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## **Legal Services Of Eastern Missouri Presents “For The Common Good” Awards Celebrating Local Volunteers And Civic Leaders**

*Eleven Common Good Awardees recognized for work for access to justice, support for vulnerable communities*

**ST. LOUIS, MO** – Legal Services of Eastern Missouri ([Legal Services](http://LegalServices.org)) will give out ten awards recognizing eleven outstanding community leaders and partners who collaborate with Legal Services to positively impact our region. This year’s [For The Common Good Awards Luncheon](#) will be on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at the Missouri Athletic Club, downtown. The public is invited to attend and recognize the awardees.

“The ‘For The Common Good’ Awards are a reflection of the power of partnership in the pursuit of justice,” said Dan Glazier, Executive Director & General Counsel of Legal Services of Eastern Missouri. “Each of this year’s honorees brings a unique and lasting impact to the lives of our clients and the broader community. Their commitment, whether through pro bono legal service, neighborhood organizing, policy advocacy, or resource sharing, reminds us that justice is a collective effort, and we are honored to recognize their leadership.”

The 2025 honorees are:

**William R. Bay** – *Robert Walston Chubb Award for sustained commitment to Legal Services*

William R. Bay is recognized as a long-time supporter of Legal Services of Eastern Missouri through his involvement with Thompson Coburn, the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, The Missouri Bar, Interest on Lawyers’ Trust Accounts, and the American Bar Association. Twenty years ago, he was instrumental in establishing the William B. Guerri Chair for children’s educational advocacy at Legal Services. Currently the national President of the American Bar Association and the first from Missouri in many years, Bay has consistently championed access to justice, the national Legal Services Corporation, and the rule of law. His continued support includes his participation as a contributing speaker at Legal Services’ LSC Celebration Breakfast this past November.

**Dorothy Lee Sneed** - *Hon. Richard B. Teitelman Award for volunteer service*

Ms. Dorothy Sneed, founder of Concerned Citizens United Neighborhood Association, has led the organization for more than twenty years, providing resources, information, and opportunities for West End residents. She goes above and beyond, actively organizing holiday drives, sending out updates, bringing city officials to

meetings for problem-solving, and offering a space for neighbors to address concerns and receive support. Although neighborhood organizing can be a thankless job, Ms. Sneed does this gracefully and is recognized for her resident leadership and outstanding service to the community through volunteer work.

**National Center for Law and Economic Justice and Stinson LLP - *Melton M. Lewis Equal Justice Award***

The National Center for Law and Economic Justice (NCLEJ) and Stinson LLP are jointly honored for their exceptional partnership and dedication in a landmark lawsuit filed in February 2022 against the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS). The lawsuit challenged DSS's wrongful denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications, citing a broken call center system and lack of accommodations for people with disabilities—barriers that deprived countless eligible Missourians of essential food assistance. NCLEJ played a critical co-counsel role, collaborating with Legal Services for over a year before the litigation began and providing invaluable strategic guidance, legal expertise, and support that were instrumental in achieving a federal court ruling in favor of the plaintiffs. Stinson LLP served as pro bono counsel, offering crucial financial and technological resources, including discovery tools like Relativity and Collaborate. Together, NCLEJ and Stinson exemplify the power of collaborative legal advocacy in the pursuit of equal justice.

**St. Louis Public Library - *Eddie Mae Binion Community Service Award***

The Saint Louis Public Library (SLPL) is exceptionally dedicated to providing equal access to justice and essential resources for the St. Louis community. SLPL has partnered with various Legal Services programs to host clinics, drop-in hours, and educational events, removing barriers to service by offering free attendance and no identification requirements. The library system has eliminated late fees, including those for Wi-Fi hotspots, ensuring universal access to resources. Beyond legal aid, SLPL provides free tax assistance, notary services, health services, youth activities, educational and technological assistance, and both physical and electronic resource access, tirelessly filling social service gaps and exemplifying outstanding dedication and service to the community.

**Helping Hand Me Downs - *Eddie Mae Binion Community Service Award***

Helping Hand Me Downs, a volunteer-run organization founded in 2011, helps families meet their immediate needs to achieve stability and independence. HHMD consistently goes above and beyond to help Legal Services' clients by reaching out to their community supporters. HHMD has also recently added toiletry bags to their distribution services, addressing a critical need not covered by SNAP benefits. They also supported the Legal Services Holiday Assistance Drive in 2024 and assisted more than a hundred children through the Children's Legal Alliance program. HHMD's mission is to help families achieve stability and move "from surviving to thriving," demonstrating compassion and dedication to the community.

**Ryan Turnage - *F. Wm. McCalpin Pro Bono Award***

Ryan Turnage is recognized with the McCalpin Award due to his long-standing and remarkable commitment to Legal Services as an incredible volunteer. He has served on and led the Young Friends Board and is now on the Legal Services Board of Directors. His pro bono work is particularly outstanding, as he accepts time-sensitive housing and other cases, such as powers of attorney and guardianships. He also advises Legal Services and other volunteers on case management and strategies, making a lasting difference.

**Michael R. Cherba - *F. Wm. McCalpin Pro Bono Award***

Michael Cherba is recognized for the McCalpin Award due to his long-standing and exceptional work as a volunteer lawyer for Legal Services. He consistently takes on difficult and time-sensitive cases, achieving excellent results. More recently, he has become a crucial advisor, providing strategic feedback and consulting with other volunteers on critical cases. He has also been actively engaged with Legal Services as a member of both the Young Friends and the Legal Services Board of Directors.

**Lewis Rice LLC - *Gerald R. Ortals Law Practice Award***

Lewis Rice LLC is recognized for its outstanding and sustained commitment as a leading pro bono partner. The firm's partnership with Legal Services has resulted in the launch of two impactful initiatives: a Power of Attorney (POA) clinic in collaboration with Ameren, and a growing Guardianship referral program, providing direct representation to clients seeking uncontested guardianship over adults or children, helping ensure that vulnerable individuals receive the care and services they need. Lewis Rice has also been a consistent presence at pro bono outreach events at Webster Rockhill, generating numerous client referrals.

**Gabriela Baeza-Stout - *Hon. John R. Essner Young Lawyer Award***

Gabriela Baeza-Stout began volunteering in late 2024 and has since participated in six legal clinics, even stepping in last-minute when there was a shortage of attorneys. She has also committed to working with a client as a volunteer attorney, demonstrating her strong motivation to help low-income individuals access the legal system. As a young lawyer, she has shown outstanding commitment to pro bono legal work.

**The St. Louis American - *Media Award***

In the past year, the St. Louis American has demonstrated a renewed commitment by publishing nine articles focusing on access to justice, with particular focus on the Microenterprise program. This consistent and impactful reporting has helped spotlight critical issues facing the St. Louis community and raise awareness of how organizations like Legal Services are working to address them. Their commitment to Legal Services and the communities has been critical to the impact they have achieved.

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***About Legal Services of Eastern Missouri***

*Legal Services of Eastern Missouri advances justice through legal representation, education, and supportive services. We partner with the community to improve lives, promote fairness and create opportunities for those in need. To learn more visit [www.lsem.org](http://www.lsem.org)*

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