

New Partnership to Help Underserved Madison County Residents with Legal Issues

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ALTON - A new medical-legal partnership between WellSpring Resources and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation (LOLLAF) will help low-income individuals with mental health conditions access free legal services. This is the first mental health medical-legal partnership in the State of Illinois.

Latasha Barnes, Staff Attorney with LOLLAF, is helping to lead the project. Barnes was involved with two successful medical-legal partnerships in St. Louis City and St. Louis County between 2008 and 2012.

“Bringing this partnership into a behavioral health setting will help a particularly vulnerable population,” Barnes said. “A large portion of people with serious mental health conditions suffer housing inequality, discrimination, and many other barriers to sustainability and self-sufficiency. This program will help eliminate those barriers and improve individual well-being.”

The Advocacy Team will provide direct representation, brief legal assistance, and advice and counsel at WellSpring Resources. The partnership will make these services easily accessible to individuals experiencing mental health conditions, and help them address legal issues such as housing stability, food security, personal safety, employment barriers, and adequate healthcare access. The partnership will also benefit local college and university students by creating an internship program for students studying law or social work.

The partnership is funded in part by a grant from the Madison County Mental Health Board. For more information, call Latasha Barnes at (618) 462-2331, ext. 2319.

Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Inc. (LOLLAF), established in 1972, provides low income and senior residents of central and southern Illinois with high quality civil legal services in order to obtain and maintain their basic human needs. Through advice, representation, advocacy, education, and collaboration, LOLLAF seeks: to achieve justice for those whose voices might otherwise not be heard; to empower individuals to advocate for themselves; and to make positive changes in the communities they serve.

Founded in 1959, WellSpring Resources is a total mental wellness resource serving Madison, Greene, Jersey, and Calhoun counties. With offices in Alton and Jerseyville WellSpring's compassionate professionals work with children, adults and families to inspire hope and personal growth. Last year, over 7,600 people sought to change their lives for the better through WellSpring's mental health and substance abuse services. Visit www.wellspringresources.co for more information.

Senior Services, Counseling Services, Case Management Services, Mental Health Court, Family Services, Wellness and Recovery Services, psychiatric services and provider WellSpring Resources are funded by the Madison County Mental Health Board.