



POETIC JUSTICE

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 3 FALL '16

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

PATH CLEARED FOR FAMILY, ACCESS TO EDUCATION SECURED



Now in fifth grade, Makayla enjoys reading, art club and gymnastics.



Makayla's Family

Rematha Grayson first noticed her daughter's problems with focus and reading in kindergarten. She asked the school for help and they offered to monitor Makayla. Between first and second grade, young Makayla switched school buildings. This change caused a lack of continuity and a confusing paper trail. While the school continued to "monitor," Makayla continued to have behavioral challenges in school and continued to fall behind.

Makayla has several medical conditions, including asthma, sleep apnea, allergies and eczema. She is up during the night and her medication makes her sleepy. Robert Needlman, her MetroHealth pediatrician, thought her medical issues indicated that she had special needs.



Dr. Robert Needlman

Ms. Grayson requested the school district evaluate her daughter. She made this request for three years, but no action was taken. Then the school told her Makayla was not ready for fourth grade.

"MY DAUGHTER WAS FALLING BEHIND, BUT IT WAS HARD FOR THE TEACHER'S TO SEE. SHE DIDN'T WANT TO PARTICIPATE BECAUSE SHE WAS AFRAID OF WHAT THE OTHER KIDS THOUGHT OF HER. NOW SHE'S GOT FRIENDS AND HER TEACHERS UNDERSTAND - AND HER EXPERIENCE HELPED OTHERS BECAUSE NOW THE SCHOOL KNOWS WHAT TO LOOK FOR." - MS. GRAYSON



Danielle Gadomski Littleton, Esq.

Needlman wrote to the school requesting a full special education evaluation. When the school district didn't reply, the pediatrician referred the family to a Legal Aid lawyer who is part of the team at MetroHealth, Danielle Gadomski Littleton. Before they received the attorney's request, the school did initiate a full evaluation, but Ms. Gadomski Littleton was now watching the results.

The tests showed Makayla qualified for special education services. Ms. Gadomski Littleton requested compensatory education and the school agreed to provide two summers at The Help Foundation.

Thanks to her Legal Aid lawyer, Makayla is now thriving in school – and has the protection of a plan for services that will help her graduate and succeed in life.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE Client Looks Forward to Holidays in Her Home • Volunteers Lawyers Program - Award Winners • Overheard at Legal Aid • Supporter Profile - Annette Butler • Eligible for Emeritus *Pro Bono* Status?

ONE CLIENT LOOKS FORWARD TO HOLIDAYS IN HER HOME

Her case creates advocacy for others like her



Ms. Glover Smiles on the front porch of home

Josie Glover thought, "Never in my wildest dreams" she could someday own her own home. She saved and saved, then took a series of classes through Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority to guide her through the process.

When she found the perfect home, she signed up for automatic withdrawal so her payment would never be late. Her loan was sold to another lender, but somehow, the direct withdrawal information was not. Suddenly, she was behind in her payments.

She had the money in her account and wrote a letter to the bank, but they wouldn't accept payments they considered "late." The bank also refused to consider the incomes of the other members of the household, her son, who gets SSI, and daughter who works as a phlebotomist.

She applied for a loan modification in 2013, but was turned down for the same reason. She was facing foreclosure and turned to Legal Aid for help.

Ms. Glover's mortgage loan was insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Her Legal Aid attorney, Phil Althouse, knew that federal regulations related to FHA loans required Ms. Glover's lender consider the other household income. He also identified other violations of Ms. Glover's legal rights by the lender and promptly filed motions that prevented a foreclosure judgment from being finalized. Mr. Althouse knew that there was more to be done for Ms. Glover and advised her to file a charge of discrimination against the mortgage lender with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. Ms. Glover's mortgage lender signed a settlement agreement with Ms. Glover and the Commission. As part of the settlement Ms. Glover obtained a loan modification. The settlement also resulted in the monitoring of FHA lenders services in Ohio.



Phil Althouse, Esq.



Glover home

But the lender failed to adhere to the terms of the agreement so Mr. Althouse requested that the case be re-opened by the Commission. The Commission referred the matter to the Ohio Attorney General's office for further action which helped resolve all issues to Ms. Glover's satisfaction.

"Ms. Glover had the benefit of legal counsel. Other borrowers may not be as fortunate," states attorney Althouse.

As a result of the Ms. Glover's case, the Civil Rights Section of the Ohio Attorney General's office now closely collaborates with legal aid programs around the state to better protect the civil rights of low-income clients.

Ms. Glover was able to secure a fair loan modification agreement and hold the mortgage servicer accountable for acting in bad faith. More importantly, the support of Legal Aid allowed Ms. Glover to keep her home. "It was scary and frustrating," recalls Ms. Glover. "I didn't know who to turn to, but Mr. Althouse was great. He put his all into helping me." She is looking forward to celebrating the holidays in her home.

DID YOU MAKE YOUR GIFT YET TO LEGAL AID IN 2016?

VISIT WWW.LASCLEV.ORG/DONATE TO MAKE A GIFT, OR USE THE ENVELOPE INSIDE THIS ISSUE – PLEASE REPLY BY DECEMBER 31.



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Congratulations TO THE 2016 VOLUNTEER LA

THE LEGACY OF JUSTICE AWARD is presented to an individual, group or institution whose

Northeast Ohio Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel (NEO ACC): NEO ACC leadership of Cynthia Binns, NEO ACC has enhanced the staffing of its Clinic during National corporate citizenship.

John Kirn: In January 2002, having retired from corporate practice, John Kirn approached Legal Aid when he needed. In the last 18 months alone John has provided 470 hours of service. John's con

THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARD is presented in recognition of significant contributions to advancing the mission of Legal Aid through *pro bono* commitment. In 2016, the proud awardees are:

Patrick McGraw: Mr. McGraw is a retired attorney who continues to use his legal talents to help low income individuals. A Harvard Law School graduate, Pat has been a *pro bono* volunteer for many years for both the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's Homeless Legal Assistance Program and Legal Aid's Volunteer Lawyers Program. Pat acts as a one-person brief advice clinic going to three different sites monthly to provide assistance. Pat focuses his work at two sites serving veterans and a site serving the near west side. Pat has contributed over 125 *pro bono* hours and staffed 30 brief advice clinics in the past eighteen months. He is also serving as a member of the Advisory Council of Legal Aid's ACT 2 Program.

Elizabeth Hendricks: In 2016, Ms. Hendricks contributed 277 *pro bono* hours as an in-house volunteer at Legal Aid. Elizabeth volunteered in Legal Aid's public benefits practice. Elizabeth is an attorney with health care law experience and extensive nursing experience at nationally recognized health care institutions.



1. Mike Ungar, Esq.
2. Mark McGuire
3. Lawyers and Legal Aid
4. Karen Giffen, Esq.
5. David Weiner, Esq.
6. Charles W. Zeigler, Esq.
7. Marcia Leavy Smith
8. James Kenney

WYERS PROGRAM AWARD WINNERS!

Volunteer Lawyers Program [vlp]

participation in *pro bono* efforts has been significant in terms of tenure and impact. The 2016 winners are:

has been a vital and committed partner since the inception of the neighborhood advice clinics. For the past several years under the *Pro Bono* Week with a donation drive of food, clothing and gifts for children for the host center. NEO ACC is a model of concerned

Legal Aid asking how he could help. John continues to be an integral part of the Legal Aid team. John steps up wherever and whenever commitment and dedication for almost 15 years make him a fitting and worthy recipient of the 2016 Legacy of Justice Award.

THE COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD is given to individual(s), firm(s), group(s) or other volunteer(s) who have made a mark by outstanding participation, effort, or critical involvement that ensured success for the community. The 2016 winners are:

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's Women in Law Section: Under the leadership of Rebecca Bennett, the Women in the Law Section and the work of the Lawyers for Women in Crisis initiative impacts a community of individuals who are struggling to overcome significant issues. This group of attorneys staffs monthly legal clinics at a shelter for homeless women and children. Attorneys in the initiative have expanded service to provide advice on civil issues to individuals participating in the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas Drug Court.

J. Luke Lindberg and Ryan Ellis: Luke and Ryan have been instrumental in the success of the new Ashtabula County Community Outreach Clinic. The Clinic addresses the need for increased outreach and service to an underserved population. Luke and Ryan responded to the need by serving as the *pro bono* staff of the monthly clinic.

Lorain County Bar Association: Through a partnership with Oberlin Community Services, the Lorain County Community Outreach Clinic provides access to legal services for individuals throughout Lorain County with a focus on the county's southern segment. The Lorain County Bar Association answered the call for help staffing the clinic by reaching out to its membership to provide assistance on a rotating basis. Volunteers recruited by the LCBA increase access to justice in Lorain County.

LEGAL AID IN THE COMMUNITY

Esq. (Ulmer Berne lawyer and Legal Aid board member)

, Esq. (Eaton Corporation)up)

law students from the Norman S. Minor Bar Association and Ulmer Berne Legal Aid clinic at the Glenville Branch of the Cleveland Public Library

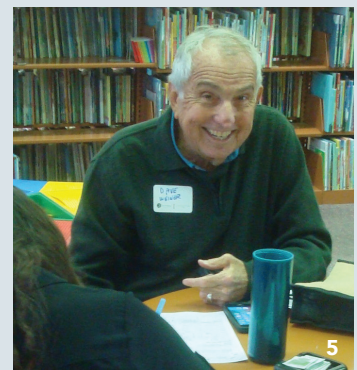
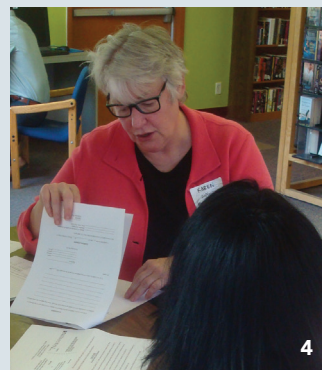
Esq. (Giffen & Kaminski lawyer and Legal Aid vice president)

Esq. (Dinn, Hochman & Potter LLC)

pp, Esq. (Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash lawyer volunteering with multi-attorney group)

Smith (Legal Aid board member)

-Prentiss (law student) and Gladys Reed (Legal Aid board member)





SUPPORTING LEGAL AID: “IT’S JUST SOMETHING YOU DO”

Attorney Annette Butler at a Legal Aid brief advice clinic

City of Cleveland attorney Annette Butler says she can’t ever remember a time when she didn’t volunteer with The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. “It’s just something you do,” she says.

She went to law school hoping to work in corporate law – but in the early 1970’s, female lawyers and African-American lawyers found closed doors. She started working for the government and soon developed an expertise in employment and anti-discrimination policies. Around this time, she founded the Black Women Lawyers of Greater Cleveland (with former Legal Aid board member Almeta Johnson) – a precursor to the Norman S. Minor Bar Association.

She worked at a law firm, she was a Common Pleas Judge, raised two children and volunteered for numerous organizations and boards including Cleveland State University.

Despite her busy schedule, she makes time to mentor young attorneys through the Ohio Supreme Court’s Lawyer-to-Lawyer mentoring program, always encouraging them to make Legal Aid a priority. Through it all, the one thing that has remained constant is her involvement with Legal Aid as a volunteer and financial supporter.

“Annette has been a critical mainstay at our Brief Advice Clinics,” says Ann Porath, head of Legal Aid’s Volunteer Lawyers Program. “To have someone at the clinics with her depth of experience and knowledge is so valuable to the clients we serve. I have seen clients benefit from Annette’s expert advice and her calm interaction with clients diffuses anxiety and concern.”

Join Attorney Butler as a financial supporter of Legal Aid by visiting www.lasclev.org/donor. Or, catch-up with Attorney Butler at a brief advice clinic – sign-up today by visiting www.lasclev.org/volunteer.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR EMERITUS PRO BONO STATUS?

The Emeritus *Pro Bono* Attorney registration status permits Ohio attorneys to provide limited legal services in association with a *pro bono* organization – like Legal Aid. To register for emeritus *pro bono* status, an attorney must submit a Certificate of Registration, an Emeritus *Pro Bono* Registration Application and Certification, and a Certification of *Pro Bono* Organization, and a registration fee of \$75.

An attorney who satisfies all of the following requirements may register for emeritus *pro bono* status:

- Is admitted to the practice of law in Ohio;
- Has engaged in the practice of law, for a minimum of fifteen years;
- Is in good standing with the Supreme Court of Ohio;
- Has not resigned from the practice of law in Ohio, resigned from the practice of law in Ohio with discipline pending, or permanently retired from the practice of law in Ohio;
- Has not voluntarily or involuntarily relinquished the attorney’s license to practice law in another jurisdiction to avoid discipline or as a result of discipline imposed by a relevant authority; and
- Has not been disciplined for professional misconduct within the past ten years or been disbarred by another jurisdiction.

Learn more by visiting:

<http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/attysvcs/attyreg/emeritusProBono/>

Learn more about Legal Aid’s
Volunteer Lawyers Program at:
www.lasclev.org/volunteer



“The way out of poverty is education, and we give people the opportunity to get an education. The work we do is critical.”

– Stephanie Jackson, Esq.

Ms. Jackson recently retired after a 29-year career at Legal Aid. During her time at Legal Aid, she helped establish Legal Aid’s education law practice, and led the Health-Education-Work-Income-Immigration practice group. In expressing her thanks, Ms. Jackson said, “The great management of Legal Aid, in particular [executive director] Colleen Cotter and [her predecessor] Lyonel Jones, have really helped me develop my career.”



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THE FIRST DUTY OF SOCIETY IS JUSTICE.
-ALEXANDER HAMILTON



LEGAL AID'S 111TH ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, November 21, 2016 • Hilton Cleveland Downtown

FEATURING:

*Welcome Remarks by The Honorable Frank G. Jackson, Mayor of Cleveland
Presentation of the 2016 Louis Stokes Paragon Award to Steven M. Dettelbach, Esq.*

FOR TICKETS, VISIT WWW.LASCLEV.ORG/2016EVENT