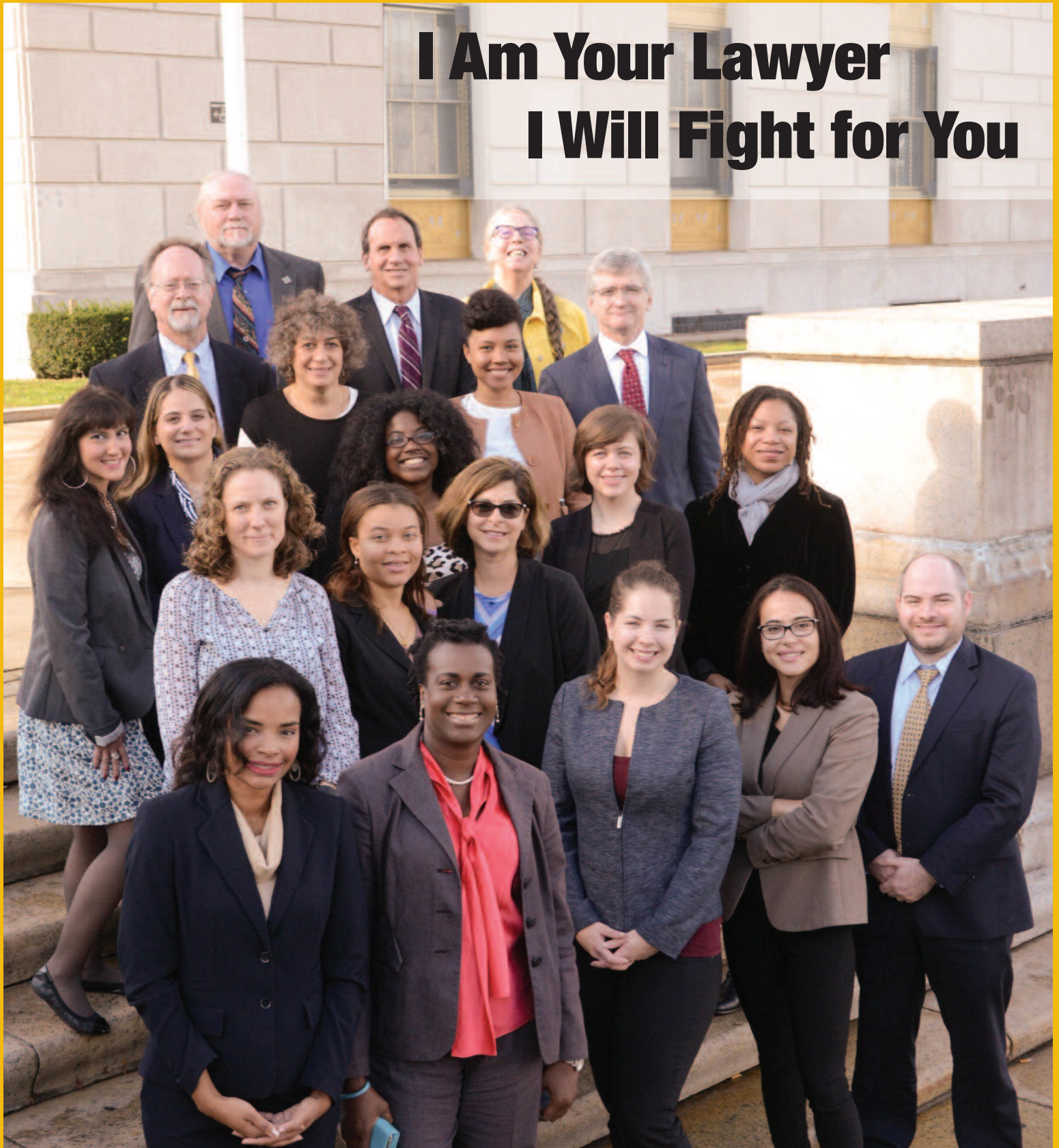


**I Am Your Lawyer
I Will Fight for You**



Annual Report 2015



**THE
LEGAL
AID
SOCIETY**

MAKING THE CASE FOR HUMANITY

This Annual Report is dedicated to The Legal Aid Society's employees whose names are listed here.

Daniel Abdul-Malak, Charlene Abney, Anita Aboagye-Agyeman, Benjie Acunis, Lindsay Adams, Arielle Adams, Nakiyyah Adams, Quisquella Addison, Melissa Ader, Daniel Ades, Toyin Adesina, Regine Adrien, David Affler, Ashley Agosto, Gabriella Agranat-Getz, Maria Aguilar-Ambrossi, Felicia Agyapong, Bina Ahmad, Noor Ahmad, Zachary Ahmad, Zohra Ahmed, Paul Ahn, Greta Aiken, Gregory Ajose, Diane Akerman, Akintunde Akinjola, Fatima Albaine, Natalie Albert, Elisa Albo, Michael Alcarese, Myra Alcarese, Elizabeth Alcocer-Gonzalez, Rita Alejandro, Anju Alexander, Jean Alexandre, Gary Alexion, Ronald Alfano, Marianne Allegro, Melinda Allen, Zoe Allen, Aisha Alleyne, Steve Alonso, Juan Alonzo, Charles Alvarez, Carla Alvarez-Gould, Brett Amelkin, Adjaratu Aminu, Sharon Anderson, Tareek Anderson, Melinda Andra, Cheryl Andrada, Pamela Andrescavage, Kaitlin Andrews, Nefertiti Ankra, Jojo Annobil, Carmine Annunziato, Bahar Ansari, Kenneth Ansley, Odessa Antoine, Ikenna Anyoku, Ruth Appadoo-Johnson, Rigodis Appling, Noha Araf, Rumzi Araj, Danielle J. Arbogast, Jimmy Arias, Jonathan Arias, Jacqueline Aristy, Tarini Arogyaswamy, Marisol Arriaga, Jessica Arroyo, Robert Arroyo, William Artus, Rachel Asher, Daniel Ashworth, Richard Asphall, Nichol Attara, Edward Auffant, Lynda Augente, Quincy Auger, Germaine Auguste, Laurie Auguste, Schency Augustin, Garrett Austin, Joseph Austin, Elenor Austrie, Alan Axelrod, Jose Ayala, Maria Ayora, Shahar Azoulay, Alisha Bacchus, Jaime Badia, Leslie Baez, Susan Bahn, Agnes Baik, Lejla Bajrami, Japheth Baker, Allison Baker, Crystal Baker-Burr, Michael Baldwin, Vanda Ballard, Kelly Ballinger, Sunita Balwant, Marla Band, Erin Bannister, Michael Baptiste, Priscilla Barbot, Chennette Barreto, Eric Barreto, Elizabeth Barroso, Kellsie Barton, Jessica Bash, Kip Bastedo, Patricia Bath, Brian Baum, Paula Baum, Carlos Baxter, Lizzie-Anne Beal, Hayat Bearat, Raymond Beauchamp, Sakeena Beaulieu, Marc Beck, Faith Bekermus, Lara Belkin, Christine Bella, Valerie Bell-Bey, Jessica Bellinder, Bernard Bellingier, Ruthlyn Belnavis, Mihaela Beloiu, Zamir Ben-Dan, Elizabeth Bender, Joshua Benjamin, Stephen Bennett, Fredric Bennett, Timothy Bennett, Michelle Benoit, Judyann Bentic, Victoria Benton, Mark Berger, Allison Berger, Juan Beritan, Steven Berko, Jeffrey Berman, Jerrold Berman, Simone Berman-Rossi, James Bernal, Athena Bernkopf, Lillian Berrios, Rebecca Besdin, Toni Beshara, Jessica Bettencourt, Pavel Beyder, Andrea Bible, Robert Bickel, Charles Billups, Nicole Bingham, Carly Bisceglie, Gina Bisogna, Bridgette Bissonnette, Elizabeth Black, Rachel Black, Shannon Blackman, Charles Blakeley, Faith Bland, Jennifer Blasser, David Blondell, Jeffrey Bloom, Evan Bloom, Richard Blum, Joshua Blumenfeld, Sarah Bodack, Marlen Bodden, Richard Bodrick, Milica Bogetic, Silvana Boggia, Anna Boksenbaum, Thomas Bomba, David Boone, Robert Bornstein, Markus Borus, David Bosler, John Boston, Heidi Bota, Eugene Bowen, Norah Bowler, Laura Boyd, Precious Boyd, Louis Bracco, Katherine Bradley, Adrienne Branch, Jacqueline Braslow, Jenny Braun Friedman, Edward Braunstein, Bonnie Brennan, Kathleen Brennan, John Brewer, Souroujal Bridgale, Jennifer Brillante-Weaver, Mitchell Briskey, Kissa Broadie, Leslie Brody, Nicole Bromberg, J Brooks, William Brosh, Bailee Brown, Lisa Brown, Georgina Brown, Karene Brown, Malia Brown, Nathaniel Brown, Jasmine Brown, Terrance Brown, Gretchen Brownschidle, Kristin Bruan, Aishah Bruno, Marjorie Bryson, Katherine

1,100 of the brightest legal minds work with 700 social workers, investigators, paralegals and support and administrative staff.

Buckel, Arthur Buckley, Brian Buckmire, Rosemary Buckmon, Robert Budner, Desiree Buenzie, Laura Bull, Roulston Bumbury, Vanessa Burdick, Benjamin Burger, Kelsey M. Burgess, Regina Burgio, Carmen Burgos, Jessica Burgos, Julia Burke, Alison Burke, Jamaal Burnside, Thomas Burrows, Katherine Burton, Helene Busby, Claudia Bustos, Barbara Byrne, Johan Byssaintine, Janera Caba, Luis Caballero, Tiffany Caban, Yissel Cabrera, Mario Cabrera, Karen Cacace, Keri Caden, Genevieve Cahill, Heidi Cain, Kristen Calabrese, Elisabeth Calcaterra, Raissa Calderon, Reinaldo Calderon, Ioana Calin, Anne Callagy, Glenda Callender, Courtney Camp, Sonia Cancel, Alan Canner, Catherine Carbonaro, Matthew Carretto, Anna Carlsen, Helena Carmona, William Carney, Christian Carrillo, Joshua Carrin, Mae Carrington, Roger Carrion, Nora S.C. Carroll, Ashley Carter, Carol Carter, Bernette Carway-Spruiell, Marilyn Casiano, Iris Castellanos, Victor Castelli, Sabrina Castillo, Alexa Cato, Teresa Caturano, Nancy Cavaluzzi, Ana Cecilio, Hannah Ceja, Yohance Celestine, Gordon Cen, Ferdinand Cesarano, Lura Chamberlain, Cara Chambers, Lorna Chan, Juan Charbonier, Denise Chardon, Richard Charney, Jonathan Chasan, Susan Chase, Abida Chaudhry, Steven Chavez, Jonathan Chazen, Brian Chelcun, Wai-Hong Cheng, Hung Kong Cheng, Phyllis Cherebin, Vanessa Cheren, Hillary Chernow, Andrea Cherry, Jenny Cheung, Rebecca Chevalier, Andrew Chi, Toe-Fun Chia, Mourad Chiadmi, Samuel Chiszar, Maria Chiu, Jamie Chosak, Nora Christenson, James Chubinsky, Javier Chuck, Jasmina Chuck, Julie Ciccolini, Erica Goffero, Lucinda Clarke, David Clarke, Gregory Clarke, Nichole Clarke, Kimar Clarke, Thomas Cleary, Susan Clement, Vilma Clerge, Samantha Clifford, Kawan Clinton, Bryan Coakley, Bobby Codjoe, Antonia Codling, Thomas Coffey, Dana Cohen, Matthew Cohen, Emily Cohen, Christina Cohen, Jennifer Cohn, Patricia Colella, Rebekah Coleman, Carolyn Coleman, Anthony Coleman, Tara Collins, George Colon, Esperanza Colon, Maria Colon, Joann Colon-Cimino, Johari Commodore, Irena Como, Carlo Concha-Zea, Kalle Condliffe, David Conn, Virginia Conroy, Cynthia Conti-Cook, Claudia Conway, Jayne Cooper, Felton Cooper, Virginia Cora, Stephanie Cordero, Marisol Cordero, Melissa Cordero, Shelley Correy, Alyssa Cose-Primus, Jona Cosio, Antoinette Costanzo, Aiden Cotter, Jose Cotto, William Cotto, Safiatou Coulibaly, Joyce Couvares, Jessica Crafton, Russell Crane, Daniela Crespo, Susan Critch, Amy Cross, Ellen Crotty, David Crow, Victor Cruz, Juanita Cruz-Cataquet, Gaynor Cunningham, Meghan Cuomo, Lauren Curatolo, Seth Curkin, Thomas Curtis, Marjan Daftary, Mark Dahm, Amy Dallas, Casey Dalporto, Maria Dambriunas, Patricia Dana, Michael D'Angelo, Asmika Dangol, Olayinka Dan-Salami, Dawn Dapelo, Erin Darcy, Alaina Dartt, Kwesi Dash, Shashwat Dave, Nicki Davey, Dilsa David, Jacques David, Rachel Davidson, Jeremy Davidson, Ellen Davidson, Terence Davidson, Nora Davila, Edgar Davila, Patricia Davis, Yasmin Davis, Sol Davis, Gianna Davis-Diggs, Peter Day, Teresa De Fonso, Adrian De Gennaro, Jason De Jesus, Melissa De Jesus, Nelson De Jesus, Susanna De La Pava, Khadine De Paiva, Katherine De Zengotita, Warren Deans, Deborah Dearth, Aurore DeCarlo, Natalie Deduke, Gerard Deenihan, Lina Del Plato, Carmen Del Valle, Benjamin Dell, Mark Dellaquila, Jeffrey Dellheim, Christine Dell'Isola-Ruggiero, Rostislav Denisov, Lonette Dennard-Williams, George Depountis, Robert Desir, Daniel DeStefano, Godline Deterville, Sneha Dhanapal, Emily Di Biase, Richard Di Marco, Deborah Diamant, Jesse Diamond, Patricia Diaz, Samantha L. 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Gottesman, Maxwell Gould, Vincent Graci, Candace Graff, Maya Graham, Holly Graham, Ricardo Granderson, Anthony Granieri, Sulay Grant, Edward Grants, James Graves, Barbara Graves-Poller, Donald Gray, Katuscia Gray, Jerome Greco, Marshall Green, Donella Green, Russell Green, Daniel Greenbaum, Naima Gregory, Laura Gretz, Catherine Griffin, Shannon Griffin, Nadine Griffin, Pamela Griffith, Seth Gross, Gerald Grossman, Mirjam Grunenfelder, Nidia Guadalupe, Saly Guirguis, Nailah Gumbs-Fahie, Yosha N. Gunasekera, Samantha M. 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THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

*Proudly serving New Yorkers
in all five boroughs of New York City.*

The nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services organization is more than a law firm for poor New Yorkers. It is an indispensable component of the legal, social, and economic fabric of New York City – passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform.

The Legal Aid Society has performed this role in City, State and federal courts since 1876. It does so by capitalizing on the diverse expertise, experience, and capabilities of more than 1,100 of the brightest legal minds. These Legal Aid Society lawyers work with more than 700 social workers, investigators, paralegals and support and administrative staff. Through a network of borough, neighborhood, and courthouse offices in 26 locations in New York City, the Society provides comprehensive legal services in all five boroughs of New York City for clients who cannot afford to pay for private counsel. The Society's legal program operates three major practices – Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Rights – and receives volunteer help from law firms, corporate law departments and expert consultants that is coordinated by the Society's Pro Bono program. Annually, the Society handles more than 310,000 cases and legal matters for clients with civil, criminal, and juvenile rights problems. The Legal Aid Society takes on more cases for more clients than any other legal services organization in the United States. And it brings a depth and breadth of perspective that is unmatched in the legal profession.

The Legal Aid Society's unique value is an ability to go beyond any one case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals and broader, more powerful systemic change for society as a whole. In addition to the annual caseload of 310,000 individual cases and legal matters, the Society's law reform work benefits some two million low-income families and individuals in New York City and the landmark rulings in many of these cases have a Statewide and national impact.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON



Ten years ago, the very survival of The Legal Aid Society was at stake. We faced many difficult situations and made some very hard and painful decisions. After a major, dramatic, financial and managerial turnaround including a total restructuring of the Society's finances, The Legal Aid Society survived the crisis, emerging a much stronger, better managed institution with a renewed spirit and commitment for the future.

We accomplished what many thought was impossible, through the support of the Board of Directors and our Sustaining Law Firms and Corporate firms represented on the Board and through the cooperation of the Society's extraordinary and committed employees and the two unions representing the Society's lawyers and support personnel. Progress did not come easy. There were significant sacrifices for managers, non-union personnel, and staff members of the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys and the SEIU/1199. We were forced to downsize and reduce real estate obligations and expenditures. Our goal was to become the Gold Standard for not for profit legal services organizations and I am proud and honored to say that we have achieved that goal.

During the last decade, we have embarked on new and exciting innovations to better serve our clients. At the same time, members of the Board of Directors worked with senior management to accomplish a complete financial and management rehabilitation including:

- Balanced budgets for all three Practices – Civil, Criminal, and Juvenile Rights;
- Joint monthly meetings of the Executive and Finance Committees to discuss budgets and expenditures;
- Procedures where prior approval is obtained from the President and Chair of the Board's Finance Committee before entering into significant financial commitments;
- Strategic oversight of operations;
- Complete overhaul and modernization of our technology infrastructure and applications;
- In three boroughs – the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island – all three Practices are in one location;
- Purchase of a Mobile Justice Unit with dedicated funds from the Robin Hood Foundation, the George Link Foundation and other dedicated funds to bring the work of the Society to communities throughout the five boroughs.

We are extremely grateful to our Sustaining Law Firms for their generous support, both financially and through

their pro bono efforts and to the City and State for the financial support they provide. Thanks to the commitment and efforts of Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, our criminal trial lawyers and juvenile rights lawyers have caseloads and client case caps which are below judicially established maximums for effective representation. Our Civil Practice benefits from substantial New York State funding – the first public funding of indigent civil legal services in the country. During the annual Pro Bono Publico Awards ceremony this year, we proudly announced The Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award to be presented annually to the law firm whose exceptional pro bono commitment to The Legal Aid Society and its clients has furthered Judge Lippman's goal of "Making Equal Justice For All Not Just An Ideal, But Truly A Reality In Our Great State."

We are blessed with a dedicated and committed Board of Directors whose members are drawn from the most prominent law firms, corporate law departments, and law schools in the nation. They willingly and selfishly share their many talents and wisdom to the betterment of The Legal Aid Society. Special thanks to the Chairs of the various Board Committees including: Charles Weinstein (Audit); Thomas M. Cerabino and Mel M. Immergut (Nominating and Governance); Douglas F. Curtis (Finance and Investment); Daniel F. Kolb (Development); Michele Hirschman and Pamela Miller (Pro Bono); Mark P. Goodman (Retirement and Benefits); Bradley I. Ruskin (Real Estate); and Randy Mastro (Strategic Planning).

Special mention must be made of our beloved President, Fin Fogg, who came to The Legal Aid Society seven years ago and embraced it with his heart and soul. Fin has rewritten the book on fund raising at The Legal Aid Society. In addition to his huge successes and hard work, Fin always delights a crowd with his tremendous sense of humor.

This completes Seymour James's first year as the Attorney-in-Chief. A mere glance at the beginning paragraphs of his report (page 5) provides a snap shot of the tremendous work accomplished for our clients through his strong leadership. This annual report is dedicated to the employees of The Legal Aid Society who each contribute in his/her way to make the impossible possible for our clients. Special thanks to our Practice heads: Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Practice; Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice; and Tamara Steckler, Attorney-in-Charge of the Juvenile Rights Practice.

Take a look at The Day in the Life of The Legal Aid Society. We promise to continue to serve New Yorkers with zealous advocacy.

Richard J. Davis
Chairman

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The past year was one of major progress and accomplishment for The Legal Aid Society.

This Annual Report chronicles the outstanding work of the Society on behalf of the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

The Society's success would not be possible without a strong and supportive Board of Directors and a dedicated and talented staff. The Board is ably chaired by Rich Davis. The legal staff is lead by Attorney-in-Chief Seymour James, just finishing an excellent first year at the helm, and outstanding practice leaders Adriene Holder (Civil), Tina Luongo (Criminal) and Tami Steckler (Juvenile Rights).

Lou Sartori manages the country's largest and most effective program of pro bono volunteers. A high performing support and administrative staff enables the Society to function effectively and efficiently.

In short, the Society has a strong team and I feel privileged to be a member of it.

The Society just inaugurated The Honorable Jonathan Lippman Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award. This annual award recognizes in perpetuity the outstanding work of Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman over the past seven years as he prepares to step down at the end of 2015. No person has done more than Judge Lippman to provide access to justice for those who badly need, but cannot afford to pay for, legal representation. His pioneering work should serve as a model for all who truly believe in the goal of equal justice under law.

As you read the report of Board Chair Rich Davis in this Annual Report, you will understand how much The Legal Aid Society has progressed and achieved since its

financial crisis and turnaround just over a decade ago. It is most fitting that we will honor the chief architect of that turnaround, Pat Hynes, and her husband, long-time Legal Aid supporter Roy Reardon, at our Awards Dinner next May 12. At the Dinner, we also will honor Board Vice Chair Dan Kolb for his many years of outstanding support and work on behalf of the Society and its clients.



One of my most enjoyable responsibilities as president of the Society is to announce the recipients of the Orison S. Marden Awards, presented each year to members of the Legal Aid staff to recognize their excellent service and commitment as employees of the Society. These awards are given in the name of a great lawyer who dedicated his life to helping others and served as Chairman of the Legal Aid Board for many years. The 2015 winners, who were chosen by their colleagues from among many nominations, are: Magnus Mukoro, (posthumous), Paralegal in the Criminal Practice; Ana Rodriguez, Support Staff, Bronx Civil; Patricia Jeffery, Office Manager for the Civil Practice; Natalie Deduke, Application Development Project Manager for MIS; Karen Kalikow, Criminal Appeals Resource Staff Attorney for Bronx Criminal; and Martin Feinman, Attorney-in-Charge of the Brooklyn office of the Juvenile Rights Practice.

I congratulate them and thank them for all they do for the Society, its clients and the cause of equal justice.

Fin Fogg
President

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*Members are drawn from the most prominent law firms,
corporate law departments, and law schools in the nation.*

REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY-IN-CHIEF



"No one will dare trample the rights of the poor and helpless under foot, as long as the appearance of The Legal Aid Society's attorney in court demands respect and careful consideration of the rights of its clients." ARTHUR VON BRIESEN, 1894

These words of Arthur von Briesen, a zealous leader who brought the work of

The Legal Aid Society prominently before the public and New York's leading citizens, were never more true, than during the last year.

During the past year, the staff:

- Won a groundbreaking victory for the Sixth Amendment's Right to Counsel, the Society and its clients.
- Increased outreach to communities throughout the City.
- Expanded the outstanding advocacy to keep low-income families in their homes.
- Secured a consent decree that will curb the widespread physical abuse of prisoners on Riker's Island.
- Fought for the rights of mentally disabled New Yorkers facing eviction.
- Took a lead role in the representation of unaccompanied immigrant children who fled abuse and violence in their homeland.
- Worked with the City and Family Court to ensure that children in upstate detention facilities would be moved "Close to Home."
- Successfully defended the rights of mentally ill parolees who are unable to assist in their own defense.
- And continued to provide the highest quality representation in its day to day work.

Founded in 1876, The Legal Aid Society operates three major legal practices- Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Rights- and provides comprehensive legal services to low-income families and individuals in all five boroughs of New York City.

With a staff of over 1,100 lawyers and approximately 700 social workers, paralegals, investigators, support and administrative staff, the Society handles over 300,000 legal matters annually for clients with civil, criminal, and juvenile rights legal problems. Through a network of

borough, neighborhood and courthouse offices in 26 locations in all five boroughs of the City, the Society provides comprehensive services for low income New Yorkers who cannot afford to pay a lawyer. The work of the staff is supplemented by volunteers from law firms, corporate law departments, and expert consultants. Our Pro Bono Program coordinates the work of 3,000 volunteers to leverage our resources.

Clients come to The Legal Aid Society for help under desperate circumstances when no one else can or will help them. The staff represents clients at virtually every level of the state and federal courts as well as federal, state and City administrative proceedings.

The Legal Aid Society takes on more cases for more clients than any other legal services organization in the United States. The Society's unique value derives from the scope and breadth of our services and our ability to go beyond any single case to create more equitable outcomes for broad groups of children and adults and systemic changes for society as a whole.

In addition to our annual workload of 300,000 individual matters, our law reform work benefits two million low-income families and individuals in New York City. The landmark rulings in many of our law reform cases have statewide and national impact.

Federal, State and City Council legislative committees frequently ask Society staff to testify about administrative regulations and procedures and to speak on behalf of clients in the media. We also operate an extensive "know your rights" community education program designed to provide clients and community based organizations with information about their basic rights.

Government funds the legally mandated representation of clients in the Society's Criminal and Juvenile Rights Practices. Our Civil Practice relies largely on private contributions for client services, along with targeted government funds for specific Civil programs. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, we are unable to assist substantial numbers of low-income New Yorkers who need our help.

The annual report describes some of the highlights of the past year. The accomplishments of our extraordinary staff are a tribute to their outstanding advocacy and dedication to the provision of high quality representation and service to our clients.

Seymour W. James, Jr.
Attorney-in-Chief

THE CIVIL PRACTICE

2015 has seen significant growth in the Civil Practice with the continued expansion of our Housing and Immigration practices. As the income gap between rich and poor in New York City becomes the largest in the country, the need for our services is increasingly apparent: in 2015, our 24 specialized units and 16 neighborhood and court-based offices worked on more than 49,000 individual legal matters benefiting approximately 121,000 low-income New Yorkers. Our active law reform litigation docket of 32 cases has far-reaching benefits for the low-income population in all five boroughs.

With an unwavering commitment to protecting the rights of low-income New Yorkers, our Civil Practice continues to improve the lives of individuals and families by helping them obtain and maintain the basic necessities of life and enhance family stability and security by resolving a full range of legal problems. Our comprehensive civil legal assistance includes: community economic development; consumer law; disability advocacy; special education support and services; elder law; employment law; family law and domestic violence; foreclosure and home equity preservation; government benefits; health law; HIV/AIDS representation; homeless rights; housing; immigration

law; law reform; tax law for low-income workers; and reentry and reintegration matters for clients returning to the community.

Recognized as a vital safety-net for New Yorkers, our dedicated attorneys are nationally recognized for their work. We are committed to serving New York's most vulnerable populations: the elderly and infirm, domestic violence survivors, immigrants, homeless individuals and families; persons living with HIV/AIDS; and low-wage workers. We offer our clients a diverse range of services, including: early intervention and prevention initiatives; self-help community legal education and training, such as Know Your Rights workshops; expert technical assistance to community groups and service providers, averting the need for legal intervention; and expanded resources and services through pro bono initiatives with the private bar.

EXPANDING HOUSING ASSISTANCE TO ADDRESS TENANT HARASSMENT AND DISPLACEMENT

The Tenant Rights Unit (TRU) is the Civil Practice's newest citywide unit, providing housing legal assistance through a combination of eviction defense, affirmative litigation, and advocacy designed to prevent the harassment and displacement of low-income tenants and stabilize housing conditions. The Unit will



The Legal Aid Society Honors 5 Visionary Leaders for Providing Opportunities to Immigrants

The Legal Aid Society honored visionary leaders for their efforts to expand opportunities to New York City immigrants. Pictured are (from left) Richard J. Davis, Chairman; Seymour W. James, Attorney-in-Chief; Jojo Annobil, Attorney-in-Charge of the Immigration Law Unit; Daniel Dromm, former Chair of the NYC Council Committee on Immigration; Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; Carlos Menchaca, NYC Council Chair of the Committee on Immigration; and Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice.

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emphasize group and building-wide assistance as well as individual tenant assistance. TRU provides outreach in high-risk zip codes in all five boroughs of the City, has a live-answer helpline for affected neighborhoods, and collaborates with community organizations, Legal Services NYC, and elected officials to build awareness for their constituents at-risk of displacement.

The new unit has already begun to have a significant impact. The Legal Aid Society and Legal Services NYC together are representing tenants in a 122-unit rental building located in an area of the Bronx slated for rezoning under the Mayor's proposed Housing New York Plan. Built in 1991 using a 421-a tax abatement which reduces developers' taxes in exchange for providing affordable, rent-stabilized apartments, the tenants are fighting the landlord's attempts to raise their rents above legal limits and deregulate their apartments. The lawsuit argues that the apartments should remain rent stabilized because the landlord, while receiving massive tax breaks, failed to follow the most basic rules of the 421-a program while raising rents as much as 40% above legally allowed limits in an attempt to force low-income residents from their homes. The tenants are asking the Court to affirm that all apartments in the building are rent stabilized and are seeking damages to address the landlord's rent overcharges.

FIGHTING DEPORTATIONS OF DETAINED IMMIGRANTS

The Immigration Law Unit, which increases family stability and safety through comprehensive citywide immigration legal services, expanded this year to accommodate two new programs: The New York Immigrant Family Unity Project and the Unaccompanied Minors Project. The New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) is the first government-funded system of universal representation in the country for detained immigrants facing deportation. NYIFUP provides free, high-quality legal representation to indigent immigrants facing deportation in the City of New York, as well as to detained New Yorkers facing deportation in the nearby immigration courts in New Jersey. NYIFUP aims to support New York's vibrant immigrant community by reducing the unnecessary detainment and unjust deportation of individuals who have strong ties to their communities.

NYIFUP responds to a pressing need for improved access to legal services for noncitizens facing deportation in New York. Over 1,500 immigrant New Yorkers each year are unable to afford counsel in removal cases. They include long-time permanent residents and victims of abuse, persecution, violence, and torture. Before NYIFUP, many New Yorkers were deported despite valid legal



Stacy Snowden, a client of the Civil Practice, testified before the Commission to Access Civil Legal Services created by Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman.

claims to remain in the U.S., simply because they could not afford an attorney.

NYIFUP seeks to increase court effectiveness and decrease detention times for those it represents, thereby saving taxpayer dollars, while providing due process. By keeping families together, the project seeks to lower the social and economic costs that would otherwise be incurred by City and State residents. NYIFUP aims to develop a replicable model for other jurisdictions around the country.

An illustrative case involves M, a citizen of Honduras, who first entered the United States at the age of 20 in 1989. He has three children, all of whom are United States citizens. In 2000, he was deported to Honduras. While there, M and his family were attacked by The Mara Salvatrucha (MS13), a notorious street gang, when they refused to submit to extortion and pay the ubiquitous bribes known as "la renta." During the attack, M was stabbed several times and lost consciousness. His father was also stabbed and later died. In another incident, M's nephew was killed by MS13 gang members. Fearing for his life, M returned to the U.S. in 2011. He was prosecuted for illegal re-entry but was found to have a credible fear of return to Honduras. The Immigration Judge granted his application for withholding removal under the Convention Against Torture.

REPRESENTING UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

2012 saw the beginning of a marked increase in juvenile cases before Immigration Courts. While the total number of cases with legal representation has increased, the rate of representation has not kept up with the increase in cases. As a result, there is a higher proportion



Seymour W. James was the keynote speaker at the New York County Lawyers' Association's 2015 Public Service Awards. The Public Service Awardees: third from left to right: Catherine Bowman-Director, HIV/LGBTQ Project, Legal Services NYC; Jennifer Brown-Attorney-in-Charge, Southern District of New York Trial Unit, Federal Defenders of New York, Inc.; Randal Jeffrey-Director, General Legal Services Unit, New York Legal Assistance Group; Bonnie Jonas-Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division, U.S Attorney's Office, SDNY; Melissa Mourges-Chief of the Forensic Sciences/Cold Case Unit, New York County District Attorney's Office; Maria Navarro-Supervising Attorney, Immigration Law Unit, The Legal Aid Society; and Criminal Justice Section's Public Service Fellowship Award winner Cynthia Pong- Staff Attorney, The Legal Aid Society, Bronx. Also attending was Carol Sigmond-NYCLA President, left; Catherine Christian Public Service Awards Committee Chair, second from left. Seymour James-Attorney-in-Chief, Legal Aid Society and the keynote speaker, right. Geoffrey Bickford, Criminal Justice Section co-chair, second from right.

of unrepresented children in Immigration Court. The need is greatest in New York City, where one out of eight cases in Immigration Court involve unaccompanied children, and less than half (43%) of pending cases involving unaccompanied juveniles in Immigration Court in New York City are represented by an attorney. The Unaccompanied Minors Project provides direct representation to recently immigrated unaccompanied children in accelerated deportation proceedings before the Immigration Court's Priority Docket. The Project was implemented in response to the federal government's plan to accelerate the deportation process for undocumented youth who were apprehended.

In one case, G and M, a brother and sister from El Salvador, were granted asylum based on a harrowing act of persecution by gangs. The then-14-year-old young woman was kidnapped by a gang-member who wanted her to be his "girlfriend." He sequestered her in a gang safe-house for almost two weeks, abusing her both sexually and physically. By chance, she was rescued when the police raided the safe house, but was severely traumatized by the kidnapping and assaults. The gang who kidnapped her began to threaten the family, especially her brother who accompanied her to and from school every day. The brother was told that he would be

harmful if he continued to stand in the way of the gang accessing the younger sister. Both siblings fled to the U.S. and are extremely relieved that they have been granted asylum and will not be forced to return to El Salvador where gang violence has gotten much worse since they left. They are both enrolled in school and are doing very well.

ASSISTING SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Civil staff provides assistance to survivors of domestic violence who are seeking employment authorization and family unity. In one example, RP, an Ecuadoran woman, came to us at the St. Christopher-Ottillie (SCO) Family Development Center, seeking to reunify with her family and pursue employment authorization. RP was the victim of domestic violence by her former husband, who is also the father of her five children. The abuse, which persisted throughout her marriage, affected her ability to seek stable employment and fully support her children, who live both in the United States and her home country of Ecuador. In 2002, RP experienced an extremely violent incident at the hands of her husband. She was severely beaten and stabbed with scissors in the presence of her five-year-old daughter. The police reported to the scene and RP cooperated with their investigation. Society staff met

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with RP and was able to secure a U Visa Certification from the Queens County District Attorney's Office based on her cooperation in the prosecution of her husband. In order to prepare a robust U Visa application (a visa available to a crime victim), Society staff translated all of her marriage and birth documents and ordered additional evidence from the NYC Administration for Children's Services. Society staff filed for U Nonimmigrant Status for RP and although yearly quotas result in a long wait for a U Visa, RP should be able to obtain an employment authorization document in the near future. Eventually, she will be able to adjust her status to Lawful Permanent Residency after accruing three years of U Nonimmigrant Status and will be able to travel to reunite with her two eldest daughters in Ecuador, whom she hasn't seen since she left for the United States in 1993.

Ensuring Comprehensive Health Care for Transgender New Yorkers

The Health Law Unit (HLU) assists clients and advocates on issues related to public health programs. In 2015, The Legal Aid Society, the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, and Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP filed a federal class action lawsuit against the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to benefit transgender New Yorkers. The lawsuit is seeking Medicaid coverage for transgender people seeking life-saving health treatments, including gender change procedures. NYSDOH's current regulation denies health coverage for gender dysphoria, also known as gender identity

disorder, discriminating against transgender individuals and violating the Medicaid Act and the Affordable Care Act. The lawsuit seeks to establish that the State must provide certain medical assistance to all transgender Medicaid recipients; that the State cannot deny coverage to transgender Medicaid recipients for procedures that are available to non-trans (or cisgender) Medicaid recipients; that transgender Medicaid recipients under the age of 21 are entitled to certain Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment services as specified by the Medicaid Act and federal regulations; and finally, that failure to provide transgender-related health care constitutes sex discrimination.

WORKING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ON RIKERS ISLAND REFORMS

The Civil and Criminal Practices have been focusing efforts on reform at Rikers Island, a complex of 10 jails on an island between Queens and the Bronx, where exposés on inmate deaths; incidences of guard violence, neglect and rape; and targeted abuse of the mentally ill by guards has drawn public outcry and increased scrutiny.

The federal court approved a consent decree to end the widespread abuse of prisoners by correction staff on Rikers Island. The Legal Aid Society's Prisoners' Rights Project, together with co-counsel Ropes & Gray and Emery, Celli, Brinckerhoff & Abady brought the class action, *Nunez v. New York*, in 2012 to halt excessive force by New York City Correction Department staff. The United States Department of Justice joined the lawsuit as a



Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice, appeared at a press conference with Mayor Bill de Blasio and a Civil Practice client. The Mayor announced \$12.3 million in homelessness prevention services to expand free legal representation in Housing Court and help New Yorkers facing eviction.

THE CIVIL PRACTICE *continued*

plaintiff in December 2014. The Consent Judgment is an enforceable federal consent decree that will be monitored by an independent correctional expert and require the Department of Correction to implement new policies and practices to curb the rampant misuse of force, and end the culture of violence which emboldens staff to abuse prisoners and lie about such abuse with impunity.

EXPANDING THE RIGHTS OF LOW-INCOME WORKERS

The Civil Practice's Employment Law Unit (ELU) provides representation, advice, and community education to low-wage and unemployed workers with regards to wage discrimination, unemployment benefits, harassment, and wage violations.

In an important example of the Unit's work, the ELU, with Crowell & Moring LLP, successfully litigated a case against the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA) for cleaners hired through NYC's Work Experience Program (WEP) who were discriminated against due to their prior criminal convictions. The workers had been denied full-time paid employment as cleaners after successfully performing the job duties and responsibilities for more than one year in the WEP program.

Under New York law, an employer cannot simply review a criminal history in isolation and make an employment determination on that basis. Rather, the employer must first consider the applicant's previous convictions in light of the eight factors set forth in §753 of the NY Correction Law, which include requesting and considering any evidence of an applicant's rehabilitation.

As a result of the lawsuit, the New York City Transit Authority has agreed to explicitly direct applicants to submit evidence of rehabilitation at the same time the Authority requests information related to a criminal conviction history. Further, the New York City Transit Authority has offered full-time employment to the WEP workers who challenged their hiring practices. Two workers commenced employment with the New York City Transit Authority in June.

FIGHTING TO PROTECT SENIORS AT PROSPECT PARK RESIDENCE

Attorneys from the Brooklyn Office for the Aging and the Law Reform Unit (LRU) working with Fitzpatrick, Cella, Harper & Scinto, and others are fighting to protect elderly tenants in the Prospect Park Residence: an assisted living facility in Park Slope, Brooklyn. The elderly tenants are all over 90 years-old and include a Holocaust survivor. The facility announced it was closing in early 2014, and has been reducing staff and services ever since. The landlord is forcing seniors out of the Residence so the building can be converted to luxury condominiums. The closure plan violates New York legal requirements, including assessing the seniors' needs and preferences for alternate facilities, assisting them in transferring to appropriate facilities, and continuing to provide required services until closure. When we first met the remaining residents, the facility was infested with bed bugs, and residents complained of peeling paint, rooms that were closed off, water pouring through leaks in the ceiling, a decrease in health aid staff and services, and rotten fruit and non-nutritious meals. In the warmer months, residents complained of a lack of air conditioning in



Seymour James congratulates Chief Judge Robert A. Katzmann of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit; Nisha Agarwal of the Mauori's Office of Immigrant Affairs; Council Member Menchaca; and Council Member Dromm as visionary leaders who expanded opportunities for immigrants.

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common areas, with temperatures rising above 80 degrees. As we await trial, the judge has ordered restoration of services.

PROTECTING THE HEALTH CARE RIGHTS OF THE ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Our Health Law Unit, which helps clients navigate the health care system, reduce medical debt, and access health insurance, serves as a Specialist Agency in the new Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN). This network was established to provide independent advice and representation to people with disabilities and elderly New Yorkers who are eligible for Medicaid and receive long-term care service. We were selected for our demonstrated ability to educate and advocate for these and other vulnerable populations. ICAN providers answer questions about Medicare and Medicaid programs for people receiving long-term care; give advice about managed care options; solve problems with plans and providers; and help with complaints and appeals. All services are free and confidential, and not connected with any health insurance plan.

PREVENTING THE EVICTION OF HOMELESS FAMILIES FROM SHELTERS

Our Bronx Neighborhood Office, along with our Law Reform Unit, worked to preserve shelter for 250 homeless families living in four privately-owned buildings being used by the City as shelter. Because of a rental rate dispute between the City and the landlords, these families were at-risk of eviction. While the City has historically used non-profit shelter providers, the shelter population has recently risen to record levels, causing the City to rely upon landlords in the private market to supply scatter-site “cluster” shelter units. The City’s Department of Homeless Services pays a social services provider and landlord \$3,000 per month for each of these apartments, most of which would rent for far less on the open market and most of which would be subject to rent regulation. The City notified the landlords who provide cluster apartments that the City is reducing their payment rate and using the savings to create a new housing subsidy. One of the landlords objected to the rate decrease and brought commercial holdover

petitions in Bronx Civil Court seeking to evict the shelter families from the buildings. Because of our intervention, the case was withdrawn and the landlord and the providers agreed to accept less money for a one-year lease, diverting 250 families from eviction.

PROTECTING PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES FROM EVICTION

In addition to enhancing access to our services, the Society works to uphold the rights of our clients with special needs through legal representation, advice, and assistance. In one such case, we are representing a group of previously homeless persons with mental disabilities at-risk of ending up back on the street. Pathways to Housing, a non-profit organization that arranges taxpayer-funded supportive housing for the mentally disabled, owes an estimated \$1.6 million in back rent, some of which is six months overdue. Over the past four years, an estimated 1,300 eviction notices have been disseminated to mentally disabled New Yorkers as a result of Pathways’ failure to pay their rent. In addition, Pathways is charged with managing their clients’ Social Security disability checks – 30% of each check is applied towards rent, but it is unclear where this money has been placed.

The Law Reform Unit worked with the New York City Human Resources Administration to obtain stays of evictions for all Pathways clients. In one such case, a client diagnosed with schizophrenia who has lived in the same Bronx apartment for years found himself nine months behind on his rent as a result of Pathways’ negligence. Earlier this year, the landlord sued him for \$18,000 in back rent. The Civil Practice is working diligently to prevent his and other former Pathways’ residents’ evictions, while we work with the NYS’ Office of Mental Health and NYC Department of Health to obtain funding to pay the back rent for these former residents. Additionally, the State is now moving Pathways’ residents to other providers and has declined to renew Pathways’ five-year contract. In response, we are working with the State and the City to find alternative housing for Pathways’ residents while keeping as many in their homes as possible.

THE CRIMINAL PRACTICE

Our Criminal Practice, the oldest and largest public defender in the country, represents low income New Yorkers involved in the criminal justice system in some 220,000 trial, appellate, and post-conviction matters annually. The Practice includes criminal defense trial offices in all five boroughs of New York City, an Appeals Bureau, a Parole Revocation Defense Unit, a DNA Unit, a Special Litigation Unit and a Community Justice Unit.

Much of the work of the Criminal Defense Practice involves representation that goes beyond the criminal case to include assisting a client with reducing the devastating and life-altering consequences that arrests and convictions have on immigration, housing, employment, education, and other important aspects of clients' lives. Because The Legal Aid Society also has Civil and Juvenile Right Practices, we can provide these essential wraparound services to our clients, utilizing staff with expertise in these legal fields.

EVERY DAY, EXPERIENCED ZEALOUS ADVOCACY

The cornerstone of a successful public defender office is zealous and effective advocacy and litigation. As the primary defender in New York City, we represent low-income New Yorkers from the start of their criminal case to the very end in over 200,000 trial-level cases. The staff in the borough offices consists of supervising attorneys,

staff attorneys, paralegals, investigators, social workers and other support personnel who work collaboratively to provide high quality, client-centered representation.

Everyday our staff are in courtrooms in Criminal and Supreme Courts throughout this city. They fight to uphold our clients rights through litigation. This year the Criminal Defense Practices' DNA Unit successfully concluded a two-year, complicated litigation challenging the Office of Chief Medical Examiner's use of low copy DNA and the Forensic Statistical Tool on the grounds that neither of these testing methodologies were properly validated in the scientific community. This holding, is now cited in courtrooms throughout New York State by criminal defense practitioners.

While this Frye litigation stands out and has received national attention, many more of our successes come from the daily victories we have gained on behalf of our clients, such as an acquittal after trial, placement of a client in an Alternative to Incarceration program, persuasion of a Court to grant a client pretrial release, or the incredible work of our Exploitation Intervention Project- the nation's first public defender driven project to help victims of trafficking and exploitation.

In an example where thorough investigation and careful preparation was rewarded, staff attorney Josh Hadas



Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Practice, conducts a training session for the new class of attorneys.



Providing Comprehensive Services In All Five Boroughs



Staff Attorney Isabel Mattina (right) congratulates her client who has just been acquitted.

represented a client charged and held in jail on Robbery in the Second Degree. The case was a one-witness ID with no corroborating evidence in which our 23 year old client who had no criminal record consistently maintained his innocence, indicating he was not at the location of the robbery at the time that it was committed but rather at his grandmother's apartment, which was several miles away. Investigator Joe Morales visited the grandmother's building and was able to ascertain that there are several surveillance cameras and that they were all working. He also learned that the footage was maintained by a third party vender which Josh subsequently subpoenaed for the video. With staff support from Miguel Ortiz who made multiple inter-borough trips we were able to obtain the footage. Josh spent the following day pouring over the hours of video and isolating the times and cameras where our client appeared; in one instance our client can be seen on the video footage entering the building approximately 15 minutes before the robbery occurred and exiting approximately 30 minutes after the robbery occurred. The same footage was prepared and presented to the assigned DA who subsequently withdrew the case from the grand jury panel and agreed to have our client released. This is a fine illustration of the positive impact of Legal Aid's team approach.

In a case exhibiting excellent litigation skills, Julie Sender tried a case where her client was charged with selling drugs to another person on the street. The police officers testified that while driving in their car, they observed the

sale take place. The client had no drugs on him and the money that was recovered from the client did not match the amount of money the client would have had if he had made the sale. Julie discredited the main police witness with a cross examination that effectively impeached the officer with a number of inconsistencies. After deliberating for a short period, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty.

REACHING THE COMMUNITY BY BEING IN THE COMMUNITY

Working in the communities is a critical part of our work. Since 2012, a group of dedicated attorneys and paralegals have been working in communities throughout the five boroughs of New York City as part of the City's effort to stem gun violence, particularly with young people. Initially known as the "Anti-Gun Violence Unit," our work focuses on assisting community partners to provide trainings and direct services. This year the unit was renamed the Community Justice Unit (CJU), but its critical mission remains the same. The Unit is The Legal Aid Society's way to engage the community before the problem has become a crisis. Traditionally, The Legal Aid Society meets clients when they have already been arrested, been wrongfully evicted or have been terminated from employment. In our effort to preempt these bad outcomes, the Community Justice Unit works to identify people in legal crisis and assist them before the situation becomes worse. Additionally, this unit works to improve public policy by garnering information from the community and coordinating with each of the special litigation units within LAS to bring lawsuits that work to correct the most pressing problems facing our clients. We believe that working in the community, alongside our community partners, tenants' associations and school and



Supervising Attorney Steven Schwarz, the arraignment supervisor, answers a question for the Honorable George A. Grasso, Supervising Judge for Arraignments.



The Legal Aid Society participated in Begin Again, a special amnesty program launched by Brooklyn DA Ken Thompson to help more than 200,000 Brooklyn residents with outstanding warrants for low level citations resolve the matters.

Front row: (from left) Marjorie Dugan, Asmika Dangol, Charlene Gibney, Dawn Ryan Second row: (from left) Taylor Lietz, Brian Escaravage, Al Wall, Nicole Mull, Margaret McClean, Marva Brown, Claire Nicolay, (private attorney), Elizabeth Loebman, Aurea Gonzalez, Luke Schram, Jawaid Stationwala, Shahriar Raafi, Daniel Ashworth, Geno Moore.

youth organizations, gives us a better understanding of the everyday issues that we, as lawyers for New Yorkers, must address and fight to change. The Community Justice Unit also regularly provides “law day” events during which community members can come to speak with lawyers from many different practice areas. CJU is currently doing regular criminal history sheet clean-up clinics around the city to help people know what is on their sheets and how to remove any false information on them. CJU frequently gives Know-Your-Rights presentations in schools and at Cure Violence sites to ensure that people are well informed when confronted by police. Additionally, the unit has scheduled dozens of focus group meetings with Judge Ariel Belen, the court-ordered facilitator for the Floyd, Davis, and Ligon lawsuits (the stop-and-frisk and trespass cases), so that he can speak with people from minority communities and understand their reactions to overly aggressive and illegal policing.

ADVOCATING FOR THOSE WHO OFTEN ARE IGNORED

The Criminal Defense Practice has been addressing this staggering reality by developing a broad range of services for our clients with mental illness. Our social workers and mitigation specialists provide an essential element of effective, comprehensive representation for our clients. In the past year, we significantly increased the scope of our social work practice, which provides assessment,

evaluation and program placement, oral advocacy, and support services at all points of criminal justice representation from arraignment to re-entry.

Our Defender Services Program is the largest component of social workers in the Criminal Practice. Operating in our Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island trial offices, social workers interview clients and their families; gather life history records; and ultimately present mitigation evidence, both oral and written, on misdemeanor and felony cases. Our Defender Services social workers put our clients’ contacts with the criminal justice system into context by telling their stories. Social workers prepare pre-pleading or pre-sentencing memoranda, letters to the court, psychosocial reports and affidavits in support of motions. These social workers also provide oral advocacy in an effort to persuade the court that our client is more than the sum of his/her alleged criminal acts. Long before the call for a commission to look at the intersection between mental illness and the criminal justice system, the Criminal Defense Practice has been addressing this staggering reality by developing a broad range of services for our clients with mental illness.

In an example of a case from our Manhattan trial office, our client, a 29-year-old African American male with cognitive impairment and substance use, was charged

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with Arson in the second degree and facing state imprisonment. The case was referred to a social worker in the Defender Services Program who persuaded the court that the client was in need of services, but the Court insisted upon inpatient placement. Due to the seriousness of an arson charge, inpatient placement was impossible to secure. The social worker presented the client's situation to the Court, along with other mitigating circumstances related to his history. As a result, the Court agreed to dismiss the arson charge and have him rearrested so that he could be charged with Reckless Endangerment. With the new charge, the social worker was able to place the client in inpatient treatment where he is currently receiving appropriate services for his substance abuse issues.

Our MICA Project is comprised of attorney/social worker teams that represent clients who suffer from both mental illness and substance abuse. The mitigation specialists help secure alternatives to incarceration for clients who can be diverted into community-based treatment. Many of these clients are participating in the Mental Health Treatment Courts. Once our client is engaged in community-based treatment, we provide essential support to our MICA Project clients for 18 to 24 months after the resolution of the case to assist them in completion of treatment services. Mr. A was one such client:

The MICA social worker was assigned to Mr. A's case in September of 2013. He is a 37-year-old veteran who had been in and out of psychiatric hospitals since his discharge from the Navy at age 22 with 100% service-connected disability. In 2011, Mr. A was charged with Assault and his case was eventually transferred to the Brooklyn Mental Health Court. He was directed to attend outpatient treatment and live with his father. During one of his many hospitalizations at the VA, it was discovered that Mr. A's father was stealing Mr. A's pension and leaving Mr. A virtually destitute. Fortunately, he was assigned a Federal Fiduciary to manage his money. Just before this case was brought to the attention of the MICA social worker, Mr. A was hospitalized at Kings County Hospital from December 24, 2012, to May 23, 2013. From there he was transferred to the Manhattan VA until September 4, 2013. Most unfortunately, the Court considered this lengthy hospitalization an AWOL from his treatment mandate and issued a warrant for his arrest. Mr. A was consequently taken into custody from the Manhattan VA and brought to Riker's Island where he rapidly decompensated. Within a week, Mr. A was transferred to Bellevue's Forensic Unit. It was during this time that the Brooklyn Mental Health Court treatment team washed their hands of his case, declining to help Mr. A any further. When the MICA social worker was assigned, an

application for supportive housing was initiated for Mr. A while working in conjunction with the VA's Mental Health Intensive Case Management (ICM) team. Unfortunately, during this lengthy process, Mr. A was deemed incompetent in early January of 2014, and was transferred to the Kirby Forensic Psychiatric Center. He was returned to Riker's a full year later in December of 2014. Since then, the MICA social worker has worked aggressively with the VA ICM team to develop a plan that would be acceptable to the Court. Through persistence and numerous attempts at negotiating assistance, the MICA social worker was able to get the full cooperation of both Manhattan and Brooklyn VA hospital administrators, doctors, and social workers with a very unusual plan: Mr. A was to be released from Court and escorted by the VA ICM team to the Manhattan VA emergency room where he would be evaluated and placed in their locked, inpatient psychiatric unit for several days to determine his stability, eventually moving to less restrictive housing and treatment. The judge agreed to the plan, and Mr. A was released to the hospital in January 2015.

FIGHTING LONG AFTER THE CASE IS OVER

Parole Revocation Defense Unit: Our Parole Revocation Defense Unit represents individuals released from prison to community supervision who are charged with violating the conditions of their supervision. Many of the clients, represented by the Parole Defense staff, face enormous



Staff Attorney Jodi Smith (right) is working with Paralegal Jessica Arroya who is inputting information in case files during an arraignment shift in the Bronx.



Staff Attorney Jeremy Davidson talks to a client outside the Bronx Hall of Justice.

obstacles reintegrating into their communities after being imprisoned. Lack of employment, housing and health care, particularly mental health treatment, often drive our clients back into the criminal justice system. Our skilled attorneys and social workers work tirelessly to try to prevent the cycle of recidivism by connecting clients to needed treatment and services after parole violations. This example of the unit's work with a 19-year-old client who faced many years in State prison on his violation of parole highlights a client benefitting from The Legal Aid Society's comprehensive knowledge of Criminal Court, Family Court and parole. No other defender in New York City has this breadth of this expertise:

Mr. W is a 19-year-old man who was charged with a parole violation related to an alleged altercation he had with his biological mother. Prior to the parole violation, the Division of Parole had allowed Mr. W to live with his mother. After the altercation, Mr. W chose to leave his mother's residence and went back to his foster mother's residence, where parole stated he was in violation for "leaving his approved residence." However, Mr. W was officially under the custody of ACS, and had been for many years due to neglect and mistreatment by the mother in the past. The attorney was alarmed at how parole had disregarded the client's history with ACS, and instead, allowed him to live with his mother. The attorney made a social work referral to gather more information on the client's history of trauma with the mother. The attorney also reached out to

the Harlem Justice Corps and ACS to get letters of support and confirmation that Mr. W could return to ACS custody. The Legal Aid social worker interviewed Mr. W, who is a bright, motivated and resilient young man, and has a complicated relationship with his mother. The social worker wrote a psychosocial letter explaining to the judge this relationship and the client's history of trauma, as well as his strengths and achievements while in the community. After thoroughly reviewing the information presented by the social worker and the attorney, the judge agreed to revoke the violation and restore Mr. W to the custody of ACS and encouraged Mr. W's continued participation in the Harlem Justice Corps.

The Parole Revocation Defense Unit won a landmark decision in the New York Court of Appeals regarding parolees who are incompetent to assist in their defense by reason of mental illness. The Court urged the legislature to establish procedures for making competency determinations, but declined to establish any procedures itself. The PRDU staff proposed legislation that will establish such procedures and was passed by both the State Senate and State Assembly.

CRIMINAL APPEALS BUREAU

Our Criminal Appeals Bureau represents clients on direct appeals from convictions in Criminal and Supreme Court, in addition to providing a wide range of post-conviction services. This year, the Criminal Appeals Unit had major

Providing Comprehensive Services In All Five Boroughs

victories on behalf of our clients, as well as the overall fairness of the criminal justice system, two of which were decided by the New York State Court of Appeals.

CAB undertook the representation of DW shortly before the scheduled oral argument after a disagreement between DW and her prior attorney, who left her without counsel. The Court inquired about CAB's willingness to intervene, and Andy Fine, the Director of our Court of Appeals Practice, agreed to handle the case. In a unanimous decision, the Court adopted our argument and found that the Appellate Term had erroneously denied DW's CPL 30.30 speedy trial motion. Specifically, after DW's original conviction was reversed, a new 30.30 clock started and the case was returned to the trial court's calendar. The People asserted the right to an automatic 30.30 exclusion to prepare the case for retrial. The trial court disagreed and dismissed the case on speedy trial grounds, but the Appellate Term reversed. A unanimous Court of Appeals reinstated the dismissal, holding that the Appellate Term had erred as a matter of law in holding that the period following the conclusion of the original appeal was automatically excludable. It overturned prior Appellate Division precedent that had supported such a determination. DW is a significant 30.30 case because it provides the defense with a basis to challenge other "automatic" 30.30 exclusions, such as the excludable time often afforded the People to prepare for trial following the conclusion of motion practice.

CAB also won an important search-and-seizure victory on behalf of BJ, when the High Court reversed the Appellate Division, granted the defense motion to suppress a gun BJ was charged with possessing, and dismissed the indictment against him. There was no dispute in the case that the police had probable cause to arrest BJ and to pursue him into his apartment. Once BJ was under arrest and the others in the apartment under control, however, the police conducted a warrantless search of the bedrooms, finding the gun inside a closed box. Rejecting the People's claim that exigent circumstances justified the intrusion, the Court of Appeals unanimously concluded that the police should have obtained a warrant and, accordingly, granted suppression preserving the right to be free from unreasonable searches in the home.

BRINGING THE ISSUES TO THE FOREFRONT AND TAKING ACTION FOR CHANGE

Throughout this past year, The Legal Aid Society's Criminal Defense Practice has testified at several City and State hearings calling for criminal justice reform such as bail reform, police accountability, as well as raising the age of criminal responsibility. Attorney-in-Charge, Tina Luongo, has been selected to represent the New York City



Staff Attorney Megan Luzier at arraignments.

defenders as part of a team of New York City criminal justice stakeholders working with the MacArthur Foundation to launch systemic changes in pre-trial detention and racial disparity. Additionally, we are litigating the unsealing of the grand jury minutes in the failure to indict Officer Daniel Pantaleo, the officer responsible for killing Staten Island resident and former CDP Client, Eric Garner.

INSURING THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL

The Criminal Practice's Special Litigation Unit (SLU) engages in class action litigation that seeks solutions to systemic problems and provides advice, training and litigation support to criminal defense attorneys throughout the City on novel or complex issues.

In a major victory in a case brought by SLU, U.S. District Court Judge George Daniels ruled that the "continuous minute-by-minute" camera monitoring of lawyers speaking to their clients before arraignments in the new Staten Island Courthouse are "likely violative" of clients' Sixth Amendment right to counsel. Ruling from the bench, Judge Daniels said the cameras could have an "inhibiting" effect on a client's willingness to speak openly with his/her lawyer. The Legal Aid Society with co-counsel from the law firm of White & Case brought a lawsuit to remove the cameras from the arraignment interview booths so that people brought before the Court can speak freely and openly to their counsel.

THE JUVENILE RIGHTS PRACTICE

With our diverse and dedicated staff, the Juvenile Rights Practice (JRP) represents more than 34,000 children annually providing a powerful voice for our clients in child welfare, delinquency and PINS matters. JRP's inter-disciplinary staff advocates day-by-day, child-by-child, and case-by-case on behalf of the clients we represent. Our experience with individual clients creates an expertise that allows us to advocate for broader reform. JRP strives to identify areas where systemic reforms are needed and to work with other advocacy groups and stakeholders to bring about those more far-reaching changes. Given our organization's status as the nation's largest representative of foster youth and youth charged with delinquency, we are uniquely positioned to help achieve broader positive reforms.

issue related workgroups and committees, including those addressing children in court, LGBTQ youth, interviewing around sensitive issues, secondary trauma stress, and adolescent practice. In addition, social work supervisors have participated in external workgroups focused on disproportionate minority representation, mental health, juvenile justice, early client engagement and community-based services.

CLIENT REPRESENTATION SAVES LIVES

In an example of our advocacy, JRP provided speedy and powerful out-of-court advocacy connecting our mentally ill client who had left her foster care placement to live in an appropriate home. When the client disclosed to JRP staff she was pregnant, JRP staff contacted the specialized



Children from SONGCORPS, PS 48 in the Bronx entertain a delighted audience.

JRP functions as the primary counsel for these children with a trial office in each of the five boroughs and an administrative office that houses our Appeals Unit and Special Litigation and Law Reform Unit (SLRUU). Working together these Units provide representation to JRP clients, and support to JRP staff, in innovative ways. JRP's cases involve a range of issues facing our clients, including but not limited to, locating appropriate foster care placement, advocating for reunification with family, accessing suitable mental health services, ensuring an appropriate education and safeguarding sibling visitation.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

For over 50 years, social worker staff has been an integral part of JRP and a strong presence on all JRP practice and

group home for expecting youth to confirm they had an open bed, and advocated directly with ACS to change the client's placement from a residential center to the specialized group home. She is now settled, receiving services and prenatal care, and able to focus on her health and education during her pregnancy.

In another example, the seven C. children, all clients of JRP, were initially remanded to foster care due to parental neglect. Many relatives came forward and JRP negotiated that one of them would move into the home so all seven children could be reunited. The court expedited the clearance at JRP's request and the maternal aunt moved in and took care of the children until their father finished receiving services that enabled him to return.

Providing A Powerful Voice For Young Clients



David G. Januszewski (left) and Peter G. Sloane, partners at Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP, were honored by The Legal Aid Society for their pro bono efforts on behalf of clients of the Kathryn A. McDonald Education Advocacy Project and presented with an award from Seymour W. James. Januszewski is also a member of the Legal Aid Board of Directors.

Another client, Julia B. had been psychiatrically hospitalized. The hospital determined that the child no longer required that level of care but the agency did not have a foster care placement for her. In addition, she wasn't receiving mandatory sibling visits while at the hospital. We filed a motion objecting to the plan to discharge her to a residential placement. The client is now having regular sibling phone contact as well as more visits and will be discharged to the same foster home as her siblings.

Another example involved our client, Sharron M. who was charged with delinquency. Prior to his hearing, he was accepted to an out of state program he wished to attend. His acceptance to the program would have been withdrawn if he had any pending court matters. JRP's creative lawyering provided our client with the opportunity to attend the program by immediately convening a conference with the prosecuting attorney, providing them with a letter from the program and asking if our client could speak to the complaining witness. That meeting led to the complaining witness finding common ground with our client and informing the prosecutor she did not want to pursue the petition and she even offered to function as a mentor for our client. The petition was withdrawn and sealed.

EXCELLENCE IN APPELLATE ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN

Our Appeals Unit represented almost 200 JRP clients in the city and state appellate courts. In one such case JRP filed a CPLR Article 78 application seeking an order directing ACS to pay for gender reassignment procedures for a 20-year-old transgender female in the foster care system. ACS had denied the application, despite recommendations from all the health care providers who had dealt with D.F., based solely on a written report from a pediatrician who, after reviewing ACS's records but never meeting with D.F., determined that none of the procedures she requested, even the most minimally intrusive such as laser hair removal, was appropriate at that time because she might not do the necessary aftercare. The court found ACS's denial arbitrary and capricious because: it rested on a premise that had no foundation in the record-D.F.'s non-compliance with rules of her group home and her failure to consistently participate in programs were not indicators that she would not participate in necessary post-operative care; by ACS's own policy, the determination of whether the procedures were medically necessary was required to be done by a mental health professional who met with D.F., rather than by a pediatrician who relied only on records; ACS's policy gave unfettered discretion to its deputy commissioner to approve or disapprove gender affirming procedures; and ACS's decision to withhold care until some "later time" completely ignored D.F.'s almost certain inability to pay for these surgeries and procedures once she aged out of foster care.



Tamara Steckler, Attorney-in-Charge of the Juvenile Rights Practice.



Barbara Stock, Assistant Attorney-in-Charge of the JRP Bronx Office, serves as master of ceremonies of the Bronx Health Fair program.

In a Court of Appeals case, 11 year-old D.S., had been arrested for stabbing a 12-year-old during a fistfight. The Family Court denied suppression of an inculpatory statement he made to two police officers while in his home, finding that the questioning was not custodial and therefore Miranda warnings were not required. At trial, the court rejected D's justification defense and entered a finding. On appeal, we argued, *inter alia*, that the statement should have been suppressed. The Appellate Division agreed, holding that a reasonable 11-year-old would not have felt free to leave during the interrogation, but found that the error was harmless beyond a reasonable doubt. We were granted leave and the Court of Appeals found that the erroneous admission of the statement was not harmless because it "undermined, if not eviscerated, D's justification defense."

REFORMING THE LAW FOR CHILDREN

Our Special Litigation and Law Reform Unit (SLLRU) works tirelessly to ensure systemic change. Currently, along with co-counsel Cravath, Swaine, & Moore LLP, SLLRU has been investigating whether City and State agencies are destroying the fingerprints, photographs and other arrest-related documents as required for many youth charged as juvenile delinquents. Young adults suffer from the wrongful consequences of these deficient practices in employment, upon future criminal justice contact and due to ongoing stigma. After successfully working with

the NYS Office of Court Administration, the NYC Department of Probation, and the NYC Law Department to identify and address failing practices, SLLRU issued demand letters to both the NYPD and the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). SLLRU is now in the course of negotiating improved processes to ensure compliance with both of these entities and is hopeful that litigation will not be required to protect the rights and future of our young clients.

LGBT INITIATIVE

An innovative project, the LGBT Rights Initiative collaborated with JRP managers in the development of a survey for all JRP staff regarding the cultural competence and comfort in working with clients identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered. All JRP staff has already been trained regarding this topic and the survey will fine tune the areas in which JRP needs to further train to ensure staff is sensitive and attentive to the issues that our LGBT clients face. The Initiative, which is also working with the Society's Criminal and Civil Practices, has developed an advanced interviewing training that will enhance our staffs' ability to speak with youth and ensure we are all providing an affirming and supportive environment for our young LGBT clients.

"CLOSE TO HOME"

An exciting development for JRP clients began in 2012, when Governor Cuomo signed a budget bill, Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2012, that included statutory amendments implementing the "Close to Home" Initiative. The Legal Aid Society was a strong advocate for this bill which required children who are currently placed in upstate facilities after being adjudicated delinquents by the Family Court to now be placed only within the confines of New York City. JRP worked with the City to ensure that our clients would no longer be placed in facilities hundreds of miles from their homes, but would instead remain in the City to receive treatment, confinement and supervision. This bill and its implementation is a significant step toward the more humane and rehabilitative treatment to which our clients are entitled. JRP continues to work with the City on the realigned juvenile justice system as part of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, a more permanent City body that is overseeing the reform.

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION

Continuing its exceptional track record, the Kathryn A. McDonald Education Advocacy Project (EAP) continues to provide education advocacy for children involved in child protective and delinquency proceedings in New York City. When necessary, EAP represents clients at mediations and

Providing A Powerful Voice For Young Clients

impartial hearings to enforce their right to a free, appropriate public education. EAP has also consulted on thousands of additional cases, providing advice about a wide range of general education issues. Over the past fourteen years, EAP has trained thousands of parents, foster parents and child welfare professionals about how to access developmental and educational services for children involved in Family Court cases. For example, JRP requested and received an order from the court stating our client was not to be moved from his school when he was placed in foster care, often the only stability for a child. The agency filed a motion to vacate the order, and JRP's Education Advocacy Project became involved. The

court agreed with the EAP advocate and our client was able to continue in his school where he is very attached to the staff and receives many necessary services, including counseling and family visits.

The depth and breadth of the practice at JRP continues to grow to meet the ever-changing needs of our clients. JRP staff are committed and passionate in their representation of New York City's youth in day-to-day child protective, delinquency and PINS hearings, as well as a host of other related hearings and proceedings that seek to ensure the child's well-being and future success.

HOLIDAY PARTY FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Last year, for the 32nd year, The Legal Aid Society sponsored the Holiday Party for Homeless and Other Vulnerable Children on the grounds of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 110th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. For many of these children, The Legal Aid Society party is the only source of holiday gifts. Special thanks to the Staff of the Society and to members of the Board of Directors and the Board of Advisers and to their law firms and corporations for their generous contributions. We also thank the following firms whose outstanding donations of toys, books, games and volunteers made it possible for the children and their families to enjoy the happiness of the holiday season: Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP; Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP; Hughes, Hubbard & Reed LLP; Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP; Morvillo, Abramowitz, Grand, Iason & Anello P.C.; Scholastic Books; Shearman & Sterling LLP; Sidley Austin, LLP; Sullivan & Cromwell LLP; and Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz. The New Amsterdam Singers and Legal Aid's own Human Resources Chief Officer Allan Fox entertained the children and Donald Molen was a tremendous Santa Claus. Terri and Richard Kim donated the hundreds of items for the crafts table which is a major attraction at the party. Photographs of the children and the wonderful volunteers from the firms and The Legal Aid Society are on the Society's website on the flickr section www.legal-aid.org <<http://www.legal-aid.org>> You can see the happy faces and know that you are responsible for the smiles and laughter. We thank you so much for caring.



IN MEMORIAM

The Legal Aid Society Mourns The Loss Of Two Former Presidents Who Were Leaders Of The Bar

The Legal Aid Society suffered the loss of two great leaders who were former Presidents of this 139-year-old organization that has served New York City's poor. Federal Judge Robert P. Patterson of the Southern District, whose remarkable life was devoted to public service, passed away April 21st. Leon Silverman, a tenacious litigator who was involved in the desegregation of schools in Little Rock, Ark., passed away January 29th.

The Legal Aid Society was the beneficiary of the great wisdom and devotion of these two leaders who gave so willingly of themselves. Judge Patterson served as President of The Legal Aid Society from 1967 to 1971. Mr. Silverman followed as President from 1971 to 1973. Both men devoted many decades of service to The Legal Aid Society, serving on its Board of Directors as members and as officers.



Judge Patterson was remembered as a great American who was an outstanding lawyer and a great human being. His roots to The Legal Aid Society began with his father who served as a director and officer before becoming a Federal Judge of the Southern District, who later served as Assistant Secretary of War in 1940. Young Judge Patterson grew up knowing great jurists such as Learned Hand and vacationed with their families. Staff of The Legal Aid Society praised Judge Patterson for his rulings regarding inmates in the City jails and prisoners. Many recalled his outstanding service to the poor.

Leon Silverman proudly identified himself as an “adversarial person.” His advocacy on behalf of The Legal Aid Society is legend. “There isn’t any reason why we shouldn’t be able to give someone who is poor the feeling that he is being given the same rights as someone with money,” he would say. He represented a host of well known persons during his career. In 1984 in a unanimous decision in *Blum v. Stenson*, the United States Supreme Court recognized the importance of The Legal Aid Society, stating that the Society “enjoys a wide reputation for the devotion of its staff and the quality of its service.” At stake was the amount of attorneys’ fees awarded under the Civil Rights Attorneys Fees Awards Act. Leon Silverman argued that case on behalf of The Legal Aid Society.



38TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER



Betsy and Ken Plevan, 2015 Servants of Justice, with Attorney-in-Chief Seymour James, Chairman Richard J. Davis; and President Fin Fogg.



Seymour W. James with Nancy and Frederic Poses, recipients of the Theodore Roosevelt Award

The Legal Aid Society's 38th Annual Awards Dinner was the most successful in the Society's history. With more than 700 dedicated supporters in attendance, we celebrated 139 years of providing quality representation to low-income New Yorkers.

2015 PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARDS



With Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman at The Legal Aid Society's 2015 Pro Bono Publico Ceremony are (from left) Louis Sartori, Director of the Pro Bono Program at Legal Aid; Fin Fogg, Legal Aid President; Chief Judge Lippman; Eugene Gelernter, co-Chair of Patterson Belknap's Pro Bono Committee; Lisa E. Cleary, co-Chair and Managing Partner of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler; Richard J. Davis, Legal Aid Chairman; and Seymour W. James, Attorney-in-Chief.

During the annual Pro Bono Publico Awards ceremony, The Legal Aid Society announced The Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award to be presented annually to the law firm whose exceptional pro bono commitment to The Legal Aid Society and its clients has furthered Judge Lippman's goal of "Making Equal Justice For All Not Just An Ideal, But Truly A Reality In Our Great State." The first winner of the award is Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler.

2015 PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARDS

The Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono & Public Service Law Firm Award

Since his appointment as Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals in 2009, no individual has done more to address the unmet legal needs of low income New Yorkers than Judge Jonathan Lippman. Recognizing the need to provide civil legal assistance to our most vulnerable citizens, in 2010 Judge Lippman established a first of its kind **Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services** in New York. The initial findings of the Task Force (now Permanent Commission) identified a critical need for additional resources to provide legal assistance to address the “essentials of life”, including housing, family stability, access to health care and education and subsistence income. Immediately, the Chief Judge set forth to implement the Task Force recommendation to increase annual funding for civil legal services by \$100 million in four years. In the last fiscal year, the state provided an additional 85 million dollars.



Knowing that more than just funding would be needed to address the justice gap, Judge Lippman worked with the private bar, legal service providers, law schools and the courts to establish unique programs to make greater use of potential resources, including:

“Attorney Emeritus” Program (AEP). Created in 2010 by the Chief Judge and his colleagues on the Administrative Board of the Courts, the Unified Court system in cooperation with the organized bar and legal services programs established a new status for attorneys in good standing, who are at least 55 years old, with a minimum of 10 years’ experience. AEP attorneys volunteer in approved pro bono legal service programs putting their skills and experience to work helping New Yorkers who cannot afford counsel.

The 50 Hour Rule. In September 2012, the Court of Appeals adopted a new rule requiring applicants for admission to the New York State bar to perform 50 hours of pro bono service. The goal of the rule is twofold; to further narrow the gap in legal assistance available to low income New Yorkers and to provide instructive and meaningful experiences to law students that will expose them to the pressing needs of the less fortunate.

In-House Pro Bono Rule. In December 2013, the Court of Appeals amended Part 522 of its rules to authorize registered in-house counsel to provide pro bono legal services in New York State provided they are in good standing in another state and properly registered with the courts. The rule allows in-house counsel working, but not admitted, in New York to perform pro bono services for unrepresented New Yorkers.

Pro Bono Scholars Program. Established in 2014, the Pro Bono Scholars Program allows students in their final year of law school to devote their last semester of study to performing pro bono service for the less fortunate through an approved externship program, law school clinic, legal services provider, law firm or corporation.

Poverty Justice Solutions Fellowships. In an effort to close the justice gap, Poverty Justice Solutions places 20 new attorneys in two-year fellowships as entry-level attorneys with civil legal service providers in New York City. Legal Fellows work exclusively on Housing Court cases representing clients facing potential eviction or seeking repairs. Fellows are provided an opportunity to make a lasting contribution to improving the lives of hundreds of low-income New York City residents in need of legal assistance.

The Legal Aid Society is proud to have been a partner with Judge Lippman in implementing these ground breaking pro bono programs, and is grateful for the assistance and support he has provided through his vigorous advocacy for increased civil legal services funding. In recognition of his exemplary leadership and dedication to the needs of the less fortunate, the Society is proud to announce **The Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award**. The award will be presented annually to the law firm whose exceptional pro bono commitment to The Legal Aid Society and its clients has furthered Judge Lippman’s goal of “Making Equal Justice For All Not Just An Ideal, But Truly A Reality in Our Great State”.

2015 PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARDS

The 2015 Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award

Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP

Commitment to public service is engrained in the values of **Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler**, and one needn't look any further than firm Co-Chairs **William Cavanaugh, Jr.** and **Lisa Cleary** for examples of that commitment. Bill has been a Legal Aid Society Board Member since 2010 and Lisa, who is also the firm's Managing Partner, has led Patterson Belknap's pro bono efforts and is a past recipient of the Society's *Public Interest Law Leadership Award*. For over a decade, Patterson Belknap has had 100% participation from its attorneys in pro bono projects. Given their longstanding commitment to improve the lives of the most underserved populations, it is no surprise that Patterson Belknap has long been a supporter of the efforts of The Legal Aid Society. Judge Robert Patterson served as President of the Society from 1967 to 1971, following in the footsteps of his father, who had also served on the Society's Board of Directors before his appointment to the bench in the Southern District of New York. Upon his own appointment to the bench in 1988, Judge Patterson was asked what lessons he had to share for associates at the firm that bore his name. His response, "Keep your values . . . and do pro bono."

Under the leadership of **Eugene Gelernter** and **Peter Tomlinson** who co-chair the firm's Pro Bono Committee, Patterson Belknap has worked side by side with Society lawyers in our Criminal Defense, Juvenile Rights and Civil practices, providing the highest quality legal services to both individual clients as well as larger groups of overlooked and unrepresented low income New Yorkers. Here are just two examples of that dedication and commitment.

On behalf of the approximately 4,000 runaway and homeless youth (RHY) in New York City, Patterson Belknap, as co-counsel with the Society's LGBT Law and Policy Initiative, the Juvenile Rights Special Litigation & Law Reform Unit, and the Civil Law Reform Unit's Homeless Rights Project, filed a class action matter to demand a right to shelter for these disenfranchised young people. The lawsuit, filed in the Eastern District of New York, continues Legal Aid's history of fighting for the right to shelter in New York City as well as bringing a voice to one of the city's most vulnerable populations. Patterson Belknap has been involved since the case's inception in 2012, researching, investigating, participating in extensive fact discovery, expert depositions and motion practice. The firm's involvement however goes well beyond providing resources and staff, as team members have been engaged with and responsive to these vulnerable clients and their concerns.

Again, responding to a crisis that potentially placed thousands at risk of homelessness, Patterson Belknap rushed to provide critical assistance to Legal Aid's Civil Law Reform Unit and successfully prevented the eviction of approximately 400 individuals with a history of chronic homelessness and mental illness. Pathways to Housing, a supportive housing provider which served as the payee for benefits awarded to these needy clients, failed to pay rent on its clients' behalf. As a result, the clients were faced with the imminent threat of eviction. Patterson Belknap and the Society commenced a lawsuit against Pathways and successfully obtained a temporary restraining order preventing the eviction of hundreds of vulnerable clients. Shortly after we filed our case, Pathways filed for bankruptcy and Patterson Belknap assisted in navigating that process. All the former Pathways clients have been successfully transitioned to a new supportive housing provider.

It is fitting therefore that Patterson Belknap be the first recipient of The Legal Aid Society's *Honorable Jonathan Lippman New York Pro Bono Publico & Public Service Law Firm Award*. Through their extraordinary pro bono commitment to The Legal Aid Society and its clients, **Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler** has clearly demonstrated that the firm shares Judge Lippman's goal of "making equal justice for all not just an ideal, but a reality".

SUSTAINING LAW FIRMS

The Legal Aid Society acknowledges the outstanding support and dedication of the Sustaining Law Firms. These firms sustain the work of The Legal Aid Society by contributing at a leadership level of \$600 per attorney in their New York offices.

The support of the Sustaining Law Firms enables The Legal Aid Society's Civil Practice to provide legal representation to the most vulnerable New Yorkers, including: senior citizens, survivors of domestic violence, persons living with HIV/AIDS, homeless and imminently homeless families and individuals, adults and children living with disabilities, immigrants, and low-income wage earners.

The support of the Sustaining Law Firms helps to ensure that poverty is not a barrier to accessing the justice system.

Arnold & Porter LLP
Baker & Hostetler LLP
BuckleySandler LLP
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP
Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP
Chadbourn & Parke LLP
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Cooley LLP
Covington & Burling LLP
Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Dechert LLP
DLA Piper LLP (US)
Fitzpatrick, Cella, Harper & Scinto
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Goodwin Procter LLP
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP
Jones Day
Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman LLP
Kaye Scholer LLP
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Kobre & Kim LLP

Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP
Lankler Siffert & Wohl LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Mayer Brown LLP
Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP
Morvillo Abramowitz Grand Iason & Anello P.C.
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
Proskauer Rose LLP
Ropes & Gray LLP
Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
Shearman & Sterling LLP
Sidley Austin LLP
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
White & Case LLP
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP
Winston & Strawn LLP
Wollmuth Maher & Deutsch LLP

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We are deeply grateful to the law firms, corporations, foundations and individuals for their support of The Legal Aid Society and our core principle that no New Yorker should be denied access to justice because of poverty. We are especially grateful to our Sustaining Law Firms for their steadfast annual support.

The Legal Aid Society wishes to also recognize the members of the New Leadership Program (NLP) for their enthusiastic support of the Society's mission over the last year. The NLP builds on our traditional Associates' Campaign for law firm associates with its innovative program comprised of young professionals from the legal, financial, business and arts communities who have chosen the Society as one of their primary philanthropic commitments. We thank the founding members of the New Leadership Board for their insight and generosity and for being enthusiastic ambassadors of our mission. As this program continues to grow, we are excited to welcome the next generation of dedicated young professionals.

Each year, the Society works on over 300,000 individual legal matters and provides law reform representation which benefits all two million low-income children and adults in New York City and has both a Statewide and a national impact. Our efforts in each of the five boroughs of the City to provide comprehensive legal assistance and community-based services could not have been realized without the commitment of all of our supporters.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of low-income New Yorkers.

SUSTAINING LAW FIRMS

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Chadbourne & Parke LLP
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Cooley LLP
Covington & Burling LLP
Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Dechert LLP
DLA Piper LLP (US)
Fitzpatrick, Cella, Harper & Scinto
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Goodwin Procter LLP
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP
Jones Day
Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman LLP
Kaye Scholer LLP
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Kobre & Kim LLP
Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP
Lankler Siffert & Wohl LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Mayer Brown LLP
Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP
Morvillo Abramowitz Grand Iason & Anello P.C.
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
Proskauer Rose LLP
Ropes & Gray LLP
Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
Shearman & Sterling LLP

Sidley Austin LLP
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
White & Case LLP
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP
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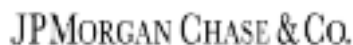
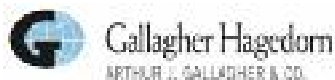
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A Day in the Life of **THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY**

When people have trouble, they come to The Legal Aid Society, one of the busiest law firms in New York City and the oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services provider in the United States. The Legal Aid Society is an indispensable component of the legal, social, and economic fabric of New York City – passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform. The Legal Aid Society is the lawyer for low-income New Yorkers, the safety net when all else has failed. The staff is the core of this great institution – over 1,100 Legal Aid Society lawyers working with 700 social workers, investigators, paralegals and support and administrative staff. Every job and every person help make it possible for The Legal Aid Society to be the voice for low-income New Yorkers. The Legal Aid Society takes on more cases for more clients than any other legal services organization in the United States. And it brings a depth and breadth of perspective that is unmatched in the legal profession. The Legal Aid Society's unique value is an ability to go beyond any one case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals and broader, more powerful systemic change for society as a whole. In addition to the annual caseload of 300,000 individual cases and legal matters, the Society's law reform work benefits some 2 million low-income families and individuals in New York City and the landmark rulings in many of these cases have a Statewide and national impact.

6:30 AM - 7:30 AM



Paralegal Ramon Willoughby walks into the Police Room at Manhattan Criminal Court. They call him the “writ man” because he monitors the arrest to arraignment time. In Staten Island, Christopher Pisciotta, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Office there, reviews the police arrest logs to determine if any detainees have been held by police beyond 24 hours without appearing before the Court. Queens Criminal Court arraignment Paralegal Cristian Espinal gets the LAS arraignment office ready for another busy day by organizing and writing up case files for clients to be interviewed that day. He also checks the status of open cases a client may have. On Rikers Island, Marie Washington, Director of the Paralegal Program, makes certain she has coverage in all 10 jails. Civil Practice Administrator Ramona Gordon opens the Harlem Community Law Office. In Brooklyn, Paralegal Herbie Grant is opening the Brooklyn Neighborhood Office where people will soon bring their problems concerning housing, benefit denials and immigration. In the Bronx JRP office, Delinquency Supervisor Mark Dellaquila arrives early to get a jump on the day. He finishes up papers to file an emergency stay application at the Appellate Division seeking the immediate release of a client who was unjustly remanded. He quickly gets pulled from that task to field morning calls and distribute cases for coverage. Tamara Steckler, Attorney-in-Charge of the JRP Practice, boards a plane to Washington, D.C. to participate in a meeting with the Department of Justice to discuss the direction of juvenile justice reform in the coming year.

Jose Martinez has made all the preparations for opening the Civil Practice’s Bronx Neighborhood Office. A few families with small children are waiting to come in. Jose helps the mothers with the strollers and gives the children some toys and books. JRP Staff Attorney Carol Hochberg leaves her home and drives to Long Island to obtain a client’s signature on an affidavit, enabling her to file a motion in Queens Family Court when the clerk’s office opens at 9:00 AM. Staten Island Supervising Attorney Joseph Licitra meets with the Court, prosecutor and Treatment Court staff to discuss the progress of our clients in court mandated drug treatment programs. Assigned early arraignments, Brooklyn CDP Staff Attorney Jasmine Foreman is interviewing a client in the holding area who is charged with a misdemeanor, while cluster supervisors are meeting in a conference room about changes in recent practices in the District Attorney’s office. Paralegal Margaret McClean is checking and arranging the drug treatment court files for cases scheduled that morning as drug treatment Staff Attorneys Dawn Dapelo and Roslyn Morrison interview clients in varying stages of post plea treatment. Civil Practice Staff Attorney Sumani Lanka heads to court for a foreclosure settlement conference as Judith Goldiner, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice’s Law Reform Unit, prepares testimony to present before the New York City Council. Later, Judith and Staff Attorneys Ellen Davidson and Robert Desir will meet with the Public Advocate’s Office about rent subsidies.

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM



10:00 AM - 12:00 NOON



Bronx CDP Staff Attorney Gaynor Cunningham consults with a polygraph expert before a test is administered to her client. Red Hook Community Justice Center Staff Attorney Daniel Ashworth interviews a client who just began a vocational training program while Mental Health Attorney, Edna McGoldrick, declares ready for trial with a 17-year-old client who has brought his friends to court to act as defense witnesses. Richard Joselson, Supervising Attorney in the Criminal Appeals Bureau, is answering the email of a staff attorney on trial in the Bronx, advising her how to fully preserve the record should an appeal be necessary. Staff Attorney Tashi Lhewa assists a client facing unscrupulous practices by debt collectors. Supervising Attorney Laura Russell and Staff Attorney Jack Newton are interviewing a domestic violence survivor in the Bronx who has immigration issues as well. In Staten Island, JRP Social Worker Kelsey Jorgensen meets with an 18-year old client to help her find medical and mental health care, obtain housing, and plan for her upcoming childbirth. Kai-lin Hsu, Staff Attorney with the Education Advocacy Project, heads to Brooklyn to represent our client at an Impartial Hearing against the Department of Education. She negotiates a settlement with the DOE representative, who admits that the school isn’t able to meet our client’s needs and agrees to fund a placement at a private school. Then Kai-lin rushes back to the Bronx to accompany a teenage client to an interview at a school that serves overage, under-credited students.

Drivers Derrick Maultsby drives the Society's Mobile Justice Unit to Brooklyn near the PATH, the City's homeless families intake center, and Staff Attorney Kathryn Kliff gets out to speak with families who are homeless and seeking shelter. Staff Attorney Natasha Ingram talks to a client in the hall in Bronx Housing Court while a few feet away, Staff Attorney Helen Frieder is negotiating with lawyers for the landlord. On Rikers Island, Paralegal Kasandra Robinson is interviewing a woman inmate in the Rose M. Singer Center whose family needs emergency assistance while, Lorraine McEvelley, Director of the Parole Revocation Defense Unit, is representing a client who has been wrongfully charged with violating the conditions of his release. Back at Water Street, Special Litigation Staff Attorney John Schoeffel is fielding phone calls from attorneys who need advice and facts checked so they can present new evidence to the Judge when court resumes at 2:00 PM. Dodd Terry, Attorney-in-Charge of JRP's Manhattan office, heads to a meeting for Agency Heads and the Supervising Judge of the Manhattan Family Court where he will advocate for JRP's staff and clients regarding court processes, while Staff Attorney Yissel Cabrera is speaking to a foster parent and client on the phone about her emergency motion that will permit the client to remain in her foster home. JRP Staff Attorney John Newberry is on his way to the Appellate Division to argue a writ he filed for the release of our Bronx client charged with delinquency and remanded by the Family Court.

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM



2:30 PM - 4:00 PM



Supervising Attorney Kimberly Forte of the LGBT Law and Policy Initiative conducts a training class for new attorneys in the Criminal Practice. JRP Social Worker Godline Deterville leaves the office at 2:30 PM to make a field visit to the foster home of three young clients who were remanded the day before on a newly filed abuse case. Adolescent Intervention Staff Attorney Debbie Rush, Social Worker Lori Salyer and Investigator Jaime Badia are on a video conference with a client at Riker's Island so the client can view a video obtained by the investigator and discuss a plea offer. In juvenile detention in Bronx Family Court, Vicki Light, the Trauma Advocacy Project attorney in the Bronx JRP office, is on trial for an abuse case of a three-month-old client with multiple fractures. Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice, is on a conference call discussing upcoming hearings on civil legal services before meeting with the Robin Hood Foundation, a major funder. Harlem Community Law Office Supervising Attorney Karen Hambrick interviews potential clients at a Single Stop session at a community-based organization. Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Practice, meets with the DNA Unit before joining a conference call on pre-trial detention. Tina has been selected to represent all New York City defenders as part of a team of stakeholders in New York City's criminal justice system working with the MacArthur Foundation to initiate systemic changes in pre-trial detention and racial disparity.

Marshall Green, the Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice's Bronx Neighborhood Office, is outside the Bronx Housing Court talking to clients. Employment Law Attorney-in-Charge Karen Cacace and Staff Attorney Amy Hong confer with a client who has been harassed on her job while JoJo Annobil, Attorney-in-Charge of the Immigration Law Unit, is on a conference call with colleagues discussing the New York Immigrant Family Unit Project for detained immigrants facing deportation. JRP Paralegal Angelica Rodriguez meets with 13-year-old Rosa, who speaks only Spanish. Angelica immediately contacts Rosa's foster family to come to court so that her JRP Staff Attorney Jennifer Smith can advocate for her release. Community Justice Unit Director Sandeep Kandhari and his staff meet with a community partner to plan Know Your Rights sessions. Queens Paralegal Lucy Herschel takes a frantic call from a distressed mother seeking advice who has received a visit from a detective looking for her son whom they intend to arrest. Lucy will confer with a supervising attorney who will assign an attorney to coordinate the surrender of the son to a local police precinct and represent him in the Criminal Court arraignment part. Attorney-in-Chief Seymour W. James returns to Water Street from a budget meeting at City Hall. He has just enough time to answer a few calls and emails, pack up copies of testimony to read later tonight, and head out for a State Bar committee meeting.

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM



6:30 PM - 10:00 PM



Cara Chambers, Supervising Attorney of the Kathryn A. McDonald Education Advocacy Project, has just finished interviewing a young client before rushing off to conduct a training session for caseworkers, parents and community leaders about the rights of children with disabilities. By the time she gets home, her email box will be filled with follow up questions which she will answer that night and tomorrow morning. The Project helps children in foster care with developmental issues in education. Family Court in the Bronx has ended just a little while ago so Dawne Mitchell, Attorney-in-Charge of the Bronx Juvenile Rights Office, is finishing up for the day, while Staff Attorney Maria Roumiantseva is at her desk entering her final edits on a conflict motion that she plans on filing the next day. In Harlem, Civil Practice Supervising Attorney Magna Rosa-Rios and Paralegal LeShawn Earl are conducting a Know Your Rights session for a community group, while in the Queens Neighborhood Office, Attorney-in-Charge Sateesh Nori is handling an emergency situation for a client who was referred by a State Assembly member. Jonathan Chasan, a Supervising Attorney in the Prisoners' Rights Project, is talking to family members of an inmate who was badly beaten at Rikers by correction officers. In arraignment parts throughout the City, Legal Aid attorneys are working the night shift where they will arraign clients until 1:00 AM..

Edward McCarthy, arraignment supervisor, is leaving Manhattan Criminal Court. The Night Court shift is over. Everyone knows Ed – court officers, EMTs, court clerks, Assistant District Attorneys and judges alike. He will have to swing back in the morning to conduct a training class for new lawyers at the Legal Aid headquarters on Water Street. He stops and jots down a note for his training class: "Why are you working so hard to keep me out of jail?" The question came from a client he represented earlier – a disheveled, frightened young man whom Ed will refer to the Legal Aid MICA Project to try to get him into a treatment program for mentally ill, chemically addicted clients. Later today during the training session, Ed will tell the new young lawyers his answer: "Because I am your lawyer and I will fight for you." In just a few hours, Ramon Willoughby will check arrest to arraignment times. Herbie Grant will arrive at the Brooklyn Neighborhood Office and Ramona Gordon will open the Harlem Community Law Office. And another day at The Legal Aid Society begins.

1:30 AM



MAKING THE CASE FOR HUMANITY

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Financial Report

June 30, 2015

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To the Board of Directors
The Legal Aid Society
New York, New York

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Legal Aid Society (the Society), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2015, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as of June 30, 2015 and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We have previously audited the Society's 2014 financial statements, and we expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those audited financial statements in our report dated October 20, 2014. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014, is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial statements from which it has been derived.

As more fully described in Note 11 to the financial statements, the Society has accrued revenue amounting to \$2,141,192 from unexecuted and/or unregistered contracts with New York State and City of New York Agencies. As a result, the New York State and City of New York Agencies may claim not to be obligated to pay the Society for the contract services performed. Consequently, the ultimate realization of these contract receivables is subject to the execution of these contracts by New York State and City of New York Agencies. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

New York, New York
October 28, 2015

The Legal Aid Society

Statement of Financial Position

June 30, 2015

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2014)

	2015	2014
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 30,801,467	\$ 33,385,662
Receivables From Grants and Governmental Contracts	28,814,309	24,005,339
Investments, at Fair Value	3,516,970	3,443,447
Deferred Charges and Other Assets	946,311	760,053
Property and Equipment, at Cost, Net	4,328,812	4,485,359
Total assets	\$ 68,407,869	\$ 66,079,860
Liabilities and Net Asset Deficiency		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 2,169,954	\$ 2,216,493
Accrued payroll and other employee expenses	28,596,235	27,067,562
Program advances	688,833	6,758,345
Accrued postretirement health and benefits cost	33,633,487	28,828,613
Pension liability	25,083,102	22,359,724
Deferred lease incentives and lease obligations	17,721,811	18,260,695
Total liabilities	107,893,422	105,491,432
Commitments and Contingencies		
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	(44,349,150)	(44,200,149)
Temporarily Restricted	2,797,574	2,722,554
Permanently Restricted	2,066,023	2,066,023
Total net asset deficiency	(39,485,553)	(39,411,572)
Total liabilities and net asset deficiency	\$ 68,407,869	\$ 66,079,860

See Notes to Financial Statements.

The Legal Aid Society

Statement of Activities

Year Ended June 30, 2015

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2014)

	2015			2014	
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total	Summarized Comparative Total
Support and Revenue					
Program support and revenue:					
Criminal Defense Practice	\$ 152,946,526	\$ 157,451	\$ -	\$ 153,103,977	\$ 145,448,719
Juvenile Rights Practice	41,673,300	649,235	-	42,322,535	43,282,149
Civil Practice	27,367,940	3,714,278	-	31,082,218	21,230,743
Contributions (net of direct expenses related to the benefit)	14,264,240	15,989	-	14,280,229	14,305,794
Return on investments, net	23,769	73,523	-	97,292	488,664
Court awards	140,277	-	-	140,277	202,595
Other income	1,143	-	-	1,143	11,527
Net assets released from restrictions - satisfaction of program and time restrictions	4,535,456	(4,535,456)	-	-	-
Total support and revenue before in-kind contributions	240,952,651	75,020	-	241,027,671	224,970,191
Operating Expenses					
Program services:					
Criminal Defense Practice	142,042,734	-	-	142,042,734	132,206,170
Juvenile Rights Practice	40,947,554	-	-	40,947,554	39,481,305
Civil Practice	38,486,555	-	-	38,486,555	32,340,707
Total program services before in-kind contributions	221,476,843	-	-	221,476,843	204,028,182
Supporting services:					
Administrative expenses	13,647,055	-	-	13,647,055	13,066,261
Fundraising expenses	800,789	-	-	800,789	893,112
Total supporting services	14,447,844	-	-	14,447,844	13,959,373
Total operating expenses before in-kind contributions	235,924,687	-	-	235,924,687	217,987,555
Result of operations	5,027,964	75,020	-	5,102,984	6,982,636
In-Kind Contributions					
Revenue from legal services	83,645,391	-	-	83,645,391	91,042,379
Program expenses from legal services	(83,645,391)	-	-	(83,645,391)	(91,042,379)
Expense from other gift-in-kind contributions	-	-	-	-	(5,993,235)
Total in-kind contributions	-	-	-	-	(5,993,235)
Change in net assets before pension liability adjustment	5,027,964	75,020	-	5,102,984	989,401
Pension and Other Postretirement-Related Changes Other Than Net Periodic Costs	-	-	-	-	-
	(5,176,965)	-	-	(5,176,965)	(2,561,451)
Change in net assets	(149,001)	75,020	-	(73,981)	(1,572,050)
Net Assets (Deficiency)					
Beginning	(44,200,149)	2,722,554	2,066,023	(39,411,572)	(37,839,522)
Ending	\$ (44,349,150)	\$ 2,797,574	\$ 2,066,023	\$ (39,485,553)	\$ (39,411,572)

See Notes to Financial Statements.

The Legal Aid Society

Statement of Functional Expenses

Year Ended June 30, 2015

(With Summarized Financial Information for the Year Ended June 30, 2014)

	2015						2014	
	Program Services			Supporting Services			Summarized Comparative Total	
	Criminal Defense Practice	Juvenile Rights Practice	Civil Practice	Pro Bono Services	Total Program Services	Administrative	Fund-Raising	Supporting Services
Employee Expenses								
Professional staff salaries	\$ 70,023,761	\$ 20,321,389	\$ 16,895,940	\$ -	\$ 107,241,090	\$ 3,328,322	\$ 196,050	\$ 3,524,372
Support staff salaries	16,913,063	5,136,954	5,189,817	-	27,239,834	3,252,270	153,862	3,405,932
Fringe benefits and other employee costs	38,186,875	11,469,601	10,109,980	-	59,766,456	3,147,647	154,922	3,302,569
Total employee expenses	125,123,699	36,927,944	32,195,737	-	194,247,380	9,728,239	504,834	10,232,873
Other Expenses								
Occupancy costs	10,296,692	2,439,762	3,201,524	-	15,937,978	1,394,601	100,835	1,495,436
Communications	732,531	214,867	217,514	-	1,164,912	73,542	4,583	78,125
Office operating	718,172	234,569	200,274	-	1,153,015	285,773	2,787	288,560
Purchases and leases of furniture and equipment	1,397,617	235,738	797,444	-	2,430,799	415,753	27,166	442,919
Law books and reference materials	552,302	147,272	268,738	-	968,312	8,473	242	8,715
Trial minutes	331,480	166,087	5,932	-	503,499	-	-	-
Cost of investigations and expert witnesses	698,731	29,201	182,148	-	910,080	450	-	450
Professional services	87,568	78,811	179,780	-	346,159	361,303	857	362,160
Transportation	663,360	78,252	67,051	-	808,663	27,993	1,119	29,112
Insurance	458,340	140,267	123,358	-	721,965	28,280	2,541	30,821
Depreciation and amortization	588,143	163,038	515,435	-	1,266,616	92,590	-	92,590
Other	394,099	91,746	531,620	-	1,017,465	1,230,058	156,025	1,386,083
Total other expenses	16,919,035	4,019,610	6,290,818	-	27,229,463	3,918,816	296,155	4,214,971
Total expenses before contributed legal services and direct expenses related to the benefit	142,042,734	40,947,554	38,486,555	-	221,476,843	13,647,055	800,789	14,447,844
Contributed Legal Services	-	-	-	83,645,391	83,645,391	-	-	-
Other Gift-In-Kind Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct Expenses Related to the Benefit	-	-	-	-	-	-	403,831	403,831
	-	-	-	83,645,391	83,645,391	-	403,831	403,831
Total 2015 expenses	\$ 142,042,734	\$ 40,947,554	\$ 38,486,555	\$ 83,645,391	\$ 305,122,234	\$ 13,647,055	\$ 1,204,620	\$ 14,851,675
Total 2014 expenses	\$ 132,206,170	\$ 39,481,305	\$ 32,340,707	\$ 97,035,614	\$ 301,063,796	\$ 13,066,261	\$ 1,202,970	\$ 14,269,231
								\$ 319,973,909
								\$ 315,333,027

See Notes to Financial Statements.

The Legal Aid Society

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended June 30, 2015

(with summarized financial information for the year ended June 30, 2014)

	2015	2014
Cash Flows From Operating Activities		
Change in net assets	\$ (73,981)	\$ (1,572,050)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used in operating activities:		
Amortization of deferred lease incentives	(712,968)	(706,483)
Amortization of deferred lease obligations	174,084	484,537
Depreciation and amortization	1,359,206	1,773,755
Contributed software	-	5,993,235
Realized and unrealized gain on investments	(15,768)	(396,768)
Accrued pension liability and postretirement health and benefits cost	7,528,252	1,170,257
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Increase in receivables from grants and governmental contracts	(4,808,970)	(9,629,713)
(Increase) decrease in deferred charges and other assets	(186,258)	31,908
Decrease in accounts payable and accrued expenses	(46,539)	(58,779)
Increase in accrued payroll and other employee expenses	1,528,673	1,398,860
Decrease in program advances	(6,069,512)	(1,783,339)
Net cash used in operating activities	(1,323,781)	(3,294,580)
Cash Flows From Investing Activities		
Proceeds from sale of investments	551,512	1,135,354
Purchase of investments	(609,267)	(1,167,139)
Purchases of property and equipment	(1,202,659)	(479,267)
Net cash used in investing activities	(1,260,414)	(511,052)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(2,584,195)	(3,805,632)
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Beginning	33,385,662	37,191,294
Ending	<u>\$ 30,801,467</u>	<u>\$ 33,385,662</u>
Supplemental Information of Noncash Investing Activity		
Leasehold improvement provided by landlord	\$ -	\$ 261,540

See Notes to Financial Statements.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 1. Organization

The Legal Aid Society (the Society) is a not-for-profit corporation founded in 1876 that provides legal services to the indigent of New York City through a number of operating practices. The Criminal Defense practice, which provides the majority of trial level public defender services in New York City, as well as the Criminal Appeals and Parole Revocation programs, are financed through contracts with the City and the State of New York. The Juvenile Rights practice is financed principally through a contract with the Office of Court Administration of the State of New York. The Civil practice relies on contracts with agencies of the City and the State of New York and the federal government, as well as on financial support from the public, including foundations, law firms, corporations and individuals.

Although the Society is not a governmental institution, it receives significant program revenue and other support through government contracts that are entered into on a periodic basis and are cancelable at any time. As a general rule, those contracts provide revenue to cover cash expenses of funded programs.

In its fiscal year ended June 30, 2015 (FY15), the Society had a negative cash flow of \$2.6 million and recognized an unrestricted operating surplus of \$5.0 million.

The Society's statement of financial position at June 30, 2015, shows cash and cash equivalents of \$30.8 million, and working capital (excess of current assets over current liabilities) of \$28.2 million. It also shows a net asset deficiency (excess of total liabilities over total assets) of \$39.5 million, an increase of \$73,981 from June 30, 2014. The net asset deficiency results from the actuarial determinations of (i) the future benefit obligations under the Society's "frozen" defined benefit pension plan which, like many such plans around the country, is underfunded due to market conditions and the current low interest rate environment and (ii) the future obligations of the Society to pay postretirement health and benefit costs that incorporate projected short-term trends in healthcare cost increases that are expected to level off in the future.

Note 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of accounting: The financial statements of the Society have been prepared on the accrual basis. In the statement of financial position, assets and liabilities are presented in order of liquidity or conversion to cash and their maturity resulting in the use of cash, respectively.

Financial statement presentation: The classification of a not-for-profit organization's net assets and its support and revenue is based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. The amounts for each of three classes of net assets - unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted - are required to be shown in a statement of financial position and the amounts of change in each of those classes of net assets be displayed in a statement of activities.

The net assets of the Society and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

- (i) Unrestricted ~~Net~~ assets resulting from contributions and other inflows of assets whose use by the Society is not subject to donor restrictions. Unrestricted amounts may be designated by the board of directors to cover any purposes determined by the Society.
- (ii) Temporarily restricted ~~Net assets~~ resulting from contributions and other inflows of assets whose use by the Society is limited by donor-imposed stipulations that either expire by passage of time or can be fulfilled and removed by actions of the Society pursuant to those stipulations. When such stipulations end or are fulfilled, such temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities.

Note 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

(iii) ~~Permanently restricted~~ **Permanently restricted net assets:** Assets resulting from contributions and other inflows of assets whose use by the Society is limited by donor-imposed stipulations that neither expire by passage of time nor can be fulfilled or otherwise removed by actions of the Society.

Use of estimates: In preparing financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, management is required to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and revenue and expenses during the reported period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Cash and cash equivalents: For purposes of the statement of cash flows, the Society considers all highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents, except for such investments purchased by the Society's investment managers as part of their long-term investment strategies.

Collectibility of receivables: All receivables are due for collections within one year.

Investments: Investments in equity and debt securities are stated at their fair values. Investment return is allocated among unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets, based on donor restrictions or the absence thereof. Interest, dividends, and net appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments are included in investment return in the statement of activities.

Fair value: The Society follows Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 820-10, *Fair Value Measurement*, which provides a framework for measuring fair value under generally accepted accounting principles and applies to all financial instruments that are being measured and reported on a fair value basis. Accordingly, the Society classifies all its investments as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, depending on whether they can be valued by reference to published market prices. All of the Society's investments at June 30, 2015 are classified as Level 1 because they all could be valued by reference to quoted prices in active markets for identical assets.

Property and equipment: Purchases of property and equipment in excess of \$10,000 per unit are capitalized. Depreciation of property and equipment is computed using the straight-line method and charged to expense over the estimated useful lives of the assets, ranging primarily from three to ten years. Property and equipment acquired with certain government contract funds are recognized as expenses pursuant to the terms of the contract in which the government funding source retains ownership of the property.

Leasehold improvements are amortized over the estimated useful life of the asset or the term of the lease, whichever is shorter.

Program advances: Program advances represent advances from third parties for services not yet performed as well as funds received from government agencies in which the funds have been allocated with the agency's agreement to cover future expenditures.

Court awards: Funds are awarded by the courts to the Society in certain non-Legal Aid cases in which there are remaining class action settlement funds. The amount of such awards in any given year cannot be estimated in advance because these awards are dependent on whether there are such residual settlement funds in particular cases and whether the Society is designated as a recipient. Therefore, such revenue is recognized upon receipt.

Note 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Revenue and support: Contracts awarded by governmental agencies are recognized as revenue in the unrestricted net asset class as the related services are performed.

The Society records as revenue the following types of contributions when they are received unconditionally, at fair value: cash, promises to give, certain contributed services and gifts of long-lived assets and other assets. Conditional contributions, including cost reimbursement grants, are recognized as support when the conditions on which they depend have been substantially met.

- Contributions and promises to give are recorded as revenue when either cash is received or when donors make an enforceable promise to give. Contributions and promises to give are classified either as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted support, based on the donor's intent.
- Contributed services provided by attorneys on a pro bono basis are recorded as revenue and expenses at fair value, based on the attorneys' average billing rates.

A number of individuals have made a contribution of their time to serve on the Society's board of directors. The value of their contributed time is not reflected in the financial statements.

Tax-exempt status: The Society is qualified as a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the IRC) and, accordingly, is not subject to federal income taxes. As a not-for-profit organization, the Society is also exempt from New York State and New York City sales and income taxes. The Society has been classified as a publicly supported charitable organization under Section 509(a)(1) of the IRC and qualifies for the maximum charitable contribution deduction for donors.

Management evaluated the Society's income tax positions and concluded that the Society had taken no uncertain income tax positions that require adjustments or disclosures to the financial statements. Generally, the Society is not subject to income tax examinations by the U.S. federal, state or local tax authorities for years before 2012, which is the standard statute of limitations look-back period.

Functional allocation of expenses: The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized in the statement of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated to the programs and supporting services benefited.

Concentration of credit risk: Financial instruments which potentially subject the Society to a concentration of credit risk consist primarily of cash and cash equivalents. At various times, the Society has cash deposits at financial institutions that exceed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance limits. The Society has not experienced any losses on these accounts.

Prior-year summarized comparative information: The accompanying financial statements include certain prior-year summarized comparative information in total, but not by net asset class or functional expense classification. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with the Society's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2014, from which the summarized information was derived.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Subsequent events: The Society evaluates events occurring after the date of the financial statements to consider whether or not the impact of such events needs to be reflected or disclosed in the financial statements. Such evaluation is performed through the date the financial statements are available for issuance, which was October 28, 2015 for these financial statements.

Note 3. Investments

The fair value of the Society's endowment investments consists of the following:

	2015	2014
Cash equivalents	\$ 182,709	\$ 135,840
Mutual funds	3,334,261	3,307,607
	<u>\$ 3,516,970</u>	<u>\$ 3,443,447</u>

The return on endowment and other investments shown in the accompanying statement of activities consists of the following:

	2015	2014
Interest and dividends	\$ 102,034	\$ 111,245
Realized gain	86,706	83,582
Unrealized gain	(70,938)	313,186
Investment fees	(20,510)	(19,349)
	<u>\$ 97,292</u>	<u>\$ 488,664</u>

The Society's investments at June 30, 2015 and 2014 were held at one financial institution.

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 4. Fair Value

The fair value hierarchy ranks the quality and reliability of the information used to determine fair values. Financial assets and liabilities carried at fair value will be classified and disclosed in one of the following three categories:

- Level 1 Quoted prices for identical assets and liabilities traded in active exchange markets, such as the New York Stock Exchange.
- Level 2 Observable inputs other than Level 1 including quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities, quoted prices in less active markets, or other observable inputs that can be corroborated by observable market data. Level 2 also includes derivative contracts whose value is determined using a pricing model with observable market inputs or can be derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data.
- Level 3 Unobservable inputs supported by little or no market activity for financial instruments whose value is determined using pricing models, discounted cash flow methodologies, or similar techniques, as well as instruments for which the determination of fair value requires significant management judgment or estimation; Level 3 also includes observable inputs for nonbinding single-dealer quotes not corroborated by observable market data.

Investments and commercial paper stated at fair value at June 30 are as follows:

	Fair Value Using Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (All Level 1)	
	2015	2014
Cash equivalents	\$ 182,709	\$ 135,840
Mutual funds		
U.S. large-cap equities	1,033,954	908,200
U.S. mid-cap/small-cap equities	223,369	234,952
International equities	1,093,534	1,106,286
Core fixed income securities	983,404	1,058,169
Subtotal - investments	3,516,970	3,443,447
Commercial paper ^(a)	17,400,000	21,600,000
Total	\$ 20,916,970	\$ 25,043,447

(a) Commercial paper is classified as cash equivalent on the statement of Financial Position.

Mutual funds are valued at the net asset value (NAV) of shares held by the Society at year-end.

Commercial paper is a short-term unsecured promissory note issued by creditworthy corporations and banks. It earns competitive, market-determined yields/rates and is traded on all major exchanges. The commercial paper was issued by the financial institution at June 30, 2015 and 2014.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 5. Contributions

Contributions consisted of the following for each fiscal year:

	2015	2014
Contributions	\$ 10,442,540	\$ 10,911,213
Benefits and special events	4,031,520	3,651,895
Bequests	210,000	52,545
	14,684,060	14,615,653
Less related direct expenses	(403,831)	(309,859)
	<u>\$ 14,280,229</u>	<u>\$ 14,305,794</u>

Note 6. Property and Equipment

Property, equipment and leasehold improvements are summarized as follows:

	2015	2014
Property and leasehold improvements	\$ 15,083,510	\$ 14,573,872
Furniture and equipment	4,160,114	3,861,561
Computer and technology	5,031,476	5,683,753
Mobile outreach van	146,936	146,936
	24,422,036	24,266,122
Less accumulated depreciation and amortization	(20,093,224)	(19,780,763)
	<u>\$ 4,328,812</u>	<u>\$ 4,485,359</u>

Note 7. Commitments

As of June 30, 2015, annual future minimum lease payments, which exclude payments based on pass-through expenses and escalations under noncancelable operating leases for all of the Society's facilities, are approximately as follows:

<u>Year Ending June 30,</u>	
2016	\$ 14,600,000
2017	14,800,000
2018	15,300,000
2019	15,900,000
2020	16,100,000
Thereafter	138,900,000
	<u>\$ 215,600,000</u>

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 7. Commitments (Continued)

Several leases for office space contain escalation clauses related to the lessor's real estate taxes, utilities and other building operating expenses. During fiscal 2015, the Society recognized increased occupancy expenses for additional space taken within several locations. The rental expense was approximately \$13,470,000 and \$12,991,000 for the years ended June 30, 2015 and 2014, respectively.

In 2004, the Society received net incentives from certain landlords of approximately \$12,692,000 for the purchase of furniture and equipment and leasehold improvements, which is included in deferred lease obligations and lease incentives in the accompanying statement of financial position and is being amortized over 20 years, the term of the respective leases.

Note 8. Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

Temporarily restricted net assets are recorded throughout the course of the year on the statement of activities. Temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following purposes at June 30:

	2015	2014
Civil Practice	\$ 748,003	\$ 570,578
Juvenile Rights Practice	391,675	456,988
Criminal Defense Practice	14,115	91,497
Endowment interest	1,450,947	1,377,424
Other	192,834	226,067
	<u>\$ 2,797,574</u>	<u>\$ 2,722,554</u>

The total of these net assets released from restriction due to satisfaction of time and purpose restrictions amounted to \$4,535,456 and \$4,262,027 during the years ended June 30, 2015 and 2014, respectively.

Note 9. Permanently Restricted Net Assets

The Society's endowment consists of 14 individual funds established for a variety of purposes. The endowments include only donor-restricted endowment funds. The Society's board of directors interprets the New York law as requiring that the Society classify the original value of gifts donated to the permanent endowment as permanently restricted net assets. Earnings on donor-restricted funds are classified separately as temporarily restricted net assets, until those amounts are appropriated for expenditure by the Society in a manner consistent with its spending policies pursuant to the donor restrictions.

The board of directors has delegated authority to its Finance Committee to invest the endowment assets with the objective of achieving capital growth and income stability. On an annual basis and consistent with its spending policy, the Society decides whether to appropriate endowment funds for expenditure as part of its annual budgeting process. There were no appropriations in the fiscal years ended June 30, 2015 and 2014.

On a quarterly basis, the Finance Committee monitors the performance of the qualified investment professionals, the performance of the endowment and the objectives for and use of the earnings on the endowment to ensure that these are consistent with the directions of the donors and the mission of the Society. At least once a year, the Finance Committee reports to the board on these issues.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 9. Permanently Restricted Net Assets (Continued)

Changes in endowment net assets for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2014 and 2015 consist of:

	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Endowment net assets, at June 30, 2013	\$ 948,871	\$ 2,066,023	\$ 3,014,894
Investment return			
Investment gain	428,553	-	428,553
Total investment return	428,553	-	428,553
Endowment net assets, at June 30, 2014	1,377,424	2,066,023	3,443,447
Investment return			
Investment gain	73,523	-	73,523
Total investment return	73,523	-	73,523
Endowment net assets, at June 30, 2015	\$ 1,450,947	\$ 2,066,023	\$ 3,516,970

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans

All current employees of the Society are covered either by a defined contribution plan or by a multi-employer pension plan. In addition, certain current management and nonunion employees who began their employment with the Society prior to December 1, 2004 are covered by the Society's retirement plan (the Retirement Plan), a defined benefit plan.

Benefits under the Retirement Plan are generally based upon years of service and the salary of the employee. The assets of the Retirement Plan consist primarily of mutual funds. Effective July 1, 1999, the Society amended its Retirement Plan to include a cash balance feature and a lump-sum option. On November 30, 2004, the Society froze the accumulation of Retirement Plan benefits as part of its financial restructuring. The Retirement Plan was replaced by a defined contribution plan effective December 1, 2004.

Because of the underfunding due to the economic downturn and based on funding requirements, the payment to the Retirement Plan was approximately \$2,237,000 in fiscal year 2015. The Society expects to contribute approximately \$2,131,000 in fiscal year 2016.

The Society made a contribution to the defined contribution plan for nonunion employees of approximately \$1,864,000 and \$1,928,000 in fiscal 2015 and 2014, respectively.

Pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement that covers a number of its employees, the Society made contributions related to the Service Employees International Union, Local 1199 pension fund, which is a national multi-employer pension plan, of approximately \$2,314,000 and \$2,172,000 in fiscal 2015 and 2014, respectively.

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

The risks of participating in a multiemployer plan are different from single employer plans in the following respects:

- (a) Assets contributed to the multiemployer plan by one employer may be used to provide benefits to employees of other participating employers.
- (b) If a participating employer stops contributing to the plan, the unfunded obligations of the plan may be borne by the remaining participating employers.
- (c) If the Society stops participating in the multiemployer plan, and continues in business, The Society could be required to pay an amount, referred to as withdrawal liability, based on the unfunded status of the plan.

The legal name of the pension fund is 1199SEIU Health Care Employees Pension Fund. The EIN/Pension Plan Number is 13-3604862/001. The most recent Pension Protection Act (PPA) zone status available in 2014, 2013 and 2012 are for the plan's year-end at December 31, 2014, 2013 and 2012, respectively. For each of these years, the plan's PPA zone status is "Green Zone". The zone status is based on information that the Society received from the plan and is certified by the plan's actuary. Among other factors, plans in the red zone are generally less than 65 percent funded, plans in the yellow zone are less than 80 percent funded, and plans in the green zone are at least 80 percent funded. The funded percentages for these years are 90.7%, 91.7% and 89.6%, respectively. The expiration date of the collective bargaining agreement requiring contributions is September 30, 2015. There is no funding improvement plan or rehabilitation plan that has been implemented or pending.

The Society's participation in the plan for the annual period ended December 31, 2014, is outlined in the table below.

Year	Employer Contributions	Greater Than 5% of Total
2014	\$ 2,520,854	No
2013	1,923,020	No
2012	1,617,861	No

Pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, the Society made contributions related to the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys defined contribution plan, which covers unionized staff attorneys, of \$5,045,000 and \$4,647,000 in fiscal 2015 and 2014, respectively.

The Society also has other postretirement benefits plans covering substantially all its employees. The Society funds its postretirement benefits other than pensions on a pay-as-you-go basis. Such benefits consist of medical, dental, and vision premiums.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

In addition, the Society accounts for long-term disability benefits in accordance with ASC Topic 712, *Nonretirement Postemployment Benefits*. The costs recognized for long-term disability premiums in fiscal years 2015 and 2014 amounted to approximately \$709,000 and \$573,000, respectively. The corresponding costs recognized for the change in the long-term benefit obligation for healthcare in fiscal 2015 and 2014 is \$603,000 and \$679,000, respectively.

	Retirement Plan Benefits		Postretirement Health and Benefits	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Change in Benefit Obligation				
Benefit obligation at beginning of year	\$ 81,813,389	\$ 77,980,201	\$ 28,828,613	\$ 23,174,909
Service cost	-	-	959,946	751,358
Interest cost	3,081,924	3,313,044	1,272,514	1,202,868
Plan participants' contributions	-	-	83,202	62,786
Actuarial loss	2,521,128	4,521,758	3,182,232	4,248,392
Benefits paid	(5,969,372)	(4,001,614)	(693,020)	(611,700)
Benefit obligation at end of year	81,447,069	81,813,389	33,633,487	28,828,613
Change in Plan Assets				
Fair value of plan assets at beginning of year	59,453,665	51,137,030	-	-
Actual return on plan assets	1,297,587	6,952,747	-	-
Employer contributions	2,237,124	5,931,203	609,818	548,914
Plan participants' contributions	-	-	83,202	62,786
Benefits paid	(5,969,372)	(4,001,614)	(693,020)	(611,700)
Expenses paid	(655,037)	(565,701)	-	-
Fair value of plan assets at end of year	56,363,967	59,453,665	-	-
Funded status at end of year	\$ (25,083,102)	\$ (22,359,724)	\$ (33,633,487)	\$ (28,828,613)

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

June 30,	Retirement Plan Benefits		Postretirement Health and Benefits	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Amounts Recognized as Liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position	\$ (25,083,102)	\$ (22,359,724)	\$ 33,633,487	\$ 28,828,613
Amounts Recognized as Cumulative Changes in Pension and Other Postretirement Costs Other Than Net Periodic Costs:				
Prior service credit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 149,576	\$ 207,359
Net actuarial loss	32,711,031	30,294,183	12,285,013	9,467,113
Net amount recognized	\$ 32,711,031	\$ 30,294,183	\$ 12,434,589	\$ 9,674,472
Components of Net Benefit Cost				
Components of net periodic benefit cost:				
Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 959,946	\$ 751,358
Expense	620,000	610,000	-	-
Interest	3,081,924	3,313,044	1,272,514	1,202,868
Expected return on plan assets	(4,286,396)	(3,747,381)	-	-
Amortization of prior service cost	-	-	57,783	(391,374)
Amortization of losses	3,128,126	3,096,373	364,332	254,035
Net periodic cost	2,543,654	3,272,036	2,654,575	1,816,887
Changes in Pension and Postretirement Costs Other Than Net Periodic Costs				
Prior service cost (credit)	-	-	(57,783)	391,374
Net loss (gain)	2,416,848	(1,824,280)	2,817,900	3,994,357
Net other than periodic cost	2,416,848	(1,824,280)	2,760,117	4,385,731
Net benefit (credit) cost	\$ 4,960,502	\$ 1,447,756	\$ 5,414,692	\$ 6,202,618

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

During fiscal 2015, the mortality table was updated to the RP-2014 Mortality Table, with application of the MP-2014 improvement scale on a fully generational basis. These reflect research published by the Society of Actuaries since the previous measurement date.

Weighted-average assumptions to determine benefit obligations at June 30:

	Retirement Plan Benefits		Postretirement Health and Benefits	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Discount rate	4.25%	4.00%	4.90%	4.60%

Weighted-average assumptions used to determine net periodic benefit cost at June 30:

	Retirement Plan Benefits		Postretirement Health and Benefits	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Discount rate	4.00%	4.45%	4.60%	5.05%
Expected return on plan assets	8.00%	7.75%	N/A	N/A

The assumed healthcare cost trend rates have a significant effect on the amounts reported for the healthcare plans. For measurement purposes, the assumed rates for future increases in healthcare is 7.35%, which is based on national trends, is 7.35% in 2016 and was 8.0% in 2015. The 7.35% rate in 2016 is expected to gradually decline to 4.5% in 2024.

The effect of a one-percentage-point change in the healthcare cost trend rate on the year-end postretirement health benefit obligation and total service and interest cost components for the year ended June 30, 2015 is as follows:

	One- Percentage- Point Decrease		One- Percentage- Point Increase	
Year-end postretirement health benefit obligation	\$	(5,836,000)	\$	7,588,000
Total of service and interest cost components		(437,000)		583,000

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

The following benefit payments which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid as follows:

<u>Year Ending June 30,</u>	Retirement	Postretirement
	Plan Benefits	Health Benefits
2016	\$ 6,670,516	\$ 670,000
2017	6,746,869	779,000
2018	6,677,179	833,000
2019	6,365,449	938,000
2020	6,160,097	999,000
2021 - 2025	27,262,138	6,673,000

The Society has adopted a policy for the investment of the assets of the Retirement Plan, which is administered by, and may be altered by, the Retirement and Benefits Committee of the Society's board of directors. The investment policy has been established to consider both the current and projected financial requirements of the Retirement Plan. The Retirement Plan relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation (realized and unrealized) and current yield (interest and dividends). The Retirement Plan uses a balanced asset allocation including both equity-based and fixed income investments to achieve its long-term objectives. Those objectives are:

- Maximize return within reasonable and prudent levels of risk of loss of principal.
- Maintain sufficient liquidity to meet benefits payment obligations on a timely basis.

The portfolio approach for the Retirement Plan is to maintain a balance of approximately 60% in equities and 40% in fixed income. Equity securities include investments in mutual funds invested in large-, mid-, and small-cap companies located in the United States and internationally. Fixed income securities are comprised of mutual funds invested in low-risk interest-bearing investments.

The Legal Aid Society

Notes to Financial Statements

Note 10. Employee Benefit Plans (Continued)

The fair value of the Retirement Plan's investments at June 30, 2015 and 2014 (all of which are Level 1 – see Note 2), by asset category, are as follows:

	Fair Value Using Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (All Level 1)		%	%
	2015	2014	2015	2014
Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,173,768	\$ 5,153,048	2.1%	8.7%
Mutual Funds				
Large-cap	18,393,260	18,599,479	32.6%	31.3%
Mid-cap	4,927,952	3,509,706	8.7%	5.9%
Small-cap	3,341,209	2,231,241	5.9%	3.8%
International	6,038,706	5,175,738	10.7%	8.7%
Emerging markets	2,894,818	4,176,789	5.1%	7.0%
Equity REITs	885,493	900,476	1.6%	1.5%
Indexed trust fund	466,759	576,636	0.8%	1.0%
Fixed income	18,242,002	19,130,552	32.5%	32.1%
	<u>\$ 56,363,967</u>	<u>\$ 59,453,665</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value.

Mutual Funds Valued at the net asset value held by the Retirement Plan at year-end.

The methods described above may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, while the Plan believes that its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with those of other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

Note 11. Contingencies

There are a number of pending legal actions against the Society which, in the opinion of management, will not result in material loss to the Society and no amounts have been accrued in the accompanying financial statements for such contingency.

As of June 30, 2015, receivables from grants and governmental contracts include accrued revenue aggregating \$2,141,192 from unexecuted and/or unregistered contracts with the State/City of New York Agencies as of June 30, 2015. The ultimate realization of these contracts receivable is subject to the execution of these contracts by New York State and City of New York Agencies. However, management believes that the Society will ultimately collect these amounts as these are amounts due for services performed or expenditures incurred on recurring contracts with the New York State and City of New York Agencies.

Certain grants and contracts are currently subject to and may be subject to audit by the funding sources. Such audits might result in disallowances of costs submitted for reimbursement. Management is of the opinion that such cost disallowances, if any, will not have a material effect on the accompanying financial statements. Accordingly, no amounts have been provided in the accompanying financial statements for such potential claims.

Helen Kloogman, Philippe Knab, Desiree Knight, Lisa Koinig, Teresa Kominos, Svetlana Kornfeind, Joyce Korn-Winderman, Daniella Korotzer, Marion Koshy, Estajo Koslow, Hayley Koteen-Lichterman, Pooja Kothari, Gillian Kress, Scott Kriskchke, Jesse Kropf, Andrew Kudysch, Mollie Kuether, Rebecca Kurti, Steven Kuza, Carolyn Kwon, Diane La Gamma, Noreen Labajo, Meghan Lacey, Martin LaFalce, John Laino, Sabrina Lall, Alice Lam, Stacy Lam, Brian Lamb, Lori Landowne, Josette Lang, Robert Langdon, Patrick Langhenry, Suman Lanka, Julie Last, Leigh Latimer, Julia Lau, Peter Laumann, Patricia Lavelle, Joseph Lavine, Emma Lawler, Simone Lawson, Misa Le, Felicia Leak, Jennifer Leao, Robyn Lear, Rachel Leary, Valerie LeBrew, JoAnn LeBright, Nahye Lee, Jeff Lee, Sungso Lee, Young Lee, Daniel Lee, Joanne Legano-Ross, Sarah Legler, Katherine Leidel, Sabieta Lekhraj, Janet Lemaire, Marty Lentz, Adrian Leshner, Michael Letwin, Jordana Levey, Allison Levie, Allison Levie, Clifford Lewis, Steven Levine, Robin Levinson-Zalewski, Karen Levit, Jane Levitt, Rachel Levy, Ezra Levy, Samuel Levy, Jennifer Lewis, Dorothy Lewis, Allison Lewis, Michael Lewis, Donna Lewis, Hannah Lewis, Jasmin Lewis, Aisha Lewis-McCoy, Tashi Lhewa, Cynthia Li, Courtney Libon, Joseph Licitra, Laura Lieberman-Cohen, Susan Light, Vicki Light, Natalie Lilavois, Justin Lin, Lisa Lin, Margaret Lin, Martha E. 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