New Jersey Legal Services

55th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner

December 8, 2022
The Addison Park
Aberdeen, New Jersey
We want to thank the following generous sponsors of the 55th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner.

**EQUAL JUSTICE LEADER**

Lowenstein Sandler
MERCK
verizon

**EQUAL JUSTICE PARTNER**

Porzio Bromberg & Newman
DLA Piper
Archer Attorneys at Law
McCarter & English

Blaise T. Santianni and Ramona E. Romero

**EQUAL JUSTICE SUPPORTER**

Brach Eichler LLC
Cullen Dykman

Karol Corbin Walker, Esq.

**EQUAL JUSTICE FRIEND**

Bowman & Company LLP

Dawn K. Miller, Esq.
Good evening and welcome!

Thank you for joining us tonight to commemorate the 55th anniversary of Legal Services in New Jersey. In the 55 years since Legal Services first opened its doors in New Jersey, we have achieved major positive changes in every area of law that impacts low-income New Jerseyans; served over 8 million people in more than 2.7 million civil legal cases; and assisted millions more via impact cases, outreach, legislative and judicial advocacy, and an extensive array of free community legal and self-help resources.

First and foremost, I would like to recognize our statewide staff—now nearly 700 strong—who every day carry out the critical, desperately needed, and often life-altering work of Legal Services. I am amazed by your boundless compassion, your tireless dedication, and your zealous advocacy on behalf of low-income and vulnerable New Jerseyans. Whether you joined Legal Services this year or have been a part of this organization since its origins, thank you for dedicating your time, effort, and expertise to the cause of equal justice in New Jersey. You are an integral and invaluable part of an esteemed, expert, and highly effective legal services delivery system.

To our board members, donors, collaborators, and supporters across the state, we are deeply grateful for your partnership. The struggle against injustice is—and must be—a collective, concerted, community effort. Looking ahead, enormous challenges remain. On the heels of a pandemic that wreaked devastating and disproportionate harm on low-income and vulnerable New Jerseyans, we must all recommit to our shared mission: the pursuit of justice for all.

Under the leadership of co-founder and visionary Melville “De” Miller, Jr., our coordinated statewide system evolved from a humble network of storefront offices into a national model. While we honor De tonight via induction into the New Jersey Equal Justice Library and Archive “Circle of Honor,” the best way to honor De’s life and legacy is to continue to embrace and carry out the mission and values of Legal Services.

As we have since 1966, our programs will continue to fight to ensure access to justice for all disadvantaged people. We will continue to innovate, build and leverage expertise, and advocate vigorously for systemic and transformative change for people in poverty. Thank you for standing with us—for the past 55 years, in this current moment, and as we tackle the challenges ahead.

Dawn K. Miller, Esq.
President, Legal Services of New Jersey
December 8, 2022
Cynthia M. Jacob, Esq.
Fisher & Phillips LLP
Chairperson

Karol Corbin Walker, Esq.
Kaufman Dolowich Voluck
First Vice Chairperson

Virginia A. Long, Esq.
Fox Rothschild LLP
Second Vice Chairperson

John P. Kahn, Esq.
CVS Health/Aetna
Secretary

Carlos M. Bollar, Esq.
Archer & Greiner

Jhanice Domingo, Esq.
Pashman Stein Walder Hayden P.C.

Douglas S. Eakeley, Esq.
Rutgers Law School

Michael K. Furey, Esq.
Day Pitney

Jaynee LaVecchia, Esq.
McCarter & English, LLP

Ross A. Lewin, Esq.
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Regina C. Little, Esq.
National Treasury Employees Union

Edwin J. McCready, Esq.
McCreedy & Cox

Stephen M. Orlofsky, Esq.
Blank Rome LLP

Marjorie Perry
President and CEO
MZM Construction & Management

Lisa Rodriguez, Esq.
Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP

Ramona E. Romero, Esq.
Princeton University

Angelica Valenza
Global Services, Strategy Lead
Johnson & Johnson

John E. Wallace, Jr., Esq.
Brown & Connery, LLP

James R. Zazzali, Esq.
Zazzali, Fagella, Nowak, Kleinbaum & Friedman

Past Board Chairs
Deborah T. Poritz, 2011-2017
James H. Coleman, Jr., 2006-2010
Michael R. Cole, 1996-2005
William D. Hardin, 1989-1996
Douglas S. Eakeley, 1981-1989
This Evening’s Proceedings

Invocation
The Reverend Bruce H. Davidson

Welcome and Opening Remarks
Cynthia M. Jacob, Esq.—LSNJ Board Chair
Dawn K. Miller, Esq.—LSNJ President

Video—Our Clients’ Stories
Our Clients’ Stories—The Difference We Make (video)

Remarks
The Honorable Stuart J. Rabner—Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court

Video—Our History
Advancing Justice—New Jersey Legal Services at 55 Years (video)

Original Poetry Reading
“A Social Justice Warrior”
Anisa Rahim, Esq.—MFA and LSNJ Vice President

Presentation of the NJEJLA Circle of Honor
Loretta Weinberg—Former Senate Majority Leader, New Jersey State Senate

Induction into the NJEJLA Circle of Honor
Melville D. Miller, Jr., Esq.—Do Well and Do Good (video)

Closing
Let us speak of the man. A social justice warrior, slaying against inequity.
Evictions and welfare denials, wrongful terminations striking him at his core.
De argued gracefully and passionately in court to settle these scores.
Possessing a fierce need to protect, an uncanny ability
to look after those of various shades, speaking in many languages.

De could have done anything, they say, but he chose this work with his heart fully.
He was tall, towering, soft-spoken, each word selected carefully.
He had it all in him, turbulence and calm, curiosity and brilliance.
A reconciler of opposites, reveling in challenges and complications,
he took mischievous joy in surprising you with unexpected words and obscure references.

His memory was sharp so you had to be careful in what you stated.
You think he would not have had the time to listen but oh, he heard you.
De knew to ask the questions you had not considered.
Find the angles and weaknesses that others missed.
Even for a tribute, he would ask how can I light a fire under you.

Only De would have been uncomfortable with too much praise,
too much talk of a singular person and legacy.
He might have said I did just about everything I could.
Yet still, I wanted to do more.
Melville DeSoto (“De”) Miller, Jr.

Melville “De” Miller, Jr., co-founder and former president of Legal Services of New Jersey, was born in Summit, New Jersey in 1944 to Frances Weinpaahl Miller and Melville DeSoto Miller. He grew up in Basking Ridge, New Jersey and was president and valedictorian of the first graduating class of Ridge High School in 1962. He graduated from Amherst College in 1966 and married Louise Sills Barton Miller that same year; he then went on to attain his JD from Harvard Law in 1969.

After graduating, Miller worked for a short time at a private law firm but the lure of public interest was too strong and he forever left private practice to join the State Office of Legal Services, then Middlesex County Legal Services, before helping to incorporate Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) in 1973. He then served as president and general counsel of LSNJ for nearly five decades, from 1974 to 2020, when, in his words, he “stepped aside” to make room for family life but vowed to stay involved in legal advocacy and the Poverty Research Institute, especially in issues related to child welfare. In the words of Alan W. Houseman, former executive director of the national nonprofit Center for Law and Social Policy,

De has been, not only a great leader in New Jersey, but one of the great leaders in legal aid in the United States. De not only created, in my view, the most comprehensive, integrated, and effective legal services system in the nation in New Jersey, but he also led efforts to improve performance and quality in the legal aid systems in the United States. He was the principle draftsperson and the theorist behind the LSC performance measures, which are used not only by LSC, but by many state funders to set criteria for civil legal aid programs and to evaluate them. He also was the theoretical genius behind the justice gap study, which LSC did, and has done several times, to show the huge gap between the legal needs of low-income people and the ability of civil legal services to meet those needs.

John Tull, retired consultant and former director of the Legal Services Corporation Office of Program Operations, described Miller as “a giant of a man and a real force of nature,” emphasizing the important influence he had in the development of the legal services movement and, in particular, the cherished value of “high quality advocacy that aims at making a difference in changing policies and practices that negatively affect poor families, poor communities, poor individuals.”
And from Douglas S. Eakeley, LSNJ board member and former chair of the Legal Services Corporation, “He was truly passionate, not only about justice, but about having justice serve people in need. He was, with that passion, wonderfully empathetic as well. He was tireless. He was a crusader at heart. … He had a vision that he was able to translate into a design, and then implement or build that design into a program, not just a program, but a program that is a national model for state support.”

Dawn K. Miller, De’s successor as president of LSNJ, describes De’s contributions to Legal Services as “immense.” He not only served as the founder and leader of Legal Services in New Jersey, but also—as either principal drafter, editor, or thought provocateur—participated in nearly every Legal Services case that came before the New Jersey Supreme Court.

Central to De’s lasting legacy are the hundreds of lawyers he helped mentor, train, and inspire to build careers in public interest work, as well as the millions of clients who have received legal assistance from Legal Services in New Jersey over the decades; the countless others who have benefitted from pro se materials, videos, and other publications; and the low-income communities who have benefitted from his dogged commitment to raising awareness of the prevalence and consequences of poverty in our state.

Miller published a number of reports and articles on poverty, many through the LSNJ Poverty Research Institute (PRI), which he created in 1997. PRI reports over these four decades include the Poverty Benchmarks Series (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012); The Real Cost Of Living Series (2008 and 2013); and eight reports between 2002 and 2013 about legal needs and the legal aid gap.

He was widely respected among the New Jersey Supreme Court Justices from former Chief Justice Robert Wilentz in the 1970s and 80s to current Chief Justice Stuart J. Rabner, who said, “He made a meaningful difference in countless lives, not only the clients he served, but also the attorneys he inspired.”

De Miller made a “huge contribution to the second civil rights movement,” says retired New Jersey Supreme Court Justice James H. Coleman, Jr., through his efforts to create “more racial, gender and ethnic diversity, justice, and political success. Those victories have helped to transform America, from being two nations to becoming more closely one nation by the time of De’s death.”

De Miller died at the age of 76 in his Tewksbury, New Jersey home on March 1, 2021. In reflections offered at that time, former LSNJ Board Chair and retired Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz spoke of their regular visits to Trenton to make the case for increased Legal Services funding. “He had an encyclopedic memory, always putting together the best case. Always shaping that case by his concern and his compassion for Legal Services clients. … He was eloquent when he chose to be and funny when he chose to be.” When testifying before the budget committee in front of both the houses, she recalls, “He spoke with the passion and knowledge that was the hallmark of the man that we all admire and love.”
New Jersey Legal Services
Years of Service

All Legal Services staff who have served five years or more are listed below, in successive five year cohorts. We honor and congratulate them on this 55th anniversary commemoration! *indicates those who have reached a threshold year of service

- Michelle Altenpohl
- Tara Artesi
- Shafiqa Bekker
- Pamela Bell
- Christopher Benson
- Ashley Camporeale
- Adelynne Carde
- T. Rinu Cherian
- Jennifer Chinchilla
- Vincent Cimilluca
- Yahaira Cordero
- Carla Davila
- Joann Diaz
- Justine Digeronimo
- Jennifer Donnelly
- Lisa Douglas
- Scott Dranoff
- Patrick Dunican
- Olatokunbo Emmanuel
- Mervin Evertz
- Tahlia Feliciano
- Marissa Fisher
- Valerio Gonzalez
- Nicholas Graham
- Leila Halwani
- Tanisha Hansford-Colon
- LaTanya R. Harry
- Nana Osafo
- Stelio Papadopoulo
- Sandra Passaro
- Sylvia Pate-Jones
- Jennifer Perez*
- Thanh Pham
- Monica Pires-Nascimento
- Rebecca Preuss
- Denecia Quander
- Geetha Ramprasad
- Anabel Rodriguez
- Angela Rodriguez
- Richard Routh*
- Rachel Salazar
- Cassandra Stabbert
- Abbey Tanu
- Troy Torres
- Amy Travis
- Dawn Truhn
- Emily Villanueva
- Alicia F. Williams
- Fana Wray Hopkins
- Pedro Yadaicela
- Sharon Yoo
- Dalya Youssef
- Karen Zamudio

5 to 9 Years of Service

- Eileen Hernandez
- Erica Hernandez DeLuna*
- Cadence Hulme
- Erycka Johnson-Saunders
- Chiori Kaneko
- Melissa Kiefer
- Kevin Kieffer
- Kimberly Koopman
- Thomas Lamaina
- Yvonne Larsen*
- Delilah Leon*
- Nancy Limo
- Gina LoBue*
- Judy Long
- Jennifer Lynch
- Yaxmin Machado
- Isabel Mangru
- Daniel M. Manzo
- Katelyn McKenzie
- Jennifer Montoya*
- Kevin Morrissey
- Quynhthy Nguyen
10 to 14 Years of Service

Maria Arroyo
Alayna Lynn Berg
Stacey Bussel
Amy M. Cortright
Elizabeth Dably
Richard Eodice
Gayle L. Fagan
Alexander Ferderber
Hersonski
Benjamin Fidalgo
Harvey C. Fisher
Maryann Flanigan
Geraldine Flynn
Luis Franco
Luisa Fuentes
Shoshana Gross
Meghan Gulczynski
Yolanda Hamilton
Elliott D. Harris
Kristal Harris-Green
Monique Jasso
Edna Jordan
Ruth Kotsalos
Natasha McLaurin
Graham Mowday
Elliston Panton
Anisa Rahim
Akil Roper
Daniel I. Rubin
Faith Snyder
Andrea L. Strack
Sonia Tul-Figueroa
Christopher Vanette

15 to 19 Years of Service

Elsa Alvarado
Rajesh Ashar
Ronny-Lynn Bracarelllo
Bette Brooks
Sandra Carbajal
Maria Castruita
Richard Chimento
Ashley M. Courtney
Victor Dave
Charles David
Deserea Dixon
Edgar Espinosa
Esperanza Galarza
Gladys Gil
Monica Gural
Sandra Gutierrez
Linda Hampton
Raquiba Huq
Sarah Hymowitz
Elizabeth Jimenez
Alice Kwong
Kevin Liebkemann
Elsy Lugo
Jo Anne Mantz
Suizma Marino
Rocio Maza
Jean Milfort
Annie Mok-Rawson
Mitchell Moskovitz
Vicki Narvaez
Michelle Nuciglio
Nicole Palmieri
Catarina Pedreiro
Shivi Prasad
Rebecca Pressman
Jocelyn Pridgen
Catherine Rivera
Kellie Rivera
Letisla Rodriguez
Giovanna Sasieta
Tanya Simmon
Kathy Smith
Carol Vadimsy Spicer
Jennifer Tanner
Olga L. Torres
Andrew Vazquez-Schroedinger
Claudia Von Briel
Angela D. Williams
Wally Acuna
Leah B. Ashe
Janet Ashley-Naouli
Linda Babecki
Jackie Ballard*
Julie Beck
James Borg
Maria Born
Noemi Celentano
Martine Cohen
Paula Correia
Luz De Jesus
Jean DeAngelis
Milva Diaz
Rachel Elkin*
Lisa Fennell
Sharon Fenton*
Carrie Ferraro
Jean-Claude Fresnel
Jean Gallagher
Sharon Grant
Shirley M. Gwynn*
Sharon Henderson
Alba Hernandez
Karen Jones*
Grace E. Kelly
Patti Koncious
Claudine M. Langrin
Mariana C. Lebduschka-Ling*
James M. McClain
Susan McCue
Mary M. McManus-Smith
David G. McMillin
Myra G. Metzger
Leslie Montgomery
Marcella Moore
Al Moreno*
Sandra Moreno
Brittani A. Morris*
Susan D. Picano
Amy Pinkas
Lizzette Rivera
Rita Robles
Iris N. Santiago*
Stephanie Setzer
Tricia Simpson-Curtin*
Jennifer Smith
Rosendo Socarras
Isabel Sosa*
Linda Strauss
Marcia E. Suarez*
Arlene Tolbert
Carol A. Weissman
Jose Abreu
Basmati Adams
Hilda Agosto
Timothy R. Block
Michael S. Gildenberg*
Alisa Grossman
Samir Lone
Lillian Melendez*
Dawn K. Miller
Debbie Morgan
Adona H. Oglivie*
Jose Ortiz*
Sherril M. Reckord*
Nilda Sharma
Lawrence Sindoni*
Michael L. Wojcik
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35 to 39</td>
<td>Andrea Auerbach, Janice Chapin, Leida Colon-Montanez, Jack Fitzgerald, Patricia Fitzpatrick, Alma Garcia, Kenneth Goldman*, Martha Gonzalez, Dollie Henry, Carleton Lewis*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 44</td>
<td>Billie Jean Beers-Staples, Gerald R. Brennan, Bonnie Constad, Robin Hicks, Theresa A. Kist, Susan J. Knispel, Miriam Martinez, Lillian Castillo Ocasio, Maya Weintraub</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nila Alonso  
June Baker  
Edward B. Brinkmann  
Olga Cardona  
Felipe Chavana  
Gregory Diebold  
Alfred N. Donnarumma

Neil Fogarty*  
Russell Gale  
Renee E. Mickens*  
Myriam Rosario  
Valda E. Wright

Richard J. Bennett  
Karen Bieniarz*  
Gail Chester  
Lorraine Garretson  
Bernice Lewis

Willie Norman  
Wendy Bryant Robinson
In Memoriam

This 55th anniversary night, we honor and remember with love those with whom we have made common cause for a substantial period, but who have since followed a different path. The list, inevitably partial because of the limitations of records and memories, includes staff colleagues, board members, and some key supporters who have passed since the 50th anniversary. Since the unity of our mission seeking justice outweighs lesser distinctions in precise role or years of service, we present them without such differentiations. They are grouped by the last program with which they were associated.

Central Jersey Legal Services
George Conover
Naomi Conover
Luisa Gonzalez
Jermaine Jackson

Essex Newark Legal Services
Lynne Gale
Frank Hutchins
Brenda Ayah Ravenell
The Reverend Willie Simmons
Yvonne Taylor
Theresa Waters

Legal Services of New Jersey
Donna Hildreth
Allan Lichtenstein
Melville "De" Miller, Jr.

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey
Allan Iskra

Northeast New Jersey Legal Services
Yanesis Hernandez

South Jersey Legal Services
Brenda Salazar
Jennifer Salome
Abbey Tanu
THE NEW JERSEY LEGAL SERVICES SYSTEM

STATEWIDE COORDINATING PROGRAM
Legal Services of New Jersey

REGIONAL LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMS
Central Jersey Legal Services
Covering Mercer, Middlesex, and Union counties

Essex-Newark Legal Services
Covering Essex county

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey
Covering Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren counties

Northeast New Jersey Legal Services
Covering Bergen, Hudson, and Passaic counties

South Jersey Legal Services
Covering Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, Monmouth, and Salem counties