

# **Dear Friends: Fall Letter from Executive Director**





Dear friends,

It is with great enthusiasm and gratitude that I write to you today as the newly appointed Executive Director of AppalReD Legal Aid. Every day, I meet new staff and learn about program accomplishments that make me proud to be at the helm of this historic and vital organization.

We have an amazing team of dedicated and talented staff who are committed to our mission. Our attorneys, many of whom were born in this region, exemplify a

commitment to their community that is nothing short of inspiring. Choosing to return home after pursuing a legal education, they embody the essence of giving back, making a lasting difference in the lives of the people they serve.

The outpouring of support and gratitude from former clients, volunteers, and community members has been heartwarming. As I engage with individuals during my visits to our local offices and outreach events, they express their appreciation for the outstanding work of our staff and share stories of how AppalReD Legal Aid has played an instrumental role in their lives or organizations. It is a testament to the lasting impact we have had and continue to make in the lives of countless individuals throughout our community.

Our dedication to the safety and wellbeing of families and vulnerable members of our community is at the core of our values at AppalReD Legal Aid. Within my initial days as Executive Director, I was privileged to provide welcoming remarks at the prestigious 20th Annual Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse Conference. This event gathered nearly 400 attendees. I was impressed with engaging speakers and substantive topics as well as the compassionate community of professionals who gathered from across the Commonwealth.

October serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of raising awareness about domestic violence and providing support to survivors. At AppalReD Legal Aid, this mission is part of our daily work. In September alone, we opened 105 cases related to domestic violence, profoundly impacting the lives of over 150 adults and 160 children. These numbers underscore the critical need for our services and the depth of the issue in our community.

As I reflect on my first 30 days, “recovery” emerges as a theme that profoundly impacts our community. The devastating 2022 flood left lasting scars, and through engaging with survivors and our dedicated Disaster Response team, I gained firsthand understanding of the immense need for legal assistance in the aftermath. We are diligently expanding our team to meet these needs and provide comprehensive support to those affected.

Furthermore, the pervasive reach of substance use and the opioid epidemic cannot be overstated. Nearly everyone I meet has a connection to someone in recovery or has been affected by this crisis. Witnessing the dedicated efforts of our Project Renew has been nothing short of inspiring. This initiative is instrumental in assisting

individuals in active recovery, helping them overcome barriers to secure housing and employment, and paving the way for a brighter future.

I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming weeks. If you are near Prestonsburg, [please attend our open house on November 15](#). Don't hesitate to reach out by email or phone at anytime.

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into the AppalReD Legal Aid family and to the mountains of Appalachian Kentucky.

Angeleigh Dorsey

Executive Director

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