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For Immediate release

Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid and Laurel Legal Services are merging to form Summit Legal Aid

Washington, Pa. (July 7, 2023) —Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid (SPLA) and Laurel Legal Services are merging to become Summit Legal Aid.

Since its inception, SPLA has assisted individuals with free community legal services, believing it should never be too costly or stressful for an individual to obtain personal representation. Likewise, Laurel Legal Services has remained committed to ensuring every individual has equal access to legal expertise since 1967.

With additional resources and a greater geographic reach, Summit Legal Aid can provide even stronger representation to those with urgent legal concerns needing help to navigate distressing family, housing, financial security, and domestic violence matters. As Summit Legal Aid, advocacy and education projects such as the Fair Housing Law Center, which focuses on housing discrimination, and the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic, which assists in federal tax issues, will also increase in scope.

“Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid and Laurel Legal Services share the same mission,” said Brian Gorman, executive director of Summit Legal Aid. “For this reason, we believe this merger makes perfect sense. We’re excited to see the results our united organization can achieve, and we look forward to working together to address the increasing needs of the communities we collectively serve.”

Gorman added that everyone has a right to life’s basic needs.

“When barriers infringe on those basic needs, whether barring someone from a job or restricting victims from leaving their abusers, Summit Legal Aid is committed to representing these individuals using our collective knowledge and passion for justice,” said Gorman.

Gorman added that every person, regardless of financial ability, should have fair representation in court.

(more)

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“The outcome of any case should not be determined by the ability to afford an attorney,” he said.

Summit Legal Aid is serving individuals' legal needs in Armstrong, Cambria, Clarion, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland counties. The cumulative experience of its attorneys is over 300 years. The roster of attorneys includes specialists in protection from abuse (PFA), parents' rights, housing, and economic legal services.

Last year, SPLA handled 3,662 cases, while Laurel Legal Services represented 2,513 clients. Though powerful individually, together Summit Legal Aid will be an impressive force in serving those in the community without the means to defend themselves.

About Summit Legal Aid

Summit Legal Aid provides legal advice and representation to individuals with limited resources. As a nonprofit organization, the firm provides quality service without charge. Summit Legal Aid believes financial restrictions should not prevent people from protecting their families, preserving their homes, finding economic security, or fleeing abuse. With a wide range of resources, Summit Legal Aid will support the communities of Armstrong, Cambria, Clarion, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland counties.

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