

# Focus on *Access to Justice*

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

## Louisiana's First Disaster Law Collaboration Summit Held in November 2022

Louisiana's civil justice community held its first Disaster Law Collaboration Summit on Nov. 3-4, 2022, in Baton Rouge. The summit brought together Louisiana's disaster response and recovery organizations with the state's civil legal aid providers to share experience and learn about the critical role civil legal aid plays before, during and after disasters.

The summit was hosted by the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Access to Justice Program and Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (SLLS). Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards kicked off the event with a keynote address emphasizing the importance of events, like the summit, to encourage cross-collaboration among disaster response service providers. The first day's programming focused on the critical role civil legal aid plays and how disaster response organizations can collaborate with legal aid providers to enhance recovery and resiliency efforts. Topics included an overview of disaster legal services, ways to address equity in disaster response, partnerships and collaboration opportunities, and long-term recovery programs.

The second day of the summit offered seven hours of legal training for Louisiana attorneys and legal aid organization staff who provide disaster response legal assistance. Casey Tingle, director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), kicked off the second day with a keynote address highlighting the record number of disasters the state has faced over the past three years, the challenges presented in disaster response, and the significant impact collaborative efforts can make to address some of those challenges. The programming that followed covered a wide range of topics from recent legislative updates and renter's rights to homeowners' insurance and the National Flood Insurance Program.



Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, center, with Frank X. Neuner, Jr., left, member of the Legal Service Corp. board of directors and 2005-06 Louisiana State Bar Association president; and Stephen I. Dwyer, current Louisiana State Bar Association president.

Additionally, LSBA's LIFT Legal Incubator Fellow Gwendolyn Collins-Greenup was presented with a certificate recognizing her completion of the Flood Proof Project, where she developed a private solo practice to serve people impacted by the 2016 floods in Baton Rouge and to provide disaster legal assistance.

U.S. Congressman Garret Graves delivered closing remarks.

More than 200 people attended, including disaster responders from government

Continued next page



Casey Tingle, director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), kicked off the summit's second day with a keynote address.



LIFT Legal Incubator Fellow Gwendolyn Collins-Greenup, center, received a certificate recognizing her completion of the Flood Proof Project. From left, Amy E. Duncan, Louisiana State Bar Association; Laura Tuggle, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services; Collins-Greenup; Alaimna R. Mire, Access to Justice Commission co-chair and 2020-21 LSBA president; and Christopher P. Pierce, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services.



U.S. Congressman Garret Graves delivered closing remarks at the summit.

Summit continued from page 12

and non-government agencies, nonprofit organizations, librarians, civil legal aid, pro bono and community partners. Disability Rights Louisiana, Emergency Legal Responders, Equal Justice Works, GOHSEP, Lagniappe Law Lab, Louisiana Appleseed, SLLS and Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) were featured exhibitors and shared information about the work and services their organizations provide. Also featured was Acadiana Legal Service Corp.'s (ALSC) new Justice Bus, which

will allow ALSC to quickly respond during disasters and provide mobile legal services to disaster survivors.

The summit was made possible through funding from Legal Service Corp. to Southeast Louisiana Legal Services and by the planning committee: Veronica Sizer, GOHSEP; Laura Tuggle, SLLS; Jessica Vermilyea, VOAD; Brittany R. Pastor, SLLS; Hailey E. Manint, SLLS; Kate Thorstad, Disability Rights Louisiana; Rachael M. Mills, LSBA; and Amy E. Duncan, LSBA. 📺

## Nominations Now Accepted for 2023 Pro Bono, Children's Law Awards

The Louisiana State Bar Association's Access to Justice Department has opened the nomination process for 2023 Pro Bono and Children's Law Awards. The awards recognize outstanding achievement in several categories, listed below. Nominations can be made online at: [www.lsba.org/goto/ProBonoNominations](http://www.lsba.org/goto/ProBonoNominations). Nominations must be received by Feb. 9. The recipients will be honored in a ceremony hosted by the Louisiana Supreme Court in May.

The **Children's Law Award** recognizes an attorney or organization that has provided outstanding services in the field of children's law.

The **Law Student Award** recognizes law students who have demonstrated a dedication to providing legal services to the poor.

The **Friend of Pro Bono Award** recognizes individuals or groups that have provided services other than casework to support pro bono efforts.

The **Pro Bono Publico Award** recognizes attorneys and firms who have provided more than 50 hours of pro bono services per year, and who have demonstrated exceptional support of the ideal of access to justice.

The **Century Club Award** recognizes attorneys who have provided 100 or more hours of volunteer service in the past year.

The **Career Public Interest Award** recognizes an individual who has devoted at least 10 years of his/her career to public interest legal work and who has demonstrated excellence and leadership in his/her service to the poor and disenfranchised.

The **David A. Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award** recognizes an individual who has been in practice at least 15 years and whose work demonstrates a life-long commitment to the provision and enhancement of legal services to the poor.

For additional assistance, email Access to Justice Department Coordinator Bridget Berins at [Bridget.Berins@lsba.org](mailto:Bridget.Berins@lsba.org). 📺

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The Modest Means Online Legal Directory connects attorneys offering affordable legal services with moderate-income families who do not qualify for free legal aid, yet can afford to pay for legal services at a reduced rate.

The Directory is open to all active Louisiana attorneys in good standing who offer reduced-fee legal services to people falling at or below 400% of the Federal Poverty Line. Many attorneys already offer reduced fees by way of a sliding scale based on the client's income, flat fees, or limited scope representation.

**FIND OUT MORE! CONTACT** Amy Duncan, LSBA Access to Justice Training & Projects Counsel, at [amy.duncan@lsba.org](mailto:amy.duncan@lsba.org) with any questions. Or for more information online, visit [www.lsba.org/ATJCommission/ModestMeans.aspx](http://www.lsba.org/ATJCommission/ModestMeans.aspx)