

COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES AND COUNSELING CENTER, INC.

HONOR FOR CLSACC STAFF ATTORNEY

CLSACC Housing attorney John Froio was the first recipient of the John W. Carbone Pro Bono Legal Services Award from Tri-City Community Action Program. Presenting the award, Elizabeth Engerman, Advocacy and Community Services Director, said: "He feels that all clients deserve to feel like they are seeing a 'real' lawyer, whether or not they can afford one. John is an excellent attorney and an experienced advocate who brings compassion and understanding to his legal services work. This has earned him respect from his co-workers, peers, the courts, and most importantly, his clients."



★ ★ ★ CONGRATULATIONS, JOHN! ★ ★ ★

JUSTICE PREVAILS!

CLSACC stood on the brink of elimination in July when Governor Romney vetoed all state funding for civil legal aid. After a tremendous public outcry and dogged advocacy from all corners of the Commonwealth, the veto was overridden. The override vote by the House (147-10) and Senate (35-5) restored \$7.6 million to legal aid programs funded by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, including \$127,500 for CLSACC.

Our thanks to those who supported legal aid, including the Massachusetts and Boston Bar Associations, the American Corporate Counsel Association, the Massachusetts Judges Conference and friends like you.

While the override was a huge victory, the final MLAC budget was down almost 16% from last year. Next year, we will face another challenge to ensure access to justice for low-income people.

CLSACC JOINS EFFORT TO PROTECT VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE

Last year CLSACC was invited to join an amicus brief arguing that the Federal District Court failed to consider extensive clinical evidence of the risk to children of long-term psychological harm stemming from exposure to sexual abuse. **As an agency offering both legal and counseling services, CLSACC was able to credibly weigh in on the issues.**

The case involved a mother who fled her home in Sweden with her two young daughters to protect them from sexual abuse by their father. Her ex-husband brought a suit seeking that the children be returned to Sweden. The Court of Appeals reversed the lower court's ruling in favor of the father and sent the case back to be re-tried. In September 2003, the judge found there was "evidence clear and convincing that sexual abuse of the younger child by the father occurred." **The Court concluded that "under the law...I may not order the children's return because of the consequent grave risk of harm and intolerable situation posed to them by their return."** The case should serve as an important precedent.

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