



Outstanding Service Award-- Helaine M. Barnett, Esq.

Helaine M. Barnett has devoted her entire professional career to the provision of legal aid to the poor and in the pursuit of equal access to justice. She was appointed President of the Legal Services Corporation in January 2004, the first legal aid attorney to be appointed to that position where she served for six years. LSC is the largest single funder of civil legal aid programs in the United States. As President, she was responsible for providing federal grants and oversight to 137 legal aid programs with over 900 offices throughout the country. Under her leadership, LSC issued the groundbreaking Justice Gap Report documenting the unmet civil legal needs of low-income Americans. Before joining LSC, Helaine Barnett spent 37 years with The Legal Aid Society in New York City and headed its multi-office Civil Division. Among her accomplishments, she created its Homeless Family Rights Project and mobilized its 9/11 disaster assistance response. Since returning from Washington D.C. in 2010, she was appointed by the Chief Judge of New York to Chair a statewide Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services, which has become the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, which she continues to Chair. As a result of its work, New York has allocated annually \$100 million of state funding for civil legal services, more than any other state in the country. She also has taught a seminar at NYU Law School on Access to the Civil Justice System. Helaine Barnett has held leadership positions in the American Bar Association, serving on its Board of Governors and its Executive Committee. She is a recipient of numerous awards including the ABA Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement, the NYU Law School Alumni Achievement, the New York Law Journal Lifetime Achievement, and the New York State Bar's Gold Medal, and has published several law review articles on access to justice. She is a graduate of NYU Law School and Barnard College.