of riots, the aftermath of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the findings of the Kerner Commission concluding that the nation was “moving toward two societies. One black, one white – separate and unequal.”

With funding and pro bono legal services contributed by Boston law firms, the organization became the first of eight independently funded and governed local affiliates of the Washington, D.C.-based Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a national organization formed at the request of President John F. Kennedy to enlist the private bar in providing legal representation to address racial discrimination.

In 1973, we became the first pro bono project of the Boston Bar Association (BBA) and the only Lawyers’ Committee affiliate in the country directly connected with a major bar association. Although the organization is now separately incorporated with its own 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, we continue to maintain strong ties to the BBA and the private bar in Boston.

Membership by private law firms still forms the working foundation of our organization. Member law firms fund a significant part of our annual operating expenses and provide millions of dollars in pro bono legal services by working closely with the organization. In this way, for decades, we have harnessed the resources and talent of Boston’s leading law firms to secure and protect the civil rights of Massachusetts residents.

Over the years, our organization has also grown, adding new projects and initiatives to respond to the changing face of discrimination. While working closely with an ever-increasing number of diverse community partners, we remain true to our core mission to challenge and eradicate all forms of discrimination.

In 2018, we celebrated our 50th anniversary. The U.S. Congress marked this landmark occasion with a congressional resolution honoring our organization. The Boston City Council also issued a resolution declaring October 18 as “Civil Rights and Economic Justice day” in Boston.

The struggle continues, but the future is bright. Lawyers for Civil Rights will continue advancing justice and equality for decades to come.



Message from the Executive Director

In the current climate, Lawyers for Civil Rights is a hub for advocacy, litigation, and resistance to discrimination.

Every day, our legal warriors are in the trenches litigating groundbreaking cases, engaging in innovative policy advocacy, leading comprehensive community education and outreach, spearheading community economic development, and partnering with law firms and community groups to further the cause of civil rights. We bring people together to promote justice and equal opportunity.

From desegregating Boston's public schools and public housing projects to our ongoing work to eradicate discrimination in schools and the workplace, we are a catalyst for equality. We are building on our rich legacy, expanding our work to make it even more diverse, inclusive, visible, and impactful.

Our staff, Board of Directors, law firm partners, community allies, and supporters are working in concert to move the struggle for civil rights from the streets to the courtroom. Together, we are providing free legal services to individuals and small businesses in communities that are often deprived of justice because of barriers such as race, language, and national origin.

Here's to moving forward – without fail and without fear.

Iván Espinoza-Madrigal, Esq.
Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR)



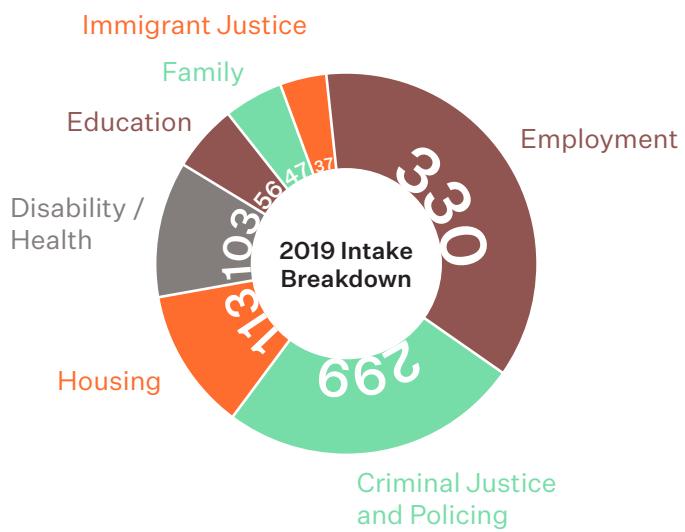
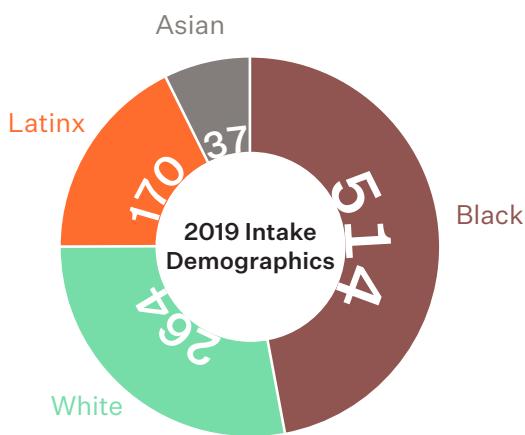
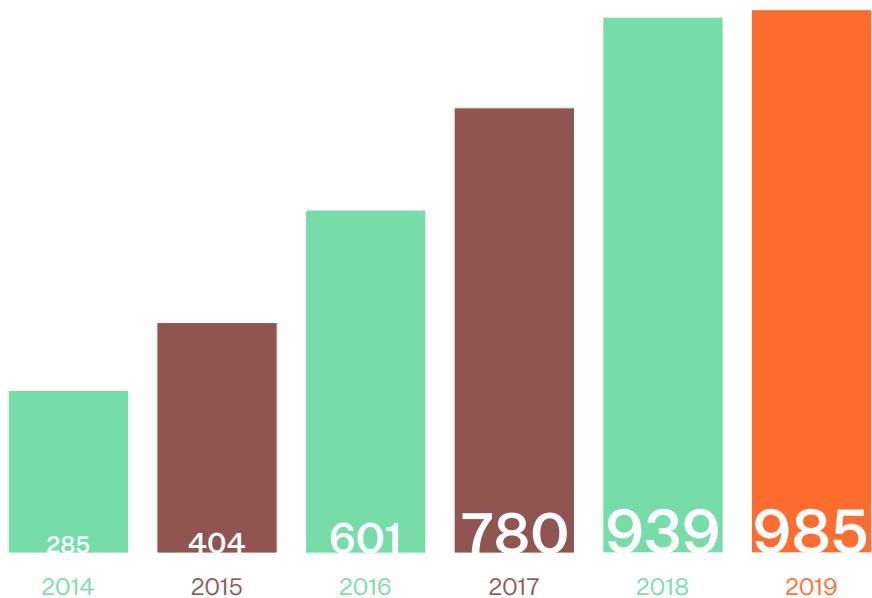
Liberian community packs the courtroom for our federal lawsuit against the Trump Administration



Harold D. Donohue
Federal Building
U.S. Courthouse

Intake Statistics

The number of community members seeking our legal assistance continues to grow each year. We serve some of the most vulnerable populations in the Commonwealth, providing representation, counsel, advice, and referrals in a variety of civil matters.



Voting Rights

Victory in Lowell

In 2019, we successfully settled a groundbreaking federal voting rights suit, *Huot v. City of Lowell*, that we brought against the City of Lowell on behalf of Asian-American and Latinx voters, with powerful pro bono assistance from **Ropes & Gray**. Our landmark Consent Decree requires Lowell to change its municipal electoral system to ensure a fairer and more equitable election process that empowers voters of all backgrounds.

Filed in 2017, the lawsuit alleged that the City's use of citywide at-large plurality elections for all seats on the Lowell City Council and Lowell School Committee illegally dilutes the voting power of minority voters in Lowell, violating the federal Voting Rights Act, as well as the U.S. Constitution. Although communities of color accounted for approximately 49% of Lowell's population at the time our lawsuit was filed, its nine-member City Council and its six-member School Committee had virtually no minority representation throughout all of Lowell's history.

As a result of the Consent Decree, starting with the 2021 municipal elections, Lowell will be barred from using its current at-large electoral system. That system will be replaced by an alternative electoral system that the

parties agree is compliant with the federal Voting Rights Act. The Consent Decree outlines six possible alternatives that Lowell may adopt, including a purely district-based system, several "hybrid" options that combine district and at-large seats, and at-large ranked-choice voting. Lowell will select one of the agreed-upon options over the coming months through a public process that will allow for community input and resident involvement. This will be accompanied by a comprehensive public education and outreach campaign conducted in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, and Khmer.

This case is the first Voting Rights Act case in the country ever brought on behalf of a coalition of Asian American and Latinx voters. Throughout the litigation, we worked closely with numerous local community groups, including the **Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association**, **Latinx Community Center for Empowerment**, and **Lowell Alliance**; civic engagement groups such as **Nonprofit VOTE**, **MassVOTE**, and **Massachusetts Voter Table**; and academic research groups including the **Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group** led by scholars at Tufts University and MIT.

Ropes & Gray Justice Fellowship

In September 2019, Ropes & Gray and LCR jointly announced the creation of the **Ropes & Gray Justice Fellowship**. The fellowship, which will provide recent law school graduates with a paid, full-time position to pursue advocacy in racial justice and immigrant rights, will be funded by attorneys' fees awarded in *Huot v. City of Lowell*. The Fellow will work on the full range of civil rights issues that we address, including protecting voting

rights, pursuing racial justice, empowering low-income individuals and communities, and other initiatives that are emblematic of the *Huot* case. This fellowship is a leading national example of the creative and impactful partnerships that can flourish between public interest organizations and the private bar. The fellowship will play a critical role in cultivating, training, and developing the next generation of civil rights attorneys.



Clients, pro bono counsel, and LCR legal warriors celebrating a victory in the *Huot v. City of Lowell* case.

Census 2020

Fighting The Census Citizenship Question

In April, together with our pro bono allies at **Mintz**, LCR filed an amicus brief in the U.S. Supreme Court in *Department of Commerce v. New York*, the case that considered whether a citizenship question could be included in the 2020 Census. The brief was filed on behalf of broad range of national and local organizations ([see list](#)). The brief supported the district court judge's conclusion that the decision to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census violated the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). We argued that immigrants, people of color, and low-income families are particularly harmed when agencies violate the APA by acting arbitrarily or capriciously.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court sided with civil and immigrants' rights groups, ruling that the Trump Administration's rationale for adding the question "seems to have been contrived," thereby ending the federal government's multi-year quest to weaponize the Census. In rendering its decision, the Court highlighted the exact point made by LCR and Mintz in our brief.

Organizations Fighting for Census Equity

- League of United Latin American Citizens
- Urban League
- Human Rights Campaign
- National Immigrant Justice Center
- Center for Constitutional Rights
- Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School
- Centro Presente
- Brazilian Worker Center
- Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
- Union of Minority Neighborhoods
- Worcester Interfaith
- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Massachusetts Voter Table
- Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts Action Fund
- Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
- Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion
- Sociedad Latina
- Boston Foundation

Census Advocacy and Community Outreach

In light of the critical role that the 2020 Census will play in determining the allocation of billions of dollars of federal funding, as well as the distribution and number of congressional seats, we launched a multi-pronged effort in spring 2019 to educate our client communities. This outreach is particularly critical in the current climate because immigrants and people of color have been repeatedly targeted by the federal government.

We are partnering with groups such as **Massachusetts Voter Table**, **Chelsea Collaborative**, **Centro Presente**, **Greater Boston Latino Network**, **East Boston Ecumenical Community Center**, **Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association**, and **Massachusetts Census Equity Fund** to ensure that all Massachusetts residents are counted.

Our efforts include:

- Launching a bilingual Census Hotline (617-482-1145) to disseminate legally accurate information and communicate directly with affected individuals who have questions and concerns about the Census.
- Creating and disseminating multi-lingual educational outreach materials, including toolkits and palm cards, to empower hard-to-count populations and encourage their participation in Census 2020.
- Advocating directly with the Census Bureau for citizenship waivers to hire enumerators and enhanced language access.
- Providing free legal support to community groups and individuals who encounter issues with the Census.



LCR's Lauren Sampson leads Census victory rally on the steps of the State House

Education

Challenging the State's Outdated School Funding Formula

In June, on behalf of more than a dozen children and parents from Chelsea, Chicopee, Fall River, Haverhill, Lowell, Orange, and Springfield, as well as the **Chelsea Collaborative** and the **New England Area Conference of the NAACP**, we sued state education officials alleging constitutional violations of educational and civil rights as a result of the Commonwealth's inadequate school funding system. The lawsuit, *Mussotte v. Peyser*, accuses state officials of ignoring the constitutional mandate requiring the Commonwealth to fund a quality education for all students.

We are co-counseling with the **Massachusetts Teachers Association, Sandulli Grace, P.C.**, and Professor Peter Enrich of **Northeastern University School of Law**.

In particular, the suit highlights the concentration of children of color and immigrant children in low-income school districts, where, on average, they receive less funding and fewer services than their white peers, who are overwhelmingly clustered in wealthier districts. For example, in Fall River, a single English learner specialist is often responsible for the language needs of 75 students, while students themselves often serve as translators for parent-teacher meetings because the district cannot recruit, retain, or afford enough bilingual professionals to serve a growing English Language Learner population. In Chelsea, where over 90% of the students are children of color, inadequate funding means many classrooms have over 30 students, even at the elementary level.

This case is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform our public schools. The case is currently pending before the Supreme Judicial Court and has also spurred legislative action. We expect significant developments on both fronts in 2020.

Democratizing Access To Exam Schools

Alongside the **Boston Branch of the NAACP**, we continue to advocate for Boston's exam schools to fully reflect the diversity of the Boston Public Schools (BPS). In February, we hosted our culminating community forum, entitled "Enough is Enough: Strategies and Solutions for Diversifying Boston's Exam Schools" at **Roxbury Community College**. Over seventy parents, students, teachers, advocates and administrators gathered to hear from speakers such as **Boston City Councilor Kim Janey**, and to discuss community recommendations for reforming the exam school admissions process, including developing a BPS-specific admission test, admitting a top percentile of students in every BPS middle school or in every zip code, and adopting a holistic model for admissions. We have also presented our findings and recommendations to the incoming BPS Superintendent, and will continue to pursue these reforms in 2020.

Protecting Equal Access To Public Spaces

In May, a group of seventh-grade students and educators from the **Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy (DLA)**, a predominantly Black charter school in Dorchester, went on a field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), in recognition of the students' placement on the honor roll. At the museum, the group was harassed and racially profiled on multiple occasions by museum staff and patrons.

We are representing multiple DLA students and educators in a concerted effort to force the MFA, one of Boston's pre-eminent cultural institutions, to reckon with its failure to provide a welcoming and inclusive space for everyone in our majority-minority city. Our clients' requests to the MFA include standing exhibits to showcase local student work, summer internships for DLA students,



Boston City Councilor Kim Janey at LCR's exam school community forum in Roxbury

and lifetime memberships for DLA students. We are also representing our clients through parallel investigations of public accommodations discrimination by both the Civil Rights Bureau of the Attorney General's Office and an independent private investigator retained by the MFA.

45th Anniversary Of Desegregating Boston Public Schools

In September, we joined forces with **Foley Hoag** and community members to celebrate the 45th anniversary of *Morgan v. Hennigan*, the case that desegregated Boston's public schools. This landmark case was filed by LCR and Foley Hoag at the height of the civil rights movement. The panel discussion was moderated by Meghan Irons of the **Boston Globe** and featured Tanisha Sullivan of the **Boston Branch of the NAACP**, Barbara Fields of the **Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM)**, Giles Li of the **Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center**, and Michael Keating, a partner at Foley Hoag. Over the course of the evening, the community came together to celebrate our accomplishments and discuss areas for reform and improvement.

Defending Diversity in Higher Education

In September 2019, Federal Judge Allison D. Burroughs issued a landmark ruling in favor of **Harvard University** in *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard*. The decision strongly reaffirms that colleges and universities may continue to use race as one of many factors in admitting a diverse student body, and that diversity in our institutions is a compelling interest that strengthens educational institutions and our country as a whole.

In this case, LCR represents a diverse group of students and alumni of color, many of whom are Asian-American, who testified in the federal trial on the importance of—and need for—diversity on college and university campuses.

All our children deserve access to higher education, and they should have an opportunity to learn with and from each other.

Immigrants' Rights

The risks faced by immigrant communities in the United States in 2019 cannot be overstated. The current Administration is taking steps at every level to detain and deport thousands of individuals, while seeking to make life unbearable for those who remain. We are carrying the mantle on behalf of these vulnerable communities, and have developed strategic and creative responses to meet the scope of the current crisis.

Protecting Humanitarian Immigration Programs

In 2019, we deepened and expanded our work to protect the vital, life-saving humanitarian immigration programs that the Trump Administration is trying to dismantle. In *Centro Presente v. Trump* we continue to litigate with pro bono support from **Choate Hall & Stewart** to save Temporary Protected Status (TPS) on behalf of Haitian, Salvadoran, and Honduran immigrants. While this case proceeds, we continue to work on the ground to ensure that TPS recipients are fully protected, including successfully advocating with the Registry of Motor Vehicles to break through bureaucratic logjams that were preventing TPS beneficiaries from renewing their drivers' licenses.

LCR also filed new litigation, *African Communities Together v. Trump*, to protect Liberian nationals with Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). Our case, filed on behalf of brave individuals with DED, their U.S. citizen children, **African Communities Together** and **UndocuBlack Network** in partnership with **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law** and **Dechert**, has already forced the government to extend DED for another year into March 2020, and we are continuing to pursue protection for the humanitarian program's recipients in federal court. Our

lawsuit has broad public support, and ten attorneys general from across the country, including Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, and California, filed an amicus brief in support of our Liberian clients.

We also joined the fight on behalf of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients in the U.S. Supreme Court. In partnership with **Outten & Golden**, we filed an amicus brief on behalf of fourteen prominent empirical scholars describing in detail the social and economic impacts of DACA cancellation.

Safeguarding Access to Justice

Through our immigrants' rights docket, we are successfully challenging the Trump Administration's unprecedented and reckless immigration enforcement.

This spring, we filed *Ryan v. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, a case designed to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers from stalking courthouses and arresting immigrants on civil immigration violations. This ground-breaking case was brought on behalf of **District Attorneys Marian Ryan and Rachael Rollins**, **Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS)**, and **Chelsea Collaborative**, in pro bono partnership with **Goodwin LLP**.

The case was initiated in response to data collected by LCR that showed rampant rates of ICE enforcement at state courthouses.

Under both Republican and Democrat administrations, federal officials treated courthouses as "sensitive locations" much like hospitals, schools, and churches – places where immigration enforcement activities would have deeply harmful community consequences. Immigration enforcement was not conducted in these spaces. The Trump Administration has deliberately targeted



LCR's Oren Nimni advocates for immigrants' rights on CNN



LCR legal warriors join Liberian immigrants in the Worcester Common before oral argument in Federal Court

courthouses for immigration arrests. This practice has generated tremendous fear in immigrant communities. Immigrants are too scared to seek judicial redress. Victims of domestic violence have been chilled from seeking protective orders against their abusers in court because they would risk arrest and deportation.

In June, we secured a major victory: a preliminary injunction in the case, the first of its kind. The federal government has appealed, but our client communities remain safe. No immigration arrests have been reported in Massachusetts courthouses since we secured the injunction.

Protecting The Most Vulnerable

Recently the most vulnerable members of our community came under attack when the Trump Administration targeted immigrants with life-threatening medical conditions, including children with inoperable cancers. Those with serious health conditions were previously protected from deportation by Medical Deferred Action, a humanitarian program that the Trump Administration sought to eliminate. In partnership with **Goodwin LLP**, we filed federal litigation on behalf of the **Irish International Immigrant Center** challenging the termination of this life-saving program, and protecting those immigrants for whom deportation is a death sentence.

Our case, *Irish International Immigrant Center v. Cuccinelli*, combined with pressure from members of Congress and community advocacy, forced the Trump Administration to backtrack and to reinstate the program within weeks of announcing its termination.

Our litigation is ongoing to ensure the well-being and lawful treatment of immigrants who are most in need of the medical resources available in our Commonwealth.

Reuniting and Repairing Families

The family separation crisis at the border is not over, and even those reunited are still feeling the effects of the unconscionable federal actions that tore them apart. In partnership with **Todd & Weld** and **Nixon Peabody** we are litigating *K.O. v. Sessions*, a major class action seeking damages for all of the children separated at the border who experienced physical harm and psychological trauma at the hands of the federal government. We also continue to reunite children and families in partnership with **Brazilian Worker Center**. Recently, we helped to reunite a young man with his wife and 6-month-old daughter in Massachusetts after they were separated at the border and forced to spend five months apart.

Shutting Down the Illegal Detention and Deportation Pipeline

We are aggressively litigating to curtail the illegal and unprecedented use of detention and removal proceedings that destroy families and communities in Massachusetts. In *Rivas v. Hodgson* we are litigating against the rogue Sheriff of Bristol County who illegally detained our client, Mr. Rivas, solely based on his immigration status. The case, brought in partnership with **Latham & Watkins** is designed to set a clear precedent that local and state law enforcement officials cannot illegally detain immigrants.

At the national level, we also filed litigation to stop the Trump Administration's unprecedented plan to subject thousands of immigrants to "expedited removal" – a process that allows low-level immigration officers to short-circuit normal immigration procedures to summarily deport individuals without counsel and without oversight by an immigration judge.

Our lawsuit, *Centro Presente v. McAleenan*, was filed in partnership with **Ropes & Gray** in federal court in Washington, D.C., on behalf of **Centro Presente, Pioneer Valley Worker Center**, and brave immigrant families who are now subject to “expedited removal” under the government’s new policy.

Our lawsuit seeks to stop the unconscionable and illegal expansion of “expedited removal,” which has traditionally been limited primarily to immigrants who just crossed the border and were apprehended close to it.

Through our work, we know firsthand that immigrant families and children are living in fear. That’s why we have deployed our staff to conduct dozens of know-your-rights trainings and workshops in schools, community centers, libraries, churches, temples, and mosques. In 2020, we will continue to work closely with our grassroots community partners, including **Centro Presente, Brazilian Worker Center**, and **Chelsea Collaborative**, to legally protect and empower immigrant families and children.



LCR's life-changing and law-changing advocacy featured on Saturday Night Live (SNL)

BizGrow

In 2019, LCR rebranded the Economic Justice Project to streamline and modernize its name. Our Economic Justice Project is now **BizGrow**.

BizGrow provides minority, immigrant, and low-income entrepreneurs and small business owners with free legal assistance, technical support, and education. BizGrow furthers our mission of economic empowerment in traditionally disenfranchised communities by assisting entrepreneurs in developing sustainable businesses and achieving economic self-sufficiency. Through free legal clinics, business workshops, and individual representations we bridge the opportunity gap, making the connections that allow our entrepreneurs to achieve their dreams.

In 2019, we worked with over 600 entrepreneurs and small business owners throughout Massachusetts. These small businesses are economic engines fueling the growth of our Commonwealth. The demographics of our client population are incredibly diverse: nearly 60% of our small business owners are women; and over 90% of our small business owners are people of color.

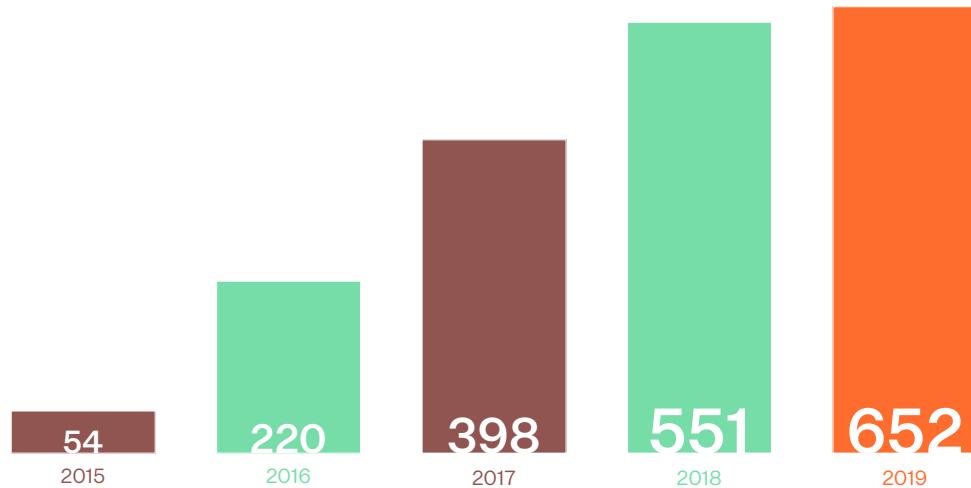
Free Individual Legal Representations

Through the generous pro bono support of our partner law firms, we match small business owners with attorneys who provide them with free transactional legal assistance to ensure that their small business grows. Common small business legal issues include: entity formation, contracts, intellectual property, and tax. Many of our law firm partners provide intensive one-on-one legal service to our clients, including **Goodwin, Nixon Peabody, Ropes & Gray**, and **WilmerHale**.

Technical Support and Educational Programming

Through our unique educational programming, we work to make sure that entrepreneurs have all the information they need to feel confident in the operation of their small business. Partnering with **Roxbury Community College, Latham & Watkins**, and **Goodwin** we held multiple sessions of our seminar series for aspiring entrepreneurs, **Create Your Own Job**. This unique workshop series introduces fundamental business legal topics to aspiring entrepreneurs. Topics include entity formation, business planning,

Small Businesses Served





Free legal clinic in our annual small business conference

networking, social media marketing, and e-commerce.

To support our small businesses, we also hold weekly free workshops on a wide range of legal and business issues that entrepreneurs commonly face such as employment law, taxes, intellectual property, and leasing. This year we added exciting new programming, including “cannabis law” and “pitching your business to the media.” All of the workshops are taught by industry experts and pro bono attorneys from Boston’s leading law firms, including **Latham & Watkins** and **Goodwin**.

To complement these classroom-style workshops, we hold monthly free legal clinics. At these events, entrepreneurs and small business owners have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with pro bono attorneys to ask specific questions about their business concerns. These unique opportunities allow small business owners to get the answers

they need to successfully grow their business. Major law firms, including **Goodwin**, **Morgan Lewis**, and **Foley Hoag**, graciously donate their time, talent, and space to provide this invaluable service.

BizGrow continues to support food entrepreneurs through its unique accelerator, **Food Biz 101**. In partnership with **Common-Wealth Kitchen** and **Goodwin**, Food Biz 101 is a 13-week seminar designed to launch the businesses of aspiring food entrepreneurs. In addition to general legal topics such as entity formation and contracts, this seminar covers topics unique to food entrepreneurs such as food safety, recipe scaling, pricing, and labeling regulations. This accelerator culminates in a pitch night where participants have the opportunity to present their business concept to industry experts, loan officers, attorneys, friends, and family.



Pitch night for small food businesses in Food Biz 101 hosted annually at Goodwin

Advocating For Diversity In City Contracting

In addition to our direct services work, we continue to support minority businesses through advocacy. This year, we brought attention to the lack of diversity in Boston city contracting. With less than 1% of \$664 million of city contracts going to Minority- and Women-Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) each year, we wrote an open letter on behalf of a broad-based coalition of organizers and community leaders that called upon the City to take immediate steps to ensure greater participation of M/WBEs in its public contracts.

In the letter we outlined ten concrete recommendations that can be successfully and immediately implemented to increase minority participation. These include breaking down prime contracts into smaller pieces to make them more accessible for smaller businesses, establishing small or local business programs that provide incentives and/or subcontracting requirements for small or local businesses, and creating a publicly accessible dashboard and scorecard for transparency and accountability with respect to progress on M/WBEs.

Joining us in this ongoing advocacy are **Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA)**, **Sociedad Latina, East Boston Ecumenical Community Council (EBECC)**, **Higher Education Resource Center**, **Hyde Square Task Force**, **La Alianza Hispana**, **Latinos for Education**, **Latino STEM Alliance**, and numerous individual LCR board members.

BizGrow Conference

On July 18, 2019 we held our annual small business conference. Held in partnership with **Suffolk Law School**, the BizGrow conference is a full-day technical assistance conference for minority, immigrant, and women entrepreneurs and small business owners. With the generous support of our sponsors and over 100 pro bono attorneys and legal volunteers, the event was a tremendous success. More than 150 small business owners and entrepreneurs attended twenty different workshops on business and legal issues. Each entrepreneur also had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with attorneys who specialize in entity formation, intellectual property, commercial leases, and taxes.

BizGrow Success Story

Each year we work with hundreds of inspiring and successful small businesses. Carolina Salinas and Carolina Garcia, two Venezuelan immigrants, attended our first Food Biz 101 cohort four years ago with a dream of sharing delicious Venezuelan arepas but a lack of knowledge and resources on where to start. At the end of the series **Las Carolinas** was born. With hard work and determination Las Carolinas continued to work with us, attending our weekly workshops and using our services to form their entity, establish contracts, and protect their intellectual property. Today, you can find Las Carolinas selling their delicious arepas at Aeronaut Brewing in Somerville.

I really enjoyed and got a lot from this workshop you made possible. It answered so many questions I had been pondering for years. I took a digital assessment yesterday and passed. I will start graphic design classes on October 7th. This will equip me to invest in the future dream I have to do art and bringing it to the communities for children. The services LCR has supported me with have built up my confidence to go forward making this dream a reality.

Jametta Cooley, *Hearts with Art*

LCR small business client

Employment

Much attention has been paid nationally and locally to the issue of racial inequity in the criminal justice system. The vast consequences of this inequity unfortunately often follow individuals throughout their lives and can limit their employment prospects. LCR has stepped in to ensure that criminal histories cannot limit present-day access to employment for our client communities.

In September 2019, with pro bono support from **Lichten & Liss-Riordan**, we filed a class action lawsuit against the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) challenging the unconstitutional and discriminatory use of overly-broad employment background checks that resulted in the termination of hundreds of Black childcare workers across the state. The use of decades-old juvenile records as a basis for a lifetime-ban in the childcare field is legally impermissible and disproportionately impacts workers of color due to over-policing and over-incarceration.

This case builds on similar class action lawsuits that we are currently litigating with **Fair Work** against Amazon, for its overly-stringent background check practices that disparately impact Black and Latinx drivers. Our goal is to ensure that the racial bias that plagues the criminal justice system is not imported into the employment context.

LCR also continues to tackle systemic practices barring equal opportunity in Boston's public safety agencies. In February 2019, LCR and pro bono partners at **Zalkind, Duncan & Bernstein**, filed two lawsuits against the Boston Police Department (BPD) on behalf of women of color who had long served Boston as successful civilian employees, working in the Human Resources and Operations Departments, but were repeatedly passed over for promotions in favor of

less-qualified white candidates. The expansion of our advocacy for increased diversity from sworn personnel to civilian employees will continue to ensure that BPD takes a holistic approach to diversity and inclusion in its workforce, examining discriminatory practices at the recruitment, hiring and promotion stages. Related work includes our long-running case against BPD for its discriminatory drug "hair test" policy, which relies on a test that is scientifically unreliable and discriminatory. With pro bono support from **Wilm-erHale**, we tried the case in federal court and are awaiting a decision.

While LCR expands its employment advocacy to new frontiers, we also maintain our role as the legal warriors for the most vulnerable. LCR and **Pontikes Law** brought a lawsuit in Suffolk Superior Court on behalf of a Latino custodial worker who was terminated from the Boston Logan Airport in retaliation for seeking to maintain his work schedule, which allowed him to observe the sabbath. As we close out 2019, we are optimistic that this matter is headed for a fully favorable settlement for our client.

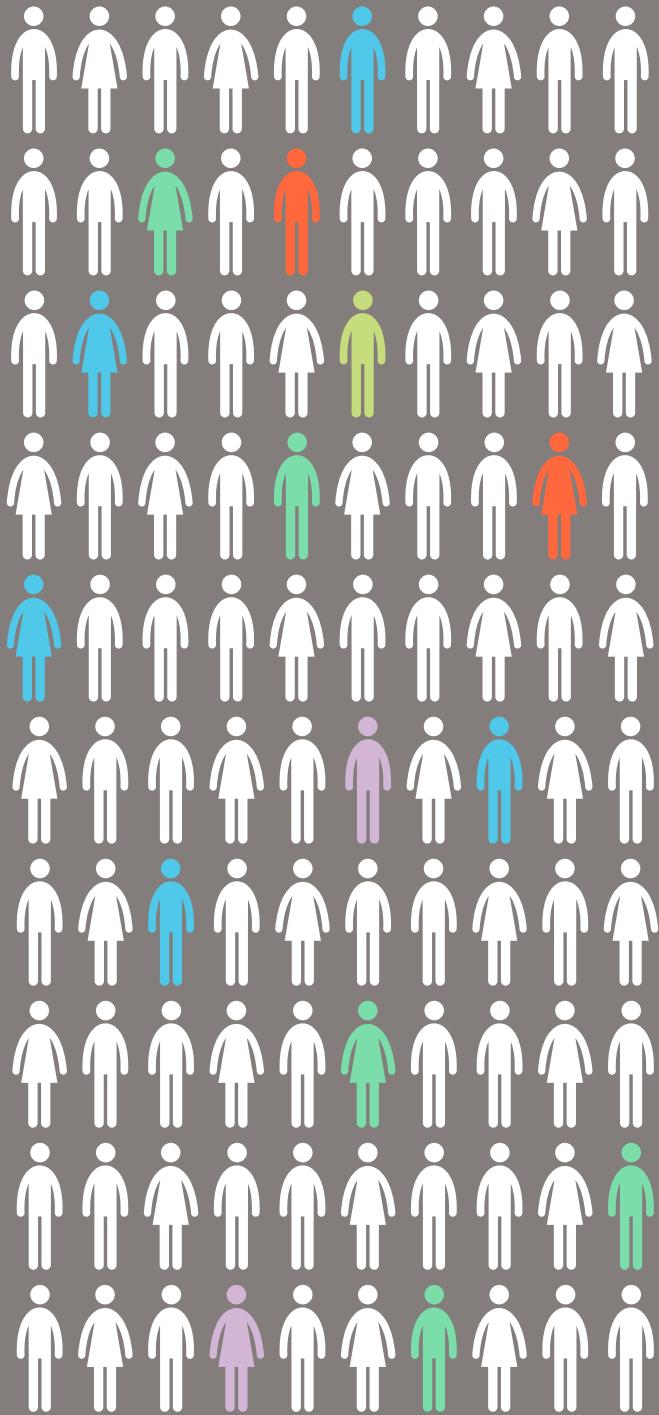
LCR is litigating a sexual harassment lawsuit filed in December 2017 against McCormick & Schmick's. With pro bono counsel from **Fair Work**, our continued representation of five low-wage Latina kitchen workers ensures that all vulnerable workers are aware of their rights and see themselves reflected back in the seismic #MeToo movement. We anticipate a hearing on summary judgment motions in late 2019. In the meantime, we continue expanding #MeToo to #YoTambien.

LAWYERS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS CALLS FOR DIVERSITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

According to the ABA,

85% of all lawyers are White,
less than 5% are Black,
only 5% are Latinx,
only 2% are Asian,
only 2% are Multiracial, and
only 1% are Native American.

Less than 36% are women.



LCR | LAWYERS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS BOSTON

www.lawyersforcivilrights.org

Police Accountability

Together with pro bono counsel from **Fick & Marx**, we continue to fight for the family of **Terrence Coleman**, a Black man living with schizophrenia, who was shot and killed by Boston police officers in October 2016 in response to a 911 call for medical assistance. LCR also represents a Black man employed by the Provost Office of Harvard University who was improperly stopped and searched by campus police because he allegedly “fit the description” of a suspect. In these and other similar cases of police misconduct, LCR fights not only for compensation to the victims, but also for real accountability through discipline of the officers, and for systemic change through the implementation of mandatory and continual implicit bias and de-escalation training.

Additionally, we filed an amicus in the First Circuit asserting that Black and Latinx lives matter on behalf of **Center for Constitutional Rights** and **LatinoJustice PRLDEF**. The brief, presented in a case challenging the criminalization of secretly recording the police, explains the real world risks faced by people of color when they try to openly record the police. Our brief reminds the court of the recent tragic killings of far too many Black and Latinx people at the hands of law enforcement, and highlights the vital role that video recordings have played in shedding light on these deaths.

We also continue to press for robust racial, gender, generational, and linguistic diversity in public safety agencies, and for transparency in their employment practices. Through the use of public record requests, we are able to measure the progress – or lack thereof – of public safety agencies in diversifying their workforces. We can also pinpoint where

efforts are working, such as in the improved use of language certifications to diversify the candidate pool, and where more work needs to be done, such as in limiting unreasonable “bypasses” of qualified applicants of color.

Measuring progress is sometimes a challenge in itself, however, when actors such as the BPD resist transparency and instead engage in a pattern and practice of failing to timely comply with public record laws. LCR and its pro bono partner at **Birnbaum & Godkin**, refused to accept this unlawful practice and filed a lawsuit in June 2019 in Suffolk Superior Court demanding declaratory and injunctive relief to ensure that BPD will be held accountable to the clear timeframes of the law moving forward.

In all of this work, LCR partners with our long-standing allies: minority-focused and minority-led public employee organizations such as **Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers (MAMLEO)**, **Boston Society of Vulcans (Vulcans)**, and **Massachusetts Minority Court Officers**. Recent progress includes a January 2019 home-rule petition and a bill pending before the statehouse to develop a fire cadet program, an initiative that LCR has long advocated for as a means to ensure a diverse pipeline into the Boston Fire Department.

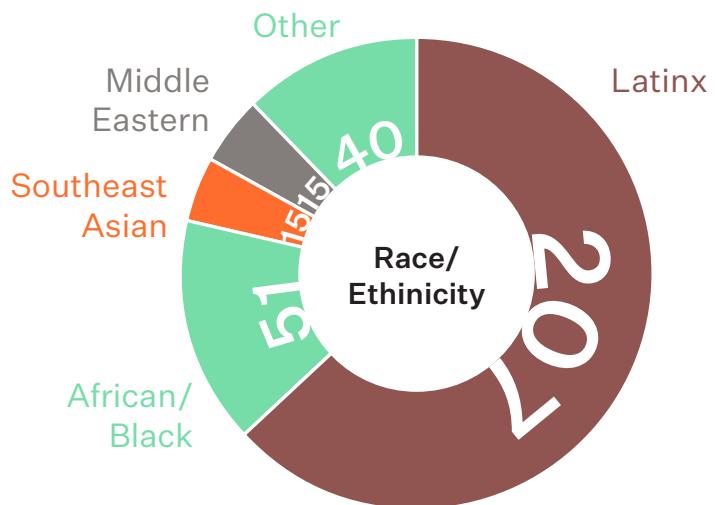
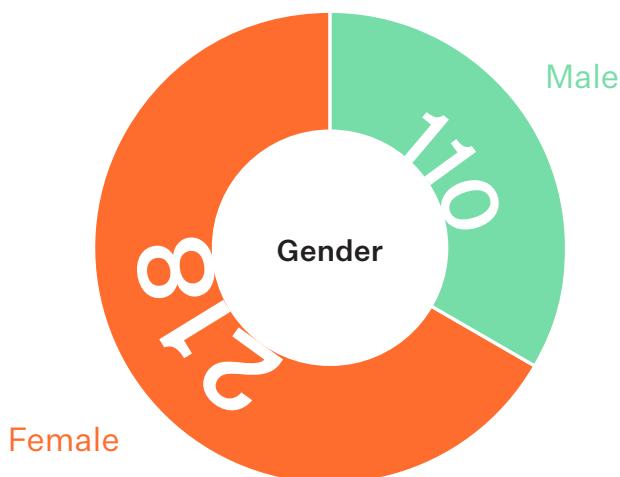
Medical–Legal Partnership

Medical–Legal Partnership 2019

In 2019, LCR's Medical-Legal Partnership, proudly housed at **Massachusetts General Hospital's Chelsea HealthCenter**, has conducted nearly 700 scheduled appointments and assisted over 300 new clients or clients with new claims. We are actively providing free and vital legal support to the low-income patient population in Chelsea.

Highlights

- In a snapshot of our programmatic success in the delivery of direct legal services to the patient population in Chelsea, 17 clients were recently awarded disability benefits, and we were able to defend 10 contested disability claims.
- We obtained nine guardianships for incapacitated adults with 6 other petitions in the pipeline.
- We assisted 15 persons in becoming naturalized U.S. citizens, including several for refugees from Bhutan.



Since 2003, LCR has partnered with **Massachusetts General Hospital** to provide legal assistance to patients at the **HealthCare Center in Chelsea**. Working on-site, LCR receives referrals from healthcare providers who identify patients with critical legal needs. The focus is on the most vulnerable patients, including those with disabilities and those threatened with eviction or wrongfully denied public benefits. In collaboration with the health care team, LCR engages in a broad range of advocacy: representing patients in court; negotiating with recalcitrant landlords; advocating before administrative agencies for public benefits—all with the aim of improving health outcomes by addressing related legal needs.

Lawsuit Challenges Department of Homeland Security

In the current climate, our Medical-Legal Partnership has been called into action to protect the patient population, particularly immigrants and people of color who are under siege. Many low-income families are choosing to disenroll from food stamps and other life-saving programs out of fear of being deemed a “public charge” by federal immigration authorities and deported.

To address this tremendous fear and

uncertainty, we filed an amicus brief with pro bono support from **Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP** on behalf of Boston-based and national healthcare providers ([see list below](#)). The involvement of healthcare advocates and providers from across the country, including Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, California, and Washington, highlights the grave harm posed by the public charge rule.

In the underlying lawsuit, *Washington v. Department of Homeland Security*, fourteen state attorneys general, including Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, successfully obtained a preliminary injunction prohibiting the Department of Homeland Security’s public charge rule—which would penalize immigrants who access life-saving benefits such as Medicaid, Section 8, and food stamps—from going into effect.

Our brief argued that in crafting the rule, DHS failed to consider the negative impact on physician-patient relationships, making the rule arbitrary and capricious in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The Court’s opinion granting a preliminary injunction cited extensively to our amicus brief.

Organizations Fighting Against The “Public Charge” Rule

Massachusetts General Hospital Chelsea Healthcare Center, International Community Health Services, Community Health Network of Washington, Housing Works, Latino Commission on AIDS, Bienestar Human Services, Gay Men’s Health Crisis, Mazzoni Center, and Massachusetts Public Health Association.

New Initiative: Race and Climate Justice

With each passing year, the impact of climate change on low-income communities of color and immigrant communities, particularly in coastal cities like Boston, becomes more dire and dramatic. As leaders on the front lines of justice, LCR and its allies must not only address the disproportionate impact of climate change on these communities, but invest in creative and courageous actions in climate resilience planning, decision-making, policy-making, and legal action that include directly impacted individuals.

In response to community demand, LCR is launching a **Race and Climate Justice** initiative focused on climate resilience and environmental justice in low-income communities of color and immigrant communities. Our work will both develop new partnerships, strategies, and cases and build on existing advocacy. For example:

In partnership with **Conservation Law Foundation, Greenroots, Alternatives to Community and Environment (ACE), and Community Labor United**, we are advocating against the MBTA's proposal to end the ability to pay in cash on trolleys, buses, and commuter trains. The transition to a cashless system will disproportionately harm low-income people of color and immigrants, many of whom are unbanked or live far from T stations where Charlie Cards can be purchased.

We are committed to ensuring that long-time residents and community groups in Boston are not displaced by gentrification, but instead, are empowered to participate in public meetings, request community benefits, and push to ensure that development meets the needs of new and old residents alike. Along with **GreenRoots, City Life/Vida Urbana, Neighbors United for a**

Better East Boston (NUBE), MassCOSH, the Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity, and Stand for Democracy, LCR has raised concerns with the proposed redevelopment of **Suffolk Downs** into a constructed "community" that straddles East Boston and Revere and will include both retail and residential complexes. In particular, we are troubled that rising rents will displace families in East Boston, a historical gateway for immigrants to Boston, that green space and other public spaces will be privatized and so rendered exclusionary, and that the residential construction will have insufficient multi-bedroom units and affordable housing to meet community needs. Similarly, we are working with community groups in Boston's South End to push for increased community benefits in the redevelopment of the **Tubman House**, a historical refuge for women of color moving to Boston from the South, into a luxury condominium complex.

In August 2019, LCR co-led a delegation of elected officials, immigrant rights advocates, community leaders, and legal experts to Central America to observe the impacts of climate change on farmers and coastal villagers. Climate change is triggering the exodus of thousands of people in search of protection and opportunity in the United States. The delegation's findings have been collected and published in a new report — titled "*Fleeing, Not Migrating: Toward A Solution To The Human Rights Crisis Affecting Migrants and Asylum Seekers*" — released jointly by LCR, **Alianza Americas, and Centro Presente**.



Above

Rivers are drying up in Honduras leading to displacement

Right

Rep. Andy Vargas (MA), Jesuit Priest and Human Rights Leader Ismael Melo (Honduras), and Rep. Nika Elugardo (MA) participating in LCR's fact-finding mission to Central America



Snapshot of Community Outreach

At LCR, we are first and foremost community lawyers. We are responsive and responsible to our client communities to answer questions, dispel misinformation, and empower them to engage in self-advocacy. This outreach, in partnership with diverse community groups, has taken us across the Commonwealth to lead workshops and trainings on a variety of topics. Highlights include:

- We partner with dozens of community groups, including **Dorcas International** in Providence, Rhode Island, **Metro Housing Boston**, **First Parish Church**, **Catholic Social Services of Fall River**, the **Allston Brighton Health Collaborative**, the **Charles River Community Health Center**, and **San Benedict Church**, to challenge the Trump Administration's public charge rule, which would make it more difficult for low-income immigrants, particularly immigrants of color, to obtain legal permanent residency in the United States if they had accessed certain benefits. We instructed healthcare and benefit providers in the legal contours of the rule, ensuring that they had accurate information about which immigrants and benefits were covered by the rule, and answered individual questions from community members to dispel fear and confusion.
- In response to requests from community groups such as the **Charles River Community Health Center**, **Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción**, **Centro Presente**, the **Pioneer Valley Worker's Center** and the **Chelsea Collaborative**, we have provided "Know Your Rights" trainings on a variety of topics, including the right of TPS holders to renew their driver's licenses at the Registry of Motor Vehicles, what to do if you are stopped by local police, or what your rights are if Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) comes to your home or workplace.
- Following on LCR's multi-year effort to reform Massachusetts' school discipline laws, we regularly receive requests from parent advocacy groups, school administrators, and community organizations to provide training and advice pertaining to Chapter 222, which codifies the rights of students and parents involved in the disciplinary process. We have visited organizations such as **Worcester Interfaith**, **Parent Professional Advocacy League**, **Greater Fall River School Community Partnership**, **Family Service Association**, **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**, and the **Worcester Education Collaborative** to share toolkits and to help families advocate for themselves when facing disciplinary hearings.

The heart of the question is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities, whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated.

President John F. Kennedy

Timeline & Case History

2019

Gregory v. Commonwealth

Class action complaint challenging overly-stringent background regulations by the MA Department of Early Education and Care, which impose a lifetime ban on childcare work for juvenile offenders, many decades-old, and have a disparate impact on employees of color.

IIIC v. Cuccinelli

Lawsuit filed to stop the recission of medical deferred action program which allows immigrants being treated for life-threatening conditions to be protected from removal. Administration backed down and reversed the recission after lawsuit filed.

Mussotte v. Peyser

Lawsuit filed to compel MA to overhaul its unfair and discriminatory school funding formula, which deprives low-income students and students of color of equal educational opportunity. Plaintiffs are students and families from communities such as Chelsea, Springfield, and Fall River.

Centro Presente v. McAleenan

Federal litigation filed in Washington, DC., to stop the Trump Administration's dramatic expansion of "expedited removal," which

eliminates due process for immigrants facing deportation.

African Communities Together v. Trump

Case on behalf of Liberian nationals who are the beneficiaries of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), a humanitarian program which the Trump Administration sought to terminate in violation of Equal Protection. Hours before our preliminary injunction motion was set to be heard in federal court, the Trump Administration backed down and extended the program.

Huot v. City of Lowell

Successfully settled landmark federal voting rights lawsuit filed on behalf of Asian-American and Latinx residents of Lowell, which charged that city's at-large electoral system illegally diluted the votes of people of color. Settlement requires city to change to a more fair and equitable system, accompanied by a robust public education campaign in English, Spanish and Khmer, allowing all residents to participate in selecting the new electoral system.

Ryan v. ICE

Groundbreaking federal lawsuit filed on behalf of prosecutors, public defenders, and community groups including the Chelsea Collaborative to

block civil immigration arrests in and around Massachusetts courthouses.

Figueroa v. Boston Police Dep't

Race discrimination case filed by civilian women of color against BPD, identifying a pattern and practice of failing to promote candidates of color and a discriminatory distribution of overtime hours.

Commonwealth v. Espinal

Amicus brief filed in the Supreme Judicial Court successfully arguing that jurors should be asked about bias against non-English speakers during voir dire.

Dep't of Commerce v. New York

Amicus brief filed in U.S. Supreme Court arguing against inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 Census. Brief focused on the importance of the Administrative Procedure Act to communities of color and low-income communities as a check on illegal agency action.

2020 Census Advocacy

Launched multi-pronged campaign to ensure a full and accurate Census count, including a Census Hotline.

Amazon Class Action

Nationwide class action filed on behalf of Black and Latinx former Amazon drivers who were

suddenly terminated based on an overly stringent background check policy, which included old and minor offenses, and disproportionately affected people of color.

2018

50th Anniversary & Name Change to Lawyers for Civil Rights

Celebrated our 50th anniversary and re-branded as Lawyers for Civil Rights. The U.S. Congress marked this landmark occasion with a Congressional Resolution honoring our 50 years of impactful work. The Boston City Council issued a resolution honoring Lawyers for Civil Rights and declaring October 18 as Civil Rights and Economic Justice Day in Boston. At our 50th Anniversary Gala, Anita Hill called for national and legal solutions to sexual harassment and violence.

Centro Presente v. Trump

First lawsuit filed in the country to save Temporary Protected Status (TPS), humanitarian protection for Salvadoran, Honduran and Haitian immigrants. Affected individuals and community groups allege that TPS termination was racially motivated and discriminatory.

Coleman v. City of Boston

In response to #BlackLivesMatter, lawsuit filed on behalf of a mother

whose son—an unarmed Black young man with a disability—was fatally shot by the Boston Police Department.

K.O.

v. Sessions

Emergency petitions filed in response to family separation crisis to secure the release and reunification of children torn apart from their families at the border. Filed the first national class action seeking damages on behalf of separated children. Suit seeks creation of designated fund to address the mental health consequences of separation.

Matter of C. Doe

First case of its kind filed with public defender and legal services organizations to block immigration arrests in courthouses. Lawsuit seeks writ of protection to prevent the arrest of immigrants with pending court matters.

Pilot

v. Brookline

Successfully settled discrimination lawsuit filed by two Black police officers in the Brookline Police Department.

Rivas

v. Bristol County Sheriff

Damages action against the Bristol County Sheriff filed on behalf of immigrant father who was unlawful detained and denied bail based solely on his immigration status.

Sexual Harassment Settlement

Successfully settled sexual harassment charge at MCAD brought by

Latina immigrant against wholesale food preparation company in Everett.

Finklea

v. City of Boston

Secured favorable Suffolk Superior Court decision addressing the practice of police departments using overly stringent background checks to bar qualified minority candidates from employment opportunities.

2017

Romero et al. v. McCormick & Schmick's

In response to #MeToo, filed sexual harassment lawsuit on behalf of five low-wage Latina workers against a national restaurant chain, alleging a hostile work environment filled with lewd behavior and unwanted touching.

City of Chelsea

v. Trump

Federal lawsuit filed on behalf of Chelsea and Lawrence, challenging the constitutionality of President Trump's Executive Order targeting sanctuary cities. The suit seeks to preserve federal funding and to protect local control over law enforcement priorities.

BizGrow

Launched signature Economic Justice Project event, connecting more than 200 entrepreneurs with free legal and business support.

Cook

v. Mystic Valley Regional Charter School

Represented Black students in successful challenge to school's discriminatory hair policy, which banned hair

extensions and other hairstyles worn disproportionately by students of color.

Lawyers' Committee v. Hodgson

Successful lawsuit to compel disclosure of records related to Bristol County sheriff's enforcement of federal immigration law. Within hours of filing the complaint, the sheriff apologized and released records.

Lawyers' Committee v. Spence

Public records lawsuit filed with the SJC to compel the Massachusetts Trial Court to release information on its employment practices.

2016

Boston Latin School Complaint

Federal civil rights complaint requesting that the U.S. Attorney investigate racial harassment at Boston Latin School. U.S. Attorney found that BLS violated federal law by failing to adequately respond to racial harassment, and the City of Boston agreed to take steps to improve the racial climate at BLS.

Fisher

v. Univ. of Texas at Austin

Amicus brief filed on behalf of prominent national empirical scholars in a case concerning the use of a race-based admissions policy at the Univ. of Texas at Austin, arguing that the "mis-match" theory espoused by affirmative action opponents is flawed. The Court upheld the policy, affirming use of race as one of many factors in college admissions.

Lawyers' Committee v. Evans

Successful lawsuit to compel the Boston Police Dept. to release records concerning the racial impact of its employment practices. At a time of growing tension between police and communities of color, the data was the subject of intense public scrutiny concerning the lack of diversity in the police force.

Airbnb

Urged HUD to investigate Airbnb's compliance with civil rights laws, citing research showing that Airbnb renters with distinctively Black names are 16% less likely to be accepted by hosts than renters with distinctively White names. In response, Airbnb took immediate steps to eliminate discrimination by hosts against minority renters.

School Discipline Toolkit

Released toolkit to educate teachers, administrators, students and parents about school disciplinary policies and alternatives to suspensions, in order to improve school discipline and combat race and disability related disparities in suspension rates.

Doe

v. Peyser

Intervention filed on behalf of students of color, students with disabilities, and English language learners in support of retaining Massachusetts' charter school cap. The Supreme Judicial Court upheld the constitutionality of the

charter cap, preserving vital resources for traditional public schools.

2015

Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard

On behalf of a multi-racial group of students, filed intervention to support Harvard's use of race-conscious admissions in a Title VI challenge to this practice brought by the same group behind Fisher v. Texas.

Defay v. Boston Police Department

MCAD found that Boston Police discriminated against Black recruits in its Training Academy. MCAD ordered Boston Police to "cease and desist" from discriminatory conduct and to reinstate and compensate affected individual.

2014

Not Measuring Up – School Discipline Report

Published groundbreaking report analyzing Massachusetts school discipline data and finding that students of color, students with disabilities, and charter school students are disproportionately suspended, particularly for minor misbehavior, bringing national attention to disparities in school discipline rates.

City of Brockton v. Energy Facilities Siting Board

Filed an environmental justice amicus brief challenging decision to locate a power plant in a minority community.

2013

Pulido v. National Grid

Successfully represented Filipino electrical worker in employment discrimination matter against National Grid.

2012

NAACP v. Galvin

Challenge to the Commonwealth's failure to offer voter registration opportunities to public assistance recipients, in violation of the National Voter Registration Act. Commonwealth agreed to policy changes and ongoing monitoring, enfranchising thousands of low-income individuals.

Ortiz v. Boston Children's Hospital

Employment discrimination case challenging wrongful termination of Latina health care workers. Case resulted in favorable settlement, including a bilingual public apology.

2010

Bonds v. City of Boston School Committee

Successful employment discrimination case on behalf of a Black teacher at Boston Latin School who received less desirable teaching assignments than less-qualified White teachers.

EEOC

v. Autozone, Inc.

Successfully represented a Sikh employee, who faced religious discrimination.

2008

Amara v. Fairmont Copley Plaza

Successfully represented seven Moroccan and Muslim employees of the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel who faced religious and national origin discrimination.

2006

Bradley v. City of Lynn

Intervened on behalf of the NAACP and the Boston Society of Vulcans to challenge discriminatory civil service exams for police and firefighter jobs in twenty communities. In a settlement, the state agreed to offer back pay and jobs to 66 minority candidates who took the discriminatory exams.

EEOC

v. Home Depot

Successfully represented a Black employee who experienced a racially hostile work environment and was wrongfully terminated.

2005

Arise for Social Justice v. City of Springfield

Successfully challenged Springfield's "at-large" election system, which diluted minority voting power in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

2004

Alshrafi

v. American Airlines

Federal court ruled that the Airline Deregulation Act did not preempt a discrimination claim by an Arab-American passenger who was barred from a flight after 9/11.

Black Political Task Force v. Galvin

Federal court struck down the 2001 State House redistricting plan for 17 districts serving Boston, and enjoined the Commonwealth from holding elections for those seats until the court approved a new plan. Court found that the state plan violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, resulted in "extreme" packing of the 6th Suffolk district, and improperly stripped minority voters out of the 11th and 12th Suffolk districts.

2003

Grutter Amicus Brief

Co-authored amicus brief filed by the Boston Bar Ass'n. and leading Boston law firms in the U.S. Supreme Court in support of affirmative action in admissions to the Univ. of Michigan Law School.

Comfort v. Lynn School Committee

Filed amicus brief, along with the NAACP, successfully defending Lynn's voluntary school desegregation plan against a constitutional attack.

2004

Jones v. City of Boston

Landmark legal challenge to a discriminatory and unreliable hair test used by the City of Boston to determine drug use. In 2014, the First Circuit ruled that the hair test disproportionately affects Black officers. In a companion case, the Massachusetts Civil Service Commission found in 2013 that the hair test

is scientifically unreliable and required Boston Police to reinstate six officers. Established Health Disparities Project centered on Medical-Legal Partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital in Chelsea

2002
South Boston Betterment Trust Corporation v. Boston Redevelopment Authority

Filed amicus brief to ensure that community benefits derived from Seaport District development were equitably distributed to minority neighborhoods.

Mayor of Cambridge v. Secretary of the Commonwealth

Filed amicus brief with the SJC to protect several majority African-American State House districts.

2001
Established Economic Justice Project

In its first year, the project provided free legal support to over 250 small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Morris v. City of Lawrence

Federal court enjoined the City of Lawrence from implementing a voter ID policy that would have discouraged Latinos from voting.

2000
Mendes v. Sullivan

Successfully represented a Cape Verdean couple who were assaulted and had their property vandalized by White neighbors.

1999

Jane Doe v. Boston Housing Authority

Class action lawsuit against the Boston Housing Authority for failing to protect minority tenants from chronic, racially-motivated violence and harassment at historically White housing developments. Case resulted in HUD's first-ever finding of "systemic discrimination," and the Housing Authority agreed to a \$1.5 million settlement, including adoption of a "zero-tolerance policy" for racial harassment.

1998

Lawyers' Committee participated in the formation of the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston.

Thornton v. Amtrak

Employment discrimination class action lawsuit on behalf of minority track workers resulting in a \$16 million settlement and systemic changes in hiring, training, promotion, and discipline.

1997

Julks v. Neptune Towers

Successful lawsuit against federally-subsidized housing development that maintained a pattern and practice of discrimination.

1996

Barrett v. Danca Realty World

Housing discrimination case at the MCAD resulted in a \$60,000 award for emotional distress, the largest amount ever awarded at that time.

Mak

v. Fall River Housing Authority

Successfully represented Cambodian tenants against the Fall River Housing Authority, which failed to protect them from racial violence and harassment.

1993

McDuffy v. Secretary of the Executive Office of Education

SJC struck down Massachusetts' public school financing system, which relied heavily on local property taxes and resulted in gross disparities between districts. SJC ruled that Massachusetts has a duty under the state constitution to provide an adequate education for all children, regardless of the wealth of their local communities.

Bennett

v. City of Boston

Federal lawsuit on behalf of families challenging unlawful searches and seizures by police during the Carol Stuart murder investigation.

1992

Culbreath v. BayBanks

BayBanks agreed to an \$11 million settlement in a lawsuit over its indirect home improvement financing program, which used illegal sales tactics to lure homeowners in communities of color to take out high interest loans, in violation of consumer protection and civil rights laws.

1988

Black Political Task Force v. Connelly

Federal court invalidated the State House redistricting plan based on the 1985 state census for violating the "one person, one vote" principle. First Latino state legislator elected from newly created Boston district.

NAACP v. Boston Housing Authority

Federal class action lawsuit against the Boston Housing Authority for maintaining racially segregated public housing.

At the Lawyers' Committee's 20th Anniversary, Sen. Edward Kennedy called for "a new abolitionist movement" to stamp out racism.

1987

Thong Lim v. Somerville Housing Authority

Federal class action lawsuit against the Somerville Housing Authority for its failure to protect minority tenants from racial violence and harassment.

Hispanic Parents Advisory Council v. City of Lowell

School desegregation and bilingual education case in Lowell, resulting in a favorable settlement.

1986

Established Fair Housing Project

1983

Latino Political Action Committee v. City of Boston

Federal court invalidated Boston's redistricting plan for violating the

constitutional principle of “one person, one vote,” under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

1982
Established Project to Combat Racial Violence

1981
Rendell-Baker v. Kohn

Represented several teachers at a private special education school in Brookline.

Hispanic Parents Advisory Council v. City of Holyoke

School desegregation case in Holyoke, resulting in a favorable settlement including bilingual and special education plans.

1979
Brown v. City of Salem

Successfully represented minority applicant who was not hired as a police officer despite ranking first on the civil service exam.

1978
Latino Association for Progress & Action v. Worcester Public Schools

Lawsuit to compel the Worcester Public Schools to provide equal educational opportunities to children with limited English proficiency. Settled by a consent decree.

Latinos Unidos de Chelsea en Acción v. HUD

Challenged the disbursement of federal funds to the City of Chelsea under the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act.

NAACP v. HUD

Class action lawsuit challenging the discriminatory use of HUD funds disbursed to Boston, resulting in a favorable settlement.

MAMLEO v. Boston Police Dep’t

Challenged a discriminatory civil service exam for promotions to sergeant, resulting in a consent decree that led to the first permanent Boston Police sergeants of color. The consent decree survived a challenge as “reverse discrimination” in MAMLEO v. Boston Police Dep’t. A court upheld the consent decree’s extension to lieutenants and captains in Stuart v. Roache.

Castro & NAACP v. Beecher

Successfully challenged discriminatory police and fire department hiring practices in communities across Massachusetts, including Boston. As a result of consent decrees, there are now hundreds of police officers and firefighters of color in Massachusetts.

1974
Morgan v. Hennigan

Federal court ordered the Boston Public Schools to desegregate in 1974, a landmark decision upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

1970

Published “The Quality of Justice in the Lower Criminal Courts of Metropolitan Boston,” a groundbreaking report that lead to systemic court reforms.

1968

The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association was formed in 1968 in the midst of riots and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the findings of the Kerner Commission report (concluding that the nation was “moving toward two societies, one Black, one White – separate and unequal”). Funded with a grant from the Ford Foundation and contributions from Boston law firms, the Committee became the first of eight independent affiliates of the national Lawyers’ Committee. President Kennedy’s vision of the legal profession mobilizing its resources to support progress in civil rights came home to his birthplace. Gaspard D’Andelot “Don” Belin served as the first Chair of the Committee.

1963
On June 21, 1963, President John F. Kennedy and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy met with 244 leading American lawyers in the White House.

The President and Attorney General made a special appeal to mobilize the legal profession to support the struggle for civil rights. The national Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law was created.

Advancing Equa



lity and Justice



Lisa Pirozzolo (Partner at WilmerHale and LCR Board Co-Chair), Suffolk County DA Rachael Rollins (Keynote Speaker), Iván Espinoza-Madrigal (Executive Director of Lawyers for Civil Rights), and Inez Friedman-Boyce (Partner at Goodwin and LCR Board Co-Chair), at LCR's 2019 gala. Photo credit Renato Castelo.

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On April 27, 2016, LCR launched a campaign to establish the Edward J. Barshak Fund for Justice to provide dedicated resources for our anti-discrimination work. We replenish the fund when we win cases with attorney fee awards. In this manner, the fund will continue to support our work for decades to come. As of November 1, 2019, we have raised \$140,000. We are proud to acknowledge our supporters.

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