



INSIDE FJC

**CLARENCE DEMESIER JOINS
FJC AS STAFF ASSISTANT.**

Prior to joining FJC, Clarence was the Community Engagement Coordinator for The Jewish Theological Seminary.

As Staff Assistant, Clarence serves as the front-line communication between donors, staff, vendors, and the general public to ensure that all matters are directed to their appropriate resolutions. His responsibilities include office maintenance, data management, grants and accounting assistance, as well as donor support. With a background in the non-profit sector, Clarence is looking forward to working more closely with the financial side of philanthropy.

Clarence received a B.A. in History from Brown University.

**ANNUAL PHILANTHROPY
NUMBERS ON THE RISE**

U.S. GIVING NEARS PRE-RECESSION LEVELS



One of the most common misperceptions in American philanthropy is that foundations and corporations represent the “big money” in nonprofit fundraising. They do not. Year after year, individuals in the U.S. are responsible, in the main, for contributing the steady 2% of GDP that constitutes giving in this country. And as the U.S. nonprofit sector finally approaches levels of top line support not seen since before the Great Recession, it is once again American individuals powering that comeback, according to the annual analysis Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy produced by the Giving USA Foundation.

According to Giving USA total estimated charitable giving in the United States rose 4.4% between 2012 and 2013, to \$335.17 billion in contributions. Giving by individuals totaled an estimated \$240.60 billion, rising 4.2% in 2013 (an increase of 2.7%, adjusted for inflation). Itemized giving comprised 83% of the total estimate for giving by individuals in 2013. The total for giving by individuals also includes \$272 million in contributions to support disaster relief efforts in 2013. The single largest contributor to the increase in total charitable giving in 2013, over 2012, was an increase of \$9.69 billion in giving by individuals (in current dollars).

In other key highlights:

- Giving increased for three of the four sources of giving. Only giving by corporations declined slightly in 2013, the result of the slow rate of growth in pre-tax corporate profits in 2013, at 3.4%.
- Total giving was given a lift by several very large gifts made by individuals, couples and estates in 2013.
- In 2013, giving by foundations increased an estimated 5.7% (4.2% adjusted for inflation) and giving by bequest increased an estimated 8.7% (7.2% adjusted for inflation), according to Giving USA.
- Giving to education is estimated to have increased 8.9% between 2012 and 2013, to \$52.07 billion. Adjusted for inflation, giving to education organizations increased 7.4%.
- Giving to human services increased by an estimated 2.2% in 2013, totaling \$41.51 billion. Adjusted for inflation, giving to human services organizations increased by 0.7%.

Giving USA 2014: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2013 is available from the Giving USA Foundation. It was researched and written by the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. This is reprinted from FORBES 6/17/2014 by Tom Watson.



**CHARITY
SPOTLIGHT**

**THE VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL
SERVICE (VOLS)
MICROENTERPRISE PROJECT**

CATALYZES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NEW YORK CITY BY HELPING LOW-INCOME ENTREPRENEURS TO SURMOUNT SIGNIFICANT LEGAL OBSTACLES.

The project leverages VOLS' strong network to match New York's leading law firms and legal departments – with their deep expertise in business law – to community-based organizations, government agencies, and other organizations that support small businesses in some of New York's most economically-distressed neighborhoods. These organizations identify small business owners who need, but cannot afford, high-quality legal assistance and then refer these entrepreneurs to their legal partners, who recruit volunteer lawyers to provide expert legal services at no cost to the business owners.

The Microenterprise Project currently has fifteen active partnerships between law firms and community organizations, with hundreds of low-income entrepreneurs benefitting each year. These entrepreneurs typically receive counsel on business law matters (corporate formation, employment law, contracts, intellectual property issues, etc.) or participate in trainings or information sessions on related topics. Some volunteer lawyers also develop informational materials that community organizations and clients can reference after these trainings end. In 2013 alone, 266 attorneys and paralegals volunteered 3,386 hours through the project – a value of nearly \$1.5 million in donated legal fees – to assist 351 low-income entrepreneurs in New York City.

The entrepreneurs served by the project reflect the extraordinary diversity of New York City's population. We serve native-born and immigrant entrepreneurs that speak English, Spanish, Mandarin and a host of other languages. Some are supplementing their salaries through entrepreneurship; others are completely dependent on the income from their small businesses. Many have overcome tremendous adversity to get where they are today, and all of them are financially vulnerable. These entrepreneurs dream of owning a successful business, of improving the quality of their lives and of their community, and working with our volunteer lawyers is a proven way to help them do so.

While we are proud of the project's achievements, we realize there is a tremendous unmet need for pro bono legal services in New York City – hundreds of thousands of low-income entrepreneurs can benefit from the services offered through the Microenterprise Project, and we believe that there are thousands of transactional lawyers in the City whom would gladly volunteer their time if presented with the right opportunity. To this end, VOLS hopes to increase the number of law firms and community organizations involved in the Microenterprise Project, and a generous grant recommended by an FJC donor has allowed us to hire the project's first full-time coordinator, Benjamin Cox, who will spearhead these expansion efforts. Benjamin comes to VOLS with a BS in business management from Babson College and several years' experience supporting small businesses throughout the US and Central Africa. With FJC's support and Benjamin's leadership, the future is bright for the Microenterprise Project and for the hundreds of low-income entrepreneurs we serve.



For more information on the Microenterprise Project, go to www.volsprobono.org or email bcox@volsprobono.org. If you would like to discuss a donation to help further grow the project, please call Bill Lienhard, VOLS Executive Director, at 347-521-5717 or blienhard@volsprobono.org.