

A BRIEF HISTORY OF APPALRED LEGAL AID



Took on a local police department well-known for engaging in "racial terror violence," on behalf of an African-American family. Also, represented several strip mining challenges, including the reversal of a permit to strip mine Pike County's Poor Bottom Hollow. AppalReD successfully argued that there would be substantial damage to life and property.



Represented several imprisoned people, including a man who was beaten, refused medical treatment, and placed in confinement. He was awarded damages.

AppalReD grows to eleven offices and a staff of over 100.

AppalReD paralegals and attorneys helped establish the first women's shelter in the area. The Battered Women's Support and Shelter, Inc. served an 8 county area.



1971

AppalReD has three operating offices in Prestonsburg, Barbourville, and the University of Kentucky in Lexington, with a staff of about 15, including 8 attorneys.

AppalReD helped organize a protest against strip mining and overweight coal trucks.

1973

AppalReD begins operating independently.

1975

1976

1980

1970

AppalReD began in 1970 as part of a two-state program operated out of Charleston, WV. John Rosenberg offered the position in November 1970.



Explosion in the Finley Coal Company Mine in December 1970 killed 38 coal miners. AppalReD represents the sole survivor and presents findings to a congressional committee. The committee agreed that the company used illegal explosives and that the responsible regulatory agency knew about previous dust violations. Company pled nolo contendere and was fined.

1972

Filed a petition against coal companies with repeat strip mining violations to prevent these companies from obtaining additional permits.

1974

Legal Services Act passes, providing funding for legal aid throughout the U.S.

1975

Assisted by AppalReD, the Town of David community group purchased their town from the coal company who had let the town crumble into disrepair.



1977

AppalReD Legal Aid grows to 22 lawyers across 4 offices.





1980'S

Successfully challenged the state park system for refusing to hire minority workers for seasonal work. Represented women coal miners denied employment or who experienced sexual harassment.

1988



"Death Knell to Broad Form Deed:" AppalReD and KFTC joined forces to write and organize for the passage of a constitutional amendment that effectively required landowner consent before surface mining could take place. It passed with 92% support.



1993

Our case representing an elderly widow sued by mineral owners and a coal company to prevent her from interfering with their proposed surface mining operation is reviewed and the Broad Form Amendment is upheld and found to be constitutional by the court.

1994

In February 1994, we began our first organized effort to provide legal assistance to persons who are HIV positive, by entering into a contract with an AIDS Volunteer Organization in Lexington.



Started Kentucky Migrant Legal Services, based in AppalReD's Richmond office and in collaboration with Texas Rural Legal Aid to educate and assist migrants with labor disputes in Kentucky.

1996

The passage of the Violence Against Women Act makes it possible to begin employing attorneys who specialize in serving clients who experienced domestic violence and assisting them with obtaining Emergency Protective Orders.

1999



AppalReD represented the Maggard family for over a decade after their 13-year-old Eric Matthew Maggard drowned. The case charged negligence of the state in its inspections and permitting of a strip mine. A grossly undersized and unmaintained culvert caused creek flooding and led to Maggard's tragic accident. The family was awarded damages.

1986

Volunteer Lawyers for Appalachian Kentucky (VLAK) begins.



1991

Mine Safety Project launched, expanding AppalReD's work on coal mine safety and health.



1990'S



A 94 year old resident of a nursing home in eastern KY was evicted after he started showing AIDS symptoms. When his family arrived they found him against a wall in his wheelchair with his belongings in garbage bags. Nursing homes also avoided housing HIV/AIDS patients by delaying training. We filed civil rights complaints with the human rights commissions and the state created non-discrimination policy regarding AIDS patients.

1994

AppalReD pivots and VLAK grows when Congress bans legal aid providers from representation of prisoners, undocumented immigrants, and certain public housing residents. They also prohibit class actions and legislative advocacy.

1997

AppalReD takes a case that takes on check cashers charging exorbitant interest rates. We testify in the state legislature. A law is passed limiting interest rates and protecting consumers.



2000



AppalReD opens LINKS or Low Income Housing Coalition of Eastern Kentucky, providing home improvement to low-income homeowners and building affordable homes.

2001

Appalachian Citizens' Law Center was founded by John Rosenberg as a "sister organization" to take on advocacy and litigation work that AppalReD could no longer legally practice.

2003

AppalReD begins offering annual conference on domestic violence and elder abuse.



2007



AppalReD opened its Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) in the Richmond office. The clinic serves clients with federal tax problems in 86 Kentucky counties.

2009

Appalachian HOPE (Homeless Outreach Prevention Effort) provides domestic violence survivors financial assistance to transition to safe housing.

2015

AppalReD coordinates a response to the "humanitarian crisis" caused by Eric Conn who perpetuated the largest fraud scheme in the history of the Social Security Administration. SSA notified 1500 people that their cases are under review or suspended and they are liable for overpayments. At least three people committed suicide. Another 2000 disability recipients were pegged for "redetermination" hearings. AppalReD recruits hundreds of private attorneys.

2019-2021

Victories for widows of disabled coal miners sets positive national precedent for black lung claimants and strengthens protections for all workers.

JULY 2021

Begins medical-legal partnership which screens primary care, obstetric, and pediatric patients for civil legal needs (housing, food benefits, utility shut off, eviction, domestic violence, consumer issues, etc.) and connects patients with our attorneys. Begins screening individuals at recovery centers to support transition back into the workforce.

OCTOBER 2021

26 attorneys and 24 staff across six offices serve over 10,000 people annually.

NOVEMBER 2021

AppalReD Legal Aid turns 50.

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