



MARYLAND
LEGAL AID

Advancing
Human Rights and
Justice for All

For Immediate Release

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Maryland Legal Aid Receives Substantial Cy Pres Award from FedEx Class Action Lawsuit

BALTIMORE, Md., (July 24, 2020) - Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) recently received a cy pres award for more than \$156,000 as a result of undistributed funds from a class action lawsuit involving thousands of FedEx drivers alleging under compensation.

"This outstanding award comes at an especially critical time, as MLA is experiencing a dramatic increase in the need for civil legal aid among low-income Maryland residents as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic," says MLA's Executive Director Wilhelm H. Joseph, Jr. "This crisis leaves countless people with new and unanticipated civil legal challenges such as recovering unpaid wages, securing unemployment benefits, avoiding eviction and foreclosure, protecting victims of abuse, and much more."

Throughout the pandemic, MLA has remained operational via online and telephone intake and will re-open walk-in intake on July 27. Joseph added, "MLA will continue to maintain and maximize service delivery to clients with a focus on upholding client dignity, accessibility, and user friendliness by providing in-person legal assistance."

The plaintiffs in *Westcott v. FedEx Ground* case were primarily represented by the following attorneys and law firms, who negotiated statewide settlements with FedEx, and in each case designated the state's legal aid organization to be the beneficiaries of any undistributed funds:

Susan E. Ellingstad - Lockridge Grindal Nauen P.L.L.P. (Minneapolis, MN)

Beth A. Ross - Leonard Carder LLP (Oakland, CA)

Robert I. Harwood - Harwood Feffer LLP (New York, NY)

Wm. Christopher Penwell, Brian E. Weisberg - Siegel Brill, P.A. (Minneapolis, MN)

Anthony L. Marchetti, Jr. - Marchetti Law, P.C.J. (Cherry Hill, NJ)

Gordon Rudd - Zimmerman Reed, P.L.L.P. (Minneapolis, MN)

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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. The firm 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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