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### **Legal Services of the Hudson Valley Hosted a Successful Inaugural Ulster Partners in Justice Reception**

**POUGHKEEPSIE, NY:** On Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) held its 1<sup>st</sup> Ulster Partners in Justice Reception at The Belltower in Rosendale, NY. During the fundraising event, which was created to support LSHV's work in Ulster County through its LET JUSTICE GROW Fund, the organization honored Eli B. Basch, Esq., and his firm, Basch & Keegan LLP, as "Champion of Justice" and Rondout Savings Bank as "Advocate for Justice." Close to 115 people attended the networking reception catered by Stone Soup Food Company, and 23 community leaders lent their support to the organization as Honorary Event Committee Members.

Dignitaries who attended the event included, in alphabetical order: Kevin Bryant, Esq., City of Kingston Corporation Counsel; Dr. Donald Christian, President, SUNY New Paltz; Evelyn Clarke, Director, Ulster County Youth Bureau and Ulster County Human Rights Commission; Hon. Lisa M. Fisher, Greene County Supreme Court Justice; Michael Hein, Ulster County Executive; Michael Iapoce, Esq., Commissioner, Ulster County Department of Social Services; Sharon Lyons, Director, Ulster County Crime Victims Assistance Program; Melissa Manna-Williams, Esq., President, Mid-Hudson Women's Bar Association; Robert McCreanor, Esq., Executive Director, Hudson Valley Justice Center; Hon. Anthony McGinty, Supervising Judge, Ulster County Family Court; Hon. Sara W. McGinty, Ulster County Surrogate Court Justice; Steve Noble, City of Kingston Mayor; Hon. William Pape, Town of Rosendale Court; Hon. Karen K. Peters, Appellate Judge, 3rd Dept., NYS Supreme Court; Nina Postupack, Ulster County Clerk; Kevin Quilty, Vice President for Ulster, Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley; Stacey Rein, President & CEO, United Way of Ulster County; William J. Ryan, Jr., Esq., SUNY Ulster; Derek Spada, Esq., President, Ulster County Bar Association; Hon. Jonah Triebwasser, Red Hook Town and Village Courts.

Celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year, LSHV is the only provider in the Hudson Valley of free, comprehensive, legal services in civil (noncriminal) matters for individuals and families who cannot afford an attorney when their basic human needs are at stake. This includes urgent legal needs such as: domestic violence, housing emergencies including eviction and foreclosure prevention, healthcare, disability and benefits, elder law, consumer fraud and more. In 2016, LSHV handled more than 15,000 cases impacting over 36,000 household members; 1,037 of

those cases – impacting 2,359 household members, including 786 children – were handled out of LSHV’s Ulster County office, located at 550 Aaron Court in Kingston.

LSHV’s Attorney-in-Charge, Kingston Office, Lauren Sheeley explained to the guests in attendance why this event and the work LSHV does is so important, saying, “As the only provider of free civil legal services in the area for individuals and families who cannot afford an attorney when their basic human needs are at stake, we know that the people we help are our neighbors. They are just like us, but after one major illness, job loss, or tragedy, the dominoes start to fall, and they end up in a desperate situation and in need of a helping hand.” Oftentimes, people need an attorney to protect their rights and assure fairness in the justice system. That’s where LSHV’s almost 90 attorneys across seven counties make a difference.

On video, former LSHV client, Amy Goodman, inspired attendees by sharing her story of being helped by LSHV to leave an abusive relationship and to gain custody of her sons. She called herself “the face of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley’s clients. I could be your friend, your co-worker, your sister, or your daughter,” and asked the audience to support LSHV’s work for the sake of others like her who have nowhere else to turn when they face life-altering crises like domestic violence, loss of a home to eviction or foreclosure, or the loss of subsistence income. She credited LSHV Staff Attorney for Domestic Violence Services, Elizabeth Corwin’s, work with giving her and her children the second start in life she thought she would never see.

### **Rondout Savings Bank**

The event honored Rondout Savings Bank for its philanthropic support of a wide range of nonprofits, including Legal Services of the Hudson Valley. Marjorie Rovereto, Chief Lending Officer, who accepted the award on behalf of the bank, said “Rondout Savings Bank first opened its doors on May 1, 1868. The bank was founded by Thomas Cornell and other business leaders who felt the Village of Rondout needed its own savings bank. Rondout Savings Bank has been successful since its founding. It has weathered the financial panics in the 1800s, the Depression of the 1930s and the financial turmoil that followed. From the beginning, Rondout Savings Bank’s core values have always been about strengthening our relationship with people in the communities we serve. Our success is attributed to the fact that we are truly a community bank. Our employees, management and trustees volunteer countless hours to local organizations and civic groups throughout the area. The bank contributes 10% of its annual earnings each year back to the communities it serves through our “Dividends to the Community” program. As we approach our 150th Anniversary, with five local offices, Thomas Cornell would approve of how the bank has grown over the years – keeping with the original pledge to be “a bank for the people,” with absolute safety for all the bank’s customers. It’s an honor to be recognized by Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, whose core mission is to protect the rights of and promote justice for the individuals and families within our community.”

### **Eli B. Basch, Esq. and Basch & Keegan**

Eli B. Basch, Esq. and Basch & Keegan were honored for outstanding dedication to obtaining justice for injury victims and their families, as well as for enriching the quality of life in the City of Kingston and Ulster County through philanthropy and community involvement.

Maureen Keegan, Esq., a Partner at Basch & Keegan LLP, who presented honoree Eli B. Basch, Esq. and Basch & Keegan LLP with their award, noted their long-standing support of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, as well as their business and civic achievements throughout the Hudson Valley. Basch, a Kingston native, said at the event, “I am very proud that Basch & Keegan has been a supporter of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley for the past 15 years, and I hope that the organization will continue to play a leadership role in the provision of high quality legal services to those without the means to pay for them, ensuring that the justice system is open and available to all.”

Eli B. Basch, Esq. has been helping Ulster County injury victims for over forty years. He has dedicated his career to helping personal injury victims and the families of individuals who were injured or killed in Ulster County car accidents, tractor-trailer accidents, falls, fires, explosions, recreational accidents, boating accidents, plane crashes, falls, construction accidents, defective product accidents, and medical negligence.

Mr. Basch is widely regarded as one of the most experienced and successful personal injury attorneys in Upstate New York. With over 250 trial verdicts and more than 5,000 settlements to his credit, Mr. Basch has handled more trials than any other personal injury lawyer currently practicing in Ulster County. In fact, he has represented more injury victims than any other lawyer in the history of Ulster County.

A graduate of SUNY Albany and Western New England School of Law, where he received his J.D., he has been named a Super Lawyer of Upstate New York by Super Lawyers magazine for the years 2011 - 2017, and he has been recognized among the Top 100 Trial Lawyers of New York State since 2007. He is a member of the following professional associations: American Association for Justice; National College of Advocacy; New York State Bar Association; New York State Trial Lawyers Association; New York Trial Academy; Super Lawyers, Upstate New York; Capital District Trial Lawyers Association; and the Ulster County Bar Association, of which he is a Past President.

Mr. Basch resides in Kingston – just two miles from his office – with his wife Susan, who is a native of Kerhonkson. He is a veteran of the United States Navy and the Vietnam War.

Regarding why he accepted Legal Services of the Hudson Valley invitation to be honored at the 1<sup>st</sup> Ulster Partners in Justice Reception, he said “I believe strongly in the availability of free legal assistance for those in need. Legal Services of the Hudson Valley provides dedicated, competent and essential help to low income individuals and families in the community who are facing a range of civil legal issues and crises. I look forward to a continuing to support this organization.”

Basch & Keegan handles only personal injury and accident cases, and only represents injury victims. Basch & Keegan does not represent insurance companies and it does not engage in defense work. There are no other firms in Ulster County that focus their practice solely on personal injury and accident claims. Attorneys represent clients with a wide range of traumatic injuries, including brain injuries, spinal injuries, fractures, scars, burns, torn ligaments and tendons, orthopedic injuries, nerve damage, psychological injuries, and wrongful death. They handle all types of automobile accidents, pedestrian injuries, slip and fall accidents, construction accidents, dog bites, product liability, boating injuries and more. They also offer representation in cases involving medical malpractice and nursing home neglect. Additionally, Basch & Keegan brings lawsuits directly against insurance companies for wrongfully denying claims for fire losses, property damage and no fault issues. With more than 85 years of combined experience, the lawyers at Basch & Keegan have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to effectively represent people who are injured as a result of negligence, carelessness or recklessness. The firm’s attorneys have earned a formidable reputation among defense attorneys and insurance adjusters as being well-prepared, dedicated to their clients and ready to go to trial on every case. Also, they enjoy their work of helping injury victims.

This year’s **sponsors** included: Gold – Basch & Keegan; Silver – Rondout Savings Bank; Bronze – Mainetti, Mainetti & O’Connor, P.C., and Justin M. Sher, Esq. and his firm, Sher Tremonte LLP; Giving Tree –an anonymous individual; Venue – The Belltower, Rosendale; Floral – Green Cottage, High Falls; Beverages – Keegan Ales.

Information on LSHV’s programs is available online at [www.lshv.org](http://www.lshv.org).

**Pictured:**

Left: Lauren Sheeley, Attorney in Charge, Kingston Office; Marjorie S. Rovereto, Chief Lending Officer at Rondout Savings Bank

Right: Maureen Keegan and Eli Basch, of Basch & Keegan; Lauren Sheeley, Attorney in Charge, Kingston Office

Bottom: LSHV CEO Barbara Finkelstein; Ulster County Executive Michael Hein; Lauren Sheeley, Attorney in Charge, Kingston Office

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