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# LSC 06.20.07 updates

June 20, 2007

LSC Updates is a summary of the latest news and developments affecting LSC and the civil equal justice community.

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Created by Congress in 1974, LSC's mission is to promote equal access to justice in our Nation and to provide high quality civil legal assistance to low-income persons. LSC currently funds 138 independent local legal aid programs around the nation. Its 11-member Board of Directors is appointed by the President of the United States with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. For more information, please visit [www.lsc.gov](http://www.lsc.gov).

## LSC News

### House Subcommittee Approves \$28 Million Increase for LSC

On June 11, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies approved a \$28 million increase for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) as part of its FY 2008 funding bill. The 8 percent increase for the Corporation is the second consecutive annual increase and would represent a \$50 million gain over two years.

Chairman Alan Mollohan (D-W.Va.) said in his opening statement to the Subcommittee, "We have made positive changes with some of the smaller agencies in this bill. I'm proud to say we have added \$28 million above the FY 07 level and \$66 million over the President's request for the Legal Services Corporation."

This increase is, in part, recognition of LSC's groundbreaking report, *Documenting the Justice Gap: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans*, which was completed in September 2005. The *Justice Gap Report* documents that nationwide, for every person helped by LSC-funded programs, another is turned away. Fifty percent of those actually seeking help are turned away for one primary reason: lack of resources.

Helaine M. Barnett, President of LSC, said, "I thank Chairman Mollohan, Congressman Frelinghuysen, and the entire Subcommittee for recognizing the crucial need for increased funding for civil legal aid in America, and for helping to provide more low-income Americans with access to justice."

To read the full press release, [click here](#).



**Rep. Alan Mollohan  
(D-W.Va.)**



**Rep. Rodney  
Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.)**

#### Inside This Issue

[House Subcommittee Approves \\$28 Million Increase for LSC](#)

[LSC Awarded for Hurricane Relief Efforts](#)

[LSC Recognizes Sheldon Roodman](#)

[Atlanta Legal Aid Welcomes UPS Fellow](#)

[Legal Aid Society of Cleveland Offers Cases for Credits](#)

[AppalRed Appoints New Executive Director](#)

[Legal Services for New York City Honors \*Pro Bono\* Volunteers](#)

[Awards](#)

[Opinion: With Sufficient Legal Services, Domestic Victims Break Cycle Of Abuse](#)

If you have any difficulty viewing this newsletter [click here](#)

[back to top ^](#)

### LSC Awarded for Hurricane Relief Efforts

On June 7, the Mississippi Center for Justice honored LSC with an award for promoting racial and economic justice in Mississippi. The award was given in recognition of LSC's ongoing work to assist with recovery efforts in the Gulf region following Hurricane Katrina.

The award was presented during the Center's "Mississippi on the Potomac" reception in

Washington, D.C., held to honor Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) for his contributions to the causes of racial justice and human rights, and to honor lawyers providing *pro bono* legal services to survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

LSC Senior Program Counsel John C. Eidleman, who leads LSC's disaster recovery efforts, accepted the award from Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), who was in attendance as a special guest and to introduce Rep. Lewis.



**Left to Right: Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) and LSC Senior Program Counsel John C. Eidleman.**

Martha Bergmark, President of the Mississippi Center for Justice, said, "We are truly grateful to the Legal Services Corporation for their work around Katrina recovery. As a Federal entity, LSC has been staunchly on the side of aiding Katrina victims and has participated as a positive force in the recovery on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. LSC has provided an organizational glue by hosting monthly Katrina calls for all grantees, being an advocate with other Federal agencies, like FEMA, to provide an agency-to-agency strategy and working for additional funding to aid hurricane survivors. For these reasons, Mississippi Center for Justice recognized LSC with our heartfelt appreciation."

The Mississippi Center for Justice is a nonprofit law firm committed to advancing racial and economic justice. For more information, visit [www.mscenterforjustice.org](http://www.mscenterforjustice.org).

[back to top ^](#)

### **LSC Recognizes Sheldon Roodman**

On June 8, LSC President Helaine M. Barnett presented Sheldon Roodman with a certificate of recognition from LSC for his dedication to clients, commitment to staff and outstanding leadership as Executive Director of the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. Barnett presented Roodman with the award at a meeting of the Midwest Project Directors Association, which also recognized Roodman for his years of service.



**Sheldon Roodman and LSC President Helaine M. Barnett**

Roodman is retiring after 30 years in charge of the organization, a time he described in a recent newsletter as "a roller coaster ride--but with many more highs than lows."

"Collectively we have pressed for justice for hundreds of thousands of low-income families facing terrible crises in their lives," said Roodman. "We have fought against the injustices and indignities heaped on welfare recipients, public housing tenants, people with HIV/AIDS, battered women, people without health insurance, immigrants, migrant workers, nursing home residents, children with special needs--the list goes on and on. I have been privileged to be part of these struggles."

Diana White, the Foundation's Deputy Director of Special Projects since 1997, will replace Roodman as Executive Director.

For more information about the Legal Assistance Foundation, visit [www.lafchicago.org](http://www.lafchicago.org).

[back to top ^](#)

## **LSC in the News**

### **Atlanta Legal Aid Welcomes UPS Fellow**

Press Release, Atlanta Legal Aid Society – June 18, 2007

Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc., today announced it had welcomed its first corporate-sponsored appointee to the Legal Aid Fellowship Program, an attorney from UPS who has begun a four-month assignment.

The appointment of Ryan Swift, a lawyer at UPS's headquarters here, is a first not only for Atlanta but also for the nation. More than 100 law firms around the country participate in various fellowship programs

with their local legal services agencies, but no corporation has ever assigned one of its attorneys to such long-term assistance.

Beginning today, Swift is reporting to Atlanta Legal Aid's Cobb County office, where he will work for the next four months while continuing to receive his salary and benefits from UPS.

The Fellowship Program of Atlanta Legal Aid immerses young lawyers in a variety of cases and crises, giving them valuable opportunities for court time and for responsibilities that only come much later at a large firm or corporation.



**Ryan Swift**

"We're excited to have UPS take part in this marvelous program," said Steve Gottlieb, Legal Aid's executive director. "Over the years, we've come to value the participation of Atlanta's law firms in our Fellowship Program as much as we value their monetary contributions in support of our work."

"UPS is committed to the communities it serves," said Teri McClure, UPS senior vice president, Legal, Compliance and Public Affairs. "And we believe when UPSers participate in programs away from the office, it makes them better managers and helps them understand the needs of our people. Our department will grow tremendously from Ryan's experience."

For more information about the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, [click here](#).

[back to top ^](#)

### **Legal Aid Society of Cleveland Offers Cases for Credits**

Attorneys in Lorain County, Ohio, who agree to handle a *pro bono* case for the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland (LASCLEV) will qualify for a free Continuing Legal Education (CLE) course next month.

The July 13 course will focus on the unmet legal needs of the low-income and would normally cost \$165, but attorneys who agree to donate their time will be spared the fee. Attorneys must complete a certain number of CLE hours each year to continue practicing.

This innovative partnership between LASCLEV and the Lorain County Bar Association formed out of a recognition that legal services programs cannot address the vast unmet need for their services alone. The participation of private attorneys is necessary to begin closing America's justice gap.

For more information, read "[Pro bono program exchanges work for education](#)," from Ohio's *Morning Journal*.

[back to top ^](#)

### **AppalRed Appoints New Executive Director**

The Appalachian Research and Defense Fund of Kentucky (AppalRed) has selected Cynthia Elliott as its new Executive Director, making her the first-ever African-American leader of a Kentucky legal services program. She is succeeding Larry York, who led the organization from 2002 to 2006, following John M. Rosenberg's retirement after 32 years in charge.

Elliott led AppalRed's Jackson County office from 1990 to 2001 before going to work for Kentucky's Department of Public Advocacy. She later served as Managing Attorney for Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, a non-LSC funded legal services program serving 32 northwest and western Ohio counties.

Rosenberg, who also served as AppalRed's interim director while a national search was underway, told the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, "We are excited that Cynthia is coming and we know she will be an outstanding director. She knows the problems our clients face from her own experience in Eastern Kentucky. She is an excellent attorney and is highly qualified for this position."

For more information about AppalRed, [click here](#).

[back to top ^](#)

### **Legal Services for New York City Honors *Pro Bono* Volunteers**

On June 13, Legal Services for New York City (LSNY) held its first-ever *pro bono* awards event to recognize the hundreds of volunteer attorneys who provide free legal services to

their clients every year.

Seven awards of special distinction were given to LSNY's *Pro Bono* Champions--individuals or organizations who had rendered extraordinary service to the program.

LSNY stated in a recent press release, "Over the past year, the *pro bono* volunteers have worked shoulder to shoulder with LSNY's advocates to provide high-quality legal services in the areas that matter most to our clients and their communities: family, housing, benefits, consumer, health, employment, bankruptcy, economic development, consumer, elder, real estate, and education law."



**Left to Right: LSNY Executive Director Andrew Scherer, New York State Bar Association President Kathryn Grant Madigan, LSNY Board Chair Fern Schair.**

Kathryn Grant Madigan, President of the New York State Bar Association, delivered the keynote address at the event.

For more information on LSNY, [click here](#).

[back to top ^](#)

## Awards

**Stephen R. Krone of MidPenn Legal Services** was named Civil Legal Aid Attorney of the Year by the Pennsylvania Bar Association on May 24. Krone has dedicated his entire 37-year legal career to providing legal services to the low-income. Krone has extensive experience in many areas of law, particularly in housing, social security and child support, and has consistently maintained a high level of quality representation while mentoring many new MidPenn attorneys. For more information, [click here](#).

**Marcia Powell Shew of South Carolina Legal Services (SCLS)** received the Ellen Hines Smith Legal Services Lawyer of the Year award from the South Carolina Bar on May 31. Shew heads SCLS's elder law unit where she counsels clients on issues such as legal guardianship of grandchildren, wills and probate, powers of attorney and financial abuse. "Ms. Shew is very dedicated and passionate about helping seniors with their legal issues," said Lynda Christison, Director of the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission, for which Shew serves as a resource for staff and volunteers. For more information, [click here](#).

**Jeffrey R. Myer of Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW)** received the Outstanding Legal Service Advocate award from LAW's Volunteer Lawyers Project on May 31. During his 13-year career at LAW, Myer has trained innumerable volunteer lawyers to handle unemployment compensation cases, and authored a training manual on the subject. Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Mary Triggiano, who presented the award to Myer, said, "In addition, Myer "has used his well-honed litigation skills to pull more than one rabbit out of a hat for Legal Action's indigent clients" according to Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Mary Triggiano, who introduced Myer at the awards ceremony.



[back to top ^](#)

## Opinion: With Sufficient Legal Services, Domestic Victims Break Cycle Of Abuse

Jean Crowe, Tennessean.com – June 8, 2007

*Note: Jean Crowe is the managing attorney of the Family Law Section of the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland's Nashville office.*

Despite the best efforts of social workers, law enforcement, elected officials and legal professionals, domestic violence remains a serious problem in our society.

Nationally, one-third of women will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime. Between 3 and 10 million children are exposed to domestic violence every year.

Public perception of the problem does not approach the horror of

the reality. We had a client who was literally a prisoner in her house, routinely abused by her husband as well as strangers he brought home. She was cut, beaten, isolated from her family and threatened with even more abuse if she were to try to leave him.

So how do we deal with domestic violence? According to a study conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice, the most effective means of dealing with the underlying problem of domestic violence is by funding legal services for victims.

Legal Aid Society provides the support to allow a victim to break the cycle of violence. Without help and understanding, victims may find the uncertainty of trying to raise children alone more daunting than living with an abusive spouse.



**Jean Crowe**

To read the article in its entirety, [click here](#).

[back to top](#) ^

Created by Congress in 1974, LSC's mission is to promote equal access to justice in our Nation and to provide high quality civil legal assistance to low-income persons. LSC Updates is produced by LSC's Office of Government Relations & Public Affairs. Questions, comments, or articles for submission can be sent to Sean Driscoll, Public Affairs Assistant, at [driscolls@lsc.gov](mailto:driscolls@lsc.gov).