



MARYLAND
LEGAL AID

Advancing
Human Rights and
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Maryland Legal Aid Attorneys Akamigbo and Nivens Named Leaders in Law

BALTIMORE, MD., March 2, 2022 – Maryland Legal Aid’s (MLA) Deputy Chief Counsel, Chijioke Akamigbo, and Staff Attorney Douglas Nivens, II have been named to *The Daily Record’s* 2022 listing of Leaders in Law.

As Deputy Chief Counsel, Chijioke provides oversight and guidance to chief attorneys and staff in MLA’s Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Midwestern Maryland (Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties), Cecil/Harford, and Allegany/Garrett offices. Chijioke’s scope of experience in business and law, along with his creativity make him an effective advocate, mentor and manager.

Chijioke previously served as Managing Director of the Maryland Center for Legal Assistance (MCLA), MLA’s wholly-owned subsidiary formed in 2017. In this position, he oversaw the opening of self-help centers in Catonsville and Frederick, and led MCLA to serve a record number of 108,497 pro se litigants in 2019. MCLA also operates self-help centers in Baltimore City, Cambridge, Glen Burnie, Hagerstown, Salisbury, and Upper Marlboro as well as a call center in Annapolis. Prior to joining MLA in 2014 as a Staff Attorney, Chijioke maintained his own general law practice in Montgomery County, where he represented homeowner associations, small businesses, and immigration clients.

Douglas Nivens, II is a recipient of the Generation J.D. award, which honors attorneys who have been admitted to the bar for ten years or less, and demonstrate professional accomplishment, community service, and a strong commitment to the legal profession early in their careers. Douglas shares his passion for equal access to justice for Baltimore City tenants, not only through his advocacy in the courts, but also through his advocacy on the right to counsel initiative. His work has allowed MLA to successfully navigate the ever-changing pandemic landscape, to more efficiently and effectively provide rental assistance to tenants and prevent evictions. Prior to joining Maryland Legal Aid in 2019, Douglas was a Senior Budget Analyst and Attorney for the Social Security Administration, Office of Budget, and a litigation attorney for the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General.

MLA’s Executive Director Wilhelm H. Joseph, Jr. shared, “Chijioke and Douglas have stayed the course, rendering legal services to low-income Marylanders during these challenging times, and Maryland Legal Aid is extremely grateful for all of their contributions!”

The Leaders in Law winners will be honored April 7 at the Hilton Baltimore BWI Hotel, 1739 West Nursery Road in Linthicum Heights. Winners will be profiled in a special magazine that will be inserted into the April 8 issue of The Daily Record and will be available online at TheDailyRecord.com.

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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, employment, and consumer law. MLA also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings in 16 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, healthcare facilities, and other communal places.