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**Charlotte legal aid nonprofits host N.C. Chief Justice at Justice for All Luncheon**

Local legal aid nonprofits Legal Services of Southern Piedmont (LSSP) and Legal Aid of North Carolina-Charlotte (LANC) hosted their ninth annual Justice for All Luncheon March 12, 2015, at The Westin Charlotte with keynote speaker Chief Justice of the N.C. Supreme Court Mark Martin, chair of the N.C. Equal Access to Justice Commission, to highlight the need for and the work of ensuring access to justice for the Charlotte area's low-income community.

More than 600 guests heard addresses by Martin and civil legal aid and local bar leaders, stressing the importance of serving low-income families and individuals whose basic human rights are threatened by their inability to pay for legal representation in civil legal matters. Attendees heard the stories of North Carolinians protected from violence, homelessness and chronic illness through the work of these organizations and their partners.

"Among the most pressing challenges facing our justice system today is the delivery of legal services to people of modest means," Martin said at the event. "Unlike in criminal cases, there is no constitutional right to court-appointed counsel for indigent parties in civil cases. It is in these civil cases that legal aid programs play a vital role in providing legal services to individuals who otherwise would not be able to afford an attorney."

LSSP's legal work focuses on helping people in the Charlotte-area meet their basic human needs, ensuring that low-income children, families and the disabled have access to quality health care and benefits; preserving income and protecting financial stability of low-income families; and providing targeted legal assistance for people with special needs such as children, elderly and disabled persons, immigrants, veterans, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

LANC-Charlotte seeks to protect victims of domestic violence; help workers remove barriers to employment; preserve homes, automobiles and other essential properties that are subject to seizure and sale; and help tenants prevent homelessness by preventing unlawful evictions and helping them get necessary repairs for safe and habitable housing.

Sponsors for the event were Bank of America, Duke Energy and Hunton & Williams LLP.

To learn more about Legal Services of Southern Piedmont and Legal Aid of North Carolina, visit [www.lssp.org](http://www.lssp.org) and [www.legalaidnc.org](http://www.legalaidnc.org).

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