



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Vanessa Bandrich

Email: Vbandrich@legalservicesmiami.org

Legal Services of Greater Miami Presented Equal Justice Judicial Leadership Awards to Three Exemplary Judges: Judge Altonaga, Judge Hanzman, and Judge Sayfie

Miami, FL – May 20, 2022 - Legal Services of Greater Miami (Legal Services), the largest provider of broad-based civil legal services for low-income residents in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, honored **distinguished Equal Justice Judicial Leaders of the South Florida Community** at this year's **13th Annual Heart of Giving Celebration and Judicial Reception**. The charismatic **Louis Aguirre, WPLG Local 10 News Anchor**, served as Master of Ceremonies of one spectacular evening of celebration and community held on May 12, 2022, at the Paradise Plaza Event Space in the heart of the Design District.

These three exemplary leaders were presented with the **2022 Equal Justice Judicial Leadership Awards for their outstanding contributions to the pursuit of justice:**

- **The Honorable Cecilia M. Altonaga**, Chief United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida
- **The Honorable Michael A. Hanzman**, Circuit Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court
- **The Honorable Nushin G. Sayfie**, Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court

This year, Legal Services also presented the **2022 Equal Justice Public Service Awards** to **Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz** and **Commissioner Sally Heyman** of the Miami-Dade County Commission, both leaders who recognize the importance of access to justice and how critical it is to ensure their constituents can enforce their legal rights.

The program concluded with **remarks from Community Services Officer Morris Copeland**. On behalf of Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Chief Copeland presented each honoree with a certificate of commendation in appreciation of their service.

"The Heart of Giving has always been an opportunity to celebrate and honor leaders in our community, who **share a common vision and passion for access to justice, and this year is no exception**. We are grateful to all our honorees for their significant contributions of service and leadership," said **Monica Vignes-Pitan, Executive Director** of Legal Services of Greater Miami. "As we look forward to a post-pandemic world, we will **continue our strong advocacy to remove legal barriers that stand in the way of justice for so many of our neighbors** who are fighting to preserve their homes from eviction or foreclosure, and to achieve economic stability."

There was incredible excitement and energy as over 300 members of the legal and business community gathered in person after a difficult two-year pandemic period. The chair of this signature event, **Lilly Ann Sanchez**, principal of The L-S Law Firm, along with prominent Host Committee members, **Deborah Baker, Jason Alderman, Alex Bach Lagos, Tiffani Lee, Cary Lubetsky, Christopher Noel, and Sheila Oretsky**, helped secure over 75 sponsors in support of Legal Services' critical mission and to continue this annual tradition. Title sponsors for the evening were **Kozyak Tropin and Throckmorton** and **Ryder System**, and **Bacardi** was the

exclusive liquor sponsor. Without the incredible generosity of our sponsors, attendees and event partners, this event would not be possible.

Susana Baker of The Art Experience delivered a beautiful showcasing of artworks in collaboration with **Galleries Bartoux**, as well as curated pieces by local artists, **Adrian Avila, Armando Colls, and Monique Lassoij**, with partial proceeds supporting Legal Services of Greater Miami.

To view the event photos, visit <https://www.legalservicesmiami.org/2022-heart-of-giving>.

About Legal Services of Greater Miami

Legal Services of Greater Miami is the largest provider of broad-based civil legal services for the poor in Miami-Dade and Monroe and is recognized in the state and in the nation as a model legal services program. In any given year, Legal Services provides services which benefits almost 20,000 vulnerable members of our community who have nowhere else to turn for help – women, children, seniors, veterans returning from combat, people with disabilities, low wage workers and the homeless--who have problems in the areas of tenants' rights, homeownership, health and income maintenance, employment, special education, tax and consumer rights. For more information, visit www.legalservicesmiami.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

###