



PRESS RELEASE
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Portland, OR --Janice Morgan has been appointed to lead Legal Aid Services of Oregon (LASO), Oregon's federally funded statewide legal aid program. Morgan takes the place of Executive Director Tom Matsuda who has resigned after 10 years in order to return to his home state of Hawaii. Morgan, a 1983 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, has served as the Program Director of LASO's Farmworker program since 1998 and has an extensive background in poverty law, having worked for programs in Michigan and in Washington, D.C. Morgan will assume the position of Executive Director on April 1, 2012.

According to Michael Mason, LASO's Board Chair, "Morgan has developed a rich experience in coordinating legal services throughout Oregon and has shown her thoughtfulness and collaborative nature in strategic planning. Her passion for providing legal services to the poor and her thoroughness are just what LASO needs to overcome the funding challenges facing our legal aid programs. Our Board is very pleased to have this proven leader take the helm of LASO."

Tom Matsuda, who has worked with Morgan for the past 10 years states, "Janice has been a tireless advocate for low-income clients, is well respected by her LASO colleagues and has many connections with the private bar. I have the utmost confidence in her abilities."

Morgan says, "I'm looking forward to this new position. I believe deeply in the equal access to justice and look forward to the challenge of continuing to provide civil legal services to those most in need---even as resources for our work have been declining. I also look forward to working with our partners in expanding our funding base even further." She added, "I have great respect for the LASO board, the private bar, our community partners and the legal aid staff and I have no doubt that we are up to facing our challenges."

LASO is the largest of Oregon's statewide legal aid programs providing civil legal services to low-income Oregonians with high priority civil needs---food, shelter, medical care, income maintenance, and safety from harm. Oregon's legal aid programs provide direct assistance to over 25,000 clients each year, with thousands more helped through legal aid's pro se materials, self-help programs and pro bono projects. About 40% of legal aid's services are devoted to helping victims of domestic violence obtain restraining orders and deal with custody and child support. Legal aid programs now have offices in 17 Oregon communities and serve Oregonians in all 36 counties. Programs currently have resources to address less than 20% of the civil legal needs of the poor--- and while the demand for services has increased dramatically since the recession began, resources to fund legal aid have been shrinking.

For further information contact Sandra Hansberger, Campaign for Equal Justice. sandy@cej-oregon.org; 503.295.8442; Michael Mason, 503.799.5225. The Campaign for Equal Justice was founded in 1991 by Oregon lawyers to help fund Oregon's legal aid programs.