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

***The Legal Aid Society Celebrates its 48th Annual Servant of Justice Awards***

***Over \$2.6 Million Raised from New York's Legal and Business Communities to Advance Client Advocacy***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** proudly hosted its 48th Annual Servant of Justice Awards last night at Cipriani 42nd Street in Manhattan, celebrating individuals who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to justice and public service.

The annual event was attended by over 600 guests, bringing together leaders from the legal, business, and philanthropic communities for an inspiring evening of celebration and advocacy. Over \$2.6 million were raised during the event, which will directly support Legal Aid's work on behalf of low-income New Yorkers facing legal challenges in housing, immigration, criminal defense, and family law, among other areas.

This year's distinguished honorees were Bart Schwartz, Senior Counsel at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, and the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, award accepted by Michael A. Volpe, Chief Bank Operations Officer. Both honorees were recognized for their exemplary pro bono work and unwavering dedication to advancing legal equity.

"The Servant of Justice Awards are a celebration of the values at the heart of our work: dignity, equity, and justice for the communities we serve," said **Twyla Carter, Attorney-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer of The Legal Aid Society**. "Our honorees' dedication to public service has had a lasting impact on countless New Yorkers, and their commitment helps ensure that the people we serve—those most in need—have a powerful advocate in their corner."

"The 48th Annual Servant of Justice awards brought together New York's legal and business communities to celebrate this year's honorees and our shared commitment to justice. We are grateful to our generous sponsors for their continued support of Legal Aid's important work," said **Alan Levine, President of The Legal Aid Society**.

“Since its founding in 1876, The Legal Aid Society has worked to close the access to justice gap for low-income New Yorkers. At the Servant of Justice Awards, we are proud to celebrate our staff and this year’s honorees for their commitment to Legal Aid’s belief that no New Yorker should be denied the right to equal justice,” said **Zachary Carter, Chair of Legal Aid’s Board of Directors.**

“I am honored to receive this year’s Servant of Justice Award from an organization that has my utmost respect and support. The Legal Aid Society has set the standard for social justice law of all kinds, and I am proud to have served on the board, and to continue as a volunteer and member of the Board of Advisers,” said **Bart Schwartz, Senior Counsel, Corporate & Financial Services, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP.**

“At the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, we know that a stable home is the foundation from which individuals, households and communities grow,” said **Michael Volpe, Chief Bank Operations Officer of the FHLBNY**, who accepted the award on behalf of his institution. “We are honored to help strengthen Legal Aid’s capacity to provide critical support for housing stability through its Economic Equities Project.”

### **Honoree Biographies:**

#### **Bart Schwartz, Senior Counsel, Corporate & Financial Services, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP**

Mr. Schwartz is Senior Counsel at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, where he has an active pro bono practice. Before joining Willkie in 2018, he spent 35 years in senior in-house legal positions, including as general counsel of three global financial services companies. Mr. Schwartz was previously at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP and Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP. From 2015-2024, he was a member of the Board of Directors of The Legal Aid Society, of which he is currently a member of the Board of Advisers.

#### **Michael A. Volpe, Senior Vice President and Chief Bank Operations Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of New York**

Mr. Volpe was named Senior Vice President and Chief Bank Operations Officer in April 2022. In this role, he directs and oversees the Community Investment department responsible for FHLBNY’s Housing Mission, as well as Bank Operations. Additionally, he served as Interim Community Investment Officer from December 2022 through December 2023. Mr. Volpe joined FHLBNY in January 1989 serving in various roles including First Vice President and Director of Bank Operations, Director of Member Services Operations, Director of Collateral and Correspondent Services, and Director of Collateral Operations. From 1998 to 2006, Mr. Volpe took a hiatus from FHLBNY where he held various technology positions at The Bank of New York. He received a B.S. in Finance and M.B.A. in International Finance from St. John’s University (NY) and is also a graduate of the ABA Stonier Graduate School of Banking.

For the list of sponsors and photos, visit: [48th Annual Servant of Justice Awards.](https://www.legalaidnyc.org/48th-annual-servant-of-justice-awards)

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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](https://www.legalaidnyc.org)*