

# News

## Two Philadelphia Lawyers Recognized with Goffman Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service by the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation

5/22/2020

The Pennsylvania Bar Foundation selected Philadelphia lawyers **Stephen P. Chawaga**, executive director of Episcopal Legal Aid, and **Wesley R. Payne IV**, a partner at White and Williams LLP, for 2020 Louis J. Goffman Awards. The Goffman Award is named for a late Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) president and recognizes individuals and organizations committed to outstanding pro bono service.



**Stephen P. Chawaga**

Chawaga has a long history of pro bono service. He founded Episcopal Legal Aid in November 2019 to promote access to justice by bringing pro bono civil legal services to low-income residents of Philadelphia and surrounding counties. The organization accomplishes its mission by joining individuals in need of services at meals and other church-sponsored gatherings to break down all access barriers and promote an atmosphere of comfort and security where clients can articulate their concerns. In its first four months of service, Episcopal Legal Aid held 24 clinics and served 102 clients.

In addition, Chawaga drafted the complaint in the Baby Neal case brought by the American Civil Liberties Union against Philadelphia's Department of Human Services to correct fatal deficiencies in the department's oversight and administrative practices. He also has a long service record at the Support Center for Child Advocates as a volunteer attorney representing child victims of neglect, a member of its board of directors and chair of its Volunteer Committee. Chawaga has also handled prisoners' rights cases as part of a program administered by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and has volunteered with Philadelphia VIP.

Chawaga is a long-time member of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and American Bar associations. He worked on several projects with the Temple-LEAP Program at the Philadelphia Bar Association and served in several positions in the PBA Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition, including scorekeeper, judge and an attorney coach for a school in Montgomery County.