

PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nominations for the 15th Legal Aid Practitioners Group Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are now open.

Following success last year, sponsorship for popular Legal Aid Newcomer award to be raised through crowdfunding again.

Nomination period ends 28 April; Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE to present awards at ceremony on 5 July in central London.

Nominations for the 2017 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year (LALY) awards are now open. There are 12 awards in total including Children's Rights, Public Law, Immigration and Asylum, Access to Justice through IT, and Criminal Defence (see full list, below).

After successfully trialing the use of crowdfunding to raise sponsorship for the Legal Aid Newcomer award, which traditionally kicks off the awards ceremony, LAPG has decided to repeat the exercise for 2017.

LAPG director Carol Storer says:

'We were overwhelmed by the amount of support from people last year who became official "Friends of LALY16", and donated to sponsor the Legal Aid Newcomer award. Some 67 of them made contributions, and we raised over £4,000, against our original target of £3,000. We are hoping to do even better this year. The fact that so many organisations and individuals want to show their solidarity with the LALYs and the young lawyers who are the future of our profession is real testament to the passion and commitment of this sector. '

All money raised by Friends of LALY17 will go towards the cost of staging the event, including keeping ticket prices affordable.

Full details of how to become a Friend of LALY17 see:

www.lapg.co.uk/laly-crowdfunding

New for 2017, all LALY nominations must be submitted online via:

www.lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination

The 2017 award categories in full are:

- * Children's Rights sponsored by CILEx
- * Criminal Defence sponsored by DG Legal
- * Family Private (including Mediation) sponsored by Resolution
- * Family Public sponsored by Resolution
- * Immigration and Asylum sponsored by Accesspoint
- * Public Law sponsored by Irwin Mitchell
- * Social and Welfare sponsored by Tikit
- * Legal Aid Newcomer sponsored by Friends of LALY17
- * Legal Aid Barrister sponsored by The Bar Council
- * Legal Aid Firm/Not-for-profit Agency sponsored by The Law Society
- * Access to Justice through IT sponsored by The Legal Education Foundation
- * Outstanding Achievement sponsored by Matrix Chambers

LALY17 media partner is Legal Action Group (media partner)

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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 15th year. They are organised on a not-for-profit basis by LAPG. Nominations close on 28 April, and the winners will be announced at a ceremony in central London on 5 July 2017.