

# Community Legal Aid

A non-profit law firm serving the legal needs of low-income individuals and families in central northeast Ohio



[www.communitylegalaid.org](http://www.communitylegalaid.org)

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## Legal Aid amplifies Black voices for Black History Month

*Non-profit highlights staff and volunteer contributions to justice*

In honor of Black History Month, Community Legal Aid is sharing stories of advocates who are making a difference in the community. [Amplifying Black Voices](#) is a collection of videos and written stories shared by the firm's current and past staff, board members, and volunteers.

“We have incredible colleagues who not only make our organization better, they dedicate themselves to improving the lives of those they serve and enriching the communities where they live,” shared Steven McGarrity, executive director of the non-profit law firm. “History is unfolding right around us and we feel these stories need to be told. As one of our advocates pointed out, ‘Black history is American history’.

These stories are featured online at [www.communitylegalaid.org/blackhistory](http://www.communitylegalaid.org/blackhistory) and will be highlighted on the organization’s social media platforms throughout the month. The firm plans to regularly add to the collection and continue sharing these stories beyond the month of February.

McGarrity added that, like many organizations over the past few years, the firm has renewed its commitment to doing internal work to create a more inclusive and diverse work environment. The Black History Month project was one initiative birthed out of those efforts and led by an interdisciplinary team of staff members.

“We hope others will find inspiration and courage to engage in uncomfortable but critical conversations,” he shared. “Get to know the people in your circles and open up to understand the challenges they’ve faced and their stories of resilience and strength. The first step toward inclusion is understanding.”

McGarrity also pointed out the need to acknowledge history and thoughtfully examine current patterns so Americans can move forward in a meaningful way.

Advocates at the non-profit firm see first hand the ongoing challenges and disparities facing low-income Ohioans, particularly in communities of color. In addition to the Amplifying Black Voices Project, Legal Aid will spotlight racial justice this month as part of its ongoing email blog series, Big Ideas. The firm will also host two free, virtual educational events that center on racial justice.

- Thursday, February 17th at noon, the firm will broadcast Big Ideas Live, a one-hour, virtual panel discussion exploring this year's theme for Black History Month, Black health and wellness.
- Thursday, February 24th, Legal Aid will host a webinar entitled Getting Past Race Neutral Policies to Reduce Disparities from 12:30-4:45 p.m. This training will explore disparities in the area of health, housing, employment, taxes, and more. Continuing legal education (CLE) credits will be available.

Both events are free and open to attorneys, advocates, policy-makers, and community leaders interested in a further exploration of these topics. Details can be found on the firm's website at [www.communitylegalaid.org/events](http://www.communitylegalaid.org/events).

Sidebar:

Visit [www.communitylegalaid.org/BlackHistory](http://www.communitylegalaid.org/BlackHistory) to view the entire project or follow on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn by searching @CommLegalAid.

Visit [www.communitylegalaid.org/events](http://www.communitylegalaid.org/events) to learn about community and continuing education programs.

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