

CLIENT UPDATE

Summer/Fall 2016

The Power of Our Lives Through the Eyes and Soul of an Advocate

In Honor of My Friend Darryl Hunt

By Eddie Ellis

Why do we become advocates? Is it because of what we go through in life? Is it something in us that needs to be wakened by a good or bad situation? I do not claim to know the answer. Let me share some of what I believe. I believe the heart of an advocate is one of love, justice, forgiveness, righteousness, togetherness etc. Advocates will give of ourselves even when we are broken and have no more to give because to us that's the right thing to do. Who are advocates? We are human beings who may happen to be men, women, fathers, mothers, and friends. Sometimes we may seem like super people to others, but we hurt just like anyone else. We need love and support like anyone else. We need time for ourselves like anyone else. And, sometimes, we don't get to just be ourselves!

Again, I do not know all the answers of what it means to be an advocate. I do know something about my friend Darryl Hunt. Darryl was an advocate. His life did not start that way. He was arrested, charged, and convicted in 1984 of a murder he did not commit. Darryl, spent 19 years in prison and many of those years were on death row. I can never imagine how that felt to him. Although DNA results proved his innocence in 1994, it took another 10 years of legal appeals for him to be released from prison. His exoneration was made possible by local community citizens — advocates. The Innocence Project

got involved and helped Darryl get out of prison. I salute the 'Innocence Project' for the work that you did for Darryl and have done for so many others.

Darryl came out of that situation with forgiveness in his heart and mind. He demonstrated his strength by coming out and putting his best forward against all odds. He continued to model the best of his humanity as he founded the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice. His nonprofit organization was dedicated to educating the public about criminal justice reform opportunities, advocating for the wrongfully convicted and providing resources to support individuals who were recently released from prison. The advocate in Darryl woke up upon his release and gave the rest of his life to help others, inform, and education people about the criminal justice system. Given all that he went through in his life, none of this was automatic. It could have been a whole different situation. I encourage you to see the HBO documentary "The Trials of Darryl Hunt." If you have seen it, watch it again.

Darryl was given awards and recognized over the years for his many different acts of kindness that he did for people and the community when he was released from the dehumanizing place we call prison. I had the honor to meet Darryl and befriend him while we served together on the Board of Directors, Client Policy Group, and Defender Policy

Group of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association. It was there that I met a man who did not talk a lot, but had a big impact on many people. His impact was large because what he fought for; what he stood up against; what he believed in; and his character. He is missed, but not forgotten!

Being an advocate is just a part of who we are as human beings. We need to learn how to see the whole person because many of us in this work are hurting mentally and

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"We refuse to believe that the bank of justice
is bankrupt."

REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

A message from Harry Johnson, Client Policy Group Chair

I am saddened as I write this message to our community, as I remember the loss of a friend and fellow advocate, Darryl Hunt. Darryl died March 13, 2016. Darryl served NLADA well as a former Client Policy Group Chairperson, member of the Defender Policy Group, and member of the Board of NLADA. His work extended beyond our organization as he worked on criminal justice reform, racial sentencing disparities, and the reentry of formerly incarcerated people on a national level. This issue of the Client Update includes two tributes to Darryl that honor his work and his humanity. We thank former Client Policy Group, Defender Policy Group, and Board member Eddie Ellis for sharing a moving tribute to Darryl.


During the November 2015 Client Policy Group meeting, held at the Annual Conference, we passed a resolution calling on NLADA and its member organizations to invest in training about implicit bias. We look forward to embracing this initiative, which will help us all to understand the unconscious nature of some acts of bias and racism. The resolution has the power of helping lawyers and advocates to understand that racism acts not only on the intentional level, but also on the unconscious level. We call this

unconscious operation implicit bias. It is the impact of our culture and institutions on our thinking about each other. Implicit bias has a real impact on the lives, life chances, and treatment of Black, Brown, Native American, and Latino people – especially those with limited economic resources. I invite you to take a look at the resolution, which we have included in this issue.

At the 2015 Annual Conference, stories of client advocates took center stage during the Client Reception. The Client Policy Group hosted the Client Contribution Awards sponsored by Time Banks USA. Four awards of \$500 and 10 awards of \$100 were given during the ceremony. We look forward to presenting these awards and honoring client's contributions once again at the upcoming 2016 Annual Conference.

We also were fortunate to welcome Shawntelle Fisher as the keynote speaker for the Client Caucus. Shawntelle L. Fisher is the founder and CEO of a nonprofit, The SoulFisher Ministries, and has a passion to see lives transformed and restored. Through her own struggles and pitfalls in life, caring members in the community guided her to a path of restoration and possibilities. Through The SoulFisher Ministries she is spreading

hope and empowering youth and those formerly incarcerated to be positive, productive and socially responsible members in the community. Shawntelle gave a powerful presentation about mass incarceration and its costs to the lives of individuals, families and communities. Her address reminded us that no life is disposable. There are "No Throw Away People." We are fortunate to include her article in this issue.

The Client Policy Group continues to be in dialogue with the leadership and management of NLADA about the work of restructuring the governance of NLADA. We will keep you posted on these developments as we approach the upcoming elections for the Client Policy Group. We have work to do in this movement for justice. We have an important call to leadership around exposing the culture that values one life over another. Our experience as clients informs our understanding of the ways that policies, practices and institutions undervalue our lives, our families and our neighborhoods. As we reflect on the charge given by Rosita Stanley in her article, *Our Call to Leadership Today*, let us answer the call to show up and stand up for equal justice. 



Resolution for NLADA Client Policy Group

Whereas the members of the Client Policy Group are concerned about the recent incidents of racially based violence, the impact of the school to prison pipeline on girls and boys of color, the impact of the intersection of race, age and differently able-bodied people, the cost to Black and Brown communities of mass incarceration; and the inequality of public education; and

Whereas the members of the Client Policy Group believe that the causes of racial inequality and structural racism include implicit or unconscious bias; and

Whereas advocates for equal justice will benefit from understanding the impact of implicit bias on their representation of people living in poverty;

Message from Lucille Logan

NOCA President's Corner

Greetings to the National Organization of Client Advocates, Inc. (NOCA) Family,

Let me begin by acknowledging and thanking Sonia Brookline for accepting the position of NOCA coordinator. Please join me in welcoming her to NOCA. Let us also welcome Latryna Carlton, our new board member for Region VI, and Joy Johnson, new board member for Region III.


NOCA is in the process of working on a work plan to better our organization. This work includes working on training that benefits you as client advocates. We live in different communities and our interests may be different based on where we live. For this reason we are reaching out to get input from you. We need input from you in order to be responsive to you, your needs, and your particular community's needs.

Since the NLADA Annual Conference, some people are asking questions about the relevance of NOCA. Some are asking, "Why do we need NOCA and the Client Policy Group?" Some believe you should, "Make a choice." It is important to remember that NOCA is its own organization. It is incorporated and is a place where all client advocates are welcome. We have a place for you at NOCA and are willing to work to make your community better. The Client Policy Group is also committed to the needs of the client community. The Client Policy Group is different from NOCA because of its relationship to NLADA and the NLADA Board of Directors. The Client Policy Group is part of the NLADA governance structure. The Policy Group has only a few seats for client participation and those seats have three-year terms. You may only serve for six consecutive years and you will have to come off for three years. NOCA membership has no

limitation. You may serve as long as your interest holds up.

We can belong to both NLADA and NOCA and not duplicate services.

NOCA was formed in 1991 with the help of NLADA and PAG. We owe our thanks to Clint Lyons and Harrison McIver, III. We have very talented members who are versed in client issues.

So I am asking you to come and join us and help us prepare for the future. Pay your NLADA dues and your NOCA dues. We must continue to support NLADA so we can continue to do much of the training that is needed. Let's work to make NOCA and the Client Policy Group of NLADA strong and effective. Together we can best serve the needs of clients, client advocates, and our communities. 

NOCA Officers

Lucille Logan

*President
Oklahoma City, OK*

Theron McNeil

*1st Vice President
Las Vegas, NV*

Ronel Baccus

*2nd Vice President
Greenburg, PA*

Linda Bergman

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Washington, PA*

Pat Mickel

*Corresponding Secretary
Erie, PA*

Harry Johnson

*Treasurer
Indianapolis, IN*

Rose Wilson

*Financial Secretary
Lubbock, TX*

Marsha White-Mathis

Parliamentarian

Sonia Brookins

NOCA Coordinator

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Client Policy Group hereby requests the NLADA Board pass the following resolution:

Resolved, the Board of Directors of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association

a. Encourages civil legal aid and public defense member programs, board, policy groups and staff to take the Implicit Association Test [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/developed by Harvard University](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/developed%20by%20Harvard%20University) and implement implicit bias training.

b. Encourages civil legal aid and public defense programs to take the Implicit Association Test and implement implicit bias training for their staff.

c. Commits to convening the chairs of the Civil and Client Policy Groups and the Defender Council to examine collectively how NLADA can expand support to its members to achieve the above mentioned goals.

No Throw Away People

By Elder Shawntelle L. Fisher, Founder/CEO
The SoulFisher Ministries

It seems that in our quest for justice, we as a country, often forget that all lives... even Black lives really do matter. We often forget that no human being should ever be “thrown away.” When I refer to people, namely African American people, being thrown away, I am referring to a cycle that has become an injustice system called the Criminal Justice System. This “injustice system” has consistently gained momentum as African American students are funneled from the classroom into the Criminal Justice System and through the Criminal Justice System, locked out of full citizenship.

African American students are funneled into this system via the school-to-prison pipeline that uses policies and practices to criminalize childhood misbehaviors in the system’s efforts to ensure that it has enough fuel to keep the flames of mass incarceration burning brightly. For, if these flames were to ever be snuffed out, African Americans might actually have a chance at becoming first-class citizens who are seen as being just as capable as the white counterparts.

Crime and punishment have undoubtedly become words used synonymously with African Americans. As we dig deeper into the term that has been coined mass incarceration, it becomes obvious that crime and punishment are multi-dimensional problems that stem from embedded racial prejudices that continue to be justified by the Jim Crow perceptions and beliefs about African Americans.

In the last three decades, state and federal prison populations have skyrocketed, due in large part to the War on Drugs that began in earnest with the Drug Abuse Act of 1986 and the rise of the “get tough” laws such as “Three Strikes,” “Truth in Sentencing,” and “Minimum Mandatory” sentencing. Decades of these kinds of policies have led to the swelling of our state and federal prison population from about 340,000 in 1972 to more than 2 million.

According to *The New York Times*, prior to the onset of the drug wars, America’s incarceration rate rested for decades between



100 and 125 per 100,000 people. Soon thereafter, it began to increase and increase astronomically, it has done. According to Drug War Facts, by the mid-80s, the incarceration rate was more than 200 per 100,000. By 2000, nearly 1 percent or about 2 million adults were incarcerated and since 2010, more than 2.2 million people in our country have consistently been behind bars. The U.S. houses more prisoners in its criminal justice system than any other country in the world and has more jails and prisons than colleges, according to The Washington Post.

In addition to mass numbers of incarcerated Americans, there are increasing numbers of racial disparities within the criminal justice system. As of 2007, according to the Sentencing Project, African Americans accounted for nearly 1 million of the prison population. In 2011, more than half of all new federal prison admissions were Hispanic. Sadly, today, at any given time, 10 percent of the country’s 18- to 24-year-old African American men are living behind bars. A new PEW report revealed that African American men without a high school diploma are more likely to be living behind bars in the U.S. than to be employed.

These statistics are frightening, to say the least. Mass incarceration of grossly large

numbers of African Americans is both wrong and racist. Many have been deceived into believing that most people were excited by the passing of the Emancipation Proclamation. On

Crime and punishment have undoubtedly become words used synonymously with African Americans.

the contrary, many people weren’t and many still aren’t content with the idea of African Americans, especially African American men, having full citizenship. This is evidenced by the racially disparate laws that incarcerate greater number of African Americans than their white counterparts and in the racially disparate sentences that are handed down to African Americans, especially African American men.

Although I am a woman, I am one such African American who has lived through the “injustice system” called the Criminal Justice System. I am one such African American that was funneled from the classroom through the school-to-prison pipeline into the cycle of mass incarceration. My first encounter with the criminal justice system was one month after I turned 17. My parents didn’t know anything about the criminal justice system. My mom

worked for the Railroad, my dad for the Post Office. They were taxpayers and they trusted the system to do what it was designed to do... be just, recognize that I wasn't a hardened criminal, just a bright young girl who had made some bad decisions.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. They didn't care that I was a bright young girl who was troubled and needed the support of the system to help me and guide me in becoming a productive member of society. Instead, I was seen as another piece of statistical data. It wasn't until after I had made seven trips through the Criminal Justice System that someone, a professor at St. Louis Community College, took an interest in me by accepting a call from me, a federal prisoner in Waseca, Minnesota and encouraged me to contact him when I got out and get enrolled in college, that I was able to see and learn a different way of life. Why was I seen as someone to be "thrown away" for more than 20 years of my life? Why was the state of Missouri willing to spend more money to keep me locked up than they were to help me receive the education that I am now receiving?

I successfully completed and received an associate's degree, two bachelor's degrees, a minor degree, and an honor's college certificate in three years. I am now a graduate student pursuing two graduate degrees simultaneously. I run one of the fastest-growing nonprofits in St. Louis, Missouri. I was just as smart then as I am now, I was just as intelligent then as I am now.

Although my bio lists many accolades, degrees and accomplishments, these were never manifested until someone took an interest in me as a human being, as being someone whose life mattered, instead of someone deemed as a throw away person, that I was able to walk down the path that I now find myself on. We as a society should never be content with seeing anyone as a "throw away person."

I share just a piece of my story here, however, I could share story after story of how people have been thrown away by society; people who we believe, whether we admit it or not, lives really don't matter, the "throw

away people." We may never say this with our mouths, but we say it through our actions and through the "injustice system" called the Criminal Justice System. A lesson that I have learned, first hand, about the school-to-prison pipeline and mass incarceration is that if society can keep African Americans uneducated, society can keep us impoverished. If society can keep us impoverished, we're then forced to live subsistent lives as second class citizens caught up the cycle of mass incarceration.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimated that more than 800,000 prisoners have children who are under the age of 18. This means that 2.3 percent of the children in the U.S. have a parent incarcerated. These children are more likely to live in poverty, to be uneducated or undereducated, to enter the foster care system, and ultimately to end up in prison themselves, and thus, the vicious cycles of school-to-prison and mass incarceration continue.

It seems that many conversations today lead us back to that dreadful day in Ferguson on August 9, 2014. What really led to Ferguson?

Is Ferguson the only place where young black men are thrown away or shot down by police officers because we somehow believe that their lives don't matter? I think not. Practices of the school-to-prison pipeline, racially disparate sentencing and incarceration, and a need to fuel mass incarceration are what led to the incident in Ferguson with Michael Brown. The events of that day, per se, were not what caused that day. Failing school districts in African American communities, inequities in healthcare and other areas have been a reality for many for decades. The day that Michael Brown was shot just happened to be the tipping point.

Disparities in areas of education, health, and employment led to Ferguson. Distorted images of African American males led to Ferguson. The idea that only certain lives matter led to Ferguson. The idea that some lives are better than others led to Ferguson. The idea that it's ok to simply throw some people away led to Ferguson. Ferguson

happens in urban cities around this country every day. Ferguson has been happening in this country for centuries. Michael Browns have been happening and continue to happen through the school-to-prison pipeline and mass incarceration.

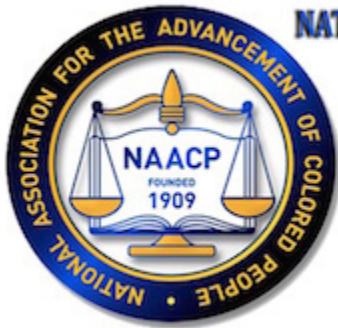
Incarceration does much more than punish someone for committing a crime. Incarceration bans some felons from getting student loans. Incarceration bans some felons from getting a home mortgage or living in certain apartment complexes. Incarceration bans felons from gaining certain state licenses. Incarceration bans some felons from even getting a job.

Steps that can be taken to ensure racial and educational equity seem obvious: Dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline; Smarter sentencing laws, which means simply ending mandatory minimums and stopping racial disparities during the criminal justice

We as a society should never be content with seeing anyone as a "throw away person."

process; Cost-effective alternatives to incarceration, which means ending the school-to-prison pipeline and ensuring that every child, regardless of his or her zip code, receives a quality education; Stop militarized policing, which means no stop and frisk and no racial profiling that targets African Americans and African American communities; Stop building new jails and prisons and close some existing ones; Ban the box, which means stop asking on job applications, "have you ever been convicted of a felony?"; Reentry – for those who have gone through the criminal justice system, we need to remember that they are still citizens who deserve the opportunity to be educated, to be employed, to not live in poverty, and to vote on the very laws that they are expected to obey. Although these steps may seem so obvious, gaining the momentum necessary to enact policies and laws that promote such equity has proven to be quite challenging and heavily resisted.

The Passing of Darryl Hunt



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 335- Durham, North Carolina 27702
866-626-2227 ~ 919-682-4700 ~ Fax 919-682-4711
www.naacpnc.org ~ www.hkonj.com

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II
President

To North Carolinians on the side of truth and justice, members of the media, family and friends of the movement,

Re: The Passing of Our Brother Darryl Hunt

North Carolina lost one of her foremost freedom fighters in the passing of Dr. Darryl Hunt. I along with the North Carolina, NAACP family lost not only a freedom fighter, but also a former colleague, brother and friend. The state robbed Darryl of 19 years of his life by imprisoning him for a rape and murder he did not commit. The case goes down in infamy as one of the most thoroughly corrupt episodes in the saga of the deeply racist criminal justice system in our state. However, in his 12 short years out of prison, Darryl accomplished more good in the world than most can hope to in a lifetime.

Those who heard Darryl speak, or worked with him in the grassroots, know that Darryl made sure his bondage was not in vain. In addition to committing his time and resources to building the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice, where he worked with hundreds of formerly incarcerated men and women, and fought for the exoneration of others falsely imprisoned, he also led a life of prophetic witness to the rampant racism in police departments, district attorney's offices and the courts.

Darryl was there in 2009 to push through the Racial Justice Act, which the North Carolina NAACP and our HKonJ partners count as one of the greatest legislative vic-



tories for criminal justice in recent history. In 2010, he joined the staff of the North Carolina NAACP as the founder and director of the Anti-Death Penalty Project. He helped lead our efforts to defend the RJA as long as possible so that the cases could get into court before the extremists in the General Assembly gutted

and repealed the bill. When the damning report on the practices of intentional perjury emerged out of the SBI labs, Darryl traveled the state on our behalf educating the branches and communities on the "Swecker Report". He led court "jury watches" during capital trials where we know black jurors are struck from the rolls at disproportionate rates. Ever since his first plenary in 2010, we've always reserved a spot for Darryl to speak at our State Convention.

And none of this is to mention his role as a national leader in innocence projects and



movements. For his work, Duke University awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2012.

Darryl was a wounded healer in the greatest sense. I can remember him often saying that he has forgiven those who put him in jail when they knew he was innocent, but he has not forgotten. For Darryl, it was a spiritual matter. He would say that he did not know how to ask others or God for forgiveness if he was not willing to forgive those who imprisoned him. He was not going to let them imprison him again with bitterness.

And neither would he let them keep him from fighting for justice.

Darryl traveled the nation and the world with his witness that injustice does not have the last word. For a generation of activists, Darryl was hope incarnate. Justice was his calling. Courage and love was his answer. We pledge to you brother Darryl, that your spirit lives on in each of us. Those you touched will touch others and others as we keep our hands on the freedom plow. Let it be so.

In Sadness and A Deepening Love for Justice,

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, President of NC NAACP

Al McSurely, Former Legal Redress Chair, NC NAACP

Rob Stephens, Former Associate Director, NC NAACP Anti-Death Penalty Project

NC NAACP Staff, Executive Committee, Branch Leaders, Members and Partners in the Forward Together Moral Fusion Movement 

Our Call to Leadership Today

By Rosita M. Stanley

Several years ago the Client Policy Group of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association embraced the concept of “No More Throw People.” No More Throw Away People is more than the title of a book written by our long-time ally, Edgar Cahn. We adopted the concept because we understand that society and too many of its communities, organizations and institutions place higher value on some people’s lives more than others. This becomes clearer the closer we examine the assumptions that are embedded in the values, policies, practices, and culture all around us. I was particularly upset when I learned about Rev. Dr. Barber being removed from an airplane after a passenger openly ridiculed him for using two seats on the plane. Rev. Barber has a physical condition that requires him to use two seats and also limits his mobility. The passenger verbally abused Rev. Barber. All the passenger saw was a large Black man with a visible disability and he chose to humiliate him. Equally significant is the fact that he felt secure and safe in ignoring his humanity and dignity. Too many people in society see Black people, people with disabilities, people with limited financial resources as less deserving of life and living. Society too often reinforces a hierarchy of some people over others. It




is what is behind the lack of respect shown to Black children attending public schools. This oppressive hierarchy, which places certain neighborhoods’ desire for safety, strong schools, and access to health care over the same desires of other neighborhoods across town, cost lives.

Underneath all of this is feeling that some lives are not worthwhile. The lives of Black and Latino people, the lives of people with limited income, the lives of people with disabilities, and the lives of those of us who are Black, with limited income, and disabilities are seen as disposable. And, the truth is that people and organizations that operate that way often doing it unconsciously. It does not mean that racism is any less real. It means that often people with power and even people charged with working with low-income communities see Black lives, Brown lives, and Native American lives as throw away. And, they do it without intentionally thinking about it. This unconscious racism is called implicit bias.

The Client Policy Group passed a resolution to combat the impact of implicit bias. This resolution was adopted at the NLADA Board Meeting during our last Annual Conference. The resolution calls for NLADA and its program members to invest in implicit bias testing and training. Hospitals and doctors have been

doing this training for sometime. NLADA’s efforts to bring this into the legal services and public defender community is an act of leadership.

With so much going on in our communities today, we too must answer the call of leadership. It is not enough for us to reject the idea that some lives are disposable. It is not enough for us to proclaim that there are no “Throw Away People.” We have an obligation to learn about the ways the hierarchy works. Learning how it works helps us to counter it and fight against it. This work is leadership work. It involves inspiring and motivating people to do what needs to be done to improve the lives and situations of individuals, families and communities. It is essential that we equip ourselves with tools and approaches to counter the effect of a culture of throw away people. We are called to build a culture of “No More Throw Away People.” So I invite you to join me and other members of the Client Policy Group as we explore ways of developing leadership development opportunities for low-income people and communities to understand and counter the impact of implicit bias. Our lives are too valuable to do anything less. 

Client Contribution Awards 2016

Nominate a Client Who Has Made a Difference and Who Has Advanced Equal Justice For All

The War on Poverty birthed the legal services program. Maximum feasible participation was a fundamental premise of that historic initiative. From the outset, that mandate was part of the DNA of the Legal Services Program. At a minimum, it took the form of client representation on the board of any program receiving funds – but that was the minimum. Client engagement takes many forms beyond board membership. For the past half-century, clients have been spokespersons for justice, champions of local programs, allies and leaders in the many struggles in which legal service programs have been engaged.

An article recognized as the blueprint for legal services entitled *The War on Poverty: A Civilian Perspective*, 73 Yale L. J. 1317 (1964) proposed in Part III neighborhood law offices with the role of extending free legal services to low income communities. It reads:

“In the final analysis the worth of the following proposal will depend on the contribution it can make as a form of enfranchisement, as an attempt to institutionalize the functions of dissent and criticism, and as a means of revitalizing the democratic process by providing representation in those forums of decision making where legislators, elective and non-elective, and where judges, frocked and unfrocked, hand down the common law of the poor.”

This foundational article ended with an exhortation that community leaders be enlisted by neighborhood law firms to perform a unique function because they

“could disseminate not simply legal knowledge, but, more vital, could impart the spirit of hope, dignity, militant citizenship, and constructive advocacy which together comprise the civilian perspective.”

That final sentence embodied the foundational premise that clients are more than



people with a legal problem. Their legal problem, however serious, is only a small part of who a client really is. Maximum feasible participation envisioned clients as an essential resource, not only to their families, but also to their communities and to this nation.

An annual celebration is long overdue of the contribution that clients — individuals or groups — have made to addressing injustice, to transforming the lives of others in their community, to restoring faith in communities in the rule of law, and to battling for the legal service program's survival, integrity and growth.

Accordingly, TimeBanks USA joins the Client Policy Group of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association to give three awards this November premised on the assumption that this nation's founding purpose — to establish justice — can best be established if driven by a sustained commitment to maximum feasible participation in every form and every forum.

Awards have been given in 2014 and 2015, and will be given in November 2016. We believe this occasion should be institutionalized as an enduring tradition that extends some form of recognition as an annual event in the future. The awards will be announced

at the Client Section Meeting of the NLADA Annual Conference.

Deadline for Nominations

This year, the deadline for nominations will be September 21, 2016. Each of the three awards will include \$500 in recognition, and may be presented either to an individual or a group of individuals working together (in which case the \$500 would be shared). Individuals and groups may nominate themselves or be nominated by others.

SEND YOUR NOMINATION

BY SEPTEMBER 21, 2016

Nature of the Awards

Awards will be for past contributions with demonstrated impact. One of the three awards will be in recognition of efforts that have successfully supported and promoted legal services (civil or criminal) undertaken by legal service programs serving the indigent. It may be at the local, regional, state or national level. A second will be for contributions by a client or clients that have changed the lives of others in the community. The third will be

for promoting client involvement and client leadership.

In addition, each and every entry will receive a certificate of contribution to legal services.

Guides for Nominations

Nominations should clearly explain the nominee's work and its impact? Since the kind of action and/or results can be wide-ranging, here are just a few examples: collaboration that led to changed policies; efforts that led to funding or other kinds of support for the program; newsletters that have had a demonstrated impact; day-to-day volunteering that helped improve the client experience in a legal services program; public forums or public demonstrations that have led to legislative action or other kind of changes that were more fair and just; training and workshops that have provided members of the community with the knowledge they need to take informed action on their own behalf.

We will be looking for details: who, what, when, where, and how. Those details should

tell the story clearly and plainly. Judges will be looking for verifiable facts. We also request two or more references. References may be from board members of legal services programs or community members. They should come from individuals with first-hand experience of what was achieved.

To nominate, simply fill out the form below and return it to NLADA for review

Beyond the Awards

We recognize that three awards can barely scratch the surface of all that has been contributed by clients over the decades, and so the roles that client leaders have played will be recognized and honored in other ways. We will be creating a series of short, thematic videos that feature interviews with client leaders to illustrate the kinds of contributions made.

To make sure that the depth and breadth of contributions is available for all to see, we shall be creating a webpage that will list the contributions of individual clients over the decades. All who have been nominated for

the awards will receive a request to allow us to post their submissions on that webpage with the pictures they submitted. In this way, we can give recognition to the many clients who have contributed so much, and show the impact they have had.

SEND NOMINATIONS TO:

NLADA MEMBERSHIP
1901 PENNSYLVANIA AVE. NW
SUITE 500
WASHINGTON, DC 20006

For faster processing, submit by email to membership@nlada.org.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE
RECEIVED BY
SEPTEMBER 21

CLIENT CONTRIBUTION AWARDS

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Tell us about who you are nominating.

Name of Nominee: _____

Name of Nominee's Organization (if applicable): _____

Award Category (select from list below):

- 1) Supporting or promoting legal services for the indigent (or a legal services program) at the local, state, or national level
- 2) Efforts by a client that improve the lives of others in the community
- 3) Promoting client involvement and client leadership

Why does the nominee deserve this award?

What measurable outcomes have been the result of the nominee's actions?

Please provide the names and contact information for two or more references who can support this nomination:

Optional: Please provide a photo or photos of the nominee(s).

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Tell us about yourself.

Your Name: _____

Your Organization (if applicable): _____

Your position/role in legal services: _____

How do you know this about the person you are nominating, and what (if any) is your relation to the nominee?

SEND NOMINATIONS TO:

NLADA MEMBERSHIP
1901 PENNSYLVANIA AVE. NW, SUITE 500
WASHINGTON, DC 20006

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emotionally. We believe just because we help people that we don't need help at times and that is a lie! We can never be our best selves if we don't make sure that we are in a healthy place mentally and emotionally. We will never really be able to help others and be our brother and sister's keepers if we are not whole. Please make sure that you are healthy. I believe advocates are heroes and sheroes that work to help our fellow human beings. We do not always win, but we fight because we know our work is critical. Everyone cannot do this work. So, in many ways we are special in our own way. It is important, however, that we never take this opportunity for granted. It is essential that we never look down on others or take advantage of others. It is essential that we work for good and continue to help create change in the world.

This is the type of advocate I witnessed in Darryl Hunt. He cared deeply for others. He worked tirelessly. The system harmed him deeply when it wrongly convicted and tried to strip him of his humanity when he was 19 years old. It systematically attempted to

break him. He resisted and maintained his dignity. But, he was never made whole. It took some things from him and he still rose up and served. He rose up and fought. He rose up and advocated for himself and others. I often wonder if we did enough to advocate for him.

In honor of fallen brothers and sisters in the advocacy world, we need to make sure that we are doing right by them and their legacies. We need to honor them by honoring our people, our communities, and ourselves. We need to learn how to ask each other, "How are you really doing? Are you okay?" And, we need to help each other relax, regroup, and regain our strength to keep moving. Advocates need friends who deeply care and support them. We need fellow travelers who are true and dear. We need people who will care about us as full human beings. I had that friend and fellow advocate in Darryl Hunt. I will miss him and remember him. Most importantly, I will always honor him through my service and witness as an advocate. [!\[\]\(cbe2492b119e39e02a1dab2af4a4b296_img.jpg\)](#)

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Instead of locking people up and then locking them out of society through a felony conviction, we need to find ways to open doors of opportunity for everyone, not simply those who live in a certain zip code. Just think of all the human talent that is simply going to waste because we, as a society don't truly believe that Black lives matter. We spend fortunes on locking up and locking out the very people

who could help fuel the economy instead of draining the economy through mass incarceration. If we were to help build strong communities we would have a much more vibrant and equitable economy. In all our dialogues and decision-making, let's remember that there are "no throw away people." Black lives matters, even the lives of those currently and/or formerly incarcerated. [!\[\]\(5361750c22c4e047a52f4eac1ec2d4cc_img.jpg\)](#)

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