



NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Chief Administrative Judge**

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Chief Administrative Judge, First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Announce Recipients of Court System’s Access to Justice Grant Initiative

NEW YORK—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas and First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George today announced that judicial districts in the Capital Region, Central New York, Finger Lakes Region, and Long Island are among the recipients of the Access to Justice Grant Initiative, established by the Permanent Commission on Access to Justice (“the “Commission”) and funded by a \$100,000 gift to the Commission from an anonymous donor.

The five, one-time \$20,000 grants will support the Unified Court System’s work to expand access to justice for low-income individuals and families in need of civil legal services in New York’s local communities.

The funds will be disbursed as follows:

- To the Third Judicial District (Capital Region, led by Administrative Judge Gerald Connolly), in collaboration with The Legal Project, to support litigation fees and expenses for low-income persons in domestic violence and divorce matters;
- To the Fifth Judicial District (Central New York, led by Administrative Judge Deborah H. Karalunas) to support the cost of supervised visitation services provided by Angel’s Monitoring for low-income litigants in the Integrated Domestic Violence Court;
- To the Sixth Judicial District (Finger Lakes Region, led by Administrative Judge Eugene D. Faughnan) to enable LawNY to expand the Tompkins County Help Center’s services to offer one-on-one remote consultation with pro bono attorneys and Cornell Law School students;

- To the Tenth Judicial District (Nassau County, led by Administrative Judge Vito DeStefano), to be administered by EAC Network to support low-income Family Treatment Court participants' transportation costs to and from the court, treatment programs, and medical appointments; and
- To the Tenth Judicial District (Suffolk County, led by Administrative Judge Andrew A. Crecca) to expand the Community Legal Help Project to two additional public library locations (Lindenhurst and Riverhead) and extend the project's hours of operation at the Brentwood location.

In selecting the grantees, the Court System, after coordinating with the Commission, chaired by Helaine M. Barnett, sought proposals from the New York State Courts' Local Access to Justice Committees and Equal Justice Committees, whose work advance meaningful access to justice in the courts. The proposals were carefully reviewed, considering each project's anticipated impact and costs, in addition to other factors.

"First, I want to express my deepest gratitude to our anonymous donor, whose generosity will assist some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers in civil matters involving life's essentials," said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. "Further, I commend the OCA's Grants and Contracts unit for its role in coordinating this effort, our Judicial Districts around the State for their excellent proposals, and Helaine Barnett and the review committee for their thoughtful consideration of each of the submissions."

"I am elated that New Yorkers in need will benefit from the critical legal assistance to be provided by these court-sponsored programs, made possible thanks to this anonymous donor's dedication to equal justice," said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George. "The implementation of this initiative is further proof of what can be accomplished through this type of collaboration. In fact, the Access to Justice Grant submission and review process, in addition to resulting in the allocation of these funds to our Third, Fifth, Sixth and Tenth Judicial Districts, spurred creative ways to fund several of the other proposals that were submitted."

"These grants, representing the best of our court system's creativity, are possible due to the generosity of an anonymous donor and the quick work of Helaine Barnett and the Commission in establishing the Access to Justice Grant Initiative. I want to thank and congratulate those whose innovative proposals have been selected for these prestigious grants. I am also very grateful to the review committee, which included designees from our Deputy Chief Administrative Judges' offices, for its thorough consideration of all the submissions," said Hon. Edwina G. Richardson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives. "The selected proposals, once enacted, promise to expand the reach of the court system's continuing work to narrow New York's justice gap. Today, we can all be proud that these results will make the best, most impactful use of these funds."

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