



INDIANAPOLIS LEGAL AID SOCIETY

## ***Advocating with Passion and Purpose***

MARCH 2022

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### **Meet Indy Legal Aid's New Board Members & Officer**



Indy Legal Aid's board of directors recently elected three new board members and one new officer at its annual meeting on March 11, 2022 .

“We are very pleased with our new members and officer,” said John Floreancig, Indy Legal Aid General Counsel and CEO. “We greatly appreciate

their dedication and enthusiasm in fulfilling Indy Legal Aid’s mission.”

#### Indy Legal Aid Officers are as follows:

**N. Kent Smith**, President, (Hall, Render, Killian, Heath & Lyman); **Parwana Noorzad**, 1st Vice President (Eli Lilly and Company); **Lee Christie**, 2nd Vice President, (Christie Farrell Lee & Bell); **Elizabeth Russell-Hartman**, Treasurer (Retired, Krieg Devault); and **John McLaughlin**, Secretary, Parr Richey Frandsen Patterson Kruse). John is a new officer and recently served as the Co-Chair of the record-setting 2021 Attorney Holiday Campaign fundraiser.

#### New members include:

**Libby Yin Goodknight**, Partner, Krieg DeVault

**Marc Lopez**, Marc Lopez Law Firm

**Jennifer Lukemeyer**, Voyles Vaiana Lukemeyer Baldwin & Webb

Photo above is John C. Trimble, Partner at Lewis Wagner, being honored with the president’s gavel during Indy Legal Aid's annual meeting after two years of service as President of the Board. All of us at Indy Legal Aid would like to express our deep appreciation to John for his many years of service to Indy Legal Aid. We are forever grateful, John! Photo



a week or two to allow the IndyRent payment to come through.”

Unfortunately, in cases in which the tenant is not eligible for rental assistance or the landlord won't agree to a continuance, the picture is much more bleak. Although the rulings vary greatly from judge to judge, tenants are often only given a week or two to get their rent caught up or they have to move out. In many cases, they are only given five days from the date of the hearing to vacate their homes.

Indy Legal Aid always serves the legal needs of the most vulnerable members of our society, but nowhere is the need for our services more pronounced. Many of these tenants are low-income seniors, disabled individuals, or single mothers of young children. They often live paycheck-to-paycheck and pay a disproportionate percentage of their income for housing. If anything goes wrong—an unexpected car repair bill, missed work due to illness, or being laid off—they fall behind in rent. “I want to highlight the fact that in this program we are assisting the most vulnerable members of our community to maintain the most basic of human needs. This is very important work and it is important that the City is funding this work,” Deetta commented.

## March Success Story



"Jane", a young African-American woman, moved out of her apartment immediately after she received an eviction notice on her door. In order to have somewhere to live, she moved to Atlanta to sofa-surf with various family members and friends. In Atlanta, she found a warehouse job and began saving every penny she

could to rent her own apartment again.

She did not drive to Indianapolis to attend the eviction hearing because she assumed that she had done exactly what she was required to do by moving out of her apartment. However, the landlord did not notify the court or its attorney that Jane had vacated, so the eviction hearing moved forward on the court's docket. At the hearing, the Court issued a default judgment of eviction against Jane and set a second hearing on damages to determine what amount, if any, she still owed to the landlord. At the damages hearing, the landlord is allowed to seek past-due rent as well as future rent that the tenant would have paid under the lease until the unit is rented to someone else. The landlord was seeking \$4,325 from Jane. Only a portion of that amount was actually for rent; a substantial chunk of the \$4,325 was for late fees charged by the landlord, attorneys' fees incurred to pursue the eviction, and court costs.

On the day of the damages hearing, Jane took the day off work and drove to Indianapolis from Atlanta to attend the hearing. She met with an ILAS attorney at court immediately prior to her hearing. Jane had brought \$2,000 -- all of the money she had saved for an apartment -- with her to the hearing to pay her former landlord, hoping to make payments toward the remaining balance. She acknowledged that she had

committed to the lease and she was determined to pay whatever she owed.

The ILAS attorney Jane consulted with was able to negotiate an agreement with the landlord's attorney to settle the case. The parties agreed that Jane's \$2,000 satisfied the entire \$4,325 debt; the landlord dismissed the case; and the court's docket entries were updated to reflect that Jane had voluntarily vacated the apartment prior to the eviction hearing rather than having to be evicted.

Jane was so relieved, and so happy with the result in her case, that she cried tears of joy when she thanked the ILAS attorney as she was leaving the court to return to Atlanta.



## **Indy Legal Aid Receives Two Prestigious Seals of Approval**



We are pleased to announce that Indy Legal Aid has earned a Candid (formerly Guidestar) Platinum Seal of Transparency five years in a row and Charity Navigator's "Give With Confidence" designation - a 100 out of 100 rating.

Charity Navigator is the world's largest and most trusted nonprofit evaluator. Charity Navigator guides intelligent giving and helps people give to charities with confidence and shine a light on truly effective organizations.

Candid is the world's largest source of information on U.S. nonprofits. The Platinum designation is the highest level bestowed by Candid. The rating designates the "highest level of recognition and an opportunity for nonprofits to share their progress in a meaningful way," according to the organization's website. Indy Legal Aid has earned the Platinum status every year since 2018.

"We are honored that the Indianapolis Legal Aid Society has been recognized again with Platinum status with Candid and recently recognized by Charity Navigator for our commitment to accountability and transparency," said John Floreancig, Indy Legal Aid CEO and General Counsel. "Charity Navigator and Candid are highly respected organizations for measuring nonprofits' progress. These honors underscore the level at which we work to earn the trust of our current and prospective donors."

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Indy Legal Aid has a number of volunteer opportunities for attorneys,



students, and the general public. For attorneys, we have pro bono cases, internships for students, and our spring and fall events, along with light office work.

For more information, click [here](#).

## No time to volunteer? Donate now!

**Thank You!**

We have several ways for you to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable Hoosiers in Central Indiana. Approximately \$.90 of every dollar donated to Indianapolis Legal Aid Society is directly used to provide programs and services. For more information, click [here](#).

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**Monday - Friday**  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

*"The Indianapolis Legal Aid Society is dedicated to ensuring that qualified low-income persons living in the Central Indiana community have access to quality legal assistance for civil disputes."*



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