

# Locke Lord<sup>LLP</sup>



## LAW FIRM PARTNER: LOCKE LORD

Volunteer attorneys play a crucial role in Act's work. These fresh legal minds provide litigation experience and resources essential to the varied issues our residents encounter. This ever-expanding team also give Act the ability to take on more and more cases, providing legal aid to new and larger areas of our city. And, perhaps most importantly, our partner firms and volunteer attorneys add a level of seriousness to our process that both encourages residents and daunts criminal activity. As Dawn Stephens, Act's South Dallas Field Director, explains, "Our clients are encouraged at every step of the process when they get to talk with the attorneys and watch these lawyers working on their behalf."

Thanks to the generosity of law firm partners, Act clients have received over \$4 million in pro bono legal support since 2009.

Locke Lord, a law firm partner that helped Act solve a number of cases early on in our West Dallas neighborhoods, provided the opportunity for us to expand our work into South Dallas in 2018. As Dawn Stephens and her team began work in the area, cases began to accumulate. The Locke Lord team, lead by Partner Arthur E. Anthony, showed a big interest from the very beginning, taking on 4 cases within a couple of weeks of hearing about the need.

As they continue to help Act in South Dallas, the Locke Lord team is enthusiastic and excited about the work they are doing, taking a personal interest in the lives and situations of Act clients. "Every time I see our client," says Madeleine Brunner, one of Locke Lord's attorneys, "I ask her if the shrubs are cut back on the property and the fence is still fixed. It seems trivial, but I'm just so proud of the change we were able to bring that I want to make sure it stays that way."

The relationship between the Locke Lord attorneys and Act clients is a perfect example of what we hope will transpire: a mutuality of inspiration. Our residents are encouraged to have a lawyer they wouldn't otherwise know or have access to championing an issue that is very personal to them. These volunteer lawyers recognize the bravery of the clients, reaffirming the value of that bravery in the help they provide. "The people in these communities are very observant," shares Matthew McDougal, another member of the Locke Lord team. "They know everything. Not only that, they are so courageous. They are willing to sign a petition or an agreement, and they really want to change their community. It's easy to assume that people in neighborhoods like these are oblivious or don't care about what is happening but they are actively working against the injustice."

The faithful partnership of firms like Locke Lord ensures that Act clients receive the best legal counsel available, at no cost to them. Just as importantly, they provide opportunities for men and women with different backgrounds, education, and life experiences to work together. As volunteer attorneys use their skills and abilities in this way, they help empower residents and bring lasting change to some of our city's underserved communities.

"It's so fun to be part of this kind of work because you get to see the results," says fellow attorney, Clinton Williams. "You can see when the neighborhood is rough, no one is outside, and when the neighborhood starts to become the kind of place everyone is happy to live in. And the change isn't short term, it's a long term difference for people. That's what brings the most satisfaction to me: getting to do something that really matters in your own city."