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AFTER NEARLY FOUR DECADES OF LEADERSHIP, LILLIAN O. JOHNSON TO RETIRE FROM COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES

Community Legal Services today announced that Lillian O. Johnson, the firm's Executive Director, has decided to retire effective April 2022. Community Legal Services ("CLS") is Arizona's largest nonprofit civil legal aid program, established in 1952. The law firm currently has offices in five counties, a budget of \$7 million, and a staff of over 80, including 28 attorneys. Ms. Johnson has served in the position of Executive Director since 1982. The Community Legal Services Board will be utilizing a recruiting firm to execute a nationwide search for a new Executive Director.

Ms. Johnson has been a passionate advocate for equal access to justice for those who could not afford to pay for it throughout her legal career. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association as well as several taskforces and committees, both on the national and local level, working to increase access to legal services and improve the quality of life for low and moderate-income families.

"Lillian is one of those leaders that we admire and strive to be. She has led the organization for over 39 years with incredible passion for our mission, the clients we serve, and our associates throughout the state. She is a problem solver, a community convener, and an advocate for the underserved," said Jennifer Holsman Tetreault, CLS Board President. "We will miss her invaluable leadership and significant contribution to the legal services community; however, we wish her only the greatest of happiness during this next chapter of her life."

Prior to joining Community Legal Services Ms. Johnson graduated from Howard University and began her legal services career while in law school at the University of Chicago, Mandel Legal Aid Clinic. Upon graduation from law school, she served as a staff attorney and managing attorney for Chicago's largest legal aid program, the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago.

In 2011, Ms. Johnson was honored as a White House Champion of Change as a part of President Barack Obama's Winning the Future Initiative; wherein they highlighted her everlasting commitment to access to justice for all, throughout her career.

In 2013, Ms. Johnson was inducted into the Maricopa County Bar Association's Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame's goal is to honor in perpetuity those remarkable individuals who have built the legal profession in this county and beyond, who have made extraordinary contributions to the law and justice, and who have distinguished themselves at the highest levels of public service.

In February of 2014, Ms. Johnson was a featured person and an honoree of the Phoenix Chapter of The Links, Inc., the Phoenix Chapter of Jack & Jill of America, Inc., and the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity Inc., Gamma Mu Chapter of Phoenix. This program honors the community's most distinguished citizens in the Art of Jurisprudence.

In November 2014, the William E. Morris Institute for Justice honored Ms. Johnson with the Hero Award for Access to Justice.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Johnson oversaw the creation of a new virtual community training program "Lunchtime Law Lessons." These free virtual community trainings cover a variety of civil legal topics and have reached almost 3,000 participants since April 2020.

CLS is dedicated to providing legal assistance, advice or representation, self-help materials, and legal education so people can know their rights. We focus on helping survivors of domestic violence; assisting victims of consumer fraud and abuse, protecting tenants from unlawful/unfair practices by landlords, foreclosures, legal problems affecting agricultural workers, wage claims and other employment matters, and federal and state programs affecting peoples' health and economic stability. For Every \$1 invested in Community Legal Services, \$6.68 is returned into our community, ensuring families facing eviction receive representation, domestic violence victims are safe, and veterans have access to the benefits they so deserve.