Legal Aid Society Brings Justice and Relief for Woman who is Blind

Ms. Many, who is blind, was sued by a creditor for $13,266.97 on a car deficiency balance. The balance was the result of her co-signing for her daughter on a car. The daughter brought a salesman to Ms. Many’s home to get the contract signed. After being pressured by her daughter and the car dealer, Ms. Many signed the contract without realizing it was actually blank. Her daughter failed to pay on the car and later passed away, leaving Ms. Many with a sizeable debt that was the result of fraudulent behavior. As a result of this fraud, she was in danger of losing the home she owned by a forced sale to pay off the debt.

A Legal Aid Society attorney took the case and filed a counterclaim against the creditor for the solicitation in her home and violation of the Consumer Protection Act. The case was settled when the creditor released any and all claims against Ms. Many, dismissed the suit for the full amount owed and gave Ms. Many a check for nearly $1200 (the amount that had been paid under the contract). As a result of our help, Ms. Many not only was relieved of any debt but did not lose her home.
Legal Aid Society to Kick Off 2017 Campaign

On March 9 we will officially kick off our 2017 campaign with a luncheon at the Nashville City Club. This event, sponsored once again by Pinnacle Financial Partners, will feature Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Jeffrey S. Bivins as the keynote speaker. 2017 Campaign Chair Julie Watson Lampley of Butler Snow will preside over the luncheon.

As of February 16, we have already raised $477,201 towards our goal of $826,000. Most of these funds have been raised through memberships in the Leadership Cabinet which are those law firms and in-house legal departments which give $400 per attorney.

This year's campaign committee is: Chair - Julie Watson Lampley; Large Firm Co-chairs - John "Jay" B. Hardcastle Jr. and Emily A. Shouse; Small Firm Co-chairs – Katherine "Kathy" A. Austin and Stephen G. Young; Government Chair – Ann V. Butterworth; Judges Co-chairs – Judge Lynda F. Jones and Judge James "Jim" G. Martin III; Corporate Chair – Margaret "Meg" C. Mazzone; Williamson County Chair – David H. Veile; Murfreesboro Chair - W. Scott Kimberly and Oak Ridge Chair - Robert R. Asbury.

If you would like to attend the luncheon and have not yet RSVP'd, please contact Cindy Durham at cdurham@las.org or 615-780-7125. Please RSVP no later than March 1. Space is limited to 200 people.

New Partnership with Scott County Family Justice Center

Our Oak Ridge office is pleased to be a part of the new Scott County Family Justice Center ("SCFJC"). The SCFJC is working with local government agencies and non-profit partners to provide comprehensive services to victims of family violence to enhance victims’ safety and improve the likelihood of successful navigation of the criminal and civil justice processes. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to assist with the SCFJC’s Advisory Board and the Coordinated Community Response Team.

New Brochure on Expungement
Thanks to staff attorney Vidhi Joshi, we have a new brochure on Expungement!

It can also be downloaded for free here.

Staff and Leadership Updates

Kerry Dietz has joined the staff as a new attorney in our Gallatin office. She practices in the areas of mortgage foreclosure, housing and consumer law. She most recently worked as interim counsel for Congressman Jim Cooper, where she researched and advised on legislative developments regarding IP/music industry, healthcare and education policy.

Prior to her time at the Office of Congressman Jim Cooper, Dietz interned with the Magistrate Judge John Bryant in the U.S. District Court for Middle District of Tennessee. She also worked with Ozment Law and The Immigrant Legal Resource Center to update their guide on how to protect constitutional rights of immigrants during removal proceedings.

Board member Charles Grant, an attorney with Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, was recently honored by the Napier-Looby Bar Foundation with the J.C. Napier Trailblazer Award. Charles serves as First Vice President on our Board of Directors.

Marla Williams, managing attorney in Cookeville, was honored at a banquet on February 26 by IMPACT, an African American Men's Leadership Group. The annual black-tie gala honors outstanding African-American citizens in the community. Marla was the first African
American attorney in Cookeville, making her a pioneer in black history in Cookeville.

2016 Campaign Final

Many thanks to everyone who donated to our 2016 Campaign for Equal Justice. As a result of your generosity, we received $814,240 to provide access to justice for thousands of Tennesseans.

We are extremely grateful for the hard work of our 2016 campaign committee:

- Trey Harwell, 2016 Campaign Chair
- George Anderson, 2016 Community Chair
- Dewey Branstetter and Katie Edge, Large Firm Co-chairs
- Jonathan Farmer and Emily Shouse, Small Firm Co-chairs
- Judge Lynda Jones and Judge Philip Smith, Judges co-chairs
- Laura Smith, Corporate attorneys chair
- Bob Watson, Government attorneys chair
- Joanie Abernathy and Virginia Story, Williamson County co-chairs
- Katie Klinghard, Clarksville Chair
- Patrick Carter, Columbia Chair
- Tessa Lawson, Cookeville Chair
- Walter Stubbs, Gallatin Chair
- Sonya Wright, Murfreesboro Chair
- Neil McBride, Oak Ridge Chair
- Pat Fraley, Tullahoma Chair

We also appreciate the work of the Community committee:

- Lee Barfield II
- The Hon. John N. Cooper
- Beth Seigenthaler Courtney
- Tim Douglas
- Kate Ezell
- Victor “Torry” S. Johnson III
- Walker Mathews
- Hope Stringer
- Jody Williams

Upcoming Clinics
We are pleased to host many clinics across Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland Plateau. These clinics are staffed by both Legal Aid Society and pro bono attorneys. If you would like to volunteer at one of the clinics, please contact Jarod Word at jword@las.org (or 615-780-7131) or call your local Legal Aid Society office.

Please note that many of our clinics are cancelled during the holidays. Check the list if you're not sure. You can see the list of upcoming clinics, hosted by Legal Aid Society and offered by partners, here.

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Shop with Amazon or Kroger? Support Legal Aid Society!

Looking for an easy way to support our work? When you shop at Amazon or Kroger, a portion of your purchases can go to support Legal Aid Society. To participate, sign up for Amazon Smile or Kroger Rewards (NPO # 98149), select Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberlands as your charity of choice and start shopping. A percentage of your eligible purchases will be donated to the organization at no extra cost to you!

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Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberlands
1-800-238-1443 | 300 Deaderick Street | Nashville, TN 37201

Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberlands advocates for fairness and justice under the law. The non-profit law firm offers free civil legal representation and educational programs to help people in its region receive justice, protect their well-being and support opportunities to overcome poverty. We serve 48 Tennessee counties from offices in Clarksville, Columbia, Cookeville, Gallatin, Nashville, Murfreesboro, Oak Ridge and Tullahoma. We are funded by Legal Services Corporation, the Tennessee Bar Foundation, United Way in 16 counties, the State of Tennessee, foundations and donors. For more information about our services or how to donate and to download information about common legal issues, visit us online at www.las.org.