

# BI-ANNUAL REPORT

2015

2016



## CLASP

Policy solutions that work for low-income people



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# who we are...



The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national, nonpartisan, anti-poverty organization advancing policy solutions for low-income people. We offer trusted expertise, a deeply knowledgeable staff, and a commitment to practical yet visionary approaches to opportunity for all. We lift up the voices of poor and low-income children, families, and individuals, equip advocates with policy ideas that work, and help public officials put good ideas into practice. Our solutions directly address the barriers that individuals and families face because of race, ethnicity, and immigration status, in addition to low income.



## A TRIBUTE TO JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN

After 28 years with CLASP, Jodie Levin-Epstein stepped down as deputy executive director in 2016. Jodie brought boundless passion for ending poverty, leading the early movement to address job quality issues. She helped spark local and state campaigns and pass dozens of laws that established labor standards. Jodie also pioneered **Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity: the Source for News, Ideas and Action**, presenting diverse perspectives about increasing economic opportunity. Her ability to bring different people together to fight for solutions is interwoven in CLASP now and forever.

# A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear CLASP Supporters,

I'm pleased to share just a sampling of the many strides the Center for Law and Social Policy made during 2015 and 2016 in pursuit of policy solutions that work for low-income people. Thanks to your generous support over these two years, CLASP not only made progress at the national and state levels during those years but also built new advocacy partnerships that left us better prepared for the new reality of 2017, which is the most dangerous era for the antipoverty agenda in the nearly 50-year history of our organization.

As I sat down after the 2016 election to outline our strategy for 2017 and beyond, I recognized that CLASP's work in many ways had prepared us for this new context. For instance, because of the deep knowledge we developed about both policy and on-the-ground effectiveness of key programs at federal, state, local levels, we have been able to explain clearly why new threats are both wrong-headed and cruel. And the new partnerships, Board expertise, and staff expertise we built in 2016 on immigration gave us capacity we needed in 2017.

The "fight back" strategy we devised is centered on addressing the urgent threats for low-income people posed by the new administration and Congressional leaders. These include **threats to core federal programs for low-income people**, including block grants, structural changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and comparable threats to the structure and funding of Pell grants, child care, and Head Start programs, along with other core supports for families. In addition, we are fighting **threats to the safety and economic security of immigrants and their families**, including the young people now able to contribute to their communities through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. And, finally, we face **threats to the safety and economic security of people of color**, including the sharp change in the direction of national justice policy toward a "law-and-order" framing that targets people of color and blocks hard-fought progress to dismantle systemic racism in the justice system.

In 2015 and 2016, we made important strides to improve and advance a **strengthened safety net** through such activities as our advocacy to support the repeal of the Maximum Family Grant in California, which resulted in families no longer being penalized by the arrival of a new baby. In addition, our many years of work to inform the development of the Child Care and Development Block Grant's reauthorization bore fruit with a much-improved set of regulations that ensure more working families have access to affordable child care—although the program is still woefully under-resourced to meet the needs of eligible families. Drawing on both inside and outside strategies, we worked with partners to significantly improve families' access to Medicaid, SNAP, and child care subsidies at the state level through two multi-state initiatives—Work Support Strategies (WSS), an ongoing partnership with six state governments to help them tear down barriers to families' enrollment and retention, and Advancing Strategies to Align Programs to spread the lessons of WSS through state-level advocacy, working with five advocacy organizations to drive change from

the outside. We also added critical expertise with the hiring of a senior policy analyst who brought us deep knowledge of the Medicaid system.

On the **immigration and racial equity front**, our work in 2015 and 2016 helped build CLASP's capacity to play an even larger role. We began to build partnerships among immigrant rights, early childhood, workforce, and anti-poverty experts and advocates through a 2015 roundtable event and follow-up report on two-generational strategies to support immigrant families. And we co-led an **amicus brief** in 2016 to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programs. As it became clear that young children in immigrant families were not only central to the nation's future but also facing specific policy threats and opportunities, we strengthened our knowledge about the critical barriers they faced. We also quantified the effect of disparate access by race and/or ethnicity on early childhood programs, financial aid for postsecondary education, and quality jobs, using data to make the case for more equitable access.

We consulted widely with criminal justice experts and advocates about the right way for CLASP to contribute to the issue of justice-involved youth and young adults. Beginning in 2015, we began offering expertise on employment, workforce development, and education to the policy debates about diversion, correctional education, and re-entry. We held major public forums—one of which was broadcast by C-SPAN—and published several national and state policy papers.

And we continued our national leadership role on access to paid sick time and paid family and medical leave. We addressed an important need by convening a group of officials from jurisdictions around the country charged with enforcing paid sick time laws. Through this annual meeting we began in 2015, we are helping dozens of cities and states create and implement best practices to ensure that new laws protect the rights of employees.

I continue to be grateful for the dedication and expertise of our Board of Trustees whose steady hand has guided us to higher levels of achievement for low-income people. And one of my greatest pleasures is working on a daily basis with our extraordinary staff, every one of whom is passionate about our work and brings an astounding level of knowledge and commitment to CLASP. Finally, I am indebted to all of our supporters who believe so strongly in what we do. Given the new challenges that poor and low-income people face, we need you now more than ever.

Sincerely,

Olivia Golden  
Executive Director







## CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION

High-quality child care and early education is essential for children's healthy development and families' economic security. However, far too many families lack access to these services. CLASP advocates at the federal, state, and local levels for investments in child care subsidies and early learning opportunities to help low-income families meet these critical needs.

In 2015 and 2016, CLASP's leadership helped further a number of important policy improvements:

- The final federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) regulations drew heavily from CLASP's recommendations. Our comments on draft regulations, written in partnership with the National Women's Law Center, were co-signed by 83 national and state organizations.
- CLASP helped implement the CCDBG law, working with state agencies and advocates in 20 states. Our TA contributed to the development of major child care legislature in California (which passed in 2017) and improved child care subsidy continuity provisions in several states' regulations.
- The final Head Start program performance standards reflect CLASP's recommendations, including our proposal on lengthening Head Start duration by requiring a minimum number of service hours (instead of days) and phasing in implementation of this standard over time.
- In 2016, CLASP released the **first-ever analysis** of participation in Head Start and CCDBG by race/ethnicity and by state. The findings highlighted very low levels of access to CCDBG for eligible Latino children and received significant interest from state advocates.
- CLASP co-hosted statewide convenings in Michigan and New York, bringing together early childhood advocates as well as groups new to the issue (including

unions and community organizers). The meetings promoted collaboration on improving child care policy and investments.

- CLASP released two papers on maternal depression: **one** that reports on a scan of state and federal policy actions and opportunities and lays out an agenda, and **one** (written in partnership with the Georgetown Center for Children and Families) that explains why Medicaid coverage for mothers with depression helps children. These provided a foundation to move forward with state technical assistance.
- CLASP work influenced guidance from The Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services at HHS clarifying state options for providing screening and treatment for maternal depression as a service for the child under Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment benefit. This guidance offers an important two-generation opportunity to advance mental health access for poor mothers in all states.

### Parents and Children Thriving Together (PACTT) Network

PACTT is a partnership between CLASP and the National Governors Association (NGA) to help five states—Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Oregon—reform statewide systems to better serve low-income families. We're providing tailored technical assistance to state teams as they develop and implement two-generation strategies that promote children's healthy development and parents' success at the same time.





## JOB QUALITY AND WORK/LIFE

Many low-income people lack access to paid family and medical leave, paid sick days, fair job schedules, living wages, and other important protections. CLASP advocates for federal, state, and local policies that expand labor protections and improve job quality—ensuring a level playing field for low-wage workers:

- CLASP helped secure President Obama’s Executive Order Establishing Paid Sick Leave for Federal Contractors. The final regulations referred to CLASP and reflected our recommendations. As a result of this order, at least 600,000 people will have access paid sick days for the first time and another half-million will have more access than before.
- We published two briefs on racial equity and job quality, [Good Jobs for All: Racial Inequities in Job Quality](#) and [Buenos Empleos: Latinos’ Limited Access to Quality Jobs](#). We also published our first Spanish-language resources ([Los Beneficios de Los Días de Enfermedad Pagados Para Empleadores y Negocios](#) and [La Healthy Families Act \(HFA\)](#)).
- CLASP held two national convenings on paid sick days enforcement and implementation. The inaugural convening was held in partnership with New York City

Department of Consumer Affairs. The second convening, co-sponsored by the City and County of San Francisco, focused on enforcing “safe time” (paid leave for domestic violence survivors) and innovative outreach strategies, including partnerships with child care centers.

Key briefs on paid leave and job scheduling include:

- **Juggling Time: Young Workers and Scheduling Practices in the LA County Service Sector** (co-authored by UCLA Labor Center);
- **Volatile Job Schedules and Access to Public Benefits;**
- **Out of Sync: How Unemployment Insurance Rules Fail Workers with Volatile Job Schedules** (co-authored by National Employment Law Project); and
- **Access to Unemployment Insurance Benefits for Family Caregivers: An Analysis of State Rules and Practices** (co-authored by National Employment Law Project and AARP Public Policy Institute).





## POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

Postsecondary education and training is essential for securing a good job. However, low-income people—particularly people of color—struggle simply to access postsecondary programs. Without industry-recognized credentials, low-income workers can't qualify for the well-paying jobs they need to gain economic security.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, CLASP has taken strategic and proactive steps in developing policy solutions for low-income adults and disadvantaged youth who need good jobs and financial and personal stability, through activities including:

- CLASP's advocacy urging the U.S. Department of Education to improve students' access to financial aid. Under the Department's new policy, students can use income tax data from two years prior when completing their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). In addition, millions of students who receive Medicaid are now automatically qualified. Further, means-tested child care subsidies are no longer counted as income for student parents.
- After years of CLASP's advocacy, Congress reinstated the Ability to Benefit (ATB) provision into the Higher Education Act. This provides federal student aid, including Pell grants, to people without high school diplomas when they participate in eligible career pathways.

We hosted a 2016 [forum](#) entitled “Reconnecting Justice: Pathways to Effective Reentry through Education and Training” to explore the intersection between criminal justice reform and postsecondary education and training. See criminal justice reform section on page 11.

### WIOA Game Plan for Low-Income People (WIOA)

We continued an ongoing series of resources and events that guide the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Our **WIOA Opportunities for Action** memos offered specific advice to states and local areas. In 2015 and 2016, we provided technical assistance in about a dozen states. We advised states on strengthening plans for local implementation of WIOA's priority of services for low-income adults, promotion of cross-program career pathways partnerships through implementation of WIOA's “Integrated Education and Training” program model, and explicitly defined goals for serving disadvantaged sub-populations and for an increased focus on individuals with the greatest barriers to employment.

We also developed webinars and comments on regulations that outline how states, local areas, advocates, and service providers can leverage opportunities to serve low-income youth through state and local plans, policies and guidance, and budget choices.





## INCOME AND WORK SUPPORTS

Nutrition and cash assistance, health insurance, child care subsidies, and refundable tax credits help low-income people meet basic needs and climb the ladder economically. In 2015 and 2016, CLASP defended effective programs and fought for new investments through research and analysis, comments and testimony, and new partnerships at the national, state, and local levels:

- CLASP published [TANF and the First Year of Life: Making a Difference at a Pivotal Moment](#), a framework contextualizing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to children's first year of life. The framework provides a vision for TANF reform as well as concrete steps states can take right now.
- In California, CLASP worked with state advocates to repeal the Maximum Family Grant, which blocked TANF families with newborns from other public benefit programs. CLASP partnered with groups that have not traditionally worked on TANF to support similar campaigns in other states.
- Working with the Administration for Children and Families and U.S. Department of Labor, CLASP provided technical assistance to help states connect their TANF programs to their "one-stop systems," which provide education, training, and employment services. We also provided technical assistance to the state of Washington to promote collaboration between its workforce development and human services agencies.
- CLASP made the case to protect—and expand—the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program and other critical public benefits. To learn more, read [How States Can Protect Workers with Irregular Schedules from Losing SNAP Benefits](#), and [Eliminating Asset Limits: Creating Savings for Families and State Governments](#).





## STREAMLINING PUBLIC BENEFITS

Through our leadership of Work Support Strategies (WSS) and Advancing Strategies to Align Programs (ASAP), we've strengthened families' ability to get and keep the help they are eligible for from SNAP, Medicaid, and child care assistance. This is important because we know from robust evidence that when low-income parents get and keep the work supports they need, they're able to stay employed and their children thrive. And when states improve their technology for work supports, it both streamlines their state's systems and helps working families on their path to economic security.

### Work Support Strategies (WSS)

*A CLASP-led, foundation-funded effort that supported states working to ensure that low-income working families get and keep the help they deserve with health care (Medicaid), child care assistance, and nutrition assistance (SNAP).*

CLASP wrapped up our direct work with the states and began to disseminate the lessons learned and evaluation findings, including that states were able to streamline eligibility determinations without driving up error rates.

In November 2016, CLASP convened state and county officials from California, North Carolina, Colorado, Minnesota, and Ohio to share their insights and assess progress in streamlining benefits.

In December 2016, we also convened a small group of senior experts, policymakers, practitioners, advocates, and funders to reflect on lessons from WSS. In the wake of the 2016 election, we discussed how the work of WSS could be continued in the new political environment.

### Advancing Strategies to Align Programs (ASAP)

*An initiative to help state advocates increase enrollment in work support programs, particularly Medicaid and SNAP, through program alignment and information sharing.*

CLASP has partnered with advocates in five states—Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania—to increase access to public benefits and enrollment across health and human services programs. CLASP has provided **advocates** with technical assistance and support as they improve delivery systems and integrate key programs. For example, two of the states took advantage of the option to enroll people in Medicaid based on their receipt of SNAP.





## YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Four in 10 young people are low income, struggling to access education and employment that prepares them for success. The rate is even higher for youth of color who are more likely to be disconnected from school and work, attend under-resourced schools, and encounter the criminal justice system as a result of structural racism. CLASP works at the federal, state, and local levels to break down barriers in education and employment, focusing on racial and gender inequity as well as promoting youth as community assets. We took exciting steps over the last two years:

- CLASP has held two public forums on investing in youth. The first forum, **Investing in Young Men of Color as Community Assets**, convened young people and leading experts to discuss policy solutions that center youth voice. The second, **Realizing Youth Justice: Advancing Education, Employment, and Youth Empowerment**, explored the connections between criminal justice reform, education, and job training for low-income young men and women. See **criminal justice reform** section on pg. 11.
- In 2016, we identified and disseminated best practices that support the wellbeing and empowerment of boys and young men of color in our brief, **Employment Pathways for Boys and Young Men of Color: Solutions and Strategies That Can Make a Difference**. The brief discusses promising strategies to improve employment outcomes for young men of color and the role of public policy in dismantling discrimination and promoting pathways to work.
- CLASP continues to lead the **Communities Collaborating to Reconnect Youth (CCRY) Network**, hosting semi-annual meetings of local leaders from across the country. Together, we identify effective strategies for low-income and out-of-school youth and strengthen connections among workforce, secondary and postsecondary education, justice, health, and foster care systems.





## CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Over two million people are incarcerated in the United States. Because of discriminatory public policies across education, employment, and criminal and juvenile justice systems, low-income people of color are disproportionately represented. CLASP addresses the intended and unintended consequences of these policies. We lift up community and state solutions, promote effective investment, and address educational and employment inequities that lead to incarceration.

In 2016, we took this work to a new level with two public forums.

**Realizing Youth Justice: Advancing Education, Employment, and Youth Empowerment** highlighted effective policies and practices that can help young men and women of color avoid the criminal justice system, access employment, achieve stability, build on their innate assets, and realize their full potential.

**Reconnecting Justice: Pathways to Effective Reentry through Education and Training** connected policy trends in correctional education and training with reentry opportunities that promote economic success. The forum and [accompanying paper](#) explored policy connections between criminal justice reform, education and job training for low-income adults, and policy changes that can reduce barriers to opportunity during and after incarceration for people involved with the justice system.



## IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Children in immigrant families make up one-quarter of all children in the United States and represent the fastest growing segment of the country's increasingly diverse child population. Yet immigrant children and families are more likely to be low income and face systemic barriers to health and nutrition supports. Harsh immigration enforcement policies also threaten their safety and wellbeing. CLASP advocates for federal and state policy reforms to promote health, economic security, and overall success for immigrant children, youth, and families. We've made important strides in this work:

- CLASP hosted a roundtable on **Two-Generational Strategies to Improve Immigrant Family and Child Outcomes**. We convened senior policymakers, practitioners, researchers, advocates, and foundation leaders from the early education, workforce development, postsecondary education, and immigration policy and practice fields to discuss two-generational strategies to support immigrant families and children.
- In March 2016, CLASP and five partners filed an **amicus (friend-of-the-court brief)** in support of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programs. CLASP contributed research on children's developmental challenges when their parents are undocumented or forced into separation.



# CLASP IN THE NEWS

CLASP experts and resources have appeared in a variety of media outlets across the country.



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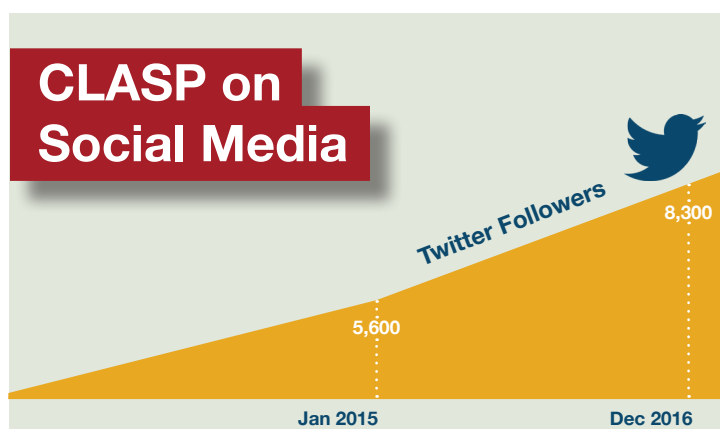
## Olivia Golden speaks at the National Head Start Association's 50th anniversary celebration in 2015

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Gene Sofer	John Vail	James Weill	Walt Worley
Elizabeth St. Clair	Barry and Phyllis Van Lare	David and Kathie Weinberg	David Yoder
David Stern	Valerie Vanaman		Martha Zaslow
	Robin and Jay Varon		Laurie Zelon

## 2015-2016 ORGANIZATIONAL CONTRACTS

Achieving the Dream	Chabot-Las Positas (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office)	MN Workforce Council Association
American Council of Learned Societies		National Governors Association
American Council on Education	Chippewa Valley Technical College (Wisconsin)	NELP
Brandeis University	Corporation for a Skilled Workforce	University of Washington
Center for American Progress		Urban Institute
Center for Community Change	Georgetown CCF	Wisconsin Technical College
	Institute for Higher Education Policy	Workforce Enterprise Services

## ASSETS

	2016	2015
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 5,118,479	\$ 3,419,030
Investments	6,635	287,146
Receivables:		
Grants receivable, current portion	3,411,521	1,414,289
Other receivables	43,685	126,272
Prepaid expenses	100,917	183,817
Total current assets	8,681,237	5,430,554
<b>FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
Equipment	411,433	357,889
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(265,396)	(215,681)
Net furniture and equipment	146,037	142,208
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Grants receivable, net of current portion	216,867	497,044
Deposits	39,160	39,160
Total non-current assets	256,027	536,204
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,083,301</b>	<b>\$ 6,108,966</b>

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	2016	2015
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Capital lease obligation, current portion	\$ 26,616	\$ 23,484
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	269,723	208,869
Accrued salaries and related benefits	176,051	162,729
Current portion of deferred rent abatement	30,133	18,984
Total current liabilities	502,523	414,066
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Capital lease obligation, long-term portion	50,073	76,690
Deferred rent abatement	125,077	155,221
Total non-current liabilities	175,150	231,911
Total liabilities	677,673	645,977



## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	2016	2015
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted	\$ 1,267,205	\$ 1,062,582
Temporarily restricted	7,138,423	4,400,407
Total net assets	8,405,628	5,462,989
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,083,301</b>	<b>\$ 6,108,966</b>

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

	2016	2015
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Foundation grants	\$ 9,505,183	\$ 4,062,435
Contributions	117,317	190,222
Investment income	6,855	949
Other revenue	17,951	19,659
Total revenue	9,647,306	4,273,265
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program services	5,947,501	5,791,354
Supporting Services:		
Management and General	202,366	116,959
Fundraising	554,800	420,217
Total supporting services	757,166	537,176
Total expenses	6,704,667	6,328,530
Change in net assets	2,942,639	(2,055,265)
Net assets at beginning of year	5,462,989	7,518,254
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 8,405,628</b>	<b>\$ 5,462,989</b>

# PHOTO CREDITS

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