

# Our Story

## NCLC's Accomplishments

The National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) proudly traces its roots to President Lyndon Johnson's declaration of a "War on Poverty." Beginning in 1965, the federal Office of Economic Opportunity began funding legal services offices with two main goals: improving the access of poor people to the legal system and enabling advocates to seek justice wherever justice for the poor is needed. Reforming a system that was stacked against low-income families eventually became the top priority of the new Legal Services Program. Several national support centers were founded, the National Consumer Law Center among them.

Robert F. Drinan, dean of Boston College Law School, received a letter in January of 1969 inviting the school to apply for federal funds to establish a "Center for Consumer Affairs." He eagerly accepted. Boston College Law School's grant application outlined the goals of a proposed "National Consumer Law Center" and described the unique qualifications of BC Law to be its home.

The grant application was successful and the National Consumer Law Center began operations in June of 1969. Although working from a college campus, NCLC's founders were determined not to operate from an ivory tower. From the beginning they were in close communication with legal aid lawyers working on the front line as advocates for low-income families.

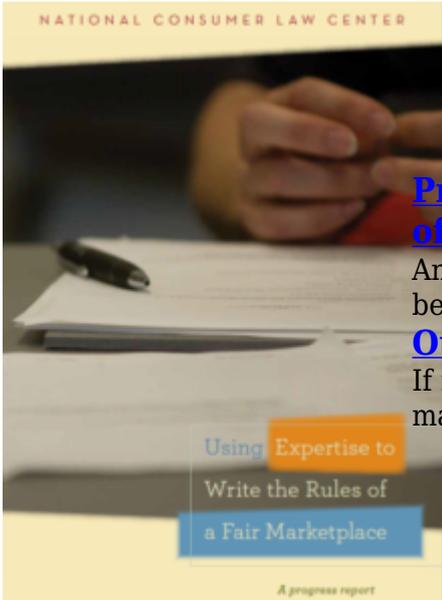
By 1972 NCLC was ready to operate independently of Boston College Law School and moved to offices in downtown Boston. In 1980 a Washington, D.C. office was established so that NCLC could provide a strong pro-consumer voice in the regulatory environment of the nation's capital.

Today, NCLC continues to fight for the rights of low-income families and provides many resources to hard working civil legal aid and private attorneys representing low-income consumers. The talented lawyers of the National Consumer Law Center provide policy analysis, advocacy, litigation, expert witness services, and training for consumer advocates throughout the United States. NCLC also works with federal and state policymakers and participates in major litigation across the nation.

Along the way NCLC has inspired and helped to create two separate, independent consumer justice organizations: The National Association of Consumer Advocates and Americans for Fairness in Lending. NCLC has also developed its own initiatives on behalf of student loan borrowers and older consumers. Additionally, NCLC publishes a comprehensive set of legal treatises, considered by many to be the preeminent source on consumer law. The treatises are widely cited in judicial opinions by courts across the United States, including the United States Supreme Court.

Although begun with federal funds in 1969, today the National Consumer Law Center is sustained by the support of a diverse network of private foundations, corporate sponsors, and individuals.

## **NCLC's Accomplishments**



## **Progress Report: Using Expertise to Write the Rules of a Fair Marketplace**

An overview of NCLC's programs and recent accomplishments on behalf of low-income consumers.

### **Our Major Achievements**

If not for NCLC's history of advocacy Americans would not enjoy many of the basic consumer protections we now take for granted.