

## President's Message

### Highlighting LBF Programs Helping Children and Families

*By Judge (Ret.) John C. Davidson, 2024-25 LBF President*

For some, summer in Louisiana evokes memories of vacations, crawfish boils and local festivals. For some of our most vulnerable citizens, it does not. As a former District Court judge, I spent the last five years of my career handling juvenile cases. This experience highlighted the challenges faced by our children in need. The disruption of structure and services during the summer can greatly intensify their daily struggles.

One of the many reasons I am so proud to be a part of the Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) is the unwavering dedication, time and attention given to providing free legal assistance and services to disadvantaged children. As the state's largest funder of free civil legal aid, the LBF provides funding to many organizations that work to protect children in areas of law affecting their safety, well-being, education and future development.

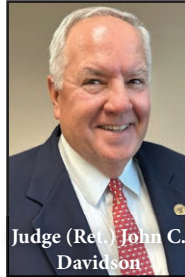
One of our more recent projects, one that is very near and dear to my heart, is our partnership with the My Community Cares Project (MCC). MCC is a community-driven, neighborhood-based approach to strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect, thereby preventing the need for foster care in Louisiana. MCC brings together children and families with lived experience in the child welfare system, community members, judges, child

advocates, attorneys, the Department of Children and Families Services, service providers, schools, businesses, emergency responders, healthcare providers, churches and non-profit agencies to identify, implement and connect families to a network of quality services and support.

The LBF supports MCC's commitment to strengthen families and support communities by dedicating funding for the second year for a full-time attorney position fully dedicated to MCC work at the following agencies: Shreveport Bar Foundation, Caddo; The Extra Mile, Lafayette; Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, Orleans; The Wellspring Alliance for Families, Ouachita; and Fostering Community, Rapides.

Other funding programs we administer which directly impact children and families are:

The LBF **Children's Legal Services grant program** awards funding to organizations providing direct legal representation of children, in matters ranging from delinquency to access to special education, mental health and foster care services; organizations engaging in impact litigation



and/or systemic legal reform efforts on behalf of children; organizations that provide lay advocacy for children in legal proceedings; and organizations that assist with the administration of justice with respect to children.

The LBF serves as administrator for the **Child in Need of Care** program providing free legal representation to children in foster care in partnership with the legal services corporations, the Louisiana Department of Child and Family Services and the Louisiana Supreme Court.

The LBF's **Kids' Chance Scholarship Program** awards scholarships to the children of Louisiana workers who have been killed or permanently and totally disabled in an accident compensable under a state or federal Workers' Compensation Act or law. To these children, the future can appear frightening. Already confronting difficult emotions, they often must confront the hurdle of funding their education beyond high school.

Our children's legal services programs are an example of the many LBF programs through which we are committed to providing access to free civil legal services to those in need. Please Visit our website at [www.raisingthebar.org](http://www.raisingthebar.org) or contact us at (504)561-1046 if you are interested in finding out how you can help be a part of restoring broken families in need.

## LBF Seeking Content Creators for Speak Out for Justice! Projects

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) is seeking content creators/contributors for 2024-25 Speak Out for Justice! Focus on Civil Legal Aid projects. Project proposals in two areas (Public Awareness and Research) will be accepted through Sept. 20.

Speak Out for Justice! Focus on Civil Legal Aid is a program of the LBF's Education Committee. The purpose of this program is to support the LBF's educational goals and show how vital the need for civil legal aid is to those who need it most.

The LBF seeks to simultaneously en-

gage with multiple content creators for this program. Each selected author/content creator will receive a \$500-\$2,500 honorarium, depending on content.

Project proposals for Public Awareness should show the vital need for civil legal aid services and may include (but are not limited to) podcasts; series of written content such as stories, articles, interviews, blog posts, publications, video, public service announcements, social media content, and/or art.

Project proposals for Research should measure the effectiveness of ongoing civil

legal aid programs and may include (but are not limited to) economic analyses; series of written content (blogs, news articles, interviews, reports); publications; extrapolations from census data and related materials; social science articles; hypotheses and surveys affirming or disproving current beliefs and approaches; and other formats to effectively discuss civil legal aid with those less familiar with it.

Learn more about the projects and proposal submissions online at: <https://raisingthebar.org/speak-out-for-justice-focus-on-civil-legal-aid>.