

LAS' Housepian Named to National Health Care/Justice Fellowship

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 23, 2015—Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland, Tennessee's largest non-profit law firm, is pleased to announce that its executive director, Gary Housepian, has been named a 2015 Where Health Meets Justice Fellow by the National Legal Aid and Defender Association. Housepian is a board member with the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS).

In the fellowship's second year, Housepian was one of 16 fellows selected from 13 states and the District of Columbia. He is the first and only leader from Tennessee to participate in this program.

The 10-month fellowship focuses on learning to frame legal services in a health care context, build strong healthcare alliances, and use population health data effectively. Fellows will be guided by a faculty of national experts in health care administration, policy, research and economics and participate in activities designed to deepen their understanding of health care organization, financing and priorities.

"I'm honored to have been chosen to participate in this program and look forward to learning how Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland can join forces with the health care community to improve health and can better meet the legal needs of clients that affect their health," Housepian said.

"The dialogue surrounding health care, policy and civil legal aid is growing in importance as we try to better identify and address systemic issues within our low-income communities. Our firm has a long history of successful advocacy in this area that we can build upon," said he added. "Through our work with our Medical-Legal Partnerships, we are implementing an approach to health that integrates the work of healthcare, public health and civil legal aid to more effectively identify, treat and prevent health-harming legal needs for patients, clinics and populations. It is my hope that through this fellowship, we will magnify our ability to work with health care providers for the overall wellbeing of Tennesseans."

Legal Aid Society staffs three Medical-Legal Partnerships, which provide civil legal aid on-site at community medical clinics. Lawyers also train and educate health care professionals to recognize patients' legal issues that can adversely affect their health. Legal Aid Society has partnerships with Neighborhood Health (formerly known as United Neighborhood Health Services), Vanderbilt University's student-run Shade Tree Clinic and Daysprings Family Health Centers in Campbell and Claiborne Counties.

Housepian will also lend his insights on the link between civil legal remedies and health care at a *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy* symposium on March 6 at the University of Tennessee College of Law in Knoxville. There, he will serve on a panel discussing best practices for medical-legal partnerships and cooperation with medical providers.

"The more we can educate health care providers, lawyers and policy-makers on this fundamental relationship between legal issues and health care, the better we are positioned to leverage real partnerships through medical care and civil legal aid and implement systemic solutions to poverty," Housepian said.

Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland advocates for fairness and justice under the law. The non-profit law firm offers free civil legal representation, educational programs and advice to ensure people in its region are able to protect their livelihoods, their health and their families. It serves 48 counties from offices in Clarksville, Columbia, Cookeville, Gallatin, Murfreesboro, Nashville, Oak Ridge and Tullahoma. Legal Aid Society is funded in part by United Way. Learn more at www.las.org, by following the firm on [Facebook](#) or calling Legal Aid Society at 615-244-6610.

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