



GATHERING EVIDENCE
REMOTELY

A PEEK INSIDE
GUANTANAMO

VOL. 28, NO. 2
SUMMER 2020

THE PUBLIC LAWYER

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION | GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SECTOR LAWYERS DIVISION



Government Lawyers
Beautify Spaces

not one but two art events — sponsored by Art Aid Naples, a group of artists passionate about the mission of Legal Aid — that raised funds for its organization.

Laura Barnard, a retired special education teacher, spearheaded the idea in January of 2019 after a friend was deported to Guatemala, leaving behind his wife and five children. Looking for immigration lawyers, Barnard reached out to Legal Aid and spoke with Sister Maureen Kelleher, an attorney on staff who is now retired. Inspired by the work of Kelleher, Barnard decided that she wanted to do something to help raise money and awareness for the organization. She went to a gallery in town, and the owner gave her the names of 10 artists. Another gallery put her in touch with additional artists. Thirty artists generously donated artwork, which was showcased at a launch party. After a weeklong online auction, Art Aid Naples raised \$28,000 in February of 2019.

In November of 2019, Leslie Vega, daughter of George Vega (who served as a Florida assistant attorney general and later moved into private practice), approached Barnard with another idea. Vega wanted to honor her father, who had recently died, and help raise funds for Legal Aid. Vega came up with the Quick Draw event. The event was held at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club, and approximately 27 artists, recruited by Vega and Barnard, participated. After the

Art Aid Naples, Legal Aid Service of Collier County, Florida

Legal Aid Service of Collier County was the beneficiary of

artists worked in *plein air* (the French term for *painting outside*) for three hours, the art was immediately auctioned off, with Naples Mayor Bill Barnett serving as auctioneer. The event raised another \$28,000.

“The artists [for these events] really care about the mission of Legal Aid,” said Jeff Ahren, director of development. “Some of them are former attorneys. They know about Legal Aid and are passionate about the issues.”¹¹

Legal Aid did incur some costs for both events, including licensing for an online auction tool (\$2,600); print ads (\$5,000); printing (\$380); T-shirts (\$400); video production costs (\$5,500); and food, beverages and supplies for the launch party (\$1,000). Additionally, teams of volunteers spent countless hours coordinating the events and helping Legal Aid development staff promote and facilitate these events.

Legal Aid hopes to repeat both events in the future.¹²



Artists at the Quick Draw event, Naples, FL
Photo credit: Ray Cazares