

The Legal Aid Advocate

March 2017



Legal Aid Society

of Middle Tennessee & the Cumberland

Working Together. Doing Justice. Restoring Hope.

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YOUR Support Helped Create These Sentiments from our Clients

*"Fantastic lady! Mary was a [God]-send during a terrible time in my life. She helped me get out from under a huge tax burden which was ruining my life. Mary made it easy to understand and fully explained each step of the process. I will always tell people to come see you guys for help. Thanks again to Mary!" PS about **Mary Gillum, Director of our TN Taxpayer Project, Oak Ridge***

*"Mr. Bush was very proficient in getting my medication approved. Not only is Atty. Bush very professional and knowledgeable, he is very personable and made me feel comfortable while talking with him." JN about **Bill Bush, Attorney, Cookeville***

*"Ms. Hoole & Jessica Jernigan were very [professional] and did an outstanding Job in and out of the office. I would Highly Recomed Them. Thank You very much. I would like to Thank Iska Hoole and Jessica M Jernigan on the outstanding Job They done Real profesional and outstanding." WB about **Iska Hoole, Managing Attorney, Tullahoma** and **Jessica Jernigan, Paralegal, Tullahoma***

*"I recieved professional & knowledable help from Mr. Frierson. He was prompt & consistent and delivered what he said he would. Thanks again." Anonymous about **Pete Frierson, Paralegal, Columbia***

Mark Your Calendars for The Big Payback

We're counting down to Middle Tennessee's largest online giving day, The Big Payback, on May 3! The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee challenges you to donate to area non-profits that raise awareness and aid for various causes in our community. Last year, more than \$2.6 million was raised in just 24 hours, and we hope to see the same charity this year.



For more information, go to The Big Payback's [website](#). We hope you'll consider Legal Aid Society as you plan your gift!

Legal Aid Society Kicks Off 2017 Campaign

We kicked off our 2017 Campaign for Equal Justice, Legal Aid Society's annual fundraising initiative, on Thursday, March 9 with a luncheon at the Nashville City Club.

The luncheon reminded the crowd why the non-profit law firm's mission is critical to so many in Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland Plateau. In his keynote address, Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Jeffrey Bivins commented on the impact volunteer lawyers have on the community.

"There are 1.1 million people in or near poverty in Tennessee and 70 percent of them need legal help each year," Chief Justice Bivins said. "It's important that we stand with one another because together we are woven into the Tennessee fabric."



The Campaign for Equal Justice is an annual initiative that raises funds for Legal Aid Society, Tennessee's largest nonprofit law firm. In 2016, the campaign received \$814,240.

"The goal of the campaign is not just to raise money, but to provide equal access to justice for the 440,000 people in the 48 counties throughout Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland Plateau who are eligible to receive the services we provide," said Gary Housepian, executive director of Legal Aid Society. "Thanks to the donations of both time and money by the people in this room as well as hundreds of others not here, we are working to provide access to justice throughout our service area, including in the very small rural counties that have limited access to



legal resources."

Staff and Leadership Updates



Andrae Crismon, Managing Attorney of our Murfreesboro office, was elected to the Board of Directors for Greenhouse Ministries for a 3 year term.



Nicole Sibilski, Grant Writer, was appointed to the National Grant Professionals Association Board.



Josh Thomas has been named the Managing Attorney of our Columbia office, Josh has been a staff attorney in the Columbia office since March 2013. He replaces David Kozlowski who will be our Director of Advocacy full-time now.

In recent months, Josh was appointed Chair of the Board of Directors of the Housing Coalition of South Central Tennessee. He previously served as Vice-Chair. He also was appointed to be a member of the Clearinghouse Editorial Advisory Board of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. Finally, Josh is the treasurer and newsletter editor for the Yale Club of Middle Tennessee.



Tiffany Tant-Shafer joins the Tullahoma office as our newest staff attorney. She will focus on family, health and benefits, and juvenile law.

Prior to joining us, Tiffany was a sole practitioner primarily advocating for children as a court-appointed guardian *ad litem*. Before that, she was a full-time adjunct professor of legal studies at Missouri Western State University, where she coordinated a student project with the Midwest Innocence Project. Tiffany was previously an associate for The Law Office of Craig D. Ritchie, P.C., handling family and appellate cases and worked as a family law attorney for Legal Aid of Western Missouri.





DarKenya Waller, Managing Attorney for our Nashville office, was inducted as a fellow of the Nashville Bar Foundation.

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](#).

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!

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.

