

# Focus on *Access to Justice*

For more information, visit [www.lsba.org/atj](http://www.lsba.org/atj).



The Access to Justice Developing Leadership Intern Program completed its third year on June 22. With Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson are this year's interns, from left, Nicolas Bell, Adams and Reese intern; De'Jonique Carter, Jones Walker intern; Chief Justice Johnson; Monica Bergeron, Baker Donelson intern; and Kansas Guidry, Phelps Dunbar intern.

## ATJ Developing Leadership Intern Program completes third year

The Access to Justice (ATJ) Developing Leadership Intern Program completed its third year on June 22. The six-week internship provides four rising 2L students — one from each of Louisiana's four law schools — the opportunity to work with pro bono and civil legal aid providers.

Weekly programming focused on the civil legal needs of low-income people, the ways in which organizations within the justice community address those needs, and how these services are increasing the quality of life for those served. In addition, interns interacted with district court judges and experienced the work life of large firms with demonstrated histories of supporting access to justice issues in Louisiana.

Louisiana's four law schools also provided programming for the interns. Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert

Law Center and Southern University Law Center combined efforts to educate this year's interns about the legal needs of those formally incarcerated. Loyola University College of Law and Tulane University Law School provided training on implicit bias and the realities of working with low-income and vulnerable client populations.


Interns also participated in Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) activities, including an Access to Justice Commission meeting, the Pro Bono Summit and the LSBA Pro Bono Publico and Children's Law Awards Ceremony.

Adams and Reese, L.L.P., Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, P.C., Jones Walker LLP, and Phelps Dunbar, L.L.P., have been the four sponsoring law firms since the first year of the program.

Participating organizations were the Baton Rouge Bar Association, CrescentCare,

the Justice and Accountability Center, Louisiana Appleseed, the New Orleans Family Justice Center, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, the Pro Bono Project of New Orleans and the Parole Project.

Participating judges were Judge Bernadette G. D'Souza, Orleans Parish Civil District Court; Judge Jeffrey C. Cashe, 21st Judicial District Court; Judge Timothy S. Marcel, 29th Judicial District Court; and Judge Lisa M. Woodruff-White, East Baton Rouge Family Court.

The success of the internship program has encouraged the LSBA's Access to Justice Commission to consider offering additional internships. Firms interested in sponsoring an intern for the 2019 program should contact Rachael M. Mills at (504)619-0104, email [rachael.mills@lsba.org](mailto:rachael.mills@lsba.org). 

# LIFT welcomes four attorneys to two Legal Incubator Programs

The Louisiana State Bar Association's legal incubator program, Legal Innovators for Tomorrow (LIFT), welcomed three new attorneys to the Domestic Violence Project and one new attorney to the Juvenile Re-Entry Assistance Program (JRAP).

LIFT addresses the legal needs of underserved and underrepresented populations in Louisiana and supports new attorneys in forming viable and sustainable public interest solo practices.

Dominique Lang Verner, Sophie Woodruff and Eleanor R. Brown joined the Domestic Violence Project in New Orleans, operated in collaboration with the New Orleans Family Justice Center (NOFJC) and Southeast Louisiana legal Services (SLLS). This program improves availability of legal services to survivors of domestic violence, particularly in the area of family law. While in the program, the LIFT attorneys receive office space onsite at NOFJC, free resources, training and mentorship from SLLS's staff attorneys. The attorneys agree to provide 30 hours per month of pro bono representation to domestic violence survivors. After 18 months, the attorneys leave the program with sustainable solo practices that will continue to serve underrepresented populations.

Trinicia S. Leonard joined JRAP in Shreveport. The program is operated in partnership with the Justice and Accountability Center of Louisiana and focuses on reducing barriers for youth (ages 18-24) who are reintegrating to their communities after incarceration. Through her



LIFT attorney Trinicia S. Leonard attended the Expungement and Resource Fair in Shreveport on June 23.

work, Leonard will provide representation in expungements, public benefits and housing law that will ultimately reduce recidivism, promote public safety and create positive results in communities in the Shreveport area. She will help host expungement legal clinics and resource fairs, in which eligible individuals who live or could live in public or Section 8 housing will have an opportunity for all expungement costs to be covered by a grant from Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Housing Authority for the City of Shreveport

To date, the LIFT program has worked to develop the public interest practices of 22 attorneys and continues to expand with new projects throughout the state. To learn more about the LIFT program, go online: [www.lsba.org/lift](http://www.lsba.org/lift). Or email Program Director Amy Duncan at [amy.duncan@lsba.org](mailto:amy.duncan@lsba.org).



Dominique Lang Verner, Sophie Woodruff and Eleanor R. Brown attended the Bridging the Gap CLE on May 7.

# LSBA launches public portal to “Find Legal Help”

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA), through its Access to Justice Commission, has created a “Find Legal Help” portal to connect the public with the full spectrum of legal services available in the state.

The online portal, at [www.LSBA.org/goto/FindLegalHelp](http://www.LSBA.org/goto/FindLegalHelp), includes options for hiring an attorney; identifying legal aid and pro bono programs; accessing self-help forms and resources; finding online and telephonic assistance; and searching a modest means directory of attorneys willing to provide sliding-scale fees or limited-scope representation.

The availability of legal services, particularly for people who cannot afford representation, depends on variables including the type of legal issue, a person's income, location and proximity to private attorneys and legal aid, and other factors. The “Find Legal Help” portal is designed to help all litigants find legal information and assistance, regardless of financial circumstance. For some relatively simple matters, self-help resources are available. In addition to a list of attorneys and services specific to each parish, the portal also connects to a wide range of statewide programs and informational websites. All information is available via mobile devices and those who need help accessing the website or printing materials can visit their local library for assistance.

# Attorney volunteers sought for Lawyers in Libraries events

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) will once again be partnering with Louisiana libraries to meet the public's legal needs.

During the week of Oct. 22-27, the LSBA, the Louisiana Library Association and local access to justice partners will co-sponsor “Lawyers in Libraries” events across the state in support of the National Pro Bono Celebration. Attorney volunteers will provide “Ask-a-Lawyer” sessions or educational presentations, free of charge to library patrons in every parish in the state.

Attorney volunteers are needed to participate in these programs. For more information, call (504)619-0145 or go online: [www.LouisianaLawyersinLibraries.org](http://www.LouisianaLawyersinLibraries.org).