

Focus on *Access to Justice*

For more information, visit www.lsba.org/atj.

LIFT Program Expands Rural Access to Legal Services

The LSBA Access to Justice Department administers the Legal Innovators for Tomorrow (LIFT) program, a legal incubator designed to help new attorneys build viable, public interest-focused law practices while expanding access to justice for low- and moderate-income residents.

The LIFT program has partnered with Acadiana Legal Service Corporation (ALSC) to launch the second phase of the Rural Justice Legal Incubator Project, which focuses on increasing access to affordable legal services in Louisiana's rural parishes.

The initiative represents a strategic investment in Louisiana's legal infrastructure. ALSC and the LSBA will work collaboratively to help new solo practitioners establish sustainable law firms focused on providing low-cost legal services to rural communities.

By supporting new practitioners, the program aims to address persistent attorney recruitment challenges in Louisiana's "legal deserts," increase service capacity in rural parishes and expand access to civil justice for underserved communities.

Four attorneys are participating in the



Participants in the LIFT Program orientation included, from left, Emily Belanger, Amber Mason, Miguel Robles-Coles, Alexis Tukes-Jones, Sharita Spears, Desiree Cotton-Turner, Gregory Hopkins and Sachida R. Raman.

project this year: Desiree Cotton-Turner, Miguel Robles-Coles, Sharita Spears and Alexis Tukes-Jones. The fellows recently attended orientation at ALSC's offices and

are preparing to expand their practices by offering affordable legal services in several areas including family law, expungements and estate planning. 



Rachael Mills and Sara Pixon at the 2026 Louisiana Library Association Conference.

ATJ Attends Louisiana Library Association Conference

Each year, as part of the Legal Education and Assistance Program (LEAP), the LSBA and the Law Library of Louisiana attend the annual Louisiana Library Association Conference. This year, Rachael Mills and Sara Pixon attended the conference on Friday, March 6, to share information about legal resources available through the Law Library and various LEAP initiatives.

The initiatives include the annual Lawyers in Libraries Program, Law Talks and legal reference training. For more information about LEAP and this year's Law Talks schedule, visit Louisiana Lawyers in Libraries at www.lsba.org/LouisianaLawyersinLibraries/LouisianaLawyersLibraries.aspx. 

Civil Legal Aid Highlighted at Lt. Gov.'s Disaster Response Summit

For the second year, Billy Nungesser hosted a Disaster Response Summit in Baton Rouge. The theme of this year's summit was "Collaboration as a Force Multiplier: Advancing Louisiana's Disaster Capacity."

The daylong summit featured numerous presentations on disaster-related topics. One panel, titled "Louisiana's Resources for Civil Legal Aid After Disaster," focused on the importance of civil legal aid following disasters.

Panelists included Hailey Barnett of the Acadiana Legal Service Corporation, Rachael Mills of the LSBA and Laura Tuggle of the Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. The presentation highlighted Louisiana's civil legal aid network and the legal resources available to assist residents with disaster recovery. 📺

LSBA Modest Means Directory and Resources for Attorneys Offering Affordable Legal Options

Since the launch of the online Modest Means Directory in 2018, the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) has received more than 36,000 inquiries to find affordable legal service solutions. While legal aid and pro bono organizations offer free legal services to families living at or below the 200% federal poverty line, many individuals who earn above that cannot afford legal services at the going rate and, therefore, need affordable legal service options.

The United Way's new ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Report emphasizes that much of the population in Louisiana above the federal poverty level still do not earn enough income to meet a basic survival budget.

Many ALICE and modest means families are turning to the Directory to find affordable legal options from the 70 attorneys listed who provide services throughout the state. But due to the high

demand, more attorneys are necessary to meet the needs of the approximately 600 to 700 individuals per month seeking legal services via the Directory.

Many attorneys already offer cost-effective legal services. For attorneys interested in joining the Directory, the LSBA offers a host of tools and resources for support, including free CLE programs on LSR/unbundling legal services and substantive law training; Practice Aid Guides; and Online Member Profile Cards.

In addition to the resources, the Directory presents an opportunity for new attorneys, specifically new solos, to grow their client base by increasing access to cost effective services for the many people and families in Louisiana in need of affordable legal options.

To join or learn more about the Directory, go to: www.lsba.org/ATJCommission/ModestMeans.aspx. Or email LSBA Access to Justice Projects Counsel Emily Belanger at emily.belanger@lsba.org. 📺

Thanks to the 2026 ATJ Intern Sponsors!

The LSBA Access to Justice (ATJ) Department acknowledges the 2026 ATJ Developing Leadership intern sponsors. ATJ intern sponsors provide mentorship and a stipend to the ATJ interns while they learn about Louisiana's civil legal aid network during the six-week summer program. This year's sponsors include Entergy Services, LLC; Butler Snow, LLP; the LSBA's Civil Law & Litigation Section; and the New Orleans Center for Economic Opportunity. 📺



NEW ORLEANS CENTER FOR
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