

Local attorneys recognized for pro bono efforts

Dhinojwala, Steel to be honored at Legal Aid event next month

“Inspiring.”

That’s the word Steven McGarrity, executive director of Community Legal Aid, uses to describe two local attorneys who will be honored next month at the organization’s annual gala.

“We have hundreds of attorneys who take cases for us all the time, who help clients in innumerable ways,” he explained. “But Mike and Duriya really took this concept to the next level, by engaging their colleagues and making this about pro bono partnership.”

Duriya Dhinojwala and Michael Steel, both attorneys with Akron-based law firm Brennan, Manna and Diamond, will be recognized at the upcoming event for spearheading the Neighborhood Law Clinic, a collaborative pro bono project aimed at providing free legal services to Akron’s Middlebury neighborhood.

“As a community leader, our law firm understands the importance of our professional responsibility to giving back,” said Steel. “Our firm’s core values are aligned with empowering others and ensuring that we take care of individuals in our community that need our help the most. By partnering with Community Legal Aid to provide a free legal clinic to a neighboring community, BMD is making a difference right here, right now.”

Dhinojwala agreed.

“There is no greater reward than offering your time and knowledge and seeing the positive impact it makes,” she explained. “As BMD approaches our 20th anniversary this coming summer, we appreciate our role in our community and the importance of being good stewards. As a firm, we are proud to be part of the Neighborhood Law Clinic and committed to pro bono work.”

The project, which launched in 2018, offered a half-day Saturday clinic at a local elementary school. In just two years, the clinic reached over 125 Akron residents who otherwise would not have had access to speak with attorneys about their legal concerns.

“A lot of times, what people need is just to sit with an attorney for 10-20 minutes to hear what they’re options are,” McGarrity said. “This clinic gives them the opportunity to do that, to get their questions answered, to get some advice, and to find the best path forward for them.”

Dhinojwala said the experience was deeply rewarding.

“The demand for pro bono legal service continues to grow, and the need for quality legal counsel is great,” she shared. “Collaborating with Community Legal Aid just made sense to us. What better way to show it than by sitting across the table from someone who needs your help? We look forward to continuing this partnership.”

Both Dhinojwala and Steel will be presented with the Pro Bono Award at Legal Aid’s 67th Anniversary Celebration on Nov. 14 at the John S. Knight Center.

For more information or to RSVP, visit www.communitylegalaid.org/67years or contact Legal Aid’s team at info@communitylegalaid.org.

Sidebar:

Community Legal Aid 67th Anniversary Celebration

November 14, 2019

Doors open at 5:15 p.m., dinner served at 5:30

Tickets \$100

RSVP at www.communitylegalaid.org/67years

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