

JUSTICE MATTERS



NEIGHBORHOOD
LEGAL SERVICES

SUMMER 2024

SUPPORTING RESIDENTS OF ALLEGHENY, BEAVER, BUTLER AND LAWRENCE COUNTIES

Local Advocates Receive 2024 PLAN Excellence Awards

The Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN) in their 2024 list of Excellence Award honorees, recognized two local champions of equal justice for having made “a profound impact on countless individuals and families, embodying the true spirit of justice and service.”

Donna Allen-Rosemond, Esq. has over thirty years of experience as an attorney at Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS). She is a long-time advocate and volunteer for domestic violence organizations, children’s issues and pro bono services. A graduate of Duquesne University School of Law, Allen-Rosemond is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., a public service sorority.



Donna Allen-Rosemond

Jane A. Downing recently retired from her position as Senior Program Officer for Economic and Community Development at The Pittsburgh Foundation. Jane played a pivotal role in distributing grants to Neighborhood Legal Services and other agencies, safeguarding tenants’ legal rights and broadening pro bono representation in eviction proceedings.



Jane A. Downing

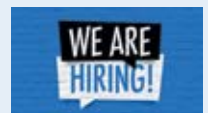


A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NLS has spent the past six months beginning the hard but necessary work of implementing the goals in our recently adopted strategic plan. We felt it was important to evaluate every aspect of our organization to make sure we’re doing all we can to better serve our clients. At the top of our priority list was an organizational restructuring necessitated by retiring long-time NLS attorneys and the need to attract and retain new legal talent. So, we began restructuring by streamlining our advocacy staff managers into five areas: intake, housing, family, economic security and special initiatives. This has helped give our advocates a clearer understanding of where to go organizationally for guidance and help. I believe we found the best people possible to fill these critical management positions. We are

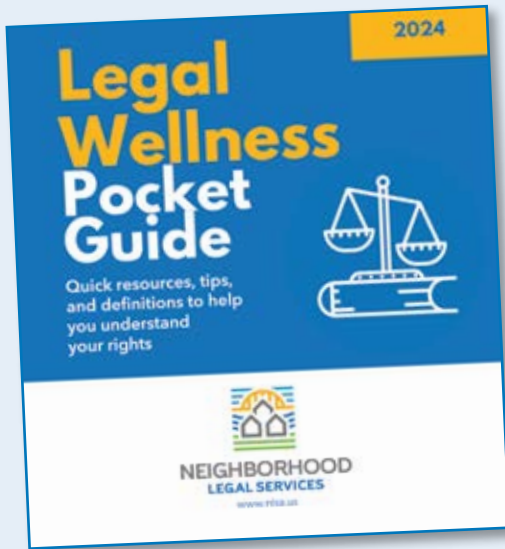
also currently recruiting candidates for key staff attorney positions. We’ll keep you updated on our progress and introduce you to new faces in future newsletters. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me by phone (412) 586-6127 or email (bergstromk@nlsa.us). Thank you for your interest and continued support of NLS and equal justice.

Best,
Kris Bergstrom
Executive Director



nlsa.us/job-opportunities

A Holistic Approach to Solving Housing Problems



Legal Wellness Pocket Guide

is a 40-page booklet containing quick resources, tips and definitions to help people understand their civil legal rights. Pocket Guides are available for [download](#) on our website.

Project HEALS, which stands for Homelessness Education Advocacy Legal Services, is a new NLS initiative seeking to combat homelessness and stabilize housing for individuals experiencing legal problems. Through targeted outreach and social work support, Project HEALS helps clients address issues such as criminal record clearing, public benefits, eviction and more. “Many of our clients have more than one challenge impacting their quality of life. Project HEALS takes a holistic approach to helping them get to a place of safety and stability,” said Allie Holler, NLS’s Community Engagement Coordinator who works to develop partnerships with local shelters and spearhead outreach efforts for Project HEALS.

Lawyer of the Day

A 2021 study by The Pittsburgh Foundation found that in almost all the landlord–tenant cases it studied, neither the landlord nor the tenant had legal representation, however, the study found landlords won about 85% of cases.

To address this imbalance, NLS has collaborated with the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, RentHelpPGH, Just Mediation Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation and Ebony Law, to provide comprehensive eviction prevention services including free legal aid, mediation, and social service navigators to people facing eviction.

A key initiative of this eviction prevention collaborative is called Lawyer of the Day, during which attorneys disperse to several locations throughout the City of Pittsburgh to attend court and offer free help. NLS will soon add two additional sites in Allegheny county.

NLS attorney Nick Brady and paralegal Erica Pennington staff NLS’s Lawyer of the Day efforts. Brady explains that having free civil legal aid attorneys in person, in the courtroom, is critical.



“Being in court is often unfamiliar and stressful. We are there to make sure that clients have access to the help they need to stay in their homes.” Clients represented in the Lawyer of the Day program benefit from favorable outcomes in over 50 percent of the cases.

Contact NLS at (412) 255-6700 for more information on Lawyer of the Day and other eviction prevention legal services.

“Legal aid through NLS saved our lives. I’m certain of it.”

From the outside, they looked like a happy, middle-class family. But for Chloe, her twin brother and mother, nothing was further from the truth. Their father’s abuse started when Chloe and her brother were only four years old. They needed free legal aid after exhausting their financial resources fighting domestic and child abuse in the courts for years without success. After one more horrifying visit with their dad, Chloe’s mom gathered all the documentation of abuse and took her children to the police station. Fortunately, the on-duty detective knew about the local crisis shelter and recommended the family go there. In turn, the center contacted NLS for legal aid.

was finally over. I never saw my



NLS assists in obtaining protective orders against abusers, ensuring that children are legally protected from further harm. In certain cases, NLS advocates for appropriate custody and guardianship arrangements that prioritize the safety and well-being of a child or children. No one knows when legal aid might save our careers, our homes

or even our lives. Please help us be here for other children like Chloe? Please give today at nlsa.us/donate.



NLS Congratulates Legal Services Corporation on 50 Years

NLS congratulates Legal Services Corporation (LSC) on its 50 years on the frontlines of providing free civil legal aid to those in need. LSC is a long-time supporter and partner of NLS, and we are proud to share a mission of helping people who have nowhere else to turn, access rights and benefits, and stabilize lives. Our former client, Chloe, courageously shared her story of how NLS stepped in and saved their lives by providing free legal aid at LSC’s anniversary celebration in Washington DC. It is because of the generosity of supporters like you, NLS can save lives and provide stability for families. Scan the QR Code to [hear Chloe tell her story](#).

To provide access to justice and free civil legal aid, please donate at nlsa.us/donate or call (412) 586-6140.



NLS staff and former clients gather at LSC Anniversary Celebration in Washington DC.



YOU'RE INVITED

**30TH ANNUAL
ACBA GOLF TOURNAMENT**
and
**10TH ANNUAL
BOCCE TOURNAMENT**

MONDAY, JULY 22
LONGUE VUE CLUB

Benefits the Allegheny County Bar Foundation
and Neighborhood Legal Services



Trip Includes:

Four days/three nights stay at The Inn at Spanish Bay
Golf for two, including carts, on the Pebble Beach Golf Links

Donation:

1 Ticket - \$20 | 3 Tickets - \$50

Proceeds benefit the Allegheny County Bar Foundation
and Neighborhood Legal Services

Winner based on the Pennsylvania Daily Lottery, Monday, July 22, 2024, 7 p.m. drawing

For tickets or more information on the
30th Annual ACBA Golf Tournament and 10th Annual Bocce Tournament
contact Mya Ras at 412-402-6681 or mras@acba.org

Join Us in Making a Difference

Your participation will directly impact the lives of those in need. The efforts of NLS and the ACBF ensures that everyone, regardless of their financial situation, has access to justice. For more information, please contact NLS at (412) 255-6700.



CONTACT US

NLS provides service to residents in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler and Lawrence counties.

Call toll-free: **1-866-761-6572**

Visit us online: **www.nlsa.us**

Follow us on social media!    



NLS' United Way Contributor Choice number is #2761 and our Equal Justice Campaign Contributor Choice number is #534.



Funded, in part, by the Commonwealth and through a contract with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The official registration and financial information of the Neighborhood Legal Services may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Federal regulations applying to NLS require that we notify all donors that no funds can be expended by NLS for any activity prohibited under P.L. 104-134 or otherwise prohibited by 45 C.F.R. § 1600 et seq.