

CLSACC NEWS FOR OUR FRIENDS

COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES AND COUNSELING CENTER, INC.

FALL 2006

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VOLUNTEER SECURES CLIENT HOME AND SAFETY

In the course of 20 years of marriage, relations between “Barbara” and “Milo” had deteriorated. Milo had become reclusive and violent. He brought guns into the house they shared with their 11-year-old daughter, “Jennifer.” He refused to let Barbara drive a car or work towards her GED. Milo began to shove and push Barbara in front of Jennifer. When he told Barbara, “Don’t leave me or we’ll both die,” she knew she had to leave, and she took her daughter across state lines to a shelter in Massachusetts. Milo stayed in their cabin, which Barbara’s aunt had sold to them for a reduced price, but did not make the mortgage payments. Although the balance was only \$12,000, the lender threatened foreclosure.

Barbara was referred to CLSACC by the shelter, and her case was accepted by family law volunteer **Malana Gleason**. Attorney Gleason filed for divorce, and avoided foreclosure by getting the court to order Milo to cooperate in the sale of the cabin. Barbara got full custody of Jennifer. After the cabin was sold, Barbara was afraid to go alone to get her belongings. Attorney Gleason went with her. Because of the dedication of CLSACC’s volunteer attorney, Barbara and Jennifer are safe from Milo, are surrounded by the comfort of their own things, and have some financial security as they begin a new chapter of their lives.

GOOD NEWS FROM A YOUNG CLIENT

In our Spring 2005 Newsletter, we told you the story of “Marie,” who, at the age of twelve, had escaped from the Congo after her parents and grandfather were murdered there. She arrived in the U.S. with no money, no food, no contacts, and without knowing a word of English. CLSACC attorney **Valerie Fisk** was representing Marie in her application for Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status, which would protect her from deportation.



Since coming to CLSACC for help, Marie has filed for SIJ status and is now preparing for her interview. She graduated from high school this year and received a scholarship to attend Fisher College, where she will begin classes in the fall. Congratulations, Marie!

▶▶ Visit us on the web at www.clsacc.org ▶▶

CLSACC ELECTS NEW BOARD PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT



TONY MIRENDA, President, joined CLSACC's Board in September 1999. He is a partner at Foley Hoag LLP in Boston, where he is a senior attorney in the firm's pro bono domestic violence prevention project. Tony came to know CLSACC through his work with the project and was impressed by its "unique mix of people and approaches." As president, he says, "I look forward to supporting the growth of the Interdisciplinary Project that CLSACC is pioneering, and to securing CLSACC's ability to provide legal and counseling services to its clients in the decades to come."



APRIL ENGLISH, Vice President, joined CLSACC's Board in 2000. She is an Assistant Attorney General for the Consumer Protection/Antitrust Division of the Office of the Attorney General. As a law student, April volunteered in CLSACC's Family Law Unit, and she is continuing her support of the agency as a director. "The work that CLSACC does is phenomenal; it is one of the most important organizations in the community. Those needing legal and counseling services can walk through the doors of CLSACC and receive both, which is extraordinary. CLSACC needs our support to continue to operate as such a unique organization."

MAKE A DONATION BY VISITING WWW.CLSACC.ORG

MISSION STATEMENT

CLSACC provides free civil legal aid and affordable psychological counseling to low-income people. Our services combat the effects of poverty and violence by helping clients and their children meet basic human needs for safety, income, health and housing. CLSACC draws on the expertise of dedicated volunteer professionals to provide direct services to our community's most vulnerable members.

"Dear Valerie,

Thank you for presenting at our quarterly domestic violence workshop... It was so critical to have your information about legal rights for victims of domestic violence who are dealing with immigration issues. So many providers both internal to Cambridge Health Alliance and in the community encounter victims of domestic violence who are recent immigrants and refugees and are not even aware that there are resources available to help them to gain legal status and get away from their batterer...I have heard wonderful feedback from everyone who attended the workshop."

Gretchen Sherwood
Citywide Violence Prevention Coordinator
Domestic Violence Free Zone Initiative

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CLSACC FRIENDS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!

Our Friends are now our second-largest source of funding. Last May, we sent our spring appeal to you with a special request. With only a month left before the end of our fiscal year, we were facing a deficit of almost \$19,000, and we needed your help. You responded with astonishing generosity, donating in record-breaking numbers. Now, because of you, CLSACC will end the year with a small surplus. We cannot **thank you** enough for continuing to support our work.



Former CLSACC Board Presidents Marie Lee and Toni Lee Pomeroy with CLSACC Director of Development Shelly McPhail.

EILEEN FISHER HELPS CLSACC FIGHT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On July 22, **EILEEN FISHER** at Copley Place held a shopping event to support CLSACC's **Battered Women and Child Support Advocacy Project**, which provides legal and counseling services to victims of domestic violence and their children.

Barbara Sheehan, Patty Kelly and the rest of the Copley Place staff could not have been more supportive and pleased to host the event. They provided beautiful flowers, scrumptious chocolate dipped fruit and a little bubbly to lure shoppers into the store, and keep them shopping. CLSACC Board members, friends and volunteers came to shop, and then stayed to chat about the agency with the many browsers, shoppers and invited guests. Ten percent of that day's sales were donated to support CLSACC's work with victims of domestic violence. CLSACC thanks EILEEN FISHER and its wonderful staff, and looks forward to working with them again!

EILEEN FISHER has long supported women through efforts to address violence against women and girls and through social initiatives that address absolute regard for human rights.

CLSACC'S BATTERED WOMEN AND CHILD SUPPORT ADVOCACY PROJECT

The **Battered Women and Child Support Advocacy Project** leverages the volunteer services of area attorneys and mental health professionals who provide critically needed services to low-income battered women and their children, many of whom have also been abused. The Project helps them secure long-term protection from violence and abuse, safe custody and visitation arrangements, health care, and financial security. In addition to legal representation, the Project also provides training and community legal education for battered women's service organizations. CLSACC also provides affordable mental health counseling for women who suffer the trauma and emotional devastation of abuse. Last year, the Project assisted more than 275 clients.

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- In This Issue:**
- GOOD NEWS FROM A YOUNG CLIENT
 - NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF CLSACC'S BOARD
 - EILEEN FISHER SALES EVENT

Do we need to correct your contact information? Please let us know by emailing kenwkins@clsacc.org or calling (617) 661-1010, x122. Thank you.

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**COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES
 AND COUNSELING CENTER**

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SAVE THE DATE

Monday, November 13, 5:30-8:30
 at **Regattabar** in the Charles Hotel



Join the **best chefs in Cambridge** as they serve up **gourmet hors d'oeuvres** and **delicious confections** with a side of **funky jazz** in support of **Community Legal Services And Counseling Center (CLSACC)**.

Past participants have included: The Blue Room, Brooklyn Brewery, Chez Henri, Finale, Gargoyles on the Square, Harvest, Henrietta's Table, Jacob's Creek Winery, Mariposa Bakery, Noir, Rialto, Rustic Kitchen, Toscanini's and Upstairs on the Square.

Tickets: \$50 per person includes food, wine, beer and cocktail tastings. To order tickets, call Boston Chefs, Inc. at (617)441-8600. Look for an invitation with more information arriving soon.

The Charles Hotel is at One Bennett Street, Cambridge. Discounted parking will be available at Charles Square Garage.

