

Legal Aid Link

Volume 4, Issue 1

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Walk to the Hill 2010 a Big Success

At the 11th annual Walk to the Hill on January 27, nearly 700 private attorneys filled the State House Great Hall and Grand Staircase in support of civil legal aid. This year's Walk was particularly exciting, because Governor Deval Patrick stopped by to thank the participants and announce level-funding for legal aid in his FY11 budget recommendation. Client speaker Carmelita T. told the audience how legal aid helped her family after she had to leave her full-time job to care for her daughter, who was diagnosed with emotional and psychological disorders.



[Click here](#) to see photos from the event. [Click here](#) to read more about the Walk on the EJC website.



And **thank you** to all of the volunteers from legal aid programs who helped make Walk to the Hill a success. We couldn't do it without you!

From left to right: Jacqui Bowman, GBLS executive director; Julia Huston, EJC chair; Mo Cowan, Chief Legal Counsel to Governor Patrick; Lonnie Powers, MLAC executive director; Martha Rush O'Mara, MLAC board chair.

MLAC News

Strategic Planning

The information gathering phase of MLAC's strategic planning process is nearly complete. Bob Greene, the strategic planning facilitator, has compiled feedback from various stakeholders in a Situation Awareness Report. Bob Greene will be meeting with groups of clients as he completes the "situation assessment" phase of the process. The MLAC board will consider a draft planning document as it starts to determine the next steps at its board meeting on February 25.

Equal Justice Coalition

The Governor's recommendation to level-fund civil legal aid ([MLAC line-item 0321-1600](#)) is a positive first step in the FY11 budget process that will unfold on Beacon Hill over the next four months.

Following on the Walk to the Hill momentum, the EJC continues to work with the private bar, law school deans, corporate counsel, retired judges and other legal aid stakeholders to push for level funding.

In January, the managing partners of 44 Boston area law firms signed a support letter to the Governor and legislative leadership requesting level funding for civil legal aid. In February, general counsel from 100 Massachusetts-based companies and institutions will do the same. All of the Massachusetts law school deans and more than 13 retired judges will deliver their own support letters in early March.

Once the House of Representatives announces its budget recommendations (sometime in mid-April), the EJC will reach out to all of its supporters with an e-alert asking that everyone contact their state senator to urge Senate support for level funding. Please stay tuned!

Diversity Coalition

The 14th and final "Four Generations in the Workplace" workshop was facilitated on January 29 for South Coastal Counties Legal Services. Twenty-six staff members participated in the workshop, which was held at the Southern New England School of Law.

Diversity Coalition Director Joyce Allen-Beckford will meet with Project Directors in March to collaborate on and plan for diversity events for the rest of 2010.

The Diversity Steering Committee welcomes **Rosa Previdi**, Legal Advocacy and Resource Center executive director, as a new member. The Committee will miss Massachusetts Correctional Legal Services Executive Director **Leslie Walker**, who is stepping down from the committee.

News from the Supreme Judicial Court

The Supreme Judicial Court made two important decisions during its administrative session as announced by Justice Gants at the Access to Justice Commission (ATJC) two weeks ago.

The first decision was about the new composition of the ATJC. The second decision was to publish for comment the proposal for an opt-out addition to the Board of Bar Overseers registration fee, which could lead to increased funds for civil legal aid. More information about the opt-out proposal can be found on the [ATJC website](#).

[Click here](#) to read Lonnie Powers' post on the MLAC blog regarding the ATJC decisions.

Program Buzz

Upcoming Fundraising Events

There are a number of fundraising events that will be hosted by legal aid programs in the spring. Here they are in chronological order:

The Western Mass. Campaign for Legal Aid Kickoff Event - Tuesday, March 16

This event will mark the beginning of a private bar campaign for Western Mass. Legal Services and Massachusetts Justice Project.

ShamROCK for Justice - Thursday, March 25

This second annual fundraiser promises to be even bigger and better than the first ShamROCK, which was a rousing success with great music, raffle items and company. It will be held by Neighborhood Legal Services, Children's Law Center of Massachusetts and Merrimack-Valley North Shore Legal Services at the [Claddagh Pub](#) in Lawrence. Please email Cathy Willard at cwillard@nlsma.org for tickets.

Nancy King Memorial Golf Tournament - Monday, May 24

MetroWest Legal Services will hold its thirteenth annual golf tournament at the Framingham Country Club. Registration information will be announced later this spring. Until then, you can check out the photos from last year's tournament by [clicking here](#).

You can view complete news for each program by [clicking here](#) or clicking on the "read more" links.

Center for Law and Education

CLE renewed its very successful Education Pro Bono partnership with the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School and Choate, Hall & Stewart.

CLE continues to seek referrals from legal services programs on behalf of low-income students in need of representation at administrative or judicial hearings to challenge suspensions, expulsions and/or deprivation of their right to an education consistent with state standards. Please contact Attorney [Jenny Chou](#) at CLE with questions or referrals.

Disability Law Center

DLC will offer two free conferences this spring. The first is "Conference on Transition Planning: A Free Training and Clinic For Parents On Special Education Transition Services For Children With Disabilities, Ages 14-22." This conference will be conducted in Portuguese and English at the New Bedford Public Library on Saturday, March 27.

The second is called "Housing Search Strategies, Housing Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodations: A Free Training and Legal Clinic for People with Disabilities, Families, and Advocates." It will be held on Monday, April 12, at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Marlborough.

There will be time at each conference for individuals to consult with DLC attorneys. You can find more information or register for both conferences at [the DLC website](#).

[Read more DLC news](#)

Greater Boston Legal Services

GBLS' Cambridge and Somerville office (Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services) received the Somerville Human Rights Commission 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Award on January 18. CASLS staff were honored for their work promoting economic justice.

Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts

LACCM is very proud that Litigation Director **Patti Prunhuber** has been chosen as a recipient of the Massachusetts Bar Association's Access to Justice Legal Services Award. LACCM is also delighted that **Mike Angelini**, chairman of Bowditch & Dewey in Worcester, has been chosen as a recipient of the MBA's Access to Justice *Pro Bono Publico* Award, for his indefatigable stewardship of LACCM's first private bar fundraising campaign.

Patti Prunhuber also appeared at the Supreme Judicial Court on February 10 to argue the case of *Provençal v. Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority*.

[Read more LACCM news](#)

New Center for Legal Advocacy

There have been two new "additions" to the NCLA family in the past year that haven't yet been featured here. **Tina Leahy** has a new son, Leopold William Leahy, who was born June 19. **Raquel Antonio** also has a new son, Jacob E. Antonio, who was born on September 23. Both Tina and Raquel are now back at NCLA. **Idelta "Delta" Dasilva**, who took over for Tina and Raquel during

their leaves, agreed to stay on when Raquel returned in January. Delta is a graduate of Southern New England School of Law, and NCLA feels lucky to have her working with them.

National Consumer Law Center

NCLC will offer two free webinars in the near future: "Federal Tax Advocacy for Domestic Violence Survivors" on February 24 and "Loan Mod Scams" on March 10. Email jhiemenz@nclc.org for information about these and future webinars. You can also go to the [NCLC website](#) for the 2010 schedule and get free downloads of past webinars.

Neighborhood Legal Services

Attorney **Robert Perkins** left NLS on February 17 to take a position at the BU Law School Office of Career Services. It has been a wonderful experience working with Rob for the last two years and helping him to develop into an outstanding foreclosure defense/consumer attorney. His departure is a big loss to NLS, and he will be missed.

Due to budget cuts, NLS offices in Lynn and Lawrence started closing at 1 pm on Fridays beginning February 1.

[Read more NLS news](#)

South Coastal Counties Legal Services

Attorney **Tom Kosman** was awarded the MBA's Access to Justice Legal Services Award along with LACCM's Patti Prunhuber. Tom is being recognized as a "forceful advocate for the protection of elders' rights," and for his devotion "to serving elderly citizens and meeting their legal needs, traveling monthly to community outreach centers and nursing homes."

Volunteer Lawyers Project

On February 1, VLP welcomed new Executive Director, **Sheila A. Hubbard**. Sheila brings significant leadership experience, a deep understanding of the needs of VLP's clients, and a passion to make a difference in their lives.

Sheila takes over from **Meg Connolly**, who retired after almost 25 years at VLP. A celebration of Meg's service to VLP and to the legal services community was held at Suffolk Law School on December 8. The VLP Board marked Meg's retirement by launching the Meg Connolly Leadership Opportunities Fund, which will provide a special resource for bringing *pro bono* efforts to meet new opportunities or challenges that face the client community.

[Read more VLP news](#)

Tech Tips from MLAC Central Technology Services

Microsoft Outlook Tips & Tricks

Quick ways to move around your Microsoft Outlook Mailbox

Switch to Mail	CTRL + 1*
Switch to Calendar	CTRL + 2
Switch to Contacts	CTRL + 3
Switch to Tasks	CTRL + 4
Switch to Notes	CTRL + 5
Switch to Folder List	CTRL + 6
Switch to Shortcuts	CTRL + 7
Switch to Journal	CTRL + 8
Help Menu	F1
Check Spelling	F7

Calendar Shortcuts:

Switch to Calendar CTRL + 2
Appointment CTRL + SHIFT + A
Meeting Request CTRL + SHIFT + Q

View from ALT + key for number of days
1 through 9 days you want to view at once

View 10 Days ALT + 0 (zero)
Switch to Weeks ALT + - (Hyphen Sign)
Switch to Months ALT + = (Equal sign)

** "CTRL + 1" indicates that you should hold down the "CTRL" and "1" keys simultaneously, NOT that you should also hold down the "+" key.*

Important Dates

February 25, 2010 - MLAC Board Meeting, 7 Winthrop Square, 4th Floor

March 26, 2010 - MLAC Grant Applications due

[Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation](#)

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