

Mission...

To provide professional legal services to those who come from foreign lands who lack sufficient means to obtain representation without regard to faith or national origin.

2020	"Lex Christi, Lex Amoris" award by the South Florida Catholic Lawyers Guild
2018	Florida Senator Daphne Campbell issued a proclamation to "recognize the outstanding achievements of Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami"
2018	The City of Miami recognized Catholic Legal Services for its role in promoting and supporting naturalization, as stated in the City's proclamation of September 18 th as <i>Constitution and CitizenshipDay</i>
2015	<i>Named Pro Bono Hero of the SE Region</i> by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)

Milestones in the History of Catholic Legal Services

2014	Organized a six-agency collaborative to provide unaccompanied children with representation; won legalAmeriCorps grant on behalf of the collaborative
2014	Selected as one of the three law firms to pilot EOIR-funded representation of mentally incompetent detainees
2013	<i>Proclamation</i> of Catholic Legal Services Citizenship Day, June 22, 2013 by the Mayor of Miami-DadeCounty Carlos A. Gimenez and the Board of County Commissioner Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
2012	<i>Proclamation</i> of the City of Miami recognizing the agency for "outstanding public service" presented byMayor Tomas P. Regalado
2011	Selected lead organization of the New Americans Campaign (NAC)
2010	Began the nation's most productive and successful Haitian TPS program in the nation
2009	Community Advocacy Award presented by the Legal Aid Service of Broward County
2007	Saint Vincent De Paul Award for faithful and compassionate service to those who seek sanctuary, shelter, and security in their new land by the Archdiocese of Miami
2006	Adalsinda Lomangino Award for outstanding contributions to the field of immigration law presented by the South Florida Chapter, American Immigration Lawyers Association
2003	National Award for Excellence In Advocacy, US Conference of Catholic Bishops
2003	Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce NOVO award for innovative excellence in delivering services to the community
2000	<i>Proclamation of Catholic Charities Legal Services Day</i> by the Mayor of Miami-Dade County, as one of thevital organizations whose contributions served to enrich the fabric of life in South Florida's community
2000	<i>Commendation</i> by the Mayor of the City of Miami for its major contributions to the Miami-Dadecommunity
1999	Admitted into the Haitian-American Grassroots Coalition
1998	Incorporated as Catholic Charities Legal Services of the Archdiocese of Miami
1994	<i>Established</i> as the GWL Legal Project of the Notre Dame d'Haiti Mission, Human Services Division

Who We Are - What We Do ...

Catholic Legal Services, hereafter "CCLS", is a nationally recognized agency with an experienced team of attorneys and immigration professionals and whose mission is to provide professional legal services, both application assistance and attorney representation before the Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Immigration Courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals, to those who come from foreign lands who lack sufficient means to obtain representation without regard to faith or national origin. In addition to its professional competencies, CCLS' staff reflects the diversity of the population it serves, allowing for culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate services. Our clients come from all paths of life. In 2020, we served people from 185 countries and territories.

General Services Programs & Broward

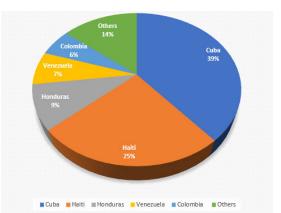
9,113 Legal Consultations (in-person) 4,798 Legal Consultations (virtual) 7,113 Services (96 Types) 4,839 New Clients

Children & Family Programs

6,418 Self-help workshops (ICH) 1,589 Legal Orientations/Clinics/Outreach 467 Representations in Imm. & Juv. Courts/Asylum/ ORR 7 SIJS 2,500 Detention-LOP 114 Victims of Crimes 15 Know Your Right Events (virtually/radio) 100,000 Outreach (globally, mostly, virtual or radio) 10 Virtual Citizenship Clinics 27 Fastrack Citizenship Outreach Sessions 200 Disabled and Mentally Challenged-New Clients (LABRE) 400 Services to LABRE

Religious Immigration Services

27 Nonimmigrant & Immigrant Petitions



2020 Environment and Challenges

Year 2020 has been completely obscure! The Coronavirus outbreak hit the U.S. and continues to cause havoc. Amidst the Coronavirus disease we dealt with many changes in immigration regulations, USCIS and the immigration courts.

- February 24: Inadmissibility rule on Public Charge Grounds came into effect and caused fear amongst the immigrant and refugee population.
- March 18: In response to COVID-19, the Miami immigration court and many other immigration courts postponed non-detained hearings until October 2, 2020.
- March-June 3rd: All USCIS field offices and asylum offices closed to the public. This closure duration caused a backlog.
- June 26: DHS made significant changes to the asylum process in the U.S. August 21, 2020, USCIS would eliminate the adjudication of an initial asylum Employment Authorization Document (EAD) within 30 days. Asylum seekers who file their work authorization applications on or after August 21, 2020 will no longer be guaranteed that USCIS will process their application within any specified timeframe.
- July 31: DHS announced a final rule on the USCIS fee schedule that will take effect on October 2. On September 29, 2020, a U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California issued a nationwide preliminary injunction enjoining fee increases for citizenship and other immigration benefits. Fee adjustment did not go into effect on October 2, 2020.
- August 25: USCIS extended the waiting period to apply for employment authorization from 150 to 365 days after an asylum application is received by USCIS or the Immigration Court and made asylum seekers who file their asylum applications more than 1 year after their arrival into the United States ineligible for an EAD.
- October 19: Miami immigration court reopened limited operations. Master calendar hearings postponed until May 2021. Some individual hearings were going forward using a rotation system.

We Care!

CCLS has lived by its core mission to care for our staff, the agency, our clients, and the community. This enduring mission guides us as we faced the difficult challenge of responding to the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). We remained fully operational and engaged during this time while ensuring the safety and health of our staff, agency, clients and our community.

Respond, Assist, Serve, Protect and Impact CCLS Stepped Up

General Services & Programs

Haitian Nationals: On August 2, 2019, although the USCIS announced its intention to end the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program ("HFRP"), CCLS continues to assist HFRP recipients. In 2020, CCLS assisted tens of eligible clients. With additional funding, CCLS would perform outreach to this vulnerable population to inform them the need to be aware of their priority date to file for adjustment of status prior to their parole status expiration.

Marie and her daughter are natives and citizens of Haiti. They entered the United States in May 2017 under the HFRP. When they entered the U.S., Marie was in the F1 preference category as an unmarried daughter of a U.S. Citizen. In

May 2019, she filed for Adjustment of Status "AS" with USCIS. However, during her Adjustment of Status interview in February 2020, Marie truthfully stated that she was indeed married. That is when the immigration officer realized that Marie was in the F3 category, "married sons/daughters of U.S. Citizens," and that her priority date for "AS" was not yet current. Therefore, in April 2020, USCIS administratively closed her case. Marie sought legal counsel at CCLS. Upon further review of her case, CCLS noticed that her I-94 parole was set to expire on May 27, 2020. With CCLS' assistance we prepared Marie and her daughter's I-94 parole renewal and included statements from the Petitioner, Marie, and her daughter, describing how their lives have changed since coming to the U.S. and the hardship it would cause on the Petitioner if Marie and her daughter were to go back to Haiti. On May 22, 2020, five days before the I-94 parole cards were set to expire, CCLS submitted Marie and her daughter's I-94 parole renewal. Their case was approved in June 2020. As of today, Marie's priority date is current and CCLS is in the process of reopening Marie and her daughter's closed case so that she may complete their "AS" process.

<u>Cuban Nationals</u>: Although the CFRP (Cuban Family Reunification Program) and Cuban Parole Program no longer are in effect, CCLS continues to assist Cuban nationals. In 2020, CCLS assisted Cubans from the MPP (Migrant Protection Program) in filing motions to change venue, asylum, work permit and Cuban adjustment applications.

<u>Assistance at Asylum Office, USICS and EOIR:</u> CCLS assisted and represented tens of affirmative asylum applicants, all aspects of removal defense, family-based petitions, victims of crimes and various other types of immigration cases.

Project LABRE (formerly the Allegany Project): Labre, named for St. Benedict Joseph Labre, serves the immigration needs of the local homeless population and the medically needy. In 2020, the program provided 400 services for over 200 people, despite the numerous challenges presented by the Coronavirus pandemic. Many homeless individuals in Miami have been in the United States for forty years without status. Because of the program's assistance, they can secure work permits and residency cards which allow them to work, live independently, and access desperately needed social services. The generous support of the City of Miami Anti-Poverty Initiative and individual donations made the Labre Project possible. We look forward to more support to serve this community.

Naturalization Project: In 2020, Catholic Legal Services continued to partner with other organizations as part of the New Americans Campaign (NAC). In addition to the partnerships fostered by the NAC, CCLS partnered with the Miami Dade Office of New Americans (ONA). Together with the ONA, CCLS



and NAC hosted a series of information sessions via Facebook live, covering various topics relevant to naturalization, including eligibility and ways to overcome various barriers in the process. These sessions were held in English, Haitian Creole, and Spanish. This same partnership developed a four-day event, the 2020 Virtual Citizenship Clinic, which made it possible for nearly 500 eligible LPRs receive assistance with preparing and filing their naturalization applications.

Pro Bono Project: CCLS's clients who do not fall under our grant programs or cannot afford our low rates continue to be served. CCLS remains committed to assist low-income immigrants on a pro bono basis. In 2020, thanks to your generous donations, CCLS was able to assist with 194 cases. Your donations are crucial to this vulnerable population as it assures that these clients are zealously represented. By resolving their immigration status, they become productive members of society.

CCLS continues to implement a monthly Know Your Rights "KYR") presentation for recent Haitian arrivals. In 2020, given COVID-19,



CCLS performed all its presentation virtually. CCLS was able to perform 10 KYRs.



In addition to COVID, the low turn around is also attributed to Haitians not being released from detention or being expelled back to Haiti once they attempted to cross the U.S./Mexico border. Given the latter, CCLS tried to partner up with other non-profit organizations located at the U.S./Mexico border to perform virtual KYRs. CCLS needs financial support to continue its effort in educating Haitians about the U.S. immigration process.

Programs for Children and Family

Since 2014, the CCLS Children's Program has grown to meet the ever-increasing need and challenges. CCLS now serves both Unaccompanied Alien Children ("UAC") and Women with Children family units ("AWC") facing immigration proceedings. CCLS' programs that serve children and family include the following programs: The Legal Orientation Program for Custodians ("LOPC"); the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program ("URMP"); the Office of Refugee Resettlement Safe Passages program ("ORR"); the Florida Bar Foundation Children's Legal Services program ("CLS") and the Paul Palank Young Women with Children program; and the Immigration Court Help Desk pilot program ("ICH").

In 2020, CCLS faced the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the harsh economic recession resulting from it. The pandemic greatly affected the processing of unaccompanied at the U.S. border. Additionally, the pandemic greatly affected the operation of government institutions such as the Immigration Court, Immigration Detention Centers, the Asylum Office, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field offices ("USCIS"), ICE Enforcement and Removal Operation offices ("ERO"), and local police stations. Finally, the harsh economic recession had a particularly negative impact on the immigrant communities that our UAC and AWC clients belong to. Under these circumstances, CCLS' staff had to quickly develop a response plan to continue serving UACs, Custodians, and AWCs during 2020. To this end, the changes that the CCLS implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have made CCLS' services more efficient and accessible.

Legal Orientation Program for Custodians: The program provides legal orientation presentations to the adult caregivers ("Custodians") of UACs in removal proceedings and seeks to protect UACs from exploitation and human trafficking related situations. It provides legal orientations, friend of court services, intake clinics, pro-bono attorney referral and placement, outreach, and pro-se assistance to serve over 10,000 juveniles facing removal without representation in the Miami Immigration Court.

In 2020, the LOPC served 1,589 participants, including UACs and Custodians. On March 17, 2020, LOPC was forced to cease all in person services and quickly developed a response plan that would allow the LOPC to continue operating, in light of the social distancing measures required to minimize the risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19. This situation presented an unprecedented challenge to the LOPC because it forced the Immigration Court to suspend all

hearings for unrepresented UACs without notice, and it forced CCLS' offices to close for LOPC legal orientation services, and it slowed down the processing of UACs at the U.S. border. In response to this situation, the LOPC began implementing a remote services Model while conducting large outreach efforts and providing services remotely.



The LOPC made use of electronic documents, phone, and video conferencing technology to provide services remotely and reaching out to Custodians and UACs. While LOPC was not the only program offering FOC services at the Miami

immigration Court, it was the only program that continued operating during the pandemic. This resulted in a rise in the numbers of UACs and Custodians the LOPC was able to serve.

Florida Bar Foundation Children's Legal Services: The CLS program provides direct representation to immigrant children in need relief with the Immigration Court, the Asylum Office, and/or the state juvenile courts. Most of these children have survived situations of persecutions, abuse, abandonment, neglect, human trafficking, and/or severe criminal activity.

In 2020, the CLS program represented approximately 92 children with active cases, out of 18 which were open in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic presented similar challenges to the functioning of the CLS program, given the prolonged suspensions and gradual resumption of operations at the Miami Immigration Court, the Asylum office, USCIS filed offices, and state juvenile courts. Despite these challenges, the CLS program successfully maintained a diligent representation of its clients. The CLS program look forward to continuing to help its clients obtain the immigration relief they need to ensure their safety and well-being in the U.S.

E.N.G.N.: "Erika" is a 10-year-old Honduran girl who came to the U.S. escaping severe persecution. Erika's persecution was severe because she was a victim of physical and sexual abuse at the age of 6, as well as neglect by a family and a society that was unwilling to protect a defenseless young girl. Both Erika's young age and the trauma she experienced made it particularly challenging for the CLS program to develop her story in order to support an asylum claim. Nonetheless, the CLS program helped Erika file an asylum application before the Asylum office. The CLS program worked diligently with Erika and with her U.S. Citizen caretaker to help them testify in support of Erika's asylum application. After a thorough an asylum interview, Erika's asylum was granted. Erika is on track to become eligible for adjustment of status to legal permanent residency this year.

<u>Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program</u>: The URMP helps immigrant children who enter the United States without a parent/guardian as refugees, asylees, entrants, or victims of human trafficking. They can also be victims of abuse, abandonment, or neglect by their parents or caregivers and as such qualify for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status ("SIJS"). CCLS maintains a foster care program for these children and provides them with housing assistance, case management as well as psychological and social services. The URMP caseworkers place younger children in the care of foster families. Older children, between the ages of 18 and 23, receive assistance through placement in independent living arrangements.

In 2020, the URMP had 7 new arrivals, 6 of which it took under an emergency basis. This means that the URMP took on these cases just a few days the children would turn 18 and thus fall outside the jurisdictions of the juvenile courts in the State of Florida. The COVID-19 pandemic presented similar challenges to the functioning of the URMP. In response to these challenges, the URMP transitioned to offering remote services via phone and video conferencing. Additionally, the URMP worked in connection with its case workers to help the clients obtain computers, tablets, and phones, as the public school closured forced children into remote classes. Finally, the URMP worked in connection with its case status updates via Zoom hearings.

Despite the challenges, the URMP was able to obtain SIJS for 4 of its clients, numerous initial and renewed work authorization documents, and had one of its clients become a U.S. Citizen. Additionally, the URMP had some of its clients featured in newspaper publications for their accomplishments while being UACs. The URMP looks forward to continuing extending its immigration and foster care services to help children on their journey to U.S. Citizenship and independent living.

A.P.: "Adeline" is a 24-year-old Haitian woman who entered the U.S. as a minor on a humanitarian parole, as a survivor of the devastating earthquake that destroyed Haiti in 2010. Adeline's case was taken under the URMP. Since taking her case, CCLS has helped Adeline obtain work authorization, renew her parole, obtain Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and adjust her status to that of lawful permanent resident. Finally, in 2020, the URMP helped Adeline become a naturalized U.S. citizen, completing her journey through the U.S. immigration process.

ORR: The ORR team represents over 350 Unaccompanied Children (UC's). In mid-2020, funding was expanded to provide direct representation to 75 UC's which the team quickly and successfully offered their services to this vulnerable population in deportation proceedings. Given the numerous attempts to dismantle asylum law over the past



few years, the team focuses on securing state court predicate orders and a path to citizenship for their clients as Special Immigrant Juveniles. Despite the challenges resulting from COVID-19, the team continued their tireless work advocating for our youngest immigrants remotely, often appearing on Zoom for hearings. Just prior to the pandemic, the documentary "Paper Children," premiered at the Miami Film Festival and to date has been viewed over 315,000 on YouTube. The film memorializes the grueling

work of the ORR team and the stunning disparities of the asylum process, following a family of 4 siblings from Honduras as they navigate an unkind system and heal past traumas with the help of CCLS Miami.





Broward Office

Introduction: CCLS' Hollywood office is staffed by a multicultural, multilingual, and professional staff with extensive immigration experience. Specifically, the staff includes a Managing attorney, a Detention Programs Supervisor, eight staff attorneys, two Immigrant Justice Corps Fellows, one Equal Justice Works Fellow and four paraprofessionals. The Hollywood office is a full-service arm of the agency that offers all type of immigration services and attorney representation.

Victims of Crimes: Abused women, men, and children are the most vulnerable immigrants and represent some of the poorest members of the South Florida community and have little hope of escaping their abusive situation or of changing their economic situation without obtaining legal status in the United States. They have nowhere to turn to escape exploitation and mistreatment because they remain ignorant of their rights and without the resources to exercise them. Through our Crime Victims grant, the Broward office employs a staff attorney to represent victims of crimes in their immigration matters before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Immigration Court. The cases range from U-Nonimmigrant Status for victims of certain serious crimes, VAWA Self-Petitions for victims of Domestic Violence and Petitions for Removal of Conditions based on being subject to abuse or extreme cruelty. All Crime victims served under this grant receives a full range of immigration representation pro bono for themselves as well as their spouses and children. With the assistance of Broward office, these individuals often have the opportunity to gain legal status, employment and ultimately autonomy from their abusers.

This year, the Crime Victims Unit made a difference in the lives of 64 different crime victims and provided a total of 114 services to them combined.

Once such recipient of these services is Ann and her minor daughter Sheri. Ann arrived in South Florida on a P-visa which are for international performers. During one of her performances, she met a man who made her feel like she was the only person on stage. The two dated and fell for each other. When it was time to back to Jamaica after her tour, the man proposed to her and convinced her not to return to Jamaica. Shortly after marrying, Ann's husband became abusive and refused to let her speak to her family. With the help of the police, Ann was able to leave the house and moved into a shelter with her minor daughter. Through our partnership with the local shelter, Ann was referred to CCLS for legal assistance. CCLS assisted Ann with filing a Self-Petition for abused spouses of U.S. citizens under

the Violence Against the Women Act which was approved two weeks before Thanksgiving. Ann and her daughter attended residency interview with her CCLS attorney at her side. Upon leaving immigration building that morning, Ann hugged her attorney and said, "I will never forget what Catholic Charities did for me." "You gave me hope when I was at my worst." Today, Ann and her daughter are both Lawful Permanent Residents of United States.

Detained Persons: The Broward office is also committed to serving the detained immigrant population of Miami-Dade County, Broward County and Glades County. Through the Legal Orientation Program (LOP), staff attorneys at the Broward office help detained immigrants understand their legal rights and provide them with information on how to navigate the very complex removal process. This year, more than 2500 detainees across South Florida's three detention facilities received legal Orientation through CCLS' Legal Orientation Program. CCLS attorneys remained committed to the program even when the COVID-19 pandemic forced authorities to cease outside access to the facilities. CCLS attorneys quickly adapted and worked with all three facilities to deliver LOP services remotely through video, Skype and by phone.

The Broward office houses two Immigrant Justice Corp Fellows through whom we provide direct representation before Immigration and Customs and Enforcement and the Immigration Court at the Broward Transitional Center (BTC) in Pompano Beach. All representation of detained immigrants by the Fellows are provided on a pro bono basis and at no cost to the detained immigrant. The types of cases ranging from release on bond or parole to request for protection from removal in the form of Asylum and withholding of removal. This year, even while dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the CCLS IJC Fellows provided representation to 28 detainees at the Broward Transitional Center and was able to secure release for 18 detainees.

NORP: Further, many persons detained in the local detention facilities suffer from mental illness. Many of them have mental health issues serious enough for an immigration judge to find that they are incompetent to represent themselves. The Broward office also houses the attorneys that provide legal representation to all detainees that have been deemed mentally incompetent to represent themselves through the National Qualified Representative Program. Broward office staff attorneys are often appointed as qualified representative by the immigration court to represent those detainees at no cost to the detainee. In many cases, our staff has been able to secure the release of those vulnerable detainees back to their families or when necessary, to mental health facilities that can provide the care that they desperately need.

Religious Immigration Services

The Religious Immigration Services Department enables CCLS to continue its mission by demonstrating support towards the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. It assists the Archdiocese of Miami, many other dioceses, eparchies, religious institutes, religious organizations, and charitable organizations with their immigration needs. The RIS provides legal representation and assistance in bringing foreign-born priests, religious men and women, ministers, and seminarians from around the globe for formation, education, and/or ministry. It also provides legal representation and assistance for those who are currently present in the United States and assists with student visas. The RIS provides consultation on religious immigration matters, representation of clients as necessary, preparation of various forms, and on-going management of clients' cases. CCLS represented more than 700 religious worker clients. In 2020, CCLS provided 35 legal consultations and filed 27 nonimmigrant and immigrant petitions.

Continuing Legal Education Program

<u>CLE</u>: Every year, CCLS and its Board of Directors bring nationally-known immigration law experts to provide Continuing Legal Education (CLE) for legal practitioners. In the face of the ongoing pandemic and the challenges CCLS faced, but thanks to technology, CCLS hosted its annual Lazy Days of Summer CLE training virtually. In 2020, CCLS conducted 8 webinar trainings, and over more than 500 people participated. At the Asylum Symposium Webinar, CCLS recognized the outstanding collaboration work of the Deputy State Director Elena Crosby and the Senior Immigration Specialist Mercedes Ayala, both from the Office of Senator Marco Rubio.

Pro Bono Project: The pro bono project connects vulnerable immigrants with pro bono counsel to defend their cases before the Immigration Court and the Board of Immigration Appeals. Clients are three times more likely to have a successful outcome than without representation. CCLS trains and mentors attorneys and law students to donate their time and talent to provide access to justice for vulnerable asylum-seekers and long time lawful permanent residents of the United States. CCLS also maintains a referral list of attorneys.

<u>Staff Training:</u> CCLS offers training to its staff. The spread of the coronavirus challenged CCLS to rethink its approach to

training. In 2020, CCLS changed its organizational strategies, developed methods and policies to meet and train its staff when we could not get together in person to ease their stress and help them embrace the change. CCLS encouraged staff to continue their education by attending online trainings. Additionally, CCLS held in-house weekly

meeting and/or training. As a result, thousands of immigrants continued to benefit from the education and analysis provided. Most notably, in October 2020, CCLS held the **Annual Ethics Training**, Ethics & Technology for Immigration Lawyers, presented by the UM School of Law under the direction of Professor Jan L. Jacobowitz, Director of Professional Responsibility Program, and **Race Relations** by Lisa Pinto, the Senior HR Director of the Archdiocese

of Miami. In that same year, CCLS organized a **Mental Health Workshop** presented by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami under the direction of Claudia J. Gomez-Cardona, Regional Director of Counseling Program. Both counselors Marlena Rodriguez and Diana Jackson made an impressive presentation addressing issues that our personnel confront frequently. The counselors provided insightful recommendations on how to deal with mentally ill clients while maintaining one's work-life balance.

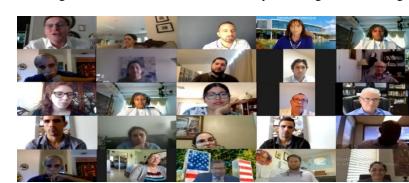
CCLS' Recognition

Our work did not go unnoticed. CCLS was the recipient of the "Lex Christi, Lex Amor" award bestowed by the Miami Catholic Lawyers Guild at the Red Mass presided by the Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski, Archbishop of Miami, at Gesu Catholic Church.

Board of Directors and Financials

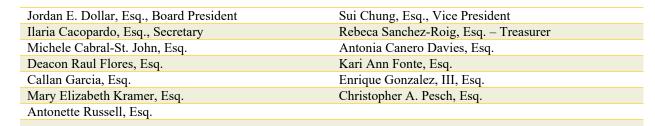
Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski Sole Corporate Member

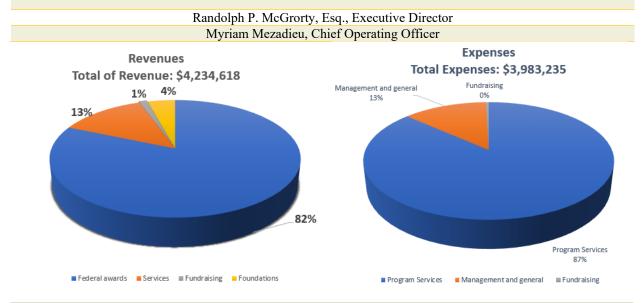
Board of Directors











Many Thanks to Archbishop of Miami, our Board of Directors, Funders, Corporate & Private Donors, Supporters, Sponsors, Volunteers, Pro Bono Attorneys, Friends!

With Humble Gratitude to All Our Staff!