

Dade Legal Aid

July Newsletter

A Message From Our Executive Director

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

Summer is in full effect, and the office is already buzzing with energy, activity, and excitement for the season ahead. From welcoming summer associates to community engagement, events, and educational programming, there is so much to look forward to as we continue creating meaningful opportunities to engage new lawyers, future lawyers, and firms to strengthen access to justice across Miami-Dade!

From our communications and community engagement team, we are excited to share our June newsletter highlighting recent happenings, upcoming events, department updates, and a preview of what's to come. Please check your inbox for the latest information on all that is happening at Dade Legal Aid - Put Something Back Pro Bono Project regarding available pro bono cases, seminars, events, and important updates.

Our pro bono recruitment efforts are in full swing. As we enter the final month of our annual membership drive, we are increasing the pace of new attorney and case acceptances and prioritizing clients with lawyers who have experience in the areas of greatest need. We continue to expand with a strong showing of support from prospective volunteers, which speaks to our reputation as one of the most versatile, lawyer friendly programs in South Florida. In furtherance of our mission to expand access to justice, I recently attended the ABA Equal Justice Pro Bono Conference and the Eleventh Judicial Circuit New Attorney Breakfast, where we connected with new attorneys, partners, firms and local voluntary bar association leadership.

Currently, our greatest areas of need are children's, family and consumer cases requiring immediate attention--we would greatly appreciate it if you would consider taking a case. To view available cases please [click here](#) or contact our team directly about any cases.

We are looking forward to a wonderful summer filled with memorable experiences at Dade Legal Aid - Put Something Back. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

Karen J. Ladis

Karen J. Ladis, Esq.

Events & Engagement

Getting a Head Start on Pro Bono for Summer Associates

Summer associates gathered at Hogan Lovells Cadwalader to learn how they can begin making an impact through pro bono service early in their legal careers. The program featured remarks from **U.S. District Judge Rodolfo A. Ruiz II**, **Chief Judge Ariana Fajardo Orshan**, and **Judge Diana Gonzalez-Whyte**, whose insights reinforced the vital role lawyers play in expanding access to justice and serving their



communities. We are grateful to Hogan Lovells Cadwalader and all of our distinguished speakers for inspiring the next generation of pro bono advocates. A special thank you to **Al Lindsay**, **Daniel Balmori**, **Darnesha Carter Foli**, **Evelyn Caro Gutierrez**, and **Naomi Tanaka** for making this event possible. **Mr. Balmori, Esq.**, a **Partner** at the firm, had this to say: *"For 16 consecutive years—including through a pandemic—Hogan Lovells (now Hogan Lovells Cadwalader) has*

proudly partnered with Dade Legal Aid on programs like "Getting a Head Start on Pro Bono introducing the earliest-stage members of our legal profession to a culture of service that will define their careers and impact our community. Partnerships like this endure because they matter." [Click here to view pictures.](#)



Session I of the Robert C. Josefsberg Leadership Academy

Class IX of the Robert C. Josefsberg Leadership Academy had its first session on Ethics & Professionalism, generously hosted by **Rumberger | Kirk**. Fellows had the opportunity to hear from one of the Academy's "Wise Ones," **Paul Lipton**, who shared thoughtful stories and lessons drawn from a distinguished career in the law. We were also honored to welcome **Charise A. Morgan**, past Miami Dade Bar President, along with many Academy fellows, alumni, and guests. Thank you to **Scott**

Sarason, **Blanca Aguilera** and the entire **Rumberger** team for their exceptional hospitality and unwavering support in launching another outstanding class of emerging legal leaders.



36th Annual Bankruptcy Skills Workshop

We proudly co-sponsored the 36th Annual Bankruptcy Skills Workshop at the University of Miami School of Law, where attorneys and judges explored current developments in bankruptcy practice. The engaging program covered topics including Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 practice, updates to the new Bankruptcy Rules overhaul, ethical considerations, and a panel featuring distinguished judges from the Southern District of Florida. In addition to gaining valuable knowledge, our team connected with current volunteer attorneys and welcomed many new attorneys to our pro bono network.



Importance of Pro Bono

Put Something Back had the opportunity to speak with attorneys at **Morgan Lewis** about the importance of pro bono service and the critical role volunteer attorneys play in expanding access to justice. We extend our sincere thanks to the **Honorable Diana Gonzalez-Whyte** of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee for joining us and to the attorneys at **Morgan Lewis** for their longstanding partnership and commitment to us.



2026 Miami Arts Marketing Project Conference

Our team was proud to support the **Miami Arts Marketing Project 2026** Conference, a professional development event that equips artists and creative entrepreneurs with the tools, insights, and connections needed to thrive in today's creating ecosystem. We hosted an outreach table to share information about our Venture Law Project, which connects qualifying artists, creators, and entrepreneurs with pro bono legal assistance in areas such as copyrights, trademarks, patents, contracts, and other business-related legal matters.

Attorney Spotlights

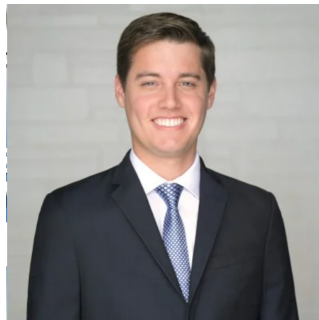


We are delighted to share that **Alina Nowicki, Esq.** is our new civil attorney handling a variety of matters for qualifying low-income residents. In this role, **Ms. Nowicki** screens, advises and represents individuals and families who are unable to afford an attorney on their own and are facing wage claim, breach of contract, garnishment, collections, foreclosure, housing, and other matters. We are grateful to be recipients of generous funding from FFLA, formerly the Florida Bar Foundation, to expand access to justice for those in need.



Congratulations **Steven Paulson, Esq.**, Senior Supervising Domestic Violence Attorney for receiving the 2026 Criminal/Legal System Professional Award from the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence. This award recognizes his compassionate, trauma-informed advocacy for survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse. Pictured are **Jennifer L. Dritt**, executive director of FCASV and **Mr. Paulson**.

Growing the Next Generation of Advocates



This summer, we are excited to welcome a talented group of students who are contributing their time, energy, and passion to **Dade Legal Aid and Put Something Back** while gaining valuable hands-on experience in public interest law. Here are a few of our many dedicated summer interns:

Top row (left to right): **Geovany Toledo**, **Kameron Walton**, and **Yasmin Sudarsanam**.

Bottom row (left to right): **Emma Kavcioglu**, **Joshua Hamburger**, and **Brooke Cooney**.

Geovany Toledo, a rising 3L at St. Thomas University College of Law, successfully completed his internship with Put Something Back. **Kameron Walton**, a rising 3L at the University of Miami School of Law, also successfully concluded his Bankruptcy Fellowship with us and is now clerking for a firm. We are grateful for their dedication and wish them continued success in law school.

Yasmin Sudarsanam and **Emma Kavcioglu** have joined us through **DukeEngage**. Both are rising sophomores at Duke University and are spending the summer working with our Guardianship and Child Advocacy teams shadowing our supervising attorneys.

Joshua Hamburger, a rising 2L at Stetson University College of Law, has rejoined the team at Dade Legal Aid as our Heirs' Property Project Fellow, where he is supporting efforts to help families preserve generational wealth through title clearing and estate planning.

Brooke Cooney, a rising senior at the University of Florida, is interning with Put Something Back and is assisting with our pro bono programs and attorney recruitment.

We are thrilled to have these and many other outstanding students with us this summer and look forward to watching them grow as future advocates for justice. Next month we will feature additional summer interns.

Save the Date: 07/16/2026



Dade Legal Aid
Put Something Back
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SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, July 16, 2026

**34th Annual Nuts & Bolts
of Family Law**
(Virtual Presentation)

Seminar is **Free** for all attorneys who
agree to accept a pro bono Family Law
case from Dade Legal Aid
Put Something Back.



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