



## 2019 GIVING IMPACT REPORT



*Making homeschooling possible*

## How We Help

### Caring for Struggling Families

We offer grants and scholarships to families when hard times threaten their ability to homeschool.

### Empowering Volunteers

Our Ambassadors are a growing network of volunteers dedicated to providing tangible assistance to homeschooling families in their communities.

### Protecting Families' Freedom

Your gift to the Homeschool Freedom Fund helps support the ongoing legal battle to protect a family's right to homeschool anywhere.

## From the President

Education teaches a child how to think. Relationships teach a child how to grow and who to be.

Relationships matter. And homeschooling can be a powerful opportunity to strengthen some of the most important relationships in a child's life—which in turn help shape who the child becomes.

At HSLDA, all our goals and initiatives revolve around one thing: making homeschooling possible. When we do that, we also expand families' options to build and strengthen meaningful relationships between family members. Loving relationships and solid education empower children to grow into vibrant, caring adults who enrich their community and their world.

Thanks to your faithful support, we were able to stand in the gap for hundreds of families over the last fiscal year. Here are some of the highlights:

**HSLDA Compassion** gave out the greatest number of grants for educational expenses and disaster relief in our history to struggling families. Compassion grants do so much more than provide books and materials—they bring hope to families.

**COVER PHOTO:** HSLDA member family and Compassion donors, the McMurrays, with their youngest son. To watch the McMurrays' story about meeting a widow who received a Compassion grant, visit [hslida.org/meetingChris](https://hslida.org/meetingChris).



Because you chose to give, these moms, dads, grandparents, and guardians were able to continue providing for their children—not just an education but another year of growth—helping them grow in knowledge and relationships.

### **Ambassador volunteers**

sacrificially helped families all across the country. From the most destructive wildfire in California history to flash flooding in central states, HSLDA Ambassadors brought practical, hands-on relief and comfort to dozens of homeschooling families in their hour of greatest need.

And Ambassadors brightened the holidays for local homeschooling families in distress through a special new “Christmas Blessing” project.

With the help of our **Freedom Fund** supporters, our legal team tackled and won dozens of discrimination cases—often on behalf of current and graduated homeschool students being denied educational opportunities, jobs, insurance coverage, and more, just for being homeschooled. Over the year, our team appeared in court several times and fielded over 12,000 legal contacts on behalf of member families.

There is still a long road ahead until we see the end of discrimination, unwarranted investigations,

and even threats against homeschoolers—both here and abroad. Thank you for standing with us at this crucial time through your gifts and prayers.

Your support gave these thousands of families the legal and/or practical help they needed to continue homeschooling—to build strong and healthy relationships. Together with you, HSLDA is privileged to distinctively enable families to homeschool, even through the hardest of times.

We have great goals for next year, but we recognize that it’s not about the goals. It’s about the people—the people you have encouraged and equipped over the past fiscal year through your generosity. Thank you!

You made this possible, and we look forward to what we will do together in the coming year.

J. Michael Smith  
*President*

## How your donations helped last fiscal year ...



### Building Up Hope through Compassion

**1,216 Curriculum Grants** helped struggling families continue homeschooling **2,225 children**.

**216 of the children in these grant recipient families had special learning needs** that required diagnostic testing, educational therapies, or specialized materials beyond what their families could afford.

**732 families** received legal and educational assistance through help with the cost of their HSLDA membership.

**63 grieving families** were personally ministered to after the death of an immediate family member.

**Disaster Relief Grants** helped **45 families** representing **111 children** recover from the devastation of California wildfires and Hurricanes Michael, Florence, and Maria.

**48 homeschool groups and co-ops** received grants to help them better serve their member families and address their homeschool community's unique needs.

*Right before the grant check came, I was at my wit's end trying to figure out how I was going to pay for items we desperately needed that were lost in the flood. **Thank you from the bottom of my heart!***

—Vanessa, Disaster Relief Grant recipient

## Encouraging Acts of Service

**79 homeschooled teens** were nominated and applied for our Servant Leadership Award.

**39 families received \$18,900** in financial assistance, fundraised by local Ambassadors.

*We wondered how we were going to pay for supplies and some special curriculum for Cody. Thanks to the HSLDA Ambassadors, we were able to do this. **The goodness and generosity you share are truly reminders of God's love.***

—Jewel, Ambassador Grant recipient

Name changed to protect privacy

## Safeguarding a Foundation of Freedom

How HSLDA's Legal Team helped homeschoolers from April 2018 to March 2019:

**688** discrimination cases

**16** court appearances

**12,188** general legal questions

**51** school officials "educated"

**1,404** government contacts

**80+** countries contacted our Global Team about homeschooling-related issues

**154** state email alerts

*This grant has allowed my wife to order the curriculum she needs for this whole school year . . . **She is enjoying being able to focus more on the children rather than on the creation of curriculum . . . Thank you so very much for your generosity and compassion.***

—Davy, Curriculum Grant recipient (family pictured below)



# Financial Information

On April 1, 2018, the beginning of our fiscal year, HSLDA merged most of its operations with HSLDA Compassion to increase ministry potential and efficiency.

## Freedom Fund and Compassion Ministry\* *April 2018–March 2019*

### REVENUES

Private gifts and grants to Freedom	\$586,634
Private gifts and grants to Compassion	\$1,415,546
Noncash contributions	\$51,888
Investment income	\$8,868
Other income <sup>†</sup>	\$41,750
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$2,104,686</b>

### EXPENSES

#### Program Expenses

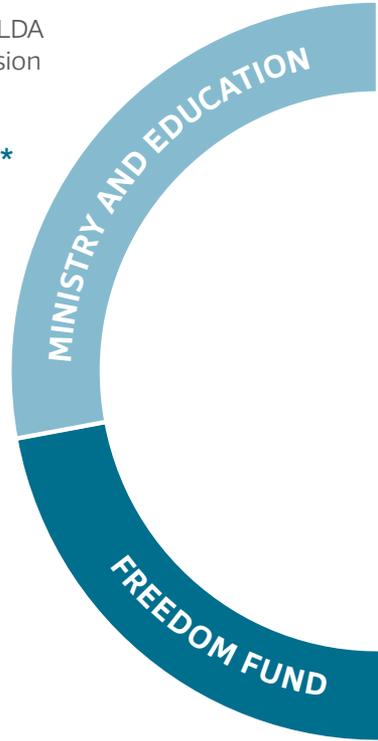
Grants and legal defense	\$1,230,407
Ministry and education	\$445,885
<b>Total program expenses</b>	<b>\$1,676,292</b>

#### Support Services

Fundraising and development	\$215,358
Management and general	\$66,255
<b>Total support expenses</b>	<b>\$281,613</b>

**Total Expenses** **\$1,957,905**

**Cash Surplus** **\$146,781**



\*Supplemental information from audited financial statements

<sup>†</sup> Includes HSLDA contest revenue, Clicks for Homeschooling, and AmazonSmile

# Program Expenses



- **Compassion grants to families**—\$659,062
  - Widows and widowers—\$138,790
  - Single-parent families—\$164,485
  - Military families—\$38,845
  - Children with special needs—\$63,320
  - Other families in need—\$253,622
- **Disaster Relief and other home emergency grants**—\$26,900
- **Ambassador grants to families**—\$18,395
- **Educational grants for groups**—\$51,550
- **Student service awards**—\$6,600
- **Freedom Fund for legal defense**—\$467,900
- **Ministry and education**—\$445,885

## HSLDA Board of Directors

### Michael P. Farris, JD, LLM

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### Rogers Hellman

Developer at Four Corners Medical Software

### Rodger Sayre, MD

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### J. Michael Smith

President and Attorney at HSLDA

### Cheryl Carter

Homeschooling mom, speaker, and author

### Rogers Hellman

Developer at Four Corners Medical Software

### Charles Hurst

Executive Director at HSLDA Compassion

### James R. Mason

Vice President of Litigation and  
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### Steve Oberlander

Vice President of Finance and  
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# Our programs make homeschooling possible . . .

Your gift to our **Freedom Fund** supports the ongoing legal battle to protect a family's right to homeschool anywhere.

**Defend**—Each week, our legal team fields hundreds of contacts—ranging from parents asking about state homeschool laws to homeschool graduates facing discrimination in higher learning institutions and the workforce.

**Litigate**—When an official's actions threaten homeschool freedoms, we take the case to the highest court necessary to correct the error and set a favorable precedent.

**Monitor**—We monitor state homeschool laws, equipping concerned citizens to respond

quickly to harmful or helpful legislation, with great success.

**Promote**—Our Global Team promotes homeschooling abroad and helps defend homeschooling families from search and seizure by ill-informed governments.

**Educate**—We help lawmakers and the public understand the irreplaceable value of parents' right to choose which educational environment and approach will best enable each of their children to thrive.

## . . . in hard times.

Through your support of **HSLDA Compassion**, you come alongside financially struggling families in need of curriculum and other resources for their children.

**Curriculum Grants** help widows, single parents, military families, and other low-income families afford educational expenses. Grants also offset some of the costs of accommodating children's special learning needs by helping pay for diagnostic testing, educational therapies, or specialized equipment.

**Disaster Relief Grants** aid families who are recovering from natural or home disasters like fires, floods, and mold.

**Ambassador volunteers** come alongside hurting homeschooling families in their own communities by:

- Assisting with education-related expenses and household needs
- Referring families to HSLDA Compassion for grants
- Representing HSLDA at fundraising and homeschooling events in their state

## Widow: Forever Grateful

On a rainy day in April, Compassion Grant recipient Chris Axtell met one of the many families who donated to make Compassion's 1,216 grants possible last fiscal year.

Chris, a widow, detailed her thanks with tears of gratitude for the many Curriculum Grants that had allowed her to realize her and her husband Joe's dream of homeschooling their children through high school, even after her husband passed away.

Following the encounter with the donor family, she expressed her heartfelt appreciation:

*Embracing the loss of my husband has been challenging—not always sure what is the “right way” to embrace it. But one thing is and has been so clear to me—God’s tender embrace of me and my family.*

**One aspect of that embrace is you.**

*Your continual support through gifts and prayers has been such a clear physical embrace to our family from God’s hand to yours and then to us.*

*Although I do not understand all His purpose in using you in our family’s lives, **I do know it has sustained us in our intense time of financial need and emotional need.***

*It is hard for me to grasp how God prompts people to give so generously to those they do not know, yet we are so grateful that He does and that you were so willing to be a part of His plan to meet our educational needs for our family.*

*May you always sense His presence in your lives as you carry out His mission in helping others. **We will be forever grateful for your generosity.***

*Chris Axtell and family*



# Compassion in Your Community

## California—Providing wildfire relief

Through State Ambassador Julie McDermott, Disaster Relief Grants helped nine families whose homes and homeschool libraries burned to the ground in the largest wildfire in California history.



*California fire damage*

## North Carolina—Lending a hand after hurricanes

When hurricanes deluged the southeast, nearly three dozen families received grants to help them get back on their feet. State Ambassadors Michelle Vantrease (NC) and Christina Prewitt (TX) assisted greatly as key liaisons for identifying families with needs and ensuring timely assistance.



*North Carolina flooding*

## Tennessee and Texas—Ambassadors team up to bring a Christmas blessing

State Ambassadors Lana Thornton (TN) and Christina Prewitt (TX) worked together to come to the assistance of a family known by Christina but living in Tennessee. Together, these ambassadors brought a double blessing to a family struggling at Christmas time.

## Arizona—Ambassadors' annual fundraiser exceeds goal

HSLDA's Arizona Ambassador Team accomplished terrific fundraising goals at their 7th Annual Curricula Fundraiser, generating more than \$10,000.



*Arizona Ambassadors*

## New York—Ambassador helps family recover from apartment fire

State Ambassador Rudy Hugo provided significant assistance to a family surviving an apartment fire in New York City in which the family lost everything.

# Defending Your Freedom

## **Massachusetts**—District fails to process paperwork, prompting investigations

After changing required documentation policies and failing to notify homeschool families of the new requirements, the Worcester Public Schools failed to process the very documents they now required, prompting unwarranted investigations for truancy by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). HSLDA lawyers worked directly with the superintendent, families, and DCF investigators to resolve the situation.

## **Virginia**—Thwarting a threat to religious exemption

Thousands of Virginia families homeschool under the state's religious exemption to compulsory school attendance. When the Loudoun County School Board sought to remove that exemption, HSLDA helped spread the word, which rallied hundreds of families to speak up and effectively put an end to the threat.

## **New Hampshire**—Undoing burdensome requirements

When new school officials introduced sudden, burdensome, and arbitrary requirements on law-abiding families, HSLDA explained the state homeschool laws to the



*New Hampshire legislature*

officials, achieving their compliance with the law and greater freedom for homeschoolers.

## **Brazil**—This bill would legalize homeschooling

Through the combined efforts of Brazilian homeschool families and advocates, along with HSLDA, Brazil is on the road to officially recognizing homeschooling as a legal educational option through a federal bill. HSLDA continues to encourage and support homeschooling families in Brazil.

## **Cuba**—Freeing and reuniting the Rigal family

The Cuban government forbade Pastor Ramón Rigal and his wife Adya from homeschooling their two children. When the Rigals continued to homeschool, Cuba seized custody of their son and daughter and imprisoned the parents. HSLDA and partnering organizations are working to free and reunite Ramón and Adya with their children.



“When we heard that we were being awarded a grant we were overcome with thankfulness and relief. **Knowing that the stress of providing curriculum to continue our children's home education during this very difficult time in our lives was removed from us is something too big for words.** The Lord used this as a very tangible reminder that He sees us, He cares for us, He has plans for us, and He is taking care of us. **Thank you so incredibly much** for making a difference in our lives!”

*—Olivia, Curriculum Grant recipient*

Name changed to protect privacy



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