



POETIC JUSTICE

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 1 SPRING '16

STORIES OF PHILANTHROPY AND HOPE FROM THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND

WIDOW'S LORAIN COUNTY HOME SAVED



Gwendolyn Frazier and her grandchild, Rylie.

Gwendolyn Frazier and her husband worked hard all their lives and paid off the mortgage on their Elyria home. Her husband took out a consolidation loan with OneMain Financial, but they paid their bills.

Her husband passed away in 2013. After that, when mail came addressed to him, she marked it "deceased" and sent it back – including mail from CitiFinancial. She had no business with CitiFinancial and thought it was junk mail. She didn't know OneMain was connected to CitiFinancial, until the bank sent a certified letter with foreclosure papers.

"It was such a burden," she recalls. "I'm not somebody who's sitting around not making my payments. "

She called and called and called for months, but couldn't get any information about how to pay the loan. The home went into foreclosure in 2014 and in a phone trial, the magistrate told her she was "out of luck" because she was not named on the loan.

Ms. Frazier sought help from Legal Aid. Volunteer attorney Kathleen Amerkhanian of Kryszak & Associates agreed to take the case *pro bono*. Legal Aid attorney Marley Eiger coached volunteer Amerkhanian on new Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (CFPB) rules that require the bank to not only to accept payments from the "successor-in-interest" but also to provide information about assumptions and modification options to the loan. "Ms. Frazier needed a lawyer to frame the case as a legal issue and provide a basis for why they should look at loss mitigation," says Ms. Amerkhanian. "By couching it in the correct terms, the court took notice." Ms. Amerkhanian got the case out of foreclosure. In mediation, she pointed out that the bank was not in compliance with federal CFPB regulations. She helped Ms. Frazier compile all the documentation needed – until finally the bank offered an affordable plan.

Thanks to her volunteer lawyer, the foreclosure was dismissed early in 2016.

"The ability to really make an impact on somebody who desperately needs your help is very rewarding," says Ms. Amerkhanian. When you take a case from Legal Aid, there is a lot of support. Marley Eiger provided a lot of information and lent her expertise, and that was invaluable."



Legal Aid volunteer Kathleen Amerkhanian, Esq.



With help from Legal Aid, Ms. Frazier's family home was saved.

"The lender was ignorant of the law, indifferent to the homeowner's compelling hardship and tried to sabotage her," says Legal Aid attorney Marley Eiger. "Not one thing about this case was easy or routine, but Kathleen was very persistent."

Thanks to Legal Aid, Ms. Frazier's home is safe and she can enjoy her hobbies of cooking and volunteering at her church. And, most importantly - she can care for her family in her home without worry.

Legal Aid's work to ensure shelter in Lorain County is supported by the Nord Family Foundation and the Community Foundation of Lorain County.

PENNY GOODEN: GREETING LEGAL AID CLIENTS SINCE 1976



When a client calls Legal Aid, the first person they may speak to is Penny Gooden. A Willoughby Hills resident, Ms. Gooden has worked as an intake specialist -- keeping the frontlines of Legal Aid calm and upbeat -- since 1976.

In all that time, she and all the intake specialists have heard so many stories from people who need a lawyer. Some cases stick with her: she recalls one specific case from early in her career involving a single mother and her fight to maintain custody over her young children. Sometimes senior citizens call the office needing an attorney to protect their homes from foreclosure or to defend themselves from unfair eviction.

Even in tense situations, Ms. Gooden has a way of calming clients who come to Legal Aid as a last resort, and she makes everyone feel welcome and comfortable.

As an intake specialist, Ms. Gooden is the first to determine - under supervision of an attorney - whether the individuals applying for Legal Aid are financially eligible, and she gathers the facts of the case to determine whether Legal Aid can help. Sadly, because of a lack of resources, Ms. Gooden and her colleagues spend much of their day turning away about half of the people who call Legal Aid for help.

"It is sometimes hard to avoid a personal connection to a client's situation, especially for me: Clients who are single mothers work their hardest to do right by their children," says the mother of two grown children. "I think about what I would want others to say if I were in the client's shoes," she says with compassion. "Sometimes the best thing is to lean in for a hug."

NEW BOARD MEMBERS BRING ENTHUSIASM, SKILL AND COMMITMENT

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's Board of Directors is comprised of 24 members. Board members serve three-year terms and are actively engaged in the organization. Eight of the 24 board members represent the low-income community and 15 are attorneys or other professionals. Board members bring diverse experience and skills together with shared commitment to Legal Aid. Members of Cleveland Legal Aid's Board of Directors serve as ambassadors, educating the community and building relationships that support our mission. In 2016, five new members were elected to Legal Aid's Board of Directors:

Leonard Castle, Community Representative, *nominated by the St. Malachi Center*
 Jillian Charles, Esq., Eaton Corporation

Edward McGhee, Community Representative, *nominated by the May Dugan Center*
 Barbara Roman, Esq., Meyers, Roman, Friedberg & Lewis

Marcia Leavy Smith, Community Representative, *nominated by Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland*



Jillian Charles, Esq.

"I am proud to be part of an organization that makes a difference in people's lives in a tangible and fundamental way. As a lawyer, I know the difference quality legal representation can make."



Marcia Leavy Smith

"People should care about Legal Aid because every person should have access to legal representation."



Barbara Roman, Esq.

"I am honored to serve on Legal Aid's Board, so I can proactively work to increase the number of lawyers who meaningfully participate in providing legal services to those in need."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|--|---|
| Leonard Castle
Community Representative
<i>nominated by the St. Malachi Center</i> | Edward Moore, Esq.
RPM International Inc. |
| Jillian Charles, Esq.
Eaton Corporation | Matt Nakon, Esq.
Wickens, Herzer, Panza, Cook & Batista |
| Frank DeSantis, Esq.
Thompson Hine | Heather Nicastro
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<i>nominated by The Arc of Greater Cleveland</i> |
| Andre Dowdy
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<i>nominated by the VA Medical Center</i> | Aaron O'Brien, Esq.
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KeyBank (retired) |
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| Delores Gray
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<i>nominated by Cleveland Tenants Organization</i> |
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Frantz Ward | Barbara Roman, Esq.
Meyers, Roman, Friedberg & Lewis |
| Vanetta Jamison
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Community Representative
<i>nominated by Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland</i> |
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Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease LLP |
| John Q. Lewis, Esq.
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Ulmer & Berne LLP |

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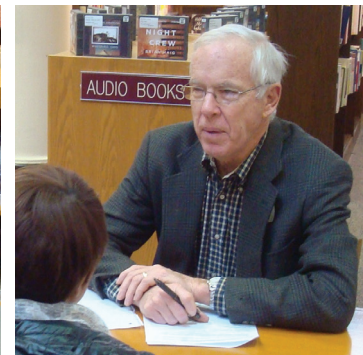


TO OUR BRIEF ADVICE CLINIC VOLUNTEERS (THROUGH MARCH 2016)

Cleveland Marshall College of Law Alumni Association • Family Law Section of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association • Federal Trade Commission • Giffen & Kaminski LLC • Jones Day • Kadish, Hinkel & Weibel Co., LPA • KeyBank's Law Department • Legal Aid's *Partners in Justice* • McDonald Hopkins LLC • Norman S. Minor Bar Association • St. Ignatius Alumni Attorneys • US Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio



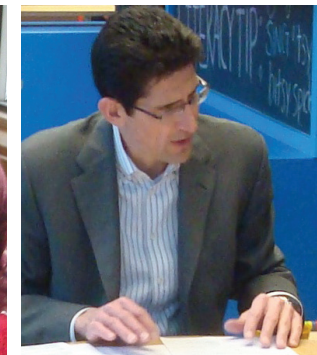
Adam Russ, Esq. - Frantz Ward (and Partner in Justice ambassador)



John Mulligan, Esq. - McDonald Hopkins LLC



Kevin Hinkel, Esq. - Kadish, Hinkel & Weibel Co., LPA



Joe Rodgers, Esq. - Eaton Corporation (and Partner in Justice ambassador)



Justin Macke, Esq. - Jones Day



Corey Clay, Esq. - Jones Day



Attorneys from Giffen & Kaminski LLC and the law department at KeyBank volunteer at a brief advice clinic at Fatima Family Center.

JUDGE AND BAR ASSOCIATION LEAD PRO SE CLINICS IN LAKE COUNTY

Brandy* called Legal Aid about filing for divorce from her husband who is serving a three-year sentence on drug charges. She wanted to end the marriage so she could get a fresh start.

Legal Aid established a *Pro Se* Divorce Clinic in Lake County for couples who have uncomplicated cases. Brandy, an Ashtabula resident, was a perfect candidate for the clinic. She and her husband don't own a home, and don't have bills or accounts in both of their names. *Pro bono* attorney and member of the Lake County Bar Association Jim O'Leary was able to help her fill-out and file the paperwork. Brandy was so grateful for Legal Aid's help navigating the forms and the courts; now, she can have a new beginning.

"We as attorneys need to be mindful that people need our help and may not be able to afford it," says Mr. O'Leary. "From my perspective it was a lot of fun, I was amazed at how

organized the entire clinic was." He added that it was nice to see his colleagues at the bar working together for the good of the community. "Sometimes, the only time we see other attorneys is when we're in court fighting."

The *Pro Se* Divorce Clinics in Lake County began in 2013 thanks to the vision of Lake County Domestic Relations Judge Colleen Falkowski. Judge Falkowski worked with Legal Aid and the Lake County Bar Association to create a model that provides access to individuals who otherwise might not be able to get help from Legal Aid. Since 2013 – more than 200 people have been helped through the clinics, which assist participants with everything from proper court dress and behavior to filing their divorce papers *pro se*.

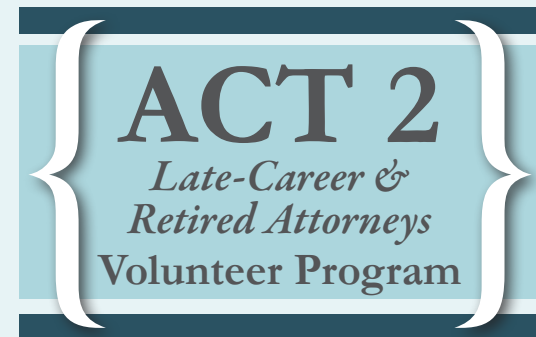
*Names have been changed to protect clients' privacy. To get involved with the *Pro Se* Clinic – or any Legal Aid volunteer opportunity – visit www.lasclev.org/volunteer



... Late-career and retired attorneys, ACT now to get involved with Legal Aid!

- Act to use your legal experience for those who need your expert help,
- Act to make a difference in the lives of others,
- Act to realize the dream that inspired you to become an attorney!

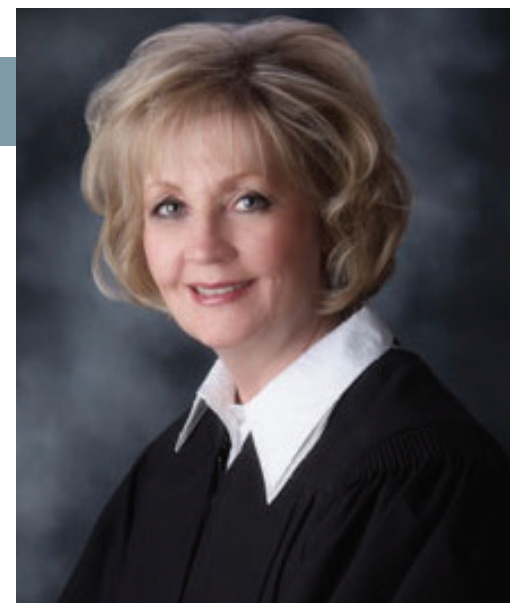
Visit www.lasclev.org/ACT2 to learn more and sign-up. Legal Aid is looking for late-career attorneys who have scaled back their practice but want to remain active - or increase involvement - in *pro bono* efforts. Legal Aid is also looking for retired attorneys who want to become involved in *pro bono* efforts for the first time.



Rolls for ACT 2 volunteers at Legal Aid include:

1. In house work at Legal Aid in a substantive practice group,
2. In house work at Legal Aid within the Volunteer Lawyers Program, leading a project or program, and
3. Traditional *pro bono* work like participation in a brief advice clinic or accepting a *pro bono* case.

The ACT 2 at Legal Aid is possible because of the support of The Cleveland Foundation's 2015 Encore Prize and the Legal Services Corporation Pro Bono Innovation Grant program.



Lake County Domestic Relations Judge Colleen Falkowski



In honor of Craig's commitment to justice all registration fees are donated to Legal Aid.

SPANGENBERG SHIBLEY & LIBER ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Spangenberg Shibley & Liber LLP is pleased to announce the 2016 Spangenberg Litigation Institute, providing the latest techniques in litigation and trial practice in the tradition of our firm's founding partner, Craig Spangenberg:

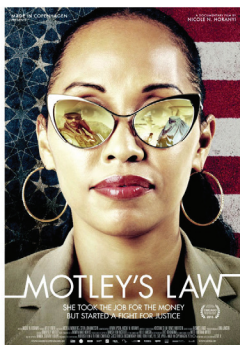
Friday, April 15, 2016
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
(3.0 hours of CLE credit)
Reception to follow

Advance registration is required.
Fee = \$50 per person

To get more program info and register visit:
www.lasclev.org/2016spanglawinstitute

LEGAL AID IS PROUD TO BE A COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE 40TH CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Join Legal Aid in a screening of the film "Motley's Law" at the 40th Annual Cleveland International Film Festival.



Film times:
Thursday, April 7, 2016 – 2:05 pm
Friday, April 8, 2016 – 6:40 pm

Tower City Cinemas
230 W. Huron Road,
Cleveland, OH 44113 United States
Tickets: <http://www.clevelandfilm.org/films/2016/motleys-law>

This film is special to Legal Aid because it highlights the importance of justice and due process.

Additionally, Legal Aid supporters can save \$2 on any CIFF move tickets when you use code "LASOC".

We applaud our 10-Year Giving Society

The following individuals provided annual support to The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland for 10 years or more. A private reception will be held at Canterbury Golf Club on Thursday, May 19 to inaugurate new members into Legal Aid's 5- and 10-Year Giving Societies. New and current members will be receiving their invitation for this special event soon.

In the meantime, we hold these 10-Year Giving Society Members in high esteem and wanted to publically thank them for their gifts. Legal Aid's work would not be possible without their steadfast support.

Thomas Adams *	Wilbur Leatherberry and Diane Phillips-Leatherberry
Todd and Stacey Behrens *	Michael Lederman and Sharmon Sollitto
Victoria Belfiglio and Grant Segall	Donald Levy
Carolyn Buller and Bill Doll	James and Pamela Lucey
Kenneth and Polly Burns	Rita and Charles Maimbourg
Judge Janet R. Burnside *	Jeffrey and Rosemary Margulies *
Sandra Buzney	Jeffrey Marks
Phil Calabrese and Mary Bynum	James McCrystal, Jr.
Retired Judge Joseph and Beverly Cirigliano *	Kathryn and Guy Mercer
Diane Citrino	Gale and Gerald Messerman
Retired Judge Colleen Conway Cooney and John G. Cooney	Donald and Sally Messinger *
Kenneth Cooley	Leslee and David Miraldi *
Colleen Cotter	Cynthia Mog and Christopher Williams *
William Doyle, Jr.	Spencer Neth and Marjorie Kitchell Ivan Otto
Carl and Claire Burke Draucker	Richard and Jacqueline Panza *
Edward and Catherine Feldman	Richard and Patricia Pogue
Katherine Friedell	John and Victoria Polito *
Judge Stuart Friedman and Arthur Kane	Lee and Susan Powar *
Steven and Gail Goldfarb *	Mary Ann and Erwin Rabin
Bernard and Susan Goodman *	Dorothy Reichenbach
David Goodman and Barbara Hawley	Donald and Toni Scherzer
Retired Judge Burt and Bunny Griffin	Ralph and Laura Skonce *
Harry Haber *	Todd Smith
Michael and Martha Hardy	Therese Sweeney Drake and James Drake
Daniel Haymond *	Dennis Terez and Nancy Conrady
William Heine and Kathy Moore *	Heather Tonsing Volosin and Matt Volosin
John and Susan Hersch	Brian Toohey and Lisa Monihan *
Ralph and Christine Higgins	Mark and Karla Wallach
Michael and Jane Horvitz	Stephen and Lisa Weingrad
Lee and Candace Hutton	Jerome Weiss and Judith Salomon
Marilyn Jech *	Stephen and Joan Werber
Carl Jenks *	Magistrate Perdexter Williams
Linda Johnson and R. Mark Jones *	
Stephen Kadish	
Amy Kellogg	
Jules and Lani Koach	
Anthony Konkoly	
Dale and Linda Kwarcianny *	
Stephen and Ellen Lazarus *	

New members as of 12/31/15 are designated with an asterisk.

Did we miss your name? If so - contact Ellen Brown at 216-861-5590 or email ellen.brown@lasclev.org



CY PRES GIFT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dworken & Bernstein attorneys Jonathan Stender, Kristen Kraus and Anna Parise present Legal Aid's executive director Colleen Cotter with a *cy pres* gift from a recent case. *Cy pres* gifts represent leftover funds in a class action lawsuit: leftover funds could be designated to charitable programs - like Legal Aid - that would indirectly help the entire class.

Learn more about *cy pres* at: <https://lasclev.org/donate/ways-to-give/cy-pres-grants/>



The
Legal Aid Society
of Cleveland

The Annual Campaign for Legal Aid
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JAM FOR JUSTICE

Wednesday, June 29, 2016

5:00 – doors open • 6:00 – music begins
CROP ROCKS, FLATS EAST BANK

Featuring performances by: DJ Wolfe Entertainment,
Luke Lindberg and the Hung Jury, Faith & Whiskey, Gringo Stew,
Out of Order, and The No Name Band

PRESENTING SPONSOR:



GOLD: AllCovered – IT Services from Konica Minolta •
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Special Jam for Justice preview party on
May 5 at Happy Dog at the Euclid Tavern,
featuring Rule 11 and the Sanctions!
www.lasclev.org/2016JamPreview

To order tickets or become a sponsor, visit
www.lasclev.org/2016Jam