



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 14, 2024

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LAWYERS FOR CHILDREN AMERICA
ANNOUNCES CHAIRS OF NEW LIAISON PROGRAM
WHO TOGETHER HAVE MORE THAN 6 DECADES EXPERIENCE
HELPING ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

HARTFORD, CT – Lawyers for Children America (LFCA), a nonprofit organization founded thirty years ago to provide pro bono legal representation to abused, neglected, and at-risk children, today announced co-chairs for its newly-created **LFCA Advocate Network**.

[Erika Amarante](#) of Wiggin and Dana (New Haven office), [Richard Harris](#) of Day Pitney LLP (Hartford office), and [Peter Knight](#) of Robinson+Cole (Hartford office) were named co-chairs of the LFCA Advocate Network, designed to support lawyers volunteering their services to represent children in juvenile court. The trio brings more than 60 years and 10,000 hours of experience as volunteers with LFCA, offering *pro bono* services for children who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, and who are navigating the child welfare system.

“We are extremely fortunate that Erika, Rick, and Peter agreed to lead this initiative,” notes executive director Priscilla Pappadia. “Each is a highly competent partner at a well-respected law firm, who has given many hours of his or her time to advance the lives of vulnerable children. As co-chairs of this new program, they will help LFCA strengthen and support our network of more than 300 volunteer lawyers statewide.”

LFCA Advocate Network is being organized in advance of LFCA’s 30th Anniversary Celebration. The program will create a network of volunteers, across law firms and corporations, who can learn from one another and can benefit from LFCA training, convenings, expertise, and resources. Membership in the program is by invitation and members are responsible for coordinating their firm or business’ participation in LFCA cases.

“Most of LFCA’s volunteer lawyers practice in areas other than child welfare. The LFCA Advocates Network will be an indispensable resource for their continued learning and professional support,” said co-chair Erika Amarante. “I still recall my first case representing a young boy over twenty years ago. It would have been so helpful to have a network of colleagues to call upon for advice.”

“One important aspect of this new program is that we can go beyond our core work of helping more than 400 children per year through LFCA, to creating a network of community-minded lawyers across Connecticut,” noted co-chair Rick Harris. “The ability for solo practitioners,

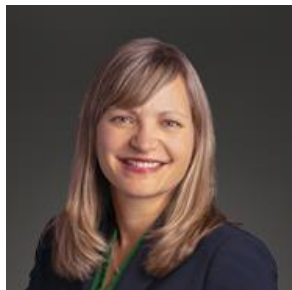
members of larger law firms, and lawyers who work in corporate legal departments to build relationships and share information will impact the quality of our services and our ability to recruit more lawyers to meet the growing need.”

LFCA’s new cases more than doubled in 2023, indicating there is a growing need for volunteer lawyers to advocate for children who are at risk through no fault of their own. The children that volunteer lawyers represent are often the unintended victims of mental health issues, domestic violence, drug use, incarceration, and poverty.

“By building this network, we can help volunteer lawyers access the resources they need most in order to help vulnerable children,” said co-chair Peter Knight. “At the same time, LFCA hopes to recruit more lawyers, grow financial support, and raise visibility with policy leaders. LFCA Advocates Network is about pooling our resources and efforts to make a significant impact on the lives of children.”

LFCA is a nonprofit organization, whose small operating budget is leveraged 4:1 by the generous donation of thousands of hours of *pro bono* legal services contributed by more than 300 volunteer lawyers, who are encouraged and supported by their firms, corporations, and other employers. The LFCA Advocate Network will include more than 40 liaisons who will have access to training, print resources, opportunities for in-person convenings and education, and online opportunities for learning, support, and networking. The program will launch later this year.

Newly Named Co-Chairs of LFCA Advocate Network:



Erika Amarante
Wiggin and Dana



Richard Harris
Day Pitney LLC



Peter Knight
Robinson+Cole

About LFCA

LFCA recruits and trains committed lawyers from premiere law firms and corporate legal departments, whose legal counsel ensures the child client’s desires, are made known to the court. In cooperation with Yale Child Study Center and local agencies, child clients receive comprehensive help including medical and mental health and educational services. Our goal is to intervene, so the cycle of child abuse does not continue from one generation to the next, and to engage the private bar in systemic improvements.

