

# TALS' Executive Director Finalist for CEO of the Year Award

NASHVILLE, Tenn., October 3, 2017 - The Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services' (TALS) Executive Director Ann Pruitt was named a finalist for the Bank of America CEO of the Year Award at the 2017 Salute to Excellence Awards Ceremony held by the Center for Nonprofit Management. Ann was recognized for her impact on TALS and Tennessee's Access to Justice community. In her time at TALS, Ann has analyzed stakeholder feedback to lead board members and staff in generating the agency's first strategic plan since 2007.

Ann built consensus around TALS' new mission - Strengthening the delivery of civil legal help to vulnerable Tennesseans - and ties TALS' programs to our mission. Ann launched a social enterprise, Law Search Pro, a service that matches clients with local qualified attorneys in Tennessee. This financial initiative enabled TALS to hire a part time attorney to staff the legal helpline and to hire a full time administrative assistant. Ann also grew the staff by pursuing a national fellowship opportunity that earned TALS a new fully funded attorney position for two years. The Tennessee Supreme Court has appointed her to its Access to Justice Commission, and she speaks on civil justice issues. Ann's greatest accomplishment is her focus on using technology to provide legal help to Tennesseans living in poverty who cannot afford to hire an attorney. See Ann's nomination video below.

Ann's co-finalist was Tom Starling, CEO of Mental Health America of Middle Tennessee and the award winner was Stephanie Sliverman, Executive Director of the Belcourt Theatre. TALS' affiliate organizations were also honored at the event. The Tennessee Justice Center received The Healing Trust Catalyst for Change Award for its use of the law, education, and advocacy to help vulnerable families access life's necessities and the Frist Foundation Innovation in Action Award for its AskJane! program that makes navigating the maze of public health benefits much more reliable. Disability Rights Tennessee won The Healing Trust Compassionate Care Award for ensuring a progressive and compassionate organizational culture. Congratulations to Ann and all of the Salute to Excellence finalist and winners.

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