NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Pro Bono News

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NYSBA Provides Free CLE for Attorneys Who Represent Indigent Parents in Family Court Proceedings

Gloria Herron Arthur*, Esq., Director, Department of Pro Bono Affairs, New York State Bar Association

Herron Arthur*

The Committee to Ensure Quality of Mandated Representation (CEQMR) of the New York State Bar Association believes that the quality of legal representation a person receives should not depend upon whether she can afford to hire an attorney. Since 2007, the CEQMR has been committed to providing free training opportunities for attorneys who represent low-income individuals in criminal and family court proceedings. Ongoing training helps to ensure that low-income and indigent clients will consistently receive competent high-quality legal representation from the attorneys who represent them for free.

Continuing legal education programs were provided in 2009, 2011, and in 2013. On June 5th, the Committee sponsored a free 5.5 credit MCLE program for mandated providers who represent adults in Family Court Article 10, termination of parental rights (TPR) and other related proceedings. The video-taped program was entitled: "Focus on Family Court: Holistic & Effective Family Representation".

Leading practitioners knowledgeable in the representation of adults in Family Court proceedings provided an overview of best practices for working with experts in Article 10, child welfare and related proceedings; how to conduct more effective preliminary hearing preparation and discovery; and how to incorporate social workers and other non-legal professionals into your practice so as to ensure holistic representation for your clients. Because our clients seldom present with a single, discrete legal issue to be addressed in one forum, the CLE also featured a panel of experienced practitioners who discussed the unintended legal consequences that may develop for clients and offered practical suggestions and strategies for how to coordinate the representation of a client facing multiple consequences in multiple forums.

Awards were presented to outstanding practitioners and programs that provide free legal services to the indigent in criminal and family court matters: the Denison Ray Award and the Excellence in Mandated Representation Awards. Named in memory of Denison Ray, a career legal activist, who led legal services programs in New York and other states, the Denison Ray Criminal Defender Award recognizes a criminal defense attorney who exemplifies the highest level of professionalism in providing zealous representation to indigent clients in criminal proceedings. The 2015 Denison Ray Criminal Defender Award honoree was Gregory A. Kilburn, First Assistant Public Defender in the office of the Wyoming County Public Defender. Mr. Kilburn was truly deserving of this recognition as he has been a zealous advocate for his clients and has always conducted himself with the highest level of professionalism.

The Excellence in Mandated Representation Awards recognize an individual attorney or organization who has "demonstrated consistent adherence to the highest professional standards in providing man-

To obtain the free CLE materials, video-replay, and the revised 2015 Standards for Providing Mandated Representation, please send a request to probono@nysba.org.

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The Pro Bono Newsletter is available online at www.nysba.org/ProBonoNews

A single asterisk* next to a name indicates the individual is a member of NYSBA. A double asterisk** indicates a law student member of the Association.

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Article authors are responsible for the correctness of all information, citations and quotations. Articles may be edited for clarity and length.

Editor: Gloria Herron Arthur, Esq.

City Bar Justice Center Launches Innovative Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Project at the Brooklyn Federal Courthouse

Carol Bockner, Director, Pro Bono Initiatives
City Bar Justice Center

New Yorkers who cannot afford an attorney sometimes seek legal redress as pro se litigants and struggle to navigate the courts on their own. New York State's courts have made great strides in becoming more user friendly for pro se litigants. Now the federal courts are beginning to address the obstacles for pro se litigants as well. This spring, the City Bar Justice Center has opened an innovative new project that targets pro se litigants for additional help – the Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Project or FedPro. FedPro, a pilot project of the City Bar Justice Center in collaboration with the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, provides information, advice, and limited-scope legal assistance to people proceeding pro se in a variety of federal civil cases in the Eastern District of New York. Launched in mid-March 2015, the Project is led by an experienced federal litigator who is a career legal services lawyer, Nancy Rosenbloom. FedPro, modeled after a similar initiative in Northern California, is located onsite in the courthouse and provides consultations, referrals, brief advice, and assistance with drafting pleadings, discovery

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NYSBA

NYSBA Provides Free CLE for Attorneys Who Represent Indigent Parents in Family Court Proceedings

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dated representation," has "engaged in innovative efforts to improve the overall quality of mandated representation," or has "promoted steps by the legislature, executive branch or judiciary to ensure the provision of high quality mandated representation."

The distinguished recipients of the Excellence Awards were Joanne Macri*, The Center for Family Representation and The Justice First Project of the Center for Appellate Litigation.

Ms. Macri was selected as an Excellence honoree on account of her tireless innovate efforts to improve the overall quality of mandated representation provided to immigrants – whether in family or criminal court proceedings. Ms. Macri was formerly the Director of the Immigration Project at the New York State Defenders Association. She is currently the Director of Regional Initiatives at the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services. She is also co-chair of the Association's Committee on Immigration.

The Center for Family Representation was selected for consistently demonstrating adherence to the highest professional standards in providing mandated representation to parents in abuse, neglect, and termination of parental rights proceedings.

The Justice First Project of the Center for Appellate Litigation was chosen as an Excellence Award honoree for its innovative efforts to improve the quality of post-conviction representation afforded clients who were either wrongfully convicted or actually innocent.

Since it was first established more than 10 years ago, the CEQMR has been a vigorous advocate for the provision of high quality legal services for the indigent in criminal and family court proceedings. In 2005, the CEQMR developed standards of representation that reflect best practices for handling criminal and family court cases. The standards have been improved and revised several times over the course of the past several years, most recently in March, 2015.

To obtain access to the free CLE materials, video-replay, and revised 2015 Standards for Providing Mandated Representation, please send a request to probono@nysba.org.

Staff of the Center for Family Representation Excellence Award Recipient

Dennison Ray Honoree Gregory A. Kilburn

Excellence Awardee Joanne Macri

Excellence Award Recipient Justice First Project of the Center for Appellate Litigation

Standing (from left to right): David Klem, Amanda Rolat, and Robert Dean* (CAL Attorney-in-Charge); Sitting (left to right): Nicolas Schumann-Ortega, Claudia Trupp (Project Director), Jennifer Roth, and Molly Ryan*

AEP Volunteer's Service Makes a Difference

Matthew Q. English IV, AmeriCorps Vista Member
Attorney Emeritus Program Coordinator, Feerick Center for Social Justice

The New York State Bar Association recently presented Attorney Emeritus volunteer William L. Gibson Jr.* with the 2015 President's Pro Bono Service Award in the category of Senior Attorney. Mr. Gibson was recognized for the service he provides to the Legal Aid Society of Mid New York, Inc. (LASMNY). Although Mr. Gibson has been an Attorney Emeritus volunteer for a little over a year, serving clients in Central New York and the Southern Tier, he has already made significant contributions by helping out with child support and domestic violence cases, the Binghamton Veterans Center "Talk to a Lawyer Program", providing over-the-phone advice on a consumer hotline, and appearing in housing court.

William L. Gibson

Arlene Sanders* noted that Mr. Gibson, "never says no to volunteer… [and] is constantly asking about new programs." Ms. Sanders, who was originally a corporate lawyer, is now the managing attorney for pro bono and understands that pro bono helps "fill the gaps" by working in tandem with not-for-profit and community-based organizations. Ms. Sanders liked that the Attorney Emeritus Program (AEP) provides attorneys 55 and older with the opportunity to represent and advise low-income persons without requiring the volunteer to pay the attorney registration fee if they are retired. Active attorneys can also participate but must pay the registration fee and meet CLE requirements.

Mr. Gibson, as he approached retirement wanted to continue doing work. "It's just my personality", he chuckled "I didn't want to spend all day playing golf." Mr. Gibson spent the past fifteen years practicing law in both government and private practice, nine of them as the County Attorney for Broome County. He echoes Ms. Sanders' sentiment regarding the lack of civil legal services for low-income persons. He recognizes the need for pro bono and the importance of litigants having representation.

During our interview, Mr. Gibson cited the Supreme Court case of *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, as New York State Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman often does when he speaks about the AEP. This landmark case ruled that under the Constitution indigent defendants have the right to assistance of counsel in criminal cases. For Mr. Gibson, this is a fundamental right and essential for a fair trial and due process of law in all cases. He noted that, "unless we are mindful, the law can be a bifurcated law, one for the poor and one for the rich."

Mr. Gibson believes "that until funding becomes available … there will always be a need for volunteer lawyers." He hopes that there will be a significant push to fund civil legal services for the indigent. For Mr. Gibson, the volunteer work he has done at LASMNY has been eye opening. Having experienced firsthand the enormity of the need and lack of sufficient civil legal services funding has pushed Mr. Gibson to donate substantially more hours than the 60-hour commitment AEP volunteers are asked to make.

Since 2014, Attorney Gibson has served dozens of clients. He helped a client receive an abatement of rent due to severe warranty of habitability issues, resulting in a substantial savings which the family then applied towards other housing. In another case, Mr. Gibson defeated a holdover proceeding by proving that the landlord had accepted rent after the action was commenced, thereby preventing a family from unjustly being evicted. In a single year he has represented 48 tenants and their families, enabling many of them to avoid or delay evictions, to obtain reductions in money judgments, and to get needed repairs.

> *Mr. Gibson … recognizes the need for pro bono and the importance of litigants having representation. … "[U]nless we are mindful, the law can be a bifurcated law, one for the poor and one for the rich".*

During the biennial registration period, Emeritus volunteers are required to contribute a minimum of 60-hours of pro bono for which they can receive up to 15 CLE credits. Many volunteers, like Mr. Gibson, serve above and beyond this number. Attorneys who are 55years or older, whether active or retired, who have ten years of work experience, and are in good standing are encouraged to change their registration status to Emeritus.

Mr. Gibson is one of more than 100 and still growing number of active Emeritus volunteers who are currently providing pro bono legal services to help address the access-to-justice gap many New Yorkers face. For more information about the Attorney Emeritus Program please go to: www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/volunteer/emeritus.

Pro Bono Net Welcomes Niki De Mel, Pro Bono & Special Initiatives Coordinator

Jacquelyn (Jax) Gitzes, Development Associate
Pro Bono Net

Niki De Mel

Pro Bono Net is delighted to introduce our newest staff member, Niki De Mel, who recently joined us as our Pro Bono and Special Initiatives Coordinator, based in our New York City office. Niki brings a diverse legal background with a focus on public interest work. She has experience in access to justice and pro bono work in Australia, the UK and the US. She will be focusing her efforts on Pro Bono Net's various New York based programs and initiatives. We are thrilled to have such an experienced and passionate professional join our team.

Niki will be supervising the NYC Pro Bono Center (www.probono.net/ny/nyc/),which is coordinated in partnership with host organizations, The Legal Aid Society and the City Bar Justice Center. She will also be supporting the activities of more than 10 different pro bono and legal aid partner organizations that manage online substantive law practice areas on probono.net/ny. The NYC Pro Bono Center is a hub for pro bono volunteer activity in New York, and currently assists more than 9,000 members with a range of training and resource tools to better equip and facilitate representation of low income and disadvantaged New Yorkers, as well as raise awareness of pro bono opportunities and news. She will lead outreach efforts to law firms, bar associations, courts, law schools and other stakeholders in New York State to encourage pro bono involvement, raise awareness of resources to support volunteers, and identify new pro bono support opportunities.

She is also responsible for spearheading pro bono initiatives and working collaboratively with non-profit legal aid organizations, national law firms and other public interest legal advocates to build innovative technology-based solutions to help bridge the justice gap. Presently, this includes the CLARO Consumer Debt Defense Project, a partnership with MFY Legal Services and the Feerick Center to increase assistance to unrepresented New Yorkers in consumer debt cases; an initiative to identify the role technology can play in expanding appropriate roles for non-attorney volunteers; and a new collaboration with the NYS Office of Victims Services, the Empire Justice Center and SUNY Center for Human Needs Research to identify the unmet civil legal needs of crime victims outside of New York City and develop a planned response to those needs.

Originally from Australia, Niki received her dual law and business degrees with honors from the University of Melbourne, and recently graduated with a Master of Laws (LLM) degree from New York University. She previously worked for several years as an associate at a leading pro bono law firm in Australia, Clayton Utz. She has also worked in the civil legal services community in the UK, where she designed and implemented access to justice initiatives with LawWorks at the National Pro Bono Center, and worked with self-represented litigants at the Royal Courts of Justice Citizen's Advice Bureau. With an interest in access to justice and technology, she has previously been involved in initiatives like remote virtual clinics and the Google Campus Clinic, and is an excited new member of the Pro Bono Net team.

About Pro Bono Net

Pro Bono Net is a national non-profit organization, founded 15 years ago, dedicated to increasing access to justice for the disadvantaged. Through innovative technology solutions and expertise in building and mobilizing justice networks, Pro Bono Net transforms the way legal help reaches the underserved. Today, we work with a broad network of access-to-justice partners to close the justice gap. Our comprehensive programs, including www.probono.net, www.lawhelp.org and www.lawhelpinteractive.org, enable legal advocates to make a stronger impact, increase volunteer participation, and empower the public with resources and self-help tools to improve their lives. For more information, visit www.probono.net.

Answering the Call of the Legal Profession

300 Attorneys, Top Law Firms Recognized for Distinguished Pro Bono Service

Valerie Zurblis, Director of Marketing and Communications
Nassau County Bar Association

Every year, hundreds of attorneys in Nassau County volunteer pro bono legal services, consultations and referrals to help thousands of Nassau residents in crisis. A volunteer attorney may provide reassurance to a distressed homeowner afraid to lose his house to foreclosure, or represent a client in court to avoid eviction. Another may take on a long-term matrimonial case for a victim of domestic abuse, or help a struggling couple decide when it's time to file for bankruptcy and how to go about it. When disaster strikes -- as Superstorm Sandy did in 2012 -- volunteer attorneys can be found on the front lines, giving hands-on legal assistance to help residents begin the process of getting life back to normal.

Nassau County Bar Association President John P. McEntee*, a partner at Farrell Fritz, remarked, "We are fortunate that when people are desperate and don't know where to go, volunteer attorneys are ready to answer the call, helping those lower income and vulnerable people who cannot afford an attorney gain access to the civil justice system."

To recognize the pro bono attorneys and law firms that have performed distinguished volunteer service for the community, on April 1 the Nassau County Bar Association, The Safe Center LI and Nassau/Suffolk Law Services held the First Annual Access to Justice Pro Bono Recognition Reception at NCBA's headquarters in Mineola. Three hundred volunteer attorneys received the Access to Justice Certificate of Recognition, and 26 Long Island law firms and solo practitioners that provided the most pro bono hours of service in 2014 were honored. Topping the list are:

Large Law Firms

Rivkin Radler LLP
Farrell Fritz, P.C.
Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP

Medium Law Firms

Horing Welikson and Rosen P.C.
John P. DiMascio & Associates
Schlissel Ostrow Karabatos, PLLC

Small Law Firms/Solo

George Frooks*, Esq.
Jon Press*, Esq.
Janet Connolly, Esq.

In addition, two businesses -- Realtime Reporting and Ultimate Process Service -- were acknowledged for donating free services in crisis situations.

"The premise of this recognition is to honor those attorneys and law firms that place the highest priority on helping society and those less fortunate than us, " said Access to Justice Committee Co-Chair Gregory Lisi*, a partner in charge of the Labor & Employment Departments at Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana. "We, as a profession, have a duty to help those less fortunate try to obtain justice, and these firms understand and embrace this calling."

NCBA Second Vice President and Committee Co-Chair Steven Leventhal*, a partner at Leventhal, Cursio, Mullaney & Sliney, added, "The attorneys honored today represent the best tradition of the legal profession - the tradition of service to the community. They make us all proud. This event is our way of saying thank you."

The NCBA Access to Justice Committee is a joint effort of the NCBA, The Safe Center LI and Nassau/Suffolk Law Services and other legal service providers, working together to coordinate legal services for the community, strengthen the core of volunteer attorneys through education and professional development, and provide information on free and reduced fee legal resources.

The complete list of honorees is available at www.nassaubar.org.

Legal Services NYC & Large Law Firms Partner to Prosecute Building Code Violations on Behalf of Low-Income Tenants

Adam J. Heintz*, Esq., Director of Pro Bono Services
Legal Services NYC

Over the past year, Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) and large law firms and corporations have partnered to tackle an area of critical need for low-income New Yorkers: the deplorable housing conditions faced by so many. Housing repair cases—known colloquially as "HPs"—are now being regularly brought on behalf of tenants in housing court by LSNYC and pro bono counsel. In less than a year, more than 50 housing repair cases have already been placed with pro bono counsel. These are clients who simply could not have been helped without pro bono support.

The problem of housing disrepair in New York City is severe. Hundreds of thousands of affordable units are falling apart: exposed to wind and water; with collapsing ceilings and floors; without heat, hot water, or functioning appliances; infested by mold and vermin; or with dangerously defective wiring.

In many gentrifying neighborhoods, landlords are purposefully neglecting—or even intentionally damaging—rent stabilized units. Unable to legally evict these low-income tenants, they constructively evict them by forcing them to live without those basic features that make a space habitable. When tenants finally give up and leave, landlords renovate and flip the units—a devastating loss to the tenant that loses her home, and the loss of yet another affordable unit in New York City. Other times, landlords—or NYCHA—refuse to repair units because they don't care to spend the money to do so. And, shockingly, some buildings still have repair problems from Hurricane Sandy, more than 2 and 1/2 years after the storm.

In June of 2014, LSNYC launched an initiative to recruit and train pro bono attorneys at large law firms and corporations to take on housing repair matters. Since then, we have enlisted the support of more than 10 law firms and one corporation. These include Skadden Arps, Hughes Hubbard & Reed, Hogan Lovells, Gibson Dunn, Covington & Burling, Jenner & Block, Willkie Farr, and King & Spalding. Also taking on housing repair cases are Perkins Coie, Sullivan & Cromwell, Stroock, Stroock & Lavan, and American Express.

Our model is to carefully screen cases, to provide an onsite training at participating firms that includes a thorough manual, and then provide ongoing support and technical assistance—in many cases co-counseling the cases. This works well because—unlike other housing matters—HPs are procedurally straightforward and easy for private attorneys to learn. What is more, pro bono volunteers get the chance to work directly with clients, draft motion papers, and appear in court.

Pro bono advocates are already achieving meaningful results. In one case, John Dunn*, an attorney from Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP, represented a client in the Bronx. Ms. T and her daughter were forced to use a bucket because they had no functioning sink. Mr. Dunn quickly obtained relief for his client, who had a range of repair needs resolved in her apartment—including getting a functional sink. "Helping Ms. T on this case was one of the most meaningful experiences of my legal career," Mr. Dunn said. "I saw the difference that my work made very quickly. This tenant had been complaining for months before she found counsel, but it wasn't until she had an attorney on the case that the landlords acted."

The impact of this initiative is also being felt by LSNYC staff. "Pro bono support has made a tremendous difference for our clients who need repairs," said Cathy Bowman, Director of LSNYC's LGBT/HIV Unit in Brooklyn. "Sadly, LSNYC does not have the resources to take on most of these cases. Now, instead of turning away clients in need, we are able to connect them to zealous pro bono advocates who compel landlords to make their homes livable again."

LSNYC continues to expand the housing repair initiative to new partners, and to increase capacity to serve clients. We look forward to having an even greater impact in the months and years ahead. Firms and corporations interested in participating should contact LSNYC through Adam Heintz, at aheintz@ls-nyc.org.

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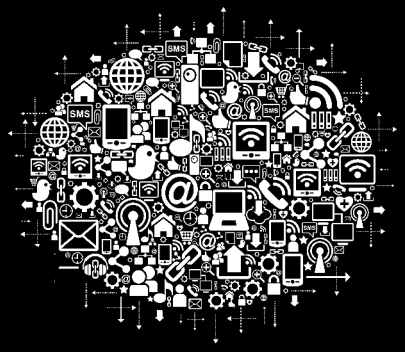

NYSBA

Nassau Bar Association Names Ashka Patwa Pro Bono Attorney of the Month for June 2015

Valerie Zurblis, Director of Marketing and Communications
Nassau County Bar Association

Ashka Patwa

Attorney Ashka Patwa of Roslyn has volunteered for Nassau Suffolk Law Service's VLP Landlord/Tenant Attorney of the Day Project since 2012, providing tenants with much needed representation that they would not otherwise be able to afford. She has devoted over 30 hours in the past year assisting tenants with their disputes, helping many remain in their residence who would otherwise be faced with eviction and rendered homeless. For her tremendous work ethic and dedication to help Nassau County residents in need, Nassau County Bar Association President Steven J. Eisman* has named her Pro Bono Attorney of the Month for June 2015.

Patwa earned her J.D. from Hofstra University School of Law in May 2008, then joined Horing Welikson and Rosen, P.C., Williston Park, concentrating in real estate/landlord-tenant litigation. She oversees the firm's Nassau County Landlord-Tenant practice in the Nassau County District Court, which resolves residential and commercial summary proceedings. She is also a part of the firm's Administrative Law Department, where she has succeeded in assisting clients challenge proceedings before the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

Patwa is an active member of the Nassau County Bar Association's District Court Committee. She is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Courts of the Eastern District of New York and Southern District of New York.

Thirteenth Annual Elder Law Fair Hosted By Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County

Sally Curran*, Esq., Executive Director
Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County

The 13th Annual Elder Law Fair took place on May 28 at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York. The event featured a series of 24 educational seminars on legal issues of interest to older adults and their families. There was also an opportunity for participants to speak with a volunteer attorney and visit informational tables hosted by sponsors of the event.

The day began with keynote speaker, Mary Anne Corasaniti, Elder Abuse Advocate from Vera House, a nonprofit agency which works to end domestic and sexual violence. Following the welcome, three sessions of seminars took place with topics including; Estate Administration, Baby Boomers Guide to Social Security, Women's Retirement Reality, Senior Exploitation and Abuse, and much more. The Elder Law Fair was free and open to the public.

The Volunteer Lawyers Project is grateful to all who supported the event, including the Presenting Level Sponsors: Avalon Document Services, Estate Planning Council of CNY, Inc., M&T Bank Mortgage Division, and Onondaga County Department of Adult & Long Term Care Services.

To learn more about the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, visit www.onvlp.org.

Thirteenth Annual Elder Law Fair, Syracuse, New York

Legal Aid and Cleary Gottlieb File Federal Lawsuit For Women Inmates Raped and Sexually Abused at Rikers

Louis S. Sartori, Esq., Director, Pro Bono Practice
The Legal Aid Society

On May 19, 2015, The Legal Aid Society and the law firm Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP filed a class action lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on behalf of their clients, women who seek an injunction requiring the City of New York and the Department of Correction (DOC) to take all steps necessary to prevent women in its custody at Rose M. Singer Center (RMSC), the women's jail at Rikers Island, from being raped and sexually abused by correction officers.

Plaintiffs also asked the Court to order the City to formulate a comprehensive plan to remedy the pattern of sexual victimization at RMSC and seek damages against a correction officer who repeatedly raped and sexually abused them.

The lawsuit charges that correction officers are allowed to exploit the authority of their position to repeatedly rape women in their care. The City has failed to protect women who report rape and sexual abuse from retaliation by correction officers by giving the officers a free hand to retaliate against these women. This retaliation includes placing them in punitive segregation based on false disciplinary charges, threats and other verbal abuse, deprivation of food for extended periods of time, and refusing to permit women to bathe. "Sexual violence is at record proportions in DOC, and rape and other sexual abuse of women are endemic at the Rose M. Singer Center, the women's jail at Rikers," said Seymour W. James*, the Attorney-in-Charge of The Legal Aid Society. "According to a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), RMSC is one of the twelve worst jails in the country regarding rates of staff sexual misconduct. Nationwide, 3.2% of jail inmates reported sexual victimization, but at RMSC the rate was 8.6%, and sexual victimization rates were higher at RMSC than at the other Rikers jails in the survey. According to the DOJ survey, approximately 5.9% of RMSC inmates reported sexual abuse by staff."

Lawyers handling the case for The Legal Aid Society include William Gibney, Marlen Bodden, and Barbara Hamilton. Lawyers handling the case for Cleary Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton, LLP include Mitchell Lowenthal*, Sarah Edwards, Sue Guan*, Elizabeth Hanly*, Jacob Johnston, Sean Mullen, and Tiffany Tam.

City Bar Justice Center Launches Innovative Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Project at the Brooklyn Federal Courthouse

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documents, motions and opposition to motions, to low-income pro se plaintiffs and defendants. The Project has access to all of the resources of the City Bar Justice Center, including supervision, malpractice insurance, computer equipment, a cloud-based case management system, support on client counseling and legal issues, and a wide pro bono network.

FedPro addresses an access-to-justice gap. Pro se cases constitute approximately twenty percent of the total civil filings in the Eastern District each year. The Court's pro se clerks are not permitted to give legal advice to pro se litigants and most legal services programs do not handle this kind of work. In its first two months of operation, the Project has shown excellent results. The Project attorney has consulted with and assisted on more than 80 civil cases. From pro se plaintiffs in employment discrimination and other civil rights cases to pro se defendants in small business disputes and mortgage foreclosure actions (and much in between), litigants have kept the office busy. FedPro receives referrals from District Judges, Magistrate Judges, the Court Clerk's office, and word of mouth, and has received early positive feedback from court personnel as well as the clients.

As the work progresses, FedPro is developing informational packets and forms, and tracking our data to measure results and refine the model.

This summer FedPro will add a student intern component to the Project as well as a rotation of pro bono attorneys from participating firms who will be of counsel to the City Bar Justice Center. FedPro is working with Sullivan & Cromwell LLP and Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP to establish pro bono support for the new office. Law student externs or clinic students are expected to join the Project in the fall.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and MasterCard Partner to Serve Clients at a Legal Clinic

Marian Genio*, Esq., Pro Bono Director, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

LSHV and MasterCard Staff

In the interest of serving the many clients of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley who face the too common problem of dealing with consumer debt, LSHV entered into a partnership with MasterCard to provide assistance. A pro bono attorney with experience in consumer debt, as well as a staff attorney from LSHV, were among those who spoke to MasterCard's Law, Franchise Integrity and Franchise Development staff at the company's Purchase, New York headquarters. In preparation for the clinic, training topics included consumer and student loan debt, as well as budgeting and obtaining and understanding a credit report. As a general overview, over twenty employees of MasterCard learned about the clients of LSHV, the challenges they face on a daily basis and difficulties specific to the low-income population that we serve.

On June 1, 2015, LSHV and MasterCard held the joint clinic at the YMCA in White Plains. LSHV summer interns, eager to meet with clients, were available to do intakes. The clients were then paired with staff from MasterCard. Many clients were facing multiple issues relating to debt. They were grateful for the assistance of the volunteer attorneys and staff who helped them make sense of their complicated situations.

Cathy L. Lueders, Esq., a Senior Vice President at MasterCard and Natasha Fapohunda, Esq., Managing Counsel and Head of Corporate Development, were instrumental in assembling staff to participate in the project. LSHV's project team included Marian Genio, Esq., Pro Bono Director; Carol Neiditch, Esq., Pro Bono Innovator; Sherri Rozansky, Esq., Pro Bono Coordinator; and Chauncey Walker, Esq., Legal Trainer.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley welcomed the collaboration with MasterCard and hopes to continue offering clinics which permit us to assist a number of clients simultaneously.

ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project's Immigration Program is Grateful for Pro Bono Attorney Support

Sophie Feal, Immigration Program Supervising Attorney
ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project

The Immigration Program of the ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project (our Program) would like to highlight the valuable work done by our volunteer attorneys over the past several months. We are grateful to our volunteers for supporting our clients during recent staffing transitions. Our former Immigration Staff Attorney, Jessica Lazarin*, recently left our Program for City Hall where she is the newly appointed Director of the Office of New Americans for the City of Buffalo. We are pleased to welcome Jerry Marti, a bilingual attorney with over 15 years of litigation experience, to our Program in June.

In November, our Program was awarded a contract from the VERA Institute of Justice in New York City to implement the New York Immigrant Family Unity Program (NYIFUP), a five month pilot program at the federal detention facility in Batavia (Batavia). NYIFUP is modeled after a New York City Program that guarantees representation to individuals who are indigent, detained, and in removal proceedings, who otherwise have no right to counsel at government expense despite the serious consequences of deportation. With this funding from the New York State legislature, fifty-five men detained in Batavia will receive free public-defender type services from VLP attorneys and volunteer attorneys before the immigration court. At the time of this article, our Program awaits confirmation of continued funding for this worthy initiative.

A few cases stand out from our five months working on the NYIFUP contract. Perhaps among the most compelling, we represented a Honduran man who had been violently gunned down and left for dead by the brutal gangs plaguing Central America. Lawlor F. Quinlan III*, Esq., of Connors and Vilardo, graciously stepped in at the last minute to complete the asylum case after the departure of our VLP colleague Jessica Lazarin. Mr. Quinlan assisted in the preparation of a legal brief on an issue that was completely new to him. He also skillfully conducted the examinations of two doctors, expert witnesses who volunteered their time through the WNY Center for Survivors of Torture created by Jewish Family Services. When he agreed to help us, Mr. Quinlan was already representing a VLP client with lawful permanent residence, admitted years ago as a refugee, who was convicted of a crime and is eligible for cancellation of removal.

In addition, Professor Susan Hazeldean* and her LGBT Clinic at Cornell Law School won protection for a gay Salvadoran man. On a case some may have deemed hopeless (including me), Professor Hazeldean and her students were able to convince the Department of Homeland Security to stipulate to "withholding of removal" so this man would not be sent back to a country where he feared persecution by not only the police, but the violent gangs. He had already suffered brutal abuse. The LGBT Clinic at Cornell Law School has provided pro bono legal services for several VLP immigration cases in the past few years and its work is exemplary.

Our Program will also represent men detained in Batavia through VERA Institute funding when they are deemed by the immigration court to be mentally incompetent and are not represented by counsel. This critical funding is the result of a settlement reached in a lawsuit in a District Court in California that is now being rolled out across the country by the Executive Office for Immigration Review, an office of the USDOJ which oversees the immigration courts nationwide.

Unaccompanied immigrant minors, many of whom are in foster care at Catholic Family Services in Rochester, also receive free legal services from our Program. Most of these clients are natives of Central America who fear gang violence in their native countries. Their plight was widely covered by the media last summer. Our Program relies on the generosity and skill of pro bono attorneys to handle our increasing case load. Matthew Kolken*, Esq., of the immigration law firm, Kolken and Kolken, has very generously stepped forward to handle 6 of these deserving cases for us in the past year. We are also grateful to Attorney Benjamin Dwyer* at Nixon Peabody for handling an unaccompanied immigrant minor case while also juggling a demanding asylum case for us in the Buffalo Immigration Court. Timothy Collins* a Niagara Falls attorney attended our Program's CLE in October 2014, *"How to Represent a Noncitizen in Removal Proceedings,"* and is now handling his first youth case involving siblings from Canada. Attorney Vera Venkova* obtained the requisite predicate order from Surrogate's Court for a twelve year old, indicating the child was abandoned, abused or neglected, to obtain the subsequent immigration benefits.

Our Program continues our weekly legal orientations at the federal detention facility in Batavia. During those sessions we identify unrepresented noncitizens facing removal and attempt to locate pro bono attorneys to represent them. David Friedfertig*, Esq., with the firm of Michael G. Cooper and Nancy Eraca*, Esq., an immigration lawyer in Elmira, both won cancellation of removal for deserving permanent residents after attending our Program's CLE last fall. Their clients, an Afghan refugee

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A Pro Bono Opportunities Guide For Lawyers in New York State *Online!*

Looking to volunteer? This easy-to-use guide will help you find the right opportunity. You can search by county, by subject area, and by population served. A collaborative project of the New York City Bar Justice Center, the New York State Bar Association and Volunteers of Legal Service.

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NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

You can find the Opportunities Guide on the Pro Bono Net Web site at **www.probono.net**, through the New York State Bar Association Web site at **www.nysba.org/pbnet**, through the New York City Bar Justice Center's Web site at **www.nycbar.org**, and through the Volunteers of Legal Service Web site at **www.volsprobono.org**.

ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project's Immigration Program is Grateful for Pro Bono Attorney Support

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and a Jamaican, were detained in Batavia through the process, as was the Dominican client in the matter handled by Matthew Hagen*, Esq. of Rochester. Counselor Katie M. Ireland* of Anspach Law prevailed in a case involving a mentally ill Burmese refugee in removal proceedings. Last fall, Anjelika Abrahamyan*, Esq., now with Mattar Veterans Advocates, successfully represented a detained Egyptian who feared torture in his native country for converting to Christianity.

We would like to recognize and thank several other local attorneys for their generous effort and support. Margaret Phillips, Esq., of Daemen College, handled a case involving a survivor of domestic violence. Counselor Valdora Esteridge is handling two citizenship cases for the children of a domestic violence survivor. Nevin Murchie*, Esq. also has a domestic violence case for VLP; as does Attorney Brenda Cisneros, with the Law Office of Jose Perez. Ms. Cisneros represents a mother and her child. Immigration Attorney Siana McLean is handling two compelling immigration matters. Attorney Mark Goldsman represents a Nigerian who is seeking asylum. Mr. Goldsman has also volunteered with VIVE/La Casa where he first met our client. Counselor Matthew Borowski* filed a petition on behalf of a U.S. citizen veteran to classify his Japanese wife for permanent residence. Sheela Gupta, Esq. is now helping a client for whom she obtained a "green card" to file for her U.S. citizenship. Attorney Ryan Crawford* of Gibson, McAskill & Crosby has been representing an asylum seeker from the Democratic Republic of Congo, who is also being assisted by the WNY Center for Survivors of Torture, in order to obtain medical evidence of his past mistreatment by Congolese authorities. Attorneys Eileen Martin and Jill Apa*, both of Barclay Damon, are each past recipients of our Program's Annual Pro Bono Award. Ms. Martin continues to handle immigration cases for our Program while Ms. Apa handles appeal briefs for us. Attorneys Ryan Anderson, Grace Golando* and Stephanie Cook* are each handling a naturalization case for VLP.

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteer attorneys.

Upcoming Immigration CLEs Sponsored by VLP

In October, VLP will be offering two CLEs for attorneys interested in handling an immigration matter. On October 16, 2015, in Buffalo, NY, we will be presenting "*Representing a Noncitizen in Removal Proceedings*." On October 23, 2015, also in Buffalo, NY, we will be presenting a CLE on *Representing Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence and Unaccompanied Minors*. Please check our website, www.ecbavlp.com for more information, or contact me directly at sfeal@ecbavlp.com.

Jon Michael Probstein* Named Thomas Maligno Pro Bono Attorney of the Year

Valerie Zurblis, Director of Marketing and Communications
Nassau County Bar Association

Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Jon Michael Probstein with his two children, Megan and Michael, and NCBA First Vice President Martha Krisel*.

Nassau County Bar Association (NCBA) President John P. McEntee* recently announced that attorney Jon Michael Probstein of Levittown, a long-time dedicated volunteer at NCBA's clinics, Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Volunteer Lawyers Project, and The Safe Center LI, as the Thomas Maligno Pro Bono Attorney of the Year 2015.

Jon Michael Probstein wears many hats. He is a successful attorney who assists people and businesses in all civil matters, dedicated father of twins Michael and Megan, and, as Jon Avner, a professional actor who continues to work in stage, screen and television roles. He is also a dedicated volunteer who freely donates his legal time and talents to help those most in need.

Probstein works on matrimonial cases and helps renters by defending evictions for the county's low-income community through the Volunteer Lawyers Project. He is a regular at NCBA's monthly Mortgage Foreclosure Legal Consultation Clinics, where he has helped dozens of Nassau homeowners navigate their way through the foreclosure process; and he counsels at NCBA's monthly Senior Citizen clinics. He is an active member of NCBA's Lawyer Assistance Program Committee and volunteers at The Safe Center LI.

After earning his degree from St. John's Law School, Jon worked at several firms in Manhattan and eventually opened offices in New York and Los Angeles. Currently, he lives in Levittown and practices primarily on Long Island.

The Thomas Maligno Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award recognizes an NCBA member for selfless commitment to the furtherance of the most noble traditions of the organized bar. The award is named for Thomas Maligno*, former Executive Director of the Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee and the founding manager of its pro bono effort, Volunteer Lawyers Project, an NCBA-supported program that helps maximize the quantity and quality of pro bono assistance provided for Nassau's low-income community.

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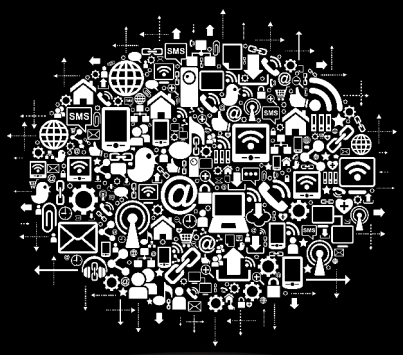

NYSBA

Legal Aid and Fitzpatrick Cella Denounce State Health Department for Failing to Protect Elderly From Unsafe Housing Conditions at Prospect Park Residence

Louis S. Sartori, Esq., Director, Pro Bono Practice, The Legal Aid Society

On May 18, 2015, New York City Council Member Brad Lander, Public Advocate Letitia James, families of seniors living at Prospect Park Residence (PPR), and members of the legal team including The Legal Aid Society and the law firm of Fitzpatrick Cella, Harper & Scinto gathered outside the Brooklyn Supreme Court to denounce the failure of the NYS Health Department and Governor Cuomo to protect the elderly residents remaining in the building. For the past year, NYS DOH has failed to protect residents – despite repeated court orders – from the owner Haysha Deitsch, who has consistently worsened building conditions (including downgrading security, firing all cleaning staff, and serving spoiled food) while attempting to force residents out, in order to sell the building for luxury housing.

After a year of neglect, NYS DOH finally requested the appointment of a receiver to operate the building earlier this spring. Judge Wayne Saitta appointed a receiver earlier this month. Now, however, the NYS DOH is refusing to advance the funds needed to insure safe building operation – despite the fact that they have done so in other cases, and could easily recoup any advances upon sale of the building. Instead, DOH is requesting that if Deitsch will not pay to care for the building and its residents, the seniors should be evicted and PPR should close.

"From the beginning, the NYS Department of Health has failed to protect the elderly residents of PPR from the rapacious greed of building owner Haysha Deitsch," said Council Member Brad Lander. " They approved his closure plan in secret, allowed Deitsch to bring new residents in (and take big one-time upfront payments) even after they knew they were going to approve the plan, and have sided with Deitsch against the residents on motion-after-motion in court. Despite appeals to Governor Cuomo and the Health Commissioner, they consistently failed to prevent Deitsch from withholding services (even heat and hot water), providing inadequate food and lighting, and pressuring frail and vulnerable seniors into leaving their homes. Governor Cuomo and the Health Department must not abandon our elderly neighbors – instead, they must follow through on their own proposal, advance funds to the receiver to operate the building safely, recoup that funding when the building is sold, and allow the residents to have their day in court."

"The State of New York must live up to its obligations to very elderly residents of the Prospect Park Residence and ensure that a receiver takes over the operation of the facility from the venal operator of the residence. Anything less is a complete abandonment of the state's legal obligations to protect the health and safety of these most vulnerable residents," said Aurore DeCarlo, Attorney in Charge, The Legal Aid Society's Brooklyn Office for the Aging.

"Every New Yorker deserves to live in a safe home, and our seniors, whose contributions have built our great city, deserve to live out their lives in dignity and respect," said NYC Public Advocate Letitia James. "Unfortunately, the New Yorkers in the Prospect Park Residence have been subject to abuse, harassment, and unlivable conditions that no one should have to endure. I am calling on the State Department of Health to do their job, and protect the residents of this building."

"The State Department of Health is abandoning seniors in their time of need and we will not stand for it!" said NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer. "This is a travesty and a failure of government to provide basic needs for some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. The Courts must intervene and put an end to this disgraceful charade and make the State hold Haysha Deitsch accountable for putting seniors' lives at risk."

"After more than a year defending its heartless evictions of senior residents - many of them quite frail – Haysha Deitsch has refused to pay the receiver appointed by Justice Saitta to run the Prospect Park Residence. The court appointed a third party receiver so that the few remaining frail seniors would not be left to live out their final days in fear, hunger and squalor. That the landlord refuses to pay the receiver is not a surprise. But I am shocked that the State Health Commissioner is also refusing. I strongly urge Health Commissioner Zucker to do the right

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2015 Distinguished Pro Bono Volunteers Recognized by Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County

Sally Curran*, Esq., Executive Director, Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County

From left to right: **Briana Fundalinski, Esq., Marion Hancock Fish, Esq., Joseph Bergh, Esq., Nolan Lafler, Esq., Karla Corpus, Esq., Sharon Ames, Esq., Hon. George Lowe*, Alex Davidson, Esq. and Brian LaClair, Esq.**

The Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County recognized the work of eleven outstanding volunteer attorneys and one law firm at the organization's Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition Party. The awards were presented on Wednesday, June 3 at the CNY Philanthropy Center.

This year's recipients and the area for which they were honored are:

Sharon Ames	**Immigration Law**
Joseph Bergh*	**Eviction & Most Overall Hours**
Leslie Bowser*	**Talk to a Lawyer Clinic**
Karla Corpus*	**Family Law**
Alex Davidson	**Veteran Law**
Marion Hancock Fish	**Nonprofit Law**
Briana Fundalinski*	**Nonprofit Law**
Anthony Marrone*	**Surrogate's Court**
Matthew Van Beveren*	**Medical Legal Clinic**
Brian LaClair*	**Unemployment Insurance**
Nolan Lafler*	**Unemployment Insurance**
Bond, Schoeneck & King	**Law Firm w/ Most Overall Hours**

These generous attorneys work tirelessly to ensure that those in need receive legal representation, information and assistance. We salute their dedication and spirit of community.

The mission of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, Inc. is to expand access to justice by identifying and meeting the unmet civil legal services needs of low income people in Onondaga County through increasing the pro bono participation of the legal community. More information about the organization, its volunteers and services can be found at www.onvlp.org.

NAPBPro: Providing Support to Pro Bono Professionals

Samantha Howell*, Esq., Membership Chair, National Association of Pro Bono Professionals

Having been involved in pro bono for many years now, I am sensitive to the frustrations and obstacles faced by newer colleagues. I have found great encouragement and support from other pro bono professionals and do my best to pay it forward. One source of support that I have found indispensable has been the National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro).

NAPBPro is an independent organization of pro bono professionals. Created in 1987, NAPBPro is the only organization devoted exclusively to promoting pro bono services to the poor and the professional development of pro bono managers and professionals. Members come from all aspects of the legal community – LSC-funded legal services programs, independent legal aid organizations, law firms, law schools, bar associations, statewide access to justice organizations and stand-alone pro bono programs.

NAPBPro works with leaders in the field throughout the country and, indeed, around the globe. I have found it to be not only a great resource for program ideas and professional development, but also for personal and professional support.

NAPBPro dues are $45.00 per year and include membership in our nationwide email list, access to our webinars (including past webinars), and a voice on pro bono issues. Non-members can also access our webinars for a nominal fee (typically $20 per webinar).

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Stay up-to-date on the latest news from the Association

Upcoming Webinars

Mon., 6/29/15 "They're Not Just Lawyers, They're Volunteers"

Presenter: Susan Ellis, President, Energize, Inc.

Description: Running a pro bono legal program is all about lawyers, but it's really about lawyers as volunteers. You need to be skillful at persuading, motivating, guiding, organizing, and thanking. And that puts you in the middle of the professional field of volunteer management. But chances are you were handed this role without much formal training. In this webinar, you'll be introduced to the 12 elements of successful volunteer engagement and see your work in a wider context. You'll get many practical tips for working smarter and out-of-the-box (but doable!) ideas for sharing your responsibilities with specially recruited volunteer leaders. Discover the wealth of resources (and colleagues) available online and in your local community to make your work easier and more effective.

Tue., 7/28/15 "Building Organizational Awareness for Your NPO Through A Public Relations Campaign"

Presenter: Joanna Broussard, Bizmark Group

Description: Even if you don't have a PR pro on hand to create and execute an organizational awareness campaign, there are still ways in which to take advantage of the myriad of tools available. The most critical part of organizing an awareness-building campaign is to gain an understanding of the 3Rs – Relevant, Resonate, Relate – and the 3 Cs – Content, Consistency, Channel – and how to use these as the basis for creating a message and a system for educating your audiences. In this 90-minute interactive presentation, with time for Q&A, we'll explore the process of how to create a simple awareness campaign that tells your story, in the right way to the right audiences and to manage it efficiently and economically.

Tue., 8/18/15 "LSC Update"

Presenter: Stefanie Davis, Assistant General Counsel, LSC

Description: Ms. Davis drafted the proposed federal regulation revisions concerning private attorney involvement (PAI). The Rules (45 CFR Part 1614), as modified, were adopted in October 2014 and became effective in November 2015. Learn about the Rule and ask questions of its drafter!

Mon., 9/21/15 "Train the Trainer"

Presenter: Martha Delaney

Description: The training modules review poverty, its impact on clients, its impact on the attorney client relationship and how attorneys can help their clients overcome barriers and have genuine access to the courts. The goal of the training is stronger client relationships, improved communication and better legal outcomes for people in need. You will take what you learn (with training module) and train others about these important poverty issues.

Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee, Inc. to Launch New Program to Assist Litigants in Child Support Matters in Suffolk County

Melissa B. Greenberger*, Esq., Pro Bono Innovator, NSLS

Attorneys from the firm Kaye Scholer join Melissa Greenberger, NSLS Pro Bono Innovator and law students on a visit to office space at the William Randolph Hearst Public Advocacy Center at Touro Law School prior to touring Suffolk County Court.

Judge Cheryl Josephs* shares her extensive experience in the areas of child support law with NSLS summer interns and Pro Bono Innovator Melissa Greenberger, at a training held at Touro Law Center.

Pro Bono Innovator. You have to admit, it's a cool title. According to Oxford's Dictionary online, "innovate" means, "make changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas, or products."

In 2014, the Legal Services Corporation requested proposals for its new Pro Bono Innovation Fund Grant. The New York project was one of eleven that were selected nationally. Nassau Suffolk Law Services (NSLS) on Long Island is one of Legal Assistance of Western New York's five subgrantees on this project which seeks to engage law students and attorneys emeritus in pro bono service. (*See*, "Pro Bono Innovations and Beyond," Pro Bono Newsletter, Spring Edition.) As the Pro Bono Innovator, my job is to recruit, interview, select, and train law student interns and attorneys emeritus, and to match them with pro bono opportunities within NSLS.

With the new Pro Bono Innovation Fund Grant, NSLS is working to develop an innovative approach to pro bono. Upon joining NSLS, I began speaking with attorneys, law school faculty and staff, court personnel, and internal staff to get a sense of unmet legal needs in the community. The idea of a child support project for custodial parents in Suffolk County began to take shape.

For individuals who are not currently involved in a court proceeding on a child support matter, but who wish to file for an initial order of support or for a modification or enforcement of an existing order of support, the new NSLS Self-Help Child Support Project may be able to assist. This project is limited to pro se assistance for custodial parents at this time. NSLS has a student practice order, which means that law students can function as student attorneys

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Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee, Inc. to Launch New Program to Assist Litigants in Child Support Matters in Suffolk County

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under the supervision of a licensed attorney. The practice order gives students the opportunity to gain practical experience while serving clients.

For the Self-Help Project, law students and volunteer attorneys, after screening potential clients for financial eligibility, will work under the supervision of a volunteer attorney to assist with the preparation of petitions as described above. The law students and volunteer attorneys will also educate litigants on the child support process, required documentation, and what to expect at a hearing. There are currently six law student interns working in the Project this summer.

One of the ways that law students and volunteer attorneys can assist with the preparation of petitions is by using "Do It Yourself," or "DIY" forms on the court's website. NSLS collaborated with Professor Jennifer Gundlach* at Hofstra Law School who taught a capstone technology course during the spring semester. Her students used A2J Author and Hot Docs to create another tool to make it easier for unrepresented litigants in Family Court to complete initial petitions for child support. There are many individuals who are simply overwhelmed by technology, who may be afraid to go to a courthouse, or who just don't know what questions to ask when they get there. Under this initiative, volunteer attorneys and law student interns sitting next to pro se litigants at our Self-Help Child Support clinics, can assist them with the guided interview program, answering their questions, printing the petitions, and educating them on what to do next. We hope that the DIY guided interview created by the Hofstra students will eventually be available online, providing access to justice to many other New Yorkers.

Hofstra Law School capstone students at a formal presentation of their "Do It Yourself" program which they developed to enable child support litigants to file pro se petitions.

NSLS students meet at the firm of Kaye Scholer to be trained on child support law.

Another aspect of the Project involves the law firm of Kaye Scholer, LLP which has generously offered to provide pro bono representation in the Suffolk County Family Court. NSLS agreed to serve as the screening agency for potential clients who will be referred by the Child Support Magistrates after appearing in court pro se. NSLS is utilizing law student summer interns, fifty- hour students, and pro bono attorneys to complete the initial phone screening for income eligibility and the intake interviews. The pro bono attorneys from Kaye Scholer will be able to utilize NSLS' satellite office at the Public Advocacy Center conveniently located at Touro Law Center, just steps away from the courthouse.

This innovative model to provide legal assistance in child support matters was made possible thanks to the cooperation of many entities and individuals. The Suffolk County Courts, the Suffolk County Bar Association, Touro Law Center, Hofstra Law School, Kaye Scholer, LLP, judges, and private attorneys who donated their time to provide training to pro bono attorneys and law students participating in the Projects - all generously contributed to this ambitious effort. Special thanks go to The Honorable C. Randall Hinrichs, District Administrative Judge for Suffolk County and the Family Court judges and personnel who have supported this initiative and who generously continue to give of their time to encourage the Project's success.

Supporting Nonprofits to Help Youth Transition to Adulthood

Ben Fraimow, Program Associate for Pro Bono, Lawyers Alliance for New York

Pro bono attorneys are using their business law and transactional skills to make it possible for nonprofit organizations to increase economic and educational opportunities for thousands of New York City older low-income youth. The leveraging effect of Lawyers Alliance for New York's volunteers is significant. What may appear as a straightforward contract negotiation, governance, or employment law project can make a tremendous difference in whether and how a nonprofit client pursues its plans to serve disconnected and disadvantaged youth.

Low-income youth face a variety of challenges in education, employment, housing, family stability, interactions with the criminal justice system, civic engagement, and their overall development as they transition to adulthood. A recent study from Measure of America (www.measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2015/) shows that 13.5 percent of youth in the New York City Metro area between the ages of 16 and 24 (approximately 324,000 young people) are disconnected, which means out of school and out of work. Among the City's African-American youth, the rate is higher, with 21.4 percent disconnected, and Latino youth, 16.4 percent disconnected.

Fortunately, nonprofit organizations provide a range of programs and responses to connect, educate, and support youth so that they can develop tools and a foundation to help them have greater self-sufficiency, economic security, and mobility as adults. Pro bono attorneys that assist children and youth organizations express enthusiasm for the dedication and the work done by these nonprofit groups, which is particularly important as older youth and young adults continue to face challenges following the Great Recession. Lawyers Alliance has identified at least six significant categories of legal needs for these nonprofit organizations: government contracting and regulatory compliance; employment law and human resources; real estate law and facilities; contracts, strategic alliances, and other transactions; intellectual property; and governance and nonprofit law guidance. With the assistance of pro bono attorneys, Lawyers Alliance helped 110 nonprofit organizations dealing with older youth on 196 legal matters in 2014, but the need for further pro bono help remains.

With the assistance of pro bono attorneys, Lawyers Alliance helped 110 nonprofit organizations dealing with older youth on 196 legal matters in 2014, but the need for further pro bono help remains.

Listed here are just a few examples of how pro bono attorneys strengthen youth-serving organizations.

Facilities: Quality legal assistance enables nonprofit managers to work through complex real estate issues that can affect the organization's finances and ability to run youth programs. Example: Forestdale serves more than 1,000 families in Queens and works to ensure that young people have the fundamental resources they need to thrive, including a safe and loving home, health literacy, and education and career opportunities. Lawyers Alliance staff and pro bono counsel from McDermott Will & Emery LLP assisted Forestdale with negotiating a lease for space that allowed for an expansion of a satellite office in Hollis, NY. With 60 percent of its clients living within that area, Forestdale can better serve people in that community through foster care, youth development, mentoring, and parenting programs for teens.

Corporate governance: A strong board of directors, clear corporate documents, and sound governance practices help youth-serving organizations to stay focused on their charitable missions. Example: Virtual Education Life Skills Mentoring Services (V-ELMS) provides youth from the Fort Greene and Clinton Hill areas of Brooklyn with job placement, job skills and enhancement, and literacy development. The organization believed that its previous name, Tutorial Lifelong Learning Community, did not sufficiently connote the services provided. Lawyers Alliance staff and pro bono counsel from Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP amended V-ELMS' certificate of incorporation, provided notices related to its name change, and updated its bylaws to ensure compliance with the New York's Nonprofit Revitalization Act. As a result, the newly named organization is better able to focus its brand, staff and Board resources on its mission of assessing and mentoring underserved youth to better their personal,

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Pro Bono Attorney Spotlight: Susan N. Esce

Andrew Eastham*, Esq., Staff Attorney
Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.

Susan N. Esce

Every year, the Syracuse office of the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York (LASMNY) receives numerous requests for bankruptcy assistance. The organization's clients are people facing medical debts, seniors on fixed incomes, working families struggling to make ends meet, and many other individuals in need of a fresh start. The demand is such that it is impossible for them to provide legal services to all of their clients without the generous assistance of pro bono volunteers. One such attorney is Susan Esce, of Esce Law, P.C. in East Syracuse, New York.

A volunteer since 2010, Ms. Esce has handled over 20 pro bono clients in addition to her busy private practice. In that time, she has discharged more than $900,000 in debt on behalf of LASMNY's clients.

Ms. Esce graduated from Syracuse University College of Law in 1987 and was admitted to practice in New York in 1988. She was inspired to pursue a career in law by her father, Nicholas J. Esce, an attorney and long-time judge for the Village of Fayetteville, New York. Upon her admission to the bar, she joined her father's firm, a general law practice, eventually taking it over upon his retirement. Then, in 2005, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act (BAPCPA) was signed into law.

"BAPCPA changed a lot," says Ms. Esce. "Any attorney doing bankruptcies at that time found they had clients lined up out the door looking for assistance." This increased demand – occurring at a time when Ms. Esce was looking for a renewed focus – inspired her to pare down her practice to center on bankruptcies. Today, Esce Law, P.C. concentrates on consumer bankruptcy and traffic violations, assisting clients in the Central New York area from their East Syracuse location.

Her interest in pro bono work stemmed from a desire to give back to the community. "As lawyers, we have a unique way that we can contribute, and this is how I do that," she says. Around 2007, she was looking for ways to get involved and volunteer her time and services. She attended a seminar about pro bono work sponsored by Judge Margaret Cangilos-Ruiz, currently the United States Chief Bankruptcy Judge for the Northern District of New York. The seminar was offered for free if the attendees agreed to take a pro bono bankruptcy referral. "The rest is history," she laughs, "and it has just continued from there."

Susan Esce is now one of LASMNY's most active Pro Bono Bankruptcy Panel attorneys, accepting several referrals a year. But another value she brings to the community is when she meets potentially eligible clients in the course of her private practice work, she refers them to LASMNY to determine their eligibility for free bankruptcy advice and upon their acceptance by LASMNY she will work with the client pro bono. LASMNY is very fortunate that Ms. Esce has incorporated "*reverse pro bono referrals*" into her practice. As a result she handles several such cases each year for LASMNY. Having Ms. Esce involved with the Pro Bono Bankruptcy Panel has been an incredible boon to LASMNY and the community. Thanks to her efforts, clients who may not even be aware of the organization or their services are able to obtain much-needed free legal help.

"I don't do [pro bono work] to be rewarded, but I find it incredibly rewarding," says Ms. Esce. She finds it helpful to reflect on the positive impact her efforts have on her clients. She thinks of her ability to "help older folks stressed out by collection activity, being able to keep folks in their homes... It reminds you that, yes, you can help people." "Idealism really exists."

Ms. Esce's pro bono contributions were recognized in 2012 when she was presented with the New York State Bar Association President's Pro Bono Service Award for the Fifth Judicial District.

The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc. is a not-for-profit law office providing free legal services to clients in need within 13 counties of Central and Northern New York (Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego and Otsego). We also serve farmworkers anywhere in New York State. Interested attorneys may contact Staff Attorney Andrew Eastham at (315) 703-6614 or aeastham@wnylc.com.

Andreozzi, Bluestein, Weber, Brown, LLP Attorneys Provide Specialized Legal Assistance to Burmese Refugees

Gayle T. Murphy, Esq.*, Pro Bono Coordinator, ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project

Andreozzi, Bluestein, Webster, Brown attorneys recognized by ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project.

Through the Coordinated Refugee/Asylee Legal Service Project (CRLS) outreach activities, ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project learned that 1,138 Burmese refugees trusted and ultimately fell victim to a native Burmese tax preparer in Buffalo, NY between 2011 and 2012. This tax preparer exploited his clients' trust by improperly adding fraudulent tax credits to their returns without their knowledge. Ultimately, the tax preparer admitted to felony charges of preparing false tax returns that cost his clients and the IRS nearly 2.5 million dollars.

According to VLP Supervising Attorney Gregory Stewart, "The IRS has taken the unusual step of not assessing any 'penalty' for the fraudulent credits claimed on the victims' returns because they did not speak or read English and were unwilling participants in the fraudulent scheme. Unfortunately, the IRS is seeking a full payment of all the improper refunds with interest." Clearly, VLP needed attorneys who had specialized taxation skills and knowledge along with the willingness to work with non-English speaking clients.

As soon as they learned of the plight of this group of Burmese refugees, the law firm of Andreozzi, Bluestein, Weber, Brown, LLP offered to help and in a big way. Attorney Michael J. Tedesco* had already worked on several pro bono tax cases and indicated that the firm wanted to play a bigger role in helping their community. Enter Randall P. Andreozzi* a civic-minded attorney who saw an opportunity to make a distinct difference with this underserved population.

Randall volunteered to meet with the group of victims at the local Burmese Community Center. He brought along Justin Andreozzi* and Heather L. Schmidt*, who were law graduates at the time and who are now associates at the firm. Randall, Justin and Heather did an exceptional job of working with interpreters to interview and provide important legal advice to many of the victims. It was an unforgettable experience for all.

Rather than shy away from representing clients with cultural and language barriers, the Andreozzi, Bluestein, Weber, Brown, LLP attorneys embraced the challenge by taking on full pro bono representation of 12 Burmese refugee clients before the IRS. Faced with clients who did not understand the culture of our legal system or our language, the Andreozzi, Bluestein, Weber, Brown, LLP attorneys took extraordinary amounts of time to educate their clients about taxes. Utilizing interpreters they obtained the necessary information from the clients, prepared the required documents, explained the documents to the clients and obtained the clients' signatures to intervene with the IRS on their clients' behalf.

The process of assisting this large group of Burmese refugees is ongoing. The generosity of the Andreozzi, Bluestein, Weber, Brown, LLP attorneys, particularly Randall Andreozzi, Michael J. Tedesco, Justin Andreozzi and Heather Schmidt, has enabled VLP to provide important free, specialized legal assistance to so many Burmese refugees in need of our assistance.

WHY I VOLUNTEER

Dean F. Radke, Esq.
Real Estate and Commercial Finance Attorney, Law Offices of Dean F. Radke

On those occasions that I watch television I tend to watch documentaries about life in rural Alaska. I am intrigued by the resourcefulness of the farmers and hunters as they cope with life under extreme conditions. However, what I find most engaging, is their strong sense of community in looking out for and helping their neighbors.

Most of my ancestors arrived in America from Germany in the 1890's. I know from family stories that there was a strong support system among the recent immigrants. One pair of my great grand-parents was instrumental in starting a bi-lingual school in Bristol, Connecticut at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. One of their sons was my Grandfather who served as a minister beginning in the Great Depression for thirty years for a principally German congregation. He was a modest man but even as a young child I could see his and my Grandmother's commitment to making their community a better place.My other Grandfather, who arrived in America just before World War I, served as a treasurer in the late 1930s and early 1940s for a worker funded disability fund for German immigrants in the Hartford area.

That is not to say that family tradition motivated me to volunteer my time. Throughout my legal career I have volunteered. When my children were younger I helped coach youth lacrosse, baseball and basketball. I served as an officer in the local Little League. As my children graduated, went to college and moved out of state my connection with my local community became more tenuous.

Earlier in my career I had done a great deal of legal work for nonprofit organizations involving affordable housing. I found myself missing that component of my practice, when I discovered The Pro Bono Partnership, a nonprofit legal assistance provider serving New York, New Jersey and Connecticut nonprofit organizations. I have completed seven projects involving real estate for the Partnership ranging from setting up a real estate holding limited liability company for a battered woman's shelter to representing an organization providing health services to Latino individuals in a commercial loan transaction. I have also assisted an organization that helps property owners revitalize their mixed use properties in Connecticut towns to structure the use of a grant of loan funds from a State agency. I have two active matters for the Partnership.

Pro Bono Partnership Honoree Dean F. Radke speaking at a volunteer recognition event.

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In serving my pro-bono clients I treat them just as I would any of my other clients. I strive to combine sound legal advice with practical business advice.

What I have gained from my association with The Pro-Bono Partnership is a strong sense of satisfaction and pride in helping my community. In working with the Partnership there is a strong multiplier effect. I am not just helping a single organization; I am helping all of the hundreds of clients of that organization. As an additional bonus, I have on occasion been presented with unique legal matters, which are not part of your typical commercial real estate transaction, and which required some extra thought and planning on my part to configure the proper solution.

What I had not expected when I started to volunteer with The Pro-Bono Partnership was the consistent gratitude of all the non-profit organizations that I worked with. My experience has been that these individuals who work to help others greatly appreciate it when the tables are turned and someone is helping them. I attribute this to the nature of the work done by the nonprofit organizations but also to the great preparatory work done by The Pro-Bono Partnership. The matters come to you from the Partnership with the legal issues well-framed and the clients well prepared.

I am proud to be helping to support my community. My purpose in writing this is to share my experiences and to encourage other attorneys to volunteer their time. I would recommend any attorney contemplating volunteering their time to contact The Pro Bono Partnership. You will get great support from the Partnership and a great sense of satisfaction in helping hundreds in your local community.

Pro Bono Partnership provides business and transactional legal services to nonprofit organizations serving the disadvantaged in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Recently, we celebrated our Volunteers of the Year for 2014 at regional events in our service areas. We were proud to celebrate the contributions of our dedicated volunteers who have delivered high-quality transactional pro bono service to organizations that could not otherwise afford legal assistance without significantly impacting resources for their core programs. Pro bono work with us, or similar programs around the country that provide free legal advice and counsel to non-profit entities, is ideally suited for corporate counsel or business and transactional attorneys. The generous contribution of our volunteers' time and talent, in areas such as governance, contracts, employment, real estate, and intellectual property, has significantly strengthened the capacity of hundreds of nonprofit organizations throughout the tri-state area, ultimately improving the quality of life for thousands of individuals and families. We were delighted when Dean Radke, one of our honorees, provided this first-person narrative on the rewards of transactional pro bono legal work.

Marcia Levy*, Esq.
Executive Director

Are you feeling overwhelmed?

The New York State Bar Association's Lawyer Assistance Program can help.

We understand the competition, constant stress, and high expectations you face as a lawyer, judge or law student. Sometimes the most difficult trials happen outside the court. Unmanaged stress can lead to problems such as substance abuse and depression.

NYSBA's LAP offers free, confidential help. All LAP services are confidential and protected under section 499 of the Judiciary Law.

Call 1.800.255.0569

NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

NYSBA

September

Tuesday, September 15/ 5:30 pm/ Albany Law School

Uncontested Divorce Training

Sponsored by The Legal Project; Contact: Jodi Koenig at (518) 435-1770; jkoenig@legalproject.org

Wednesday, September 23/ 4-6pm/ New York State Bar Association

Parole Appeals and Medical Parole Advocacy

This training will sharpen your Administrative Law and advocacy skills by preparing you to challenge arbitrary denials of parole release and or compassionate medical parole using CPLR Article 78 Proceedings. Knowledge of the rules of practice in Article 78 proceedings is invaluable whenever decisions made by a governmental entity are being contested. Sponsored by Prisoners' Legal Services and the New York State Bar Association. Free to attorneys willing to accept a pro bono case referral from the program sponsors. To register and for more information about the program contact: Samantha Howell, showell@pls.org.

Saturday, September 26/ 10– Noon/ Mechanicville Community Center, 6 South Main Street, Mechanicville, NY

Uncontested Divorce Clinic

Clinic sponsored by The Legal Project. Contact: Jodi Koenig at (518) 435-1770; jkoenig@legalproject.org

Wednesday, September 30/ 2-5pm/New York State Bar Association

The Connection between Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty

This program will address how to recognize the continuum of criminal conduct against animals and people, and will identify the appropriate organizational resources.

Among both animal rights advocates and those committed to protecting people from violence in the home, there is a growing awareness of the connection between animal abuse and domestic violence. Animal abuse is often a predicator and an indicator crime for domestic violence, elder abuse and child maltreatment. One recent study found that 71% of pet guardians entering a domestic violence shelter told of an abuser who had harmed or killed a family pet, frequently as a method of exerting control—a cruel demonstration of "what could happen" to the person.

To register: www.albanycountybar.com/DVandAnimalCrueltyCLE. Email questions about program content to: Lisa Frisch: lfrisch@legalproject.org. 3 MCLE credits available: 2.0 Professional Practice; 1.0 Ethics; Cost: Free.

October

Wednesday/October 7/4-7pm/New York State Bar Association

Attorney for the Day -Landlord Tenant Training

Sponsored by Albany County Bar Association, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, and New York State Bar Association, this training prepares pro bono volunteers to represent low-income tenants facing eviction during their first court appearance in Albany City Court. Pro bono volunteers provide limited advice and in court representation. 3 MCLE credits available: 1.0 Skills; 2.0 Areas of Professional Practice. Cost: Free for attorneys who agree to accept a pro bono referral from each of the sponsoring organizations. Contact: Graham Molho, (518) 445-7691, ext. 116; gmolho@albanycountybar.com.

TBA/ New York State Bar Association/ Albany, NY

National Pro Bono Week Albany Kick-off Celebration

The New York State Bar Association in collaboration with its Capital Region Pro Bono Partners celebrate the 6th Anniversary of National Pro Bono Week. In addition to recognizing outstanding Capital District volunteer attorneys, especially Attorney Emeritus volunteers, and members of the judiciary who support pro bono we will pay a special tribute to Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, in appreciation of his steadfast support of the civil legal services and pro bono communities. Contact: probono@nysba.org

Wednesday, October 14/10am-4:30pm/ Live Webcast from NYC to NYSBA

Law a La Carte: Limited Scope Practicing for Low and Moderate Income Clients

The Honorable Fern Fisher, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts within NYC and Director of the NYS Courts Access to Justice Program will moderate panel discussions on best practices for effectively and ethically operating limited scope pro bono programs and limited scope law practice for low and moderate income individuals. The program is offered free of charge and will be broadcast live from NYC to the New York State Bar Association. 5 MCLE credits, including Ethics credits will be available. Speakers include: William Hornsby, Staff Counsel for the ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services; Hon. Dina E. Fein, Special Advisor for Access to Justice Initiatives, First Justice, Housing Court - Western Division, Massachusetts. Additional speakers and agenda TBA. The morning session will be broadcast from 10am-1pm and the afternoon session will be broadcast from 2:30-4:30pm.

For more information and to register contact: lawalacarte@nycourts.gov

Wednesday, October 14/ 11:30 am; Century House, Latham, NY

The Legal Project Pro Bono Awards Luncheon

Contact: Rose Porter at (518) 435-1770; rporter@legalproject.org
Thursday, Oct. 22/5:30 pm/Hart Theatre Lounge, The Egg, Albany, NY

The Legal Project Pro Bono Reception

Contact: Rose Porter at (518) 435-1770; rporter@legalproject.org.

Thursday, October 29/ 6-8pm/New York County Lawyers Association/NY, NY

National Pro Bono Week NYC Kick-off Celebration

The NYS Access to Justice Programs, NYCLA and New York State Bar Association celebrate the pro bono contributions of NYC attorneys. Special recognition will be given to Attorney Emeritus.
Contact: lmilder@nycourts.gov

At Albany Law School/10-3pm

October 17, 2015 – ***LGBT Law Day***

October 24, 2015 – ***Senior Citizens Law Day***

November 14, 2015 – ***Veterans' Law Day***

This fall, Albany Law School continues its tradition of community service law days. Each service day is targeted at a particular segment of the community. This year, the focus is on senior citizens, veterans, and members of the LGBT community. Students, law school faculty and staff, and volunteer attorneys come together to provide helpful information and legal help to underserved persons in the capital district.

Each law day event offers the following free services:

- Walk-in clinic (free consultation with volunteer attorneys)
- Keynote speaker and presentations on relevant topics
- Resource fair

Volunteers are more than welcome to participate in any (or all) of the law days, in any capacity you see fit:

- Lawyers are needed to staff the walk-in clinic. Questions are often general in nature – you don't need to be an expert in any particular field to help out.
- Interested in making a presentation on a topic of interest to the community? It's a great way to help out and to increase your exposure.
- A table at the resource fair? Another great way to help out and to reach the community.
- Sponsors: always needed, and always welcome.

For more information, contact: Pro Bono Coordinator Patrick Barnett-Mulligan, pbarn@albanylaw.edu; (518) 445-2304.

November

Tuesday, November 9/8-4pm/ New York State Bar Association

An In-depth Look at VA Benefits & Advocacy Strategies

This interactive CLE presents an overview of benefits available for qualified veterans through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The program will examine eligibility criteria for service connected disability benefits and VA pensions, and the process for appealing unfavorable decisions. Attendees will be guided step by step through the preparation of the VA Claims application and VA Claims Appeal process using the facts of a hypothetical veteran claimant. This course will meet attendees' initial first year CLE requirements and any ongoing CLE requirements on veterans benefits law and procedures required every two years (see, 38 C.F.R. § 14.629). This program is presented free of charge to attorneys who agree to accept pro bono referrals.

Cost: Free, Tax-deductible donations to Disability Rights NY accepted to cover cost of lunch and additional program expenses. Pro-bono legal service is requested after training.

Credits: 6.0 Transitional CLE Credits in Professional Practice, including 1 Ethics credit, 3 VA-accredited CLE hours

Registration Information: E-mail: VACLE@disabilityrightsny.org ; please include your name, organization, position/job title, and pro-bono availability in your email. Donations to help fund the program can be made here: https://www.disabilityrightsny.org/donate-to-drny.html

VA-Accredited Representative Info: To advocate within the VA system, a representative must be VA-Accredited. You can find more information about the accreditation process here: http://www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp. The application process takes between 2-5 months. For the CLE credits to apply, you must first become accredited before CLE training requirements are recognize by the VA. It is recommended to submit your Application for Accreditation, VA Form 21, as soon as possible.

Sponsored by:
Veterans Committee of the New York State Bar Association
Finkelstein & Partners, LLP
Disability Rights New York (DRNY)

December

Friday, December 4 (TENTATIVE Date)/ Location and Time TBA

Representing Victims of Domestic Violence in Family Court

Program sponsored by the Domestic Violence Legal Training Coalition
Contact: Susan Pattenaude, (518) 435-1770; spattenaude@legalproject.org

NYSBA's Online Communities

NYSBA's Communities are private, online professional networks designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and forging of connections among members. Communities are replacing NYSBA's popular listserves – they are customized and feature all the functionality of former listserves, including multiple options for format and timing of emails. Communities help you gain a competitive edge, plus you get immediate advice and tips in your area(s) of practice.

To be an active part of NYSBA's Online Communities access them on the web directly at **http://communities.nysba.org**.

Supporting Nonprofits to Help Youth Transition to Adulthood

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educational, and future career lives.

Contract negotiations: Contracts, collaborations, and strategic alliances allow youth-serving groups to build partnerships that improve programs and capacity. However, organizations undertaking such a transaction need to conduct due diligence, understand how best to structure the relationship, and clarify each party's responsibilities. Example: Chalkbeat (formerly Education News Network) provides local coverage of education policy related to low-income and other communities where public school improvement matters most. Lawyers Alliance staff and pro bono counsel from Kirkland & Ellis LLP revised and negotiated the organization's master services agreement and statement of work for use with technology firms, to ensure that it retains ownership of any intellectual property developed through these technology contracts. Chalkbeat is now better able to use technology to investigate and report on policies and practices that can lead to improved education outcomes for children and families.

Lawyers Alliance anticipates several dozen new pro bono matters over the next year to support nonprofit organizations that help youth make a positive transition to adulthood, while also providing trainings and educational resources to nonprofit leaders. These matters are especially appealing to corporate, tax, real estate, employment, and intellectual property lawyers. For more information on this project and other aspects of Lawyers Alliance's Children and Youth Services Initiative please reach out to Staff Attorney Nicole Cuttino at ncuttino@lawyersalliance.org or Pro Bono Program Associate Ben Fraimow at bfraimow@lawyersalliance.org.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Kickoff CLE:

The Connection Between Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty

Wednesday, September 30, 2015

2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

New York State Bar Association Center, 1 Elk Street, Albany, NY

Registration is available through the Albany County Bar Association:

www.albanycountybar.com/DVandAnimalCrueltyCLE If you have questions regarding the program content, please contact Lisa Frisch, Executive Director, The Legal Project, by email at: **lfrisch@legalproject.org.**

Thoughts on Orientation for Summer Interns at Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

Carol Neiditch, Esq., Pro Bono Innovator, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley
Christina Oddo, Summer Associate, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

Christina Oddo, a law-student intern entering her second year at Pace Law School, shares her thoughts on the summer orientation program she participated in Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV).

The summer orientation for interns was more than informational. Seemingly general topics such as Elder Law and Foreclosure, were broken down into practical and engaging discussions on how exactly attorneys work directly with clients in these areas. The discussions were detailed, and with the materials that were provided, we were able to follow along with the speakers and engage in conversation and questions.

Beyond background information on the specific topics, each attorney personalized their presentation to give the interns a true feel for the type of work they do. I personally was able to narrow my broader interest in Family Law to an interest in perhaps pursuing a career in Domestic Violence Law after the corresponding presentation. Further, having no real background or knowledge in the law surrounding education and special education, I found myself so engaged during the education presentation, realizing for the first time that maybe that area of law is something I want to consider. I am sure I am speaking for the other interns present at the orientation when I say that we not only gained valuable knowledge, but we are now able to use what we learned as a tool in conceptualizing career paths and goals.

Further, the opening video was a wonderful reminder of the mission and dedication of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, and more personally why I decided to attend law school in the first place. The attorneys presented with such passion, also informing the interns of opportunities to get involved in specific areas of law. After the orientation, I reached out to the domestic violence unit and soon after had the opportunity to work with an attorney on a related topic for a current case.

Lastly, the different areas of law and the separate presentations seemed to overlap in engaging ways. The presenters made note of how something affecting a client relating to one area of law may consequently affect the same client in another area. With this background, we will be able to recognize these connections throughout the summer as we experience work in different units, and ultimately carry this information with us through school and our careers.

Legal Aid and Fitzpatrick Cella Denounce State Health Department for Failing to Protect Elderly From Unsafe Housing Conditions at Prospect Park Residence

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thing and implement the court's order," said Assembly member Jo Anne Simon.

"I am concerned about the news that the NYS Health Department is considering walking away from protecting the seniors still residing at Prospect Park Residence. Judge Saitta's order must be followed without delay and a receivership should be created as soon as possible to oversee the facility's operations before they fall into complete disrepair. The landlord has once again failed to act in the interest of the residents. Now, the Health Department needs to do the right thing by establishing and paying for the receivership until the issue is fully resolved. I will continue to work with my colleagues and concerned neighbors to make sure that the residents of Prospect Park are protected," said Assembly member Jim Brennan.

"The State of New York must live up to its obligations to very elderly residents of the Prospect Park Residence and ensure that a receiver takes over the operation of the facility from the venal operator of the residence. Anything less is a complete abandonment of the state's legal obligations to protect the health and safety of these most vulnerable residents," said Aurore DeCarlo, Attorney in Charge, The Legal Aid Society's Brooklyn Office for the Aging.

"The DOH is tasked with protecting this vulnerable population. It specifically asked the Court to appoint a temporary receiver and now is backing away from that obligation because it does not want to follow its own rules and regulations to front the cost of the receiver to properly run the facility. It is unfortunate the DOH has apparently decided to take the side of the owner over these elderly individuals," said Jason Johnson*, of Fitzpatrick, Cella, Harper & Scinto, co-counsel with Legal Aid on the lawsuit to keep Prospect Park Residence open.

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS ARE...

P **P**rofessionally persistent.

R **R**eliable. Always ready, willing and eager to serve.

O **O**ptimistic, even when the odds appear to be stacked against the client.

B **B**elievers in justice, fairness, and that where there is a will, there must be a way!

O **O**utgoing and enthusiastic.

N **N**eeded. They never give up and are tenaciously creative.

O **O**n call and available to tackle the most difficult cases.