



May 1, 2025

Contact:

Press@legal-aid.org

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

The Legal Aid Society Celebrates Law Day 2025 with United Stand for the Rule of Law

(New York, NY) — This Law Day, May 1st, The Legal Aid Society will not simply reflect on the role of law in our democracy — we will reaffirm, out loud and in action, our commitment to the rule of law at a time when it is under direct attack.

“At a time when the rule of law faces unprecedented threats—from mass deportations to the open defiance of court orders—we cannot be silent,” said **Twyla Carter, Attorney-in-Chief and CEO of The Legal Aid Society**. “We are not just practitioners of the law; we are its stewards, guardians, and conscience.”

Across every system The Legal Aid Society serves—housing, immigration, child welfare, and criminal defense, among others—the organization's attorneys and advocates are witnessing how these attacks fall hardest on those already made vulnerable by racism, poverty, and exclusion.

This is a constitutional crisis, not a partisan claim. It is a factual reality, and as public interest lawyers and defenders, The Legal Aid Society refuses to stand apart from it.

To mark Law Day 2025, Legal Aid held a citywide oath ceremony where staff across all offices gathered—both in person and virtually—to collectively reaffirm their oath and stand united for justice. Watch the video here.

Legal Aid proudly welcomed two distinguished leaders in New York’s legal system for this special event:

- The Hon. Judge Joseph A. Zayas, Chief Administrative Judge of the New York State Unified Court System, delivered opening remarks. A former Staff Attorney at The Legal

Aid Society, Judge Zayas now oversees the day-to-day operation of the state's vast judicial system, including its \$3.7 billion budget, 3,300 judges, and 15,000 employees statewide.

- The Hon. Edwina G. Richardson, Director of the Office for Justice Initiatives, administered the attorney's oath renewals. Judge Richardson is a statewide leader in advancing access to justice across all courts, championing equity through six focus areas including Family Justice, Diversity & Inclusion, and Youth Justice.

As Justice Thurgood Marshall once said, *“The legal system can force open doors and sometimes even knock down walls, but it cannot build bridges. That job belongs to you and me.”*

On Law Day 2025, The Legal Aid Society is building those bridges—through action, advocacy, and an unwavering voice for justice.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For nearly 150 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org