

PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nominations for the 17th Legal Aid Practitioners Group Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are now open.

Nomination period ends 30 April; winners to be announced at awards at ceremony on 10 July in central London.

The 2019 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year (LALY) awards are launched today (Monday 4 January). There are 12 awards in total including Children's Rights, Public Law, Mental Health, Access to Justice through IT, and Criminal Defence (see full list, below).

LAPG CEO Chris Minnoch says:

"The LALYs continue to play a vital role in recognising and celebrating the lawyers who go the extra mile to achieve life-changing results for their clients. Just last week, for example, we saw the winner of our 2018 Public Lawyer award, Harriet Wistrich, break new legal ground with her victory in the appeal court on behalf of her client Sally Challen. I would encourage everyone who knows a lawyer who deserves recognition for their work - whether in the highest or the lower courts; whether by bringing once-in-a-lifetime, precedent-setting cases, or by being at the legal aid coalface day in, day out - to nominate them for a LALY award this year. We want to hear about their achievements and to ensure such vital contributions to access to justice are acknowledged."

The winners will be announced and receive their awards, which will be presented by Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, at a ceremony on 10 July.

Chris Minnoch says:

'We are delighted that Baroness Kennedy will be presenting the awards, as she is well known as a champion for justice and is held in the highest esteem by our profession. We would also like to thank Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE, our outgoing presenter, who previously presented the awards for us. Everyone in Team LALY would like to thank Doreen for her stalwart support for the LALYs over so many years; and to welcome Helena on board.'

For the fourth year running, LALY19 will be crowdfunding for sponsorship for the popular Legal Aid Newcomer award, allowing supporters to show solidarity with the profession by donating to become Friends of LALY19. In 2018, 76 supporters donated a total of £5,070. All money raised through crowdfunding will go towards the cost of staging the event, and to keeping ticket prices affordable in order to encourage newer members of the profession to attend.

The crowdfunding campaign goes live on 5 March and will end on 30 April.
For full details of how to become a Friend of LALY19 see:

www.lapg.co.uk/laly-crowdfunding

All LALY nominations must be submitted online via: www.lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination

The 2019 award categories in full are:

- * Children's Rights
- * Criminal Defence
- * Family (including Mediation)
- * Mental Health
- * Public Law
- * Social Welfare
- * Legal Aid Newcomer
- * Legal Aid Barrister
- * Practice Manager
- * Legal Aid Firm/Not-for-profit Agency
- * Access to Justice through IT
- * Outstanding Achievement (see below)

LALY19 award category sponsors:

Accesspoint
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Doughty Street Chambers
DG Legal
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The Legal Education Foundation
Matrix Chambers
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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. LAPG is the leading membership organisation for legal aid lawyers, providing a wide range of services and support. www.lapg.co.uk
2. The Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are into their 17th year. They are organised on a not-for-profit basis by LAPG. Nominations close on 30 April, and the winners will be announced at a ceremony in central London on 10 July 2019.
3. We do not seek nominations for the Outstanding Achievement award.