

Focus on *Access to Justice*

For more information, visit www.lsba.org/atj.

Schachtman recognized by Louisiana Library Association for access to justice efforts

Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) Access to Justice (ATJ) Self-Representation Counsel Michael W. Schachtman is the 2017 recipient of the Margaret T. Lane Award presented by the Louisiana Library Association's Government Documents Round Table Section.

Schachtman was recognized for his "significant contribution to legal reference services in Louisiana" and for his "contributions and services ensuring access to government and legal information and documents through initiatives such as the LEAP (Legal Education and Assistance Program) Program, the Lawyers in Libraries Program, and the Louisiana Self-Help Resource Centers."

A significant portion of Schachtman's LSBA work involves creating specialized resources for self-represented litigants and educating librarians about local and statewide services available to patrons. Because of his efforts, many individuals learn of Louisiana's legal resources, including local lawyer referral services, legal aid programs, pro bono volunteer



Michael W. Schachtman

organizations, statewide hotlines, court-approved forms and help desks.

Lawyers from every parish in the state have participated in the "Lawyers in Libraries" program, but many individuals are still unable to obtain representation.

Schachtman shares this award with partners at the Law Library of Louisiana and the Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center Library who also work to ensure Louisiana libraries and their patrons have access to Louisiana attorneys and legal resources. 📄

Applications being accepted for Re-Entry Court Collaborative Lawyering Program

The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) LIFT Incubator and Accelerator Program is working with organizations to reduce collateral consequences, faced by citizens convicted of an offense, through entrepreneurial lawyering. Applications for the new LIFT Fellow to work with this project will be accepted through April 7.

Launched in January, the Re-Entry Court Collaborative Lawyering Program was formed to address the gap in services for civil legal issues that pose barriers for returning participants in the Re-Entry Court program. This is critical as the potential for recidivism is compounded by a lack of access to justice for Re-Entry Court participants.

The LSBA's LIFT Program, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, the VOTE-NOLA, the First 72+ and the Justice and Accountability Center of Louisiana have created a program to meet the needs of Re-Entry Court participants. The program assesses the legal needs of the participants and then matches the participant with an attorney or organization that can address the need.

LIFT is accepting applications for attorneys with zero-five years' experience who have started or plan to start a solo practice designed to reduce recidivism by addressing collateral consequences arising from incarceration. The new LIFT Fellow will receive training, resources and mentorship to provide representation for civil legal matters.

For more information on the program and to download the application, go to: www.lsba.org/LIFT/ReEntryCollaborativeLawyeringProject.aspx. Application submissions must be emailed to amy.duncan@lsba.org. 📄

Survey now open: "Justice Gap" could be the answer to growing your business

The Louisiana Access to Justice Commission's Modest Means Committee is examining the lack of legal services available to clients falling into the "justice gap" — the gap between those able to access the courts through free legal services and those able to pay the standard rates charged by many private attorneys.

Many Louisiana residents fall into this "gap." Studies have found that a large percentage of Louisiana households fall above the federal poverty guidelines but cannot afford market-rate legal services. In most industries, a gap in the market might be presented as a business opportunity for

market expansion of services, into which innovative entrepreneurs would enter. However, the legal market has been slow to expand into this territory of providing "affordable legal services."

As the committee examines how to assist with this issue — by connecting attorneys offering rates based on a client's ability to pay with modest means clients — attorneys interested are encouraged to respond to the online survey: www.surveymonkey.com/r/modestmeans.

The program launched could help increase business for innovative solo and small firm businesses willing to enter this market. 📄