

Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services Announces 2012 Access to Justice Awards

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Nashville, TN -- On Wednesday, September 26th at the annual Equal Justice University, the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services presented the following awards:

The 2012 B. Riney Green Award was presented to Margaret L. Behm, first chair of the Tennessee Access to Justice Commission.

The 2012 New Advocate of the Year Award was presented to Adrienne Kittos from Justice for Our Neighbors - Tennessee.

At Equal Justice University, co-sponsored by TALS and the Tennessee Bar Association, Tennessee's annual gathering of legal aid and pro bono civil legal advocates, the Access to Justice Awards are presented to deserving advocates from across the state of Tennessee. The B. Riney Green Award celebrates the advocate who has demonstrated strong inter-program cooperation and the New Advocate of the Year Award celebrates advocates who have excelled within their first five years in public interest law.

More on the awards, photos of award winners, and Equal Justice University speakers can be found here: <http://www.tba.org/node/53167>

Excerpts from nominations for award winners:

“Margaret Behm was named by the Court as inaugural Chair of the Commission because Margaret understand that statewide collaboration among legal service providers and other stakeholders is necessary to meeting the unmet civil legal needs of low income Tennesseans. Margaret recognized the amazing work being done by legal aid attorneys and other advocates and developed projects and fostered partnerships to fill in the gaps to take cases or help Tennesseans that legal aid just simply could not take on. The Commission has had much success because of Margaret’s vision and efforts to form a solid relationship with access to justice organizations across the state.”

“Adrienne’s impact on the immigrant community in Middle Tennessee cannot be overstated. Over the three short years of her practice, she has been a quiet force for change in hundreds of lives, helping women escape domestic violence with the benefit of U Visa, reuniting families separated across borders, and allowing hundreds of young students to step out of the shadows and be recognized in their communities. She works effectively in partnership with other organizations and provides the type of creative and powerful advocacy that the New Advocate Award is designed to recognize, tirelessly, on her own, in a choir loft, ever day.”

TALS is appreciative to all those who nominated deserving advocates this year for these awards.

The awards were at Paris Landing State Park on Wednesday, September 26th at the EJU Awards Dinner. The speaker at that dinner was the Honorable Bill Purcell, former Mayor of Metro Nashville.

TALS is a statewide non-profit organization that seeks to build partnerships to support the delivery of effective civil legal services for low-income and elderly Tennesseans. TALS is committed to increasing equal access to justice across Tennessee. TALS is an alliance of the federally-funded legal aid programs, independent providers of civil legal services, and supporting agencies in Tennessee. TALS manages three websites in Tennessee – www.onlinetnjustice.org; www.tals.org and www.tennhelp.org.

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