

Annual Report

2015

Promoting Economic  
Security Through Research  
and Advocacy



**mlpp**  
MICHIGAN LEAGUE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

## 2015 Highlights: Permanent support for working families, other improvements secured

Advancing progressive public policy in Michigan continues to be an uphill climb. But thanks to supporters like you, the Michigan League for Public Policy helped notch some major victories in 2015 to improve the lives of the state’s low- and modest-income families. With your help, these imperative steps are taking place despite ongoing challenges, infrastructure issues and economic concerns in the state.

In 2015, the League fought to protect and extend anti-poverty support for workers and their families on multiple fronts. We notched a big everlasting win for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) at the federal level. The League was part of a nationwide effort that successfully secured the permanent extension of provisions of the federal EITC and Child Tax Credit. This will help reduce poverty for 16 million people, including 176,00 children and 357,000 adults right here in Michigan. Few policies will ever have an impact on poverty as profound and permanent as this, benefitting families for generations to come.

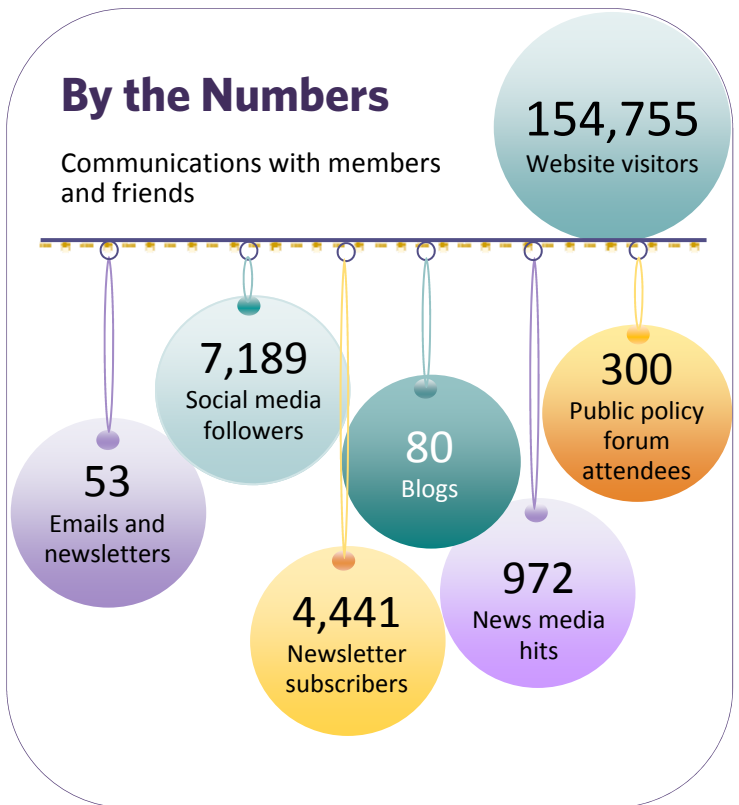
Back home, we faced a different battle on the EITC—defending it rather than extending it, as the Michigan EITC came under fire once again after being cut in 2011. Its elimination was discussed as part of ongoing negotiations on a road funding package last year, and the League quickly convened a diverse coalition that successfully staved off the

**OUR MISSION** — To ensure economic security and well-being for all people in Michigan through policy change.

**VISION** — Michigan residents, families and children from all races, places and income levels will have equal access to economic, health and educational opportunities.

**VALUES**

- Honesty, Integrity and Nonpartisanship
- Social and Economic Justice, Fairness and Opportunity
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Democratic Process and the Dignity of All



threat and saved the state EITC. But we will have to stay vigilant to make sure we protect this important tool when future budget cuts or funding needs arise.

We have also continued the fight to secure affordable and quality healthcare for all Michiganders. The League successfully advocated for the federal government’s approval of a second waiver to continue the Healthy Michigan Plan. Without this action, this proven program—and the healthcare it provides for more than 630,000 state residents—was in jeopardy of being eliminated in April 2016. In addition, the League also helped to expand Healthy Kids Dental, which provides dental care for Medicaid-eligible children, to include 290,000 more children, ages 0-12 in Kent, Oakland and Wayne counties.

(2015 Highlights continued from page 1)

Among other accomplishments in 2015, the League:

- Worked closely with sponsors and other lawmakers on a third-grade reading bill to turn a very harsh bill into a more positive tool to improve reading.
- Successfully fought for a change to child care assistance eligibility in Michigan, to help more families keep their child care assistance longer.
- Secured \$70 million in the 2016 budget for school districts serving high numbers of low-income children who are struggling in school.
- Achieved a 13% increase in funding for adult education in the 2016 budget to help Michigan workers.
- Effectively fought for an additional \$20 million investment in the budget for mental health services for those not eligible for Medicaid/Healthy Michigan Plan.
- Encouraged the Legislature to continue funding to keep OB units open in rural hospitals.
- Convened a collaborative to end mass incarceration and support policy changes.

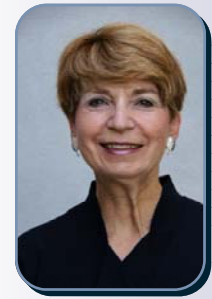
### HOW TO JOIN THE LEAGUE'S EFFORTS

Go to [www.mlpp.org](http://www.mlpp.org) to:

- ✓ Sign up for e-news and action alerts
- ✓ Become a member
- ✓ Subscribe to our blog
- ✓ Donate

Tax-deductible donations may also be mailed to Michigan League for Public Policy, 1223 Turner Street, Suite G-1, Lansing, MI 48906

## Message from the President & CEO Gilda Z. Jacobs



For over 100 years, the Michigan League for Public Policy has played a vital role in improving the lives of our state's most vulnerable residents. Looking back at the past year, I hope you know that the League's achievements are as much yours as they are ours. Our work is made possible because of you—the donors, funders, members, partners and friends that continue to support our ongoing work.

While the climate at the Capitol remains challenging for progressive policies, we have remained steadfast in our mission to build a stronger Michigan. As you can see in this report, the League has helped improve state and federal policies to better serve everyone.

In 2015, we bid farewell to several key staff who have been an integral part of our public policy efforts for the last two decades. We are extremely grateful for their many years of great service, and wish our colleagues well. But we are also excited to have this opportunity to bring in some new faces with the experience, energy and ideas to lead the next generation of passionate policy advocates at the League.

The League continues to organize and serve on issue-focused coalitions to get more done together, including efforts to reduce mass incarceration and promote earned paid sick days in Michigan.

Our board of directors has also been expanding to encompass the growing needs of our organization, representing different skill sets, geographic

areas and demographics. The board currently includes one former budget director, four former lawmakers, a former state Treasurer, the former director of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth, and policy experts and nonprofit leaders from across the state. Dr. Charles Ballard, our new board chair, is a noted economist, an author and a professor at Michigan State University.

You don't last a century as an organization without being able to be fluid and change with the times. We continue to adapt and evolve to be the most efficient with your dollars and the most effective on Michigan policy.

With the Flint water crisis and the struggles of Detroit Public Schools, our policy and advocacy work is needed now more than ever. These disasters disproportionately hurt low-income residents and people of color, and the lead poisoning in Flint in particular will require state services and financial support for decades and even generations to come.

We are already working hard on these issues, and know that you are right there with us. With your support and assistance, our work will continue to benefit the lives of many Michiganders and we can improve public policy within the state.

Thank you for your continued and dedicated support, both in 2015 and the year ahead.

Warmest wishes,

Gilda Z. Jacobs

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please let us know so we can correct it.*

# League's Policy Agenda: Building a Stronger Michigan

## THE RESULTS MICHIGAN NEEDS

A 21ST CENTURY SKILLED WORKFORCE

A FLOURISHING ECONOMY AND INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS

ADEQUATE STATE REVENUES TO INVEST IN PROVEN SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO GROW THE ECONOMY

EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL OF THE STATE'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, ELIMINATING BARRIERS BY INCOME, RACE AND PLACE

### Strengthen Families with Young Children

Increase access to safe, high-quality child care

Enroll low-income 3-year-olds in preschool

Expand home visiting and other support for parents of children ages 0-3

Fund programs to find and help young children with disabilities

Prevent child abuse and neglect

### Skills for the New Economy

Adequately fund public schools, community colleges and universities

Invest in early intervention as an alternative to mandatory retention of 3rd graders

Expand alternatives for young people to get a high school diploma

Strengthen adult education and training

Provide more financial aid for low-income college students

### Work and Economic Opportunity for All

Support work by expanding the state Earned Income Tax Credit and refundable child care credits

Reduce extreme poverty and homelessness by removing barriers to assistance

Encourage savings by revising asset tests for public and food assistance

Strengthen family-friendly workplace policies

Revise parole and reentry policies so prisoners can reconnect to the community

### Healthy Kids and Families

Fund prenatal, primary care and mental health services

Reduce infant mortality disparities and exposure to lead and other toxins

Provide dental care to all low-income children

Expand sources of clean, renewable energy

### Strong Revenues and Smart Investments

Support a progressive income tax that adequately funds state services

Modernize the state's sales tax to cover selected services and enforce taxes on internet sales

Support road and infrastructure improvements funded with tax changes that least affect low-wage workers

Annually review tax expenditures

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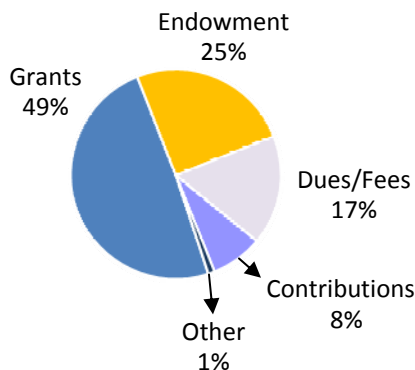
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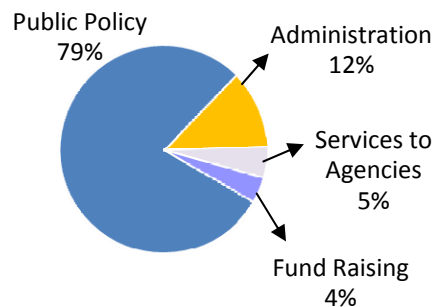


## Sources of Funds and Expenditures—18 months ended Dec. 31, 2014 (audited)

### Sources of Funds — \$3,361,551



### Expenditures — \$4,341,017





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## League earns four stars as a charitable organization

Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, awarded the League four stars – the highest rating possible – as a charitable organization.

The nonprofit, independent group rates charities based on financial performance, accountability and transparency.

“Michigan League for Public Policy’s coveted 4-star rating puts it in a very select group of high-performing charities,” according to Ken Berger, president and CEO, Charity Navigator. “Out of the thousands of nonprofits Charity Navigator evaluates, only one out of four earns 4 stars – a rating that, now, with our new Accountability and Transparency metrics, demands even greater rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness.”



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