

2013 Equal Justice University Draws Big Crowd

The 2013 Equal Justice University (EJU), held October 9-11, 2013 in Nashville, Tennessee at the Millennium Maxwell House Hotel, drew over 200 members of the equal justice community. The conference, hosted by the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS) and co-sponsored by the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA), was planned with the support of TALS' statewide Training Work Group. This year's training work group, led by Harrison McIver III, Executive Director of Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc., successfully created a unique and informative conference experience by presenting speakers, convening task forces and organizing networking opportunities designed to help participants in their critical roles as advocates for some of the most vulnerable people in Tennessee.

This year's conference featured a line-up of Tennessee Leaders as keynote speakers. Gary Wade, Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, kicked off the conference at Wednesday's Welcome Lunch. AC Wharton, Jr., Mayor of Memphis, gave the keynote address at the Access to Justice Awards Dinner on Wednesday evening. Beth Harwell, Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives, and Cindy Wyrick, President of the Tennessee Bar Association, addressed conference attendees at Thursday's Leadership Luncheon.

EJU trainings are built on the suggestions and the work of Tennessee's collective equal justice community. At last year's EJU conference, attendees requested additional programming on elder law. In response, the 2013 EJU featured sessions by nationally recognized elder law expert Erik Carlson, Director of the Long-Term Care Project of the National Senior Citizens Law Center. Tennessee Justice Center's Gordon Bonnyman, a national expert on healthcare advocacy kicked off the conference with a discussion of the Affordable Care Act, offering critical information for all of the equal justice community. Those were just some of the 15 hours of training sessions provided throughout the conference.

At EJU, TALS presented the 2013 Access to Justice Awards. The Access to Justice Awards Dinner is a hallmark of each Equal Justice University and at this year's dinner, Mayor AC Wharton, Jr., Mayor of Memphis, Tennessee, addressed the gathering of equal justice community members. The awards ceremony also featured a special treat when Riney Green, for whom the B. Riney Green Award is named, presented the awards to the 2013 B. Riney Green Award winners. The 2013 Access to Justice Awards Winners and friends: Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services Executive Director Ann Pruitt, B. Riney Green Award Winner Harrison McIver III, 2013 New Advocates of the Year Emily O'Donnell and Charity Miles Williams, Mayor AC Wharton, Jr.,

Mayor of Memphis, Tennessee and B. Riney Green Award Winner Gordon Bonnyman.

The 2013 EJU, like previous conferences, also provided many opportunities for relationship building and fun. Attendees enjoyed an equal justice karaoke contest in the Maxwell Bar on Wednesday evening after the Access to Justice Awards celebration. On Thursday, conference attendees and guests attended a Equal Justice University Art Crawl, hosted by the 5th Avenue Arts District.

The Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services thanks all attendees, volunteers, sponsors, and special guests who helped make this year's event so successful.

See the TBA's coverage of the event [here](#).



Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Gary Wade spoke at the 2013 Equal Justice University Welcome Lunch.



TALS Board Chair and Memphis Legal Services, Inc. General Counsel Frank Cantrell helped welcome Chief Justice Gary Wade as he gave the keynote address at this year's Equal Justice University Welcome Lunch on Wednesday, October 9th.

Memphis Mayor AC Wharton, Jr., gave the keynote address at the 2013 Access to Justice Awards Dinner on Wednesday, October 9, 2013. Mayor Wharton is a former Executive Director of Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc.



At left, former MALS Executive Director Mayor AC Wharton, Jr. and current MALS Executive Director and B. Riney Green Award Winner Harrison McIver III. Below left, B. Riney Green enjoys and Gordon Bonnyman's, Executive Director of Tennessee Justice Center, acceptance of the B. Riney Green Award. At bottom right, TALS Executive Director Ann Pruitt (middle) is all smiles for Legal Aid of East Tennessee's Emily O'Donnell (left) and Charity Miles Williams (right) who were both named 2013 New Advocates of the Year.



Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives Beth Harwell and Tennessee Bar Association President Cindy Wyrick addressed the value of leadership to EJU attendees at the Leadership Luncheon.



Many Tennessee leaders gathered at the Equal Justice University. At far left, TN Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission Chairman George 'Buck' Lewis and TN Bar Association President Cindy Wyrick. At left, TBA President Allen Ramseur, Buck Lewis, Ann Pruitt, Chief Justice Gary Wade and Frank Cantrell.



At left, legal services attorneys and staff from across Tennessee gather to discuss the impact of the Affordable Care Act's implementation on their clients.

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