

LSNJ Hosts Annual Networking Event for Students and New Attorneys



On July 10, LSNJ held its annual United in the Pursuit of Leadership Initiatives for Tomorrow (UPLIFT™) networking event at the Stage House Tavern in Somerset. Part of the Emerging Leaders for Justice Initiative, this event fosters mentorship and collaboration among current and former Legal Services fellows and interns, newer Legal Services attorneys, and experienced advocates. Now in its fifth year, returning participants



have the opportunity to form deeper connections and reflect upon how their internship helped shape their career paths.

As an introductory exercise, the group was asked, "What does justice mean to you?" Read some of their answers on page 7.

President's Message



Dawn K. Miller, Esq.
President, Legal Services of New Jersey

Undoubtedly, these are deeply challenging, uncertain times for our clients, the Legal Services community, and the more than 3.1 million New Jerseyans currently living in True Poverty—who are now faced with an uncertain future economy and devastating cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, and other government assistance programs. Importantly, this edition of our *Poverty to Justice* newsletter offers much-needed reason for hope.

First, I proudly welcome Derick

Dailey to LSNJ's Board of Trustees. His leadership, experience, and fervent commitment to justice give me hope and confidence in the future we can build here in New Jersey.

At an event I now look forward to each summer, LSNJ recently celebrated the next generation of public interest advocates at our fifth annual UPLIFT™ (United in the Pursuit of Leadership Initiatives for Tomorrow) event, bringing together new and seasoned advocates—undergraduate interns, law students, and new and senior staff alike—in learning, community, and recommitment to our mission. The event opened with the question *What does justice mean to you?* The responses on page 7 offer an inspiring, insightful vision for a fairer, more compassionate path forward.

I ask all of you to reflect on a similar question: *What does access to justice in New Jersey look like in this current moment?* For our immigrant

children experiencing hunger? For farmworkers facing wage theft? For hardworking families across our state, struggling to make ends meet given the soaring cost of living?

At Legal Services, we will always fight to bend the proverbial arc of the moral universe towards justice—particularly when other forces attempt to pull it back. We will continue to invest in the next generation of advocates; raise public awareness on a range of social, economic, and racial justice issues via our free Melville “De”, Miller, Jr. Justice Series; and expand pro bono trainings for our invaluable team of volunteer attorneys. We continue to open an increased caseload (nearly 64,000 cases last year!); win positive legal developments through impact advocacy and litigation; and publish innovative research through our Poverty Research Institute. And we are excited to announce plans to expand UPLIFT™ programming in the coming year, including new sponsorship opportunities that will enable donors to invest directly in the public interest pipeline in New Jersey.

Thank you, as always, for investing in Legal Services and fueling our work and mission. Every day, our clients, staff, volunteers, and supporters give me new reasons for hope—despite today's many challenges, may this newsletter do the same for you!

neighbors? For seniors navigating poverty, housing instability, and complex healthcare needs? For single mothers and

“We will always fight to bend the proverbial arc of the moral universe towards justice—particularly when other forces attempt to pull it back.”

Workers Legal Rights Project Wins Unemployment Benefits for Client

Emily (not her real name) tried to handle her unemployment matter herself. She was terminated from her job while out on medical leave and applied for unemployment insurance. She was denied; appealed; and denied again. The Appeal Tribunal sided with her employer and affirmed the disqualification of benefits, ruling that Emily had voluntarily left her job for personal reasons when she failed to return from medical leave. Emily retained Legal Services of New Jersey to help her appeal to the Board of Review. "If I hadn't found Legal Services," says Emily, "I would probably have just been completely lost."

Emily has suffered from major depression for over 10 years and

says too many people do not take the diagnosis seriously. "It's not a joke for people who are really dealing with it—for people like me." She used to rely on caffeine all day just to try to get through the day while trying out different medications. Some didn't work; others made her too dizzy to drive. The stress of the unemployment denials and loss of income only worsened the symptoms of depression, to the point where Emily nearly gave up.

"When I felt like I was in a dark place, and I felt like I was in a room locked up by myself and nobody didn't want to hear me 'cause I was saying, I'm sick, I'm sick, I'm sick, and nobody cared—I feel like Fred [her attorney] cared. And he listened. ...

When I felt like I was going to give up, he said don't give up."

Legal Services' Workers Legal Rights Project submitted a brief on Emily's behalf and, a few months later, the Board of Review reversed the Appeal Tribunal decision, ruling in Emily's favor. The Board of Review reasoned that she had not exhibited intent to sever her employment and did, in fact, make reasonable efforts to preserve it.

"I'm able to get back on my feet because of Fred," says Emily. "He is definitely a great attorney. He is experienced. He has a lot of knowledge. And he helped me a lot."



Derick D. Dailey, Esq.



"I'm honored and excited to be part of LSNJ's distinguished board of trustees. I look forward to advancing their mission of securing equal access to justice for all New Jerseyans."

Welcome to Derick D. Dailey, Esq., of Crowell & Moring LLP, who joined the Legal Services of New Jersey Board of Trustees in July. Dailey is a counsel in Crowell & Moring's Litigation, White Collar and Regulatory Enforcement, and State Attorney General groups. He represents clients in matters involving State Attorneys General inquiries and investigations, state and federal investigations, as well as complex commercial litigation. He helps clients resolve significant disputes early and without the need for litigation; handles investigations by state and federal regulatory bodies; and conducts sensitive internal investigations on behalf of corporations, universities, and nonprofits.

Dailey previously served as Senior Counsel to New Jersey Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin, where he was responsible for overseeing the Division on Civil Rights and the Juvenile Justice Commission, and supervising some of the department's most high-profile matters related to criminal justice, civil rights, youth justice, voting rights, reproductive rights, and racial justice. Derick also served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Wilmington, Delaware prior to joining the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

A graduate of Fordham University School of Law, Derick remains actively engaged in the Fordham Law community and currently serves on the Advisory Board of the National Black Law Students Association – Northeast Region.

Dailey has been named an Obama Foundation USA Leader for 2024-2025, one of 100 leaders selected across the United States. The six-month non-residential leadership program is designed to inspire, empower, and connect emerging leaders across the country.

He has been admitted to the bar in New York, New Jersey, Missouri, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. In addition to the LSNJ Board of Trustees, Dailey is a trustee of the New Jersey Governor's Reentry Training and Employment Center and a board member of the Pipeline to Law Foundation.

Says LSNJ Board Chair Cynthia M. Jacob, Esq., "Derick is well known in the legal community and will be a terrific addition to our distinguished board of trustees, adding a depth of experience and a unique perspective on the practice of law and service to New Jersey's low-income population."

Melville “De” Miller, Jr. Justice Series Constitutional Law Year-in-Review

On May 19, Legal Services of New Jersey presented the latest webinar in its Melville “De” Miller, Jr., Justice Series, Constitutional Law: A Year-In-Review. Over 800 participants joined the live presentation, which featured a panel moderated by LSNJ Senior Vice President Akil Roper.

Panelists included Distinguished Professor Ronald K. Chen of Rutgers University Law School, Deputy Solicitor General Michael Zuckerman of the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, and ACLU-NJ’s Director of Appellate Advocacy Ezra Rosenberg. Each speaker discussed their respective experiences advancing the civil rights of New Jerseyans under the constitution, particularly in light of recent federal actions, addressing such topics as immigration, free speech, and education.

Deputy Solicitor General Zuckerman addressed recent battles over government funding, the extent of federal immigration authority and the most recent U.S. Supreme Court argument challenging the federal executive order on birthright citizenship. Zuckerman also placed



recent federalism in a historical context, noting that there have been continuing legal challenges testing the scope and limits of federal and states’ rights.

Zuckerman also discussed recent litigation in the New Jersey Supreme Court over amendments to the Fair Housing Act involving the Mount Laurel doctrine, and *Englewood Hospital & Medical Center v. the State of New Jersey, et al.*, in which the court is considering a challenge to the constitutionality of charity care in New Jersey and whether it is a “taking” of hospital property under the circumstances.

Director Rosenberg discussed three separate litigations challenging presidential executive orders on

election integrity, the mass Reduction-In-Force, and law firms, particularly those who previously represented clients adverse to the interests of the administration or maintain diversity, equity and inclusion programs. Director Rosenberg also addressed recent voting rights cases in which the ACLU has been involved at the appellate level.

Professor Chen addressed a few remaining key points, including the president’s appointment and removal power and whether *Humphrey’s Executor v. U.S.*, a 1938 case limiting the ability of the president to remove an appointee to an independent regulatory agency, is going to be overturned and the two First

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LSNJ Ramps Up Training for Pro Bono Volunteers

LSNJ continues its tradition of providing CLE-accredited legal training for pro bono volunteers, offering two trainings this summer, and a third planned for October.

The expungement training, held on June 26, was led by staff of the LSNJ Reentry Project and covered topics including expungement eligibility, gathering records, recent changes in expungement law, and an overview of New Jersey's eCourts expungement system.

The federal tax training, held on July 10, was led by staff of LSNJ's Tax Legal Assistance Project as well as Samantha Phipps and Ralph Kahler of the Taxpayer Advocate Service. Topics included basic tax law, collections, federal tax controversy, and assisting clients.

Other benefits of partnering with Legal Services for pro bono service include:

- Pre-screening of potential clients for financial and substantive eligibility
- Malpractice insurance
- Networking opportunities with other service-minded professionals
- Ongoing mentorship and support

Visit PROBONONJ.org to learn more about opportunities and to register!

*"It was **practical, current, and efficient,**" says one recent training participant.*



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Amendment cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

View the Constitutional Law Year in Review webinar at lsnj.pub/ConLawWebinar.

The Melville "De" Miller Justice Series offers free CLE credits for lawyers in New Jersey, is open to the general public, and created in honor of LSNJ's founder, De Miller. The programs are designed to highlight areas of broad social and legal justice that have an impact on the low-income community in New Jersey—from new advocacy or government initiatives to specific issues or areas of law. View prior webinars at www.lsnj.org/JusticeSeries.aspx.

UPLIFT™ attendees were asked,

"WHAT DOES JUSTICE MEAN TO YOU?"

**Standing up
for each other**

**Where healthy
agitation meets
the people and
works to make
better laws**



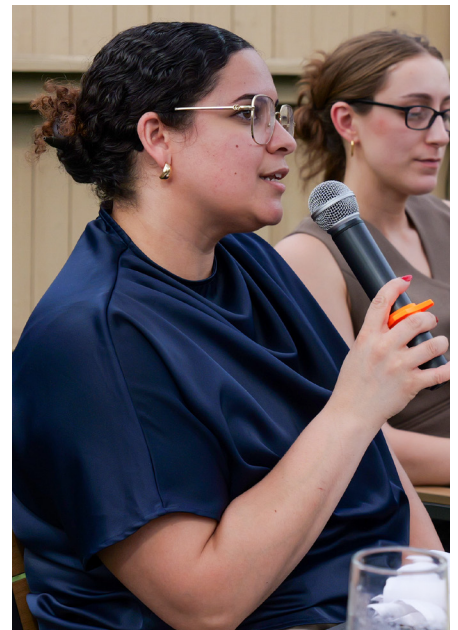
**Meeting
people's basic
human rights**

**Equity in access
and representation**



**Helping people
who need our help**

**Going the extra
mile to make
sure we get to
the right answer**



Fairness

THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMER INTERNS!





www.LSNJLAW.org – A legal information website to help you learn more about your civil legal rights in New Jersey and access materials to help you represent yourself pro se.

www.LSNJ.org – An organizational website where you can learn about the work of Legal Services.

www.PROBONONJ.org – A site where attorneys can learn about and sign up for pro bono opportunities.

www.NJEJLA.org – The New Jersey Equal Justice Library and Archive is an educational resource that includes a history of Legal Services in New Jersey, interviews with current and former staff, and tributes to major contributors to social justice.



POVERTY to JUSTICE

A Quarterly Report from
Legal Services of New Jersey

To be added to the mailing list
for this newsletter, email
development@lsnj.org.

Poverty to Justice quarterly newsletter includes updates on our work, our clients, and our volunteers as we move together toward the shared mission of justice.



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Cy pres awards from class action settlements provide significant support for our work. Checks should be made payable to **"Legal Services of New Jersey."** For more information, email eshulman@lsnj.org.

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