



MARYLAND
LEGAL AID

Advancing
Human Rights and
Justice for All

For Immediate Release

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Maryland Legal Aid Names Acting Chief and Supervising Attorney for Montgomery County Office

BALTIMORE, Md., (July 29, 2020) - Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is pleased to announce the appointments of Cristen Sargent and Frank Vitale as the Acting Chief Attorney and Acting Supervising Attorney, respectively, for MLA's Montgomery County office in Rockville.

Cristen brings 12 years of legal experience to this position. Before joining MLA in 2018 as a staff attorney in MLA's Montgomery County office, she was a senior staff attorney at Land of Lincoln Legal Aid in East St. Louis, Illinois and a child advocacy attorney for Voices for Children in St. Louis. She has also worked as an Attorney Advisor with the Social Security Administration and a staff attorney with Farmworker Legal Services of New York. Cristen received her undergraduate degree from Hamilton College and her law degree and graduate degree in social work from Washington University in St. Louis.

Frank joined MLA as a staff attorney in the Montgomery County office in 2015 where he focuses on housing and consumer issues. He also serves as co-chair of the Housing and Human Rights task forces, and was named MLA's Senior Attorney for Human Rights in 2018. Frank received his undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts in 2010. Following a year of service as an AmeriCorps volunteer, Frank received his law degree from Northeastern University School of Law in 2014, where he also interned with MLA's Human Rights Project while a student.

MLA's Deputy Chief Counsel Gina Polley shared, "MLA is fortunate to have a deep bench of dedicated and client-focused advocates to help ensure that during these challenging times, MLA is continuing to provide the highest level of service to low-income and marginalized residents of Montgomery County."

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About Maryland Legal Aid

Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is a private, non-profit law firm that provides free, civil legal services to people who are in Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties from 12 offices. As Maryland's 3rd largest law firm, MLA handles cases involving a wide range of issues, including family, housing, government benefits, healthcare, education, employment, and consumer law. MLA also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings in 14 jurisdictions. Other vulnerable populations, such as homeowners facing foreclosure, migrant and seasonal farm workers, people with developmental and mental health disabilities, nursing home and assisted living residents, and veterans seeking benefits and assistance with related legal issues also receive representation through special projects. MLA's Community Lawyering Initiative, which includes its *Lawyer in the Library* program, assists with expunging criminal records to remove barriers to obtaining housing, employment, and child custody through clinics held in libraries, community centers, non-profit organizations, places of worship, schools, medical facilities, and other gathering places.

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