

# Center for Arkansas Legal Services welcomes new executive director

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Milo Mumgaard - Submitted photo

The Center for Arkansas Legal Services, based in Little Rock with seven offices in central and southern

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Arkansas, recently announced its first new executive director in almost three decades, Milo Mumgaard.

Mumgaard "joins CALS at a critical moment for low-income Arkansans who are facing an increasingly difficult economy and legal environment and need protection and advancement of their fundamental civil legal rights now more than ever," a news release said.

Mumgaard has over 30 years of experience leading civil legal services and public interest legal programs across the country. Most recently, Mumgaard served seven years as executive director of Legal Aid of Nebraska, a statewide legal services nonprofit law firm based in Omaha. "During his successful tenure, Legal Aid of Nebraska doubled its staff to over 100 (including almost 60 attorneys), nearly doubled its revenue and budget to over \$11 million annually, launched new community-based projects to more effectively bring critically needed civil legal services to families and communities across Nebraska, and significantly increased its pro bono (volunteer) legal profession support and participation," the release said.

"CALS is pleased, after a national search, to welcome Milo to Arkansas. Milo brings to CALS an exceptional combination of real-world, on-the-ground experience with guiding legal services for the poor in some of the most difficult places in the country, and a successful track record in working with all sides to overcome barriers to equal justice for all," UALR Bowen School of Law Professor Nicholas Kahn-Fogel, CALS board president, said in the release.

"We're confident Milo's leadership will continue to build on CALS' remarkable tradition and history and the amazing accomplishments of our staff and volunteers. We are excited for a new era ahead for CALS, with Milo's experienced leadership and increasingly positive results achieved for low-income Arkansans."

Prior to his service as executive director of Legal Aid of Nebraska, Mumgaard's career included time spent as chief counsel to Lincoln's mayor, "where he focused on affordable housing and sustainability; founder and executive director of Nebraska Appleseed, a leading nonprofit focusing on the rights of low-income families, where Mumgaard litigated multiple impact cases, arguing numerous times before both the federal 8th Circuit Court of Appeals and Nebraska Supreme Court; helped develop national legal strategies as associate general counsel for the AFL-CIO, to protect low-wage workers in some of the most vulnerable and least safe jobs in the country; and represented migrant farmworkers in federal court while serving in rural West Texas. Mumgaard is an

honors graduate of the New York University School of Law, where he was editor-in-chief of the Review of Law and Social Change," the release said.

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"I am honored to join CALS and its passionate staff and network of supporters. I am very much looking forward to working with Arkansans of all backgrounds to seek, in all the ways we can, a more fair and just life for everyone," Mumgaard said in the release. "CALS has been instrumental over the years in providing, day in and day out, the legal services that provide hope and opportunity for families and people who too often are simply left out. I've dedicated my career to building a more equal justice system for everyone, one that fully lives up to its inspiring ideals, and I'm delighted to join my new friends and colleagues in Arkansas to do just that."

Mumgaard succeeds Jean Turner Carter, who served over 26 years as executive director at CALS. Carter retired on Sept. 30 after a 40-plus-year career in civil legal services in Arkansas.

"Jean provided steady and strong leadership through many mergers, funding challenges, political leadership changes, and major advances in the law affecting low-income Arkansans," the release said.

"Jean's legacy is unmatched here in Arkansas, and she has truly been a special force in building and maintaining legal services for the poor all over the state," board President Kahn-Fogel said in the release.

"Through her dedication and commitment, she has been an example for all of us and leaves behind a remarkable record. We look forward to continuing to build on all Jean has accomplished."

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