

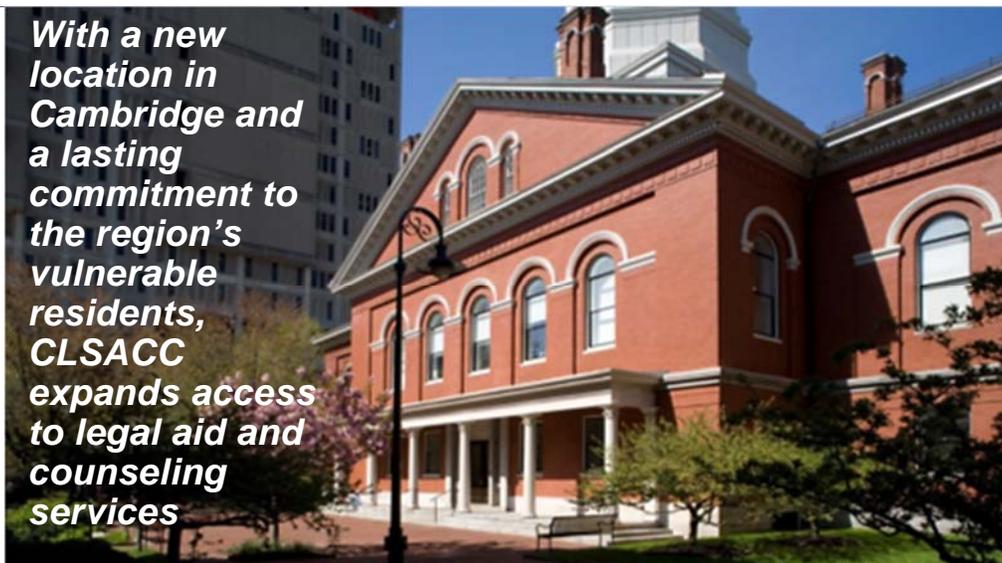
COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES AND COUNSELING CENTER
YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK

Over the last five years, the number of clients receiving assistance from CLSACC increased by almost 25 percent. To meet the growing demand for legal and mental health services, CLSACC moved to a new 7,000 square-foot office - located at 47 Thorndike Street in Cambridge. Centrally located with public transportation and on-street parking, the new space includes 24 private offices for staff and volunteers - twice those available at the former location - as well as larger community meeting and group counseling spaces.

At an open house celebration on September 25 formally opening our new location, CLSACC showcased the organization's growing impact on the region's social and economic fabric - from preventing homelessness, to delivering psychological counseling to immigrant victims of torture, to securing legal protections for domestic violence survivors.

With its relocation to 47 Thorndike Street, CLSACC is expanding its presence in the heart of Cambridge to fulfill its mission to fight poverty and violence through free legal assistance and affordable psychological counseling. And in doing so, CLSACC will open the doors of opportunity to those who have been historically marginalized and unable to gain access to these services.

With a new location in Cambridge and a lasting commitment to the region's vulnerable residents, CLSACC expands access to legal aid and counseling services



“ Access to civil legal aid doesn't just open doors to our justice system – it empowers people with low-incomes to take control of their lives and vastly increases the health and vitality of our communities. —Mojdeh Rohani, CLSACC Executive Director

THANK YOU
for supporting
CLSACC this year!

- More than 1,500 vulnerable people with low incomes received the quality assistance they urgently needed.
- 825 survivors of violence and abuse achieved long term safety and stability through legal aid and counseling.
- Volunteers donated 12,674 hours of legal and mental health services, substantially increasing access to justice and healing in our community.



AFTER A HARROWING ESCAPE FROM HONDURAS, A MOTHER FINDS ASYLUM IN U.S.

When Maria was detained by border patrol, she was relieved that at least her children had reached safety. Three weeks earlier she had fled Honduras with her three young daughters ages 11, 5 and 3. There wasn't much time to plan. With just a few personal items and \$27 in cash, they crossed through Guatemala, then into Mexico where they boarded a train. Soon after, the family was abducted by two Zetas who for 15 days beat Maria and demanded thousands of dollars for their release. The family eventually escaped, and ran for hours under the cover of darkness to the U.S. border.

Every year, thousands of immigrants come to the U.S. seeking protection from persecution or violence in their home countries. Many struggle to navigate the legal system due to intense psychological trauma, language barriers and complex immigration laws. Legal assistance is critical to ensuring they are protected – **immigrant women with children are 14 times more likely to win relief when they have an attorney.**



Maria described the years of physical and emotional abuse she endured. Her father regularly abused her as a child and once chased her with a machete. Her husband would beat and rape her, then disappear for months at a time. To get by, Maria baked and sold bread at her daughters' school until an MS-13 gang member robbed her at gunpoint. Maria felt she had no option but to flee the country.

CLSACC's immigration attorney represented Maria during the course of her asylum proceedings, filing a thorough application and presenting detailed testimony about the harm she faced in Honduras. **With CLSACC's help, Maria won a life-changing victory this year: she was granted asylum.** She is now applying for a work permit and building a new life in the United States. *Client's name, and any other identifying details, have been changed to protect the client's identity.*

NEW CAREGIVER PACKET HELPS CLIENTS PLAN FOR FAMILY EMERGENCIES

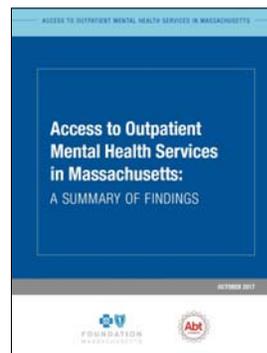
Responding to heightened fears of deportation among immigrant families, CLSACC together with ten partner organizations created a new caregiver packet to help navigate crises, like the detention of a parent. The packet¹, called "Advice for Immigrant Families," includes step-by-step instructions on how to fill out a caregiver authorization affidavit. The affidavit grants a third party legal authority to act regarding a child's education and medical issues for up to two years. The affidavit can be executed by a custodial parent without the assent of the non-custodial parent – a valuable tool in domestic violence cases.

The packet also contains advice for immigrants, including a legal services referral list and "know your rights" trainings, as well as special guidance for domestic violence survivors on how to develop a safety plan and seek safe shelter. ¹URL: www.masslegalhelp.org/immigration/planning-for-family-emergency-packet.pdf

YOUR GIFT CHANGES LIVES.

CLSACC relies on the generosity of individuals like you to provide vital legal and mental health services. Show your support by making a contribution today at clsacc.org or by mailing your gift to "CLSACC" at 47 Thorndike St, SB-LL-1, Cambridge, MA 02141. CLSACC is a tax-exempt 501c3 non-profit organization. **Thank you.**

REPORT: WAIT FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TOO LONG IN MASSACHUSETTS



Every year, thousands of state residents seeking mental health services are forced to wait months for treatment, according to a new study by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mass. Foundation. The wait is especially long for adults who are covered by Medicaid, those needing a psychiatrist and people who don't speak English, the study found.

CLSACC's Counseling Program works to address this unmet need by providing mental health services at little or no cost to our community's most vulnerable members, including those who are victims of domestic violence, immigrants and refugees, and other low-income adults who are unable to access treatment. CLSACC is among just a few programs in the region that serve clients without insurance or who cannot afford to pay. And our program connects clients to social services, psychiatric care and legal aid to help them achieve stability and healing.

You can read the entire October 2017 study "Access to Outpatient Mental Health Services in Massachusetts" online at bluecrossmafoundation.org.