

Legal Aid Link

Volume 6, Issue 3

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MLAC

National Mortgage Settlement Update

MLAC is awaiting confirmation from the Attorney General's office regarding the \$6 million funding proposal submitted in response to a request for applications for funds from the national mortgage foreclosure settlement. MLAC is collaborating on the HomeCorps Legal Assistance Project with the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) and seven legal services programs.

FY11 Fact Book

The MLAC Fact Book for FY11 is a handy resource for facts and figures about civil legal services in Massachusetts. Get information on funding, services, client demographics, pro bono attorney assistance and staffing as well as information on the MLAC staff and board, all in one easy-to-access publication. [Click here to visit the MLAC website and download your copy.](#)



Tim Lee

MLAC Welcomes Client Board Member Tim Lee and Student Interns

The Supreme Judicial Court has appointed Tim Lee of Framingham to fill a vacant position on MLAC's Board of Directors. Tim serves on the boards of Volunteer Lawyers' Project since 2006 and Advocates, Inc. since 2003. MLAC welcomes Tim to the Board and looks forward to his leadership.

MLAC is also fortunate to host two interns who are working on a variety of projects this summer. Meredith Harvard, a student at Suffolk University Law School, has been volunteering at MLAC since March. Alexandra Kennelly, a high-school student at Boston Latin School, is working at

MLAC this summer as part of the Boston Bar Association's summer jobs program.

Farewell to Mary Doyon

MLAC bids a fond farewell to Fiscal Director Mary Doyon, who is retiring from MLAC on August 31. Mary has been with MLAC for almost 11 years and will be sorely missed. During her time at MLAC she has worked tirelessly to ensure that our accounting systems worked flawlessly. Her work has been highly praised by our auditors, but most important, Mary is dedicated to supporting the mission of MLAC

and the programs to provide justice to all in the Commonwealth. She has worked with the fiscal directors of the programs, providing forums for them to learn from one another and to address common problems. She has been a strong and consistent voice within the MLAC staff, always asking how our financial decisions will advance services to clients. Mary also has been an invaluable member of our monitoring efforts, reviewing the fiscal status of the programs and adding her insights to the monitoring reports. With gratitude for all you have done for MLAC and legal aid in Massachusetts, Mary, we wish you the best in your retirement.

Equal Justice Coalition

It's Official: \$12 Million for MLAC in FY2013

On July 8, Governor Deval Patrick signed the fiscal year 2013 budget, which includes \$12 million for the MLAC line item (0321-1600). Although this amount is less than the \$14.5 million that MLAC originally requested, it is a \$1.5 million increase over the FY12 appropriation, and is certainly cause for celebration. The Equal Justice Coalition would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts that its supporters and partners made throughout the funding campaign to convince legislators and the Governor that the increase was necessary. Project directors, program board and staff members, law school deans, legal aid clients and attorneys from companies and law firms across Massachusetts all contacted their representatives on Beacon Hill to express their support for legal aid funding. To all, a sincere thank you. Your efforts made this possible.



EJC Unveils New Website

The Equal Justice Coalition website, www.equaljusticecoalition.org, received a major overhaul recently, with added features for supporters to stay connected with the funding campaign and learn how to become more involved. The new site makes it even easier to respond to new action alerts, which prompt supporters to contact their legislators whenever there is pending legislation related to the MLAC line item. Also featured is a "[Get Involved](#)" page, with suggested actions that visitors can take to make a difference, such as writing letters to the editor or volunteering at Walk to the Hill.

Diversity Coalition & Retention Task Force

Retention Task Force Recommendations Adopted

The Retention Task Force's (RTF) recommendations were unanimously endorsed by the MLAC Board at their annual meeting on May 24th. A copy of the final document and appendices is available on the [MLAC website](#). The Project Directors also accepted the document at a meeting on May 24th. There are however some details that will need to be addressed and resolved prior to implementation. The next step requires the Diversity Coalition to create an implementation timeline as requested by the MLAC Board, to be followed by an implementation roll-out. The Diversity Coalition Steering and Advisory Committee has begun working on the recruitment recommendations set forth by the RTF. The goal is to create a comprehensive, central recruitment database that will provide legal services programs easy access to a current and updated list of recruitment venues, providing access to an increased number of candidates of color.

Advocate Profile

Meet Charlie Harak, National Consumer Law Center

Find out how Charlie empowers social service agencies to help people pay their utility bills.

[Click here for the story](#)



People

Prisoners' Legal Services Executive Director **Leslie Walker** received an award from the [Massachusetts Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers](#) in June.

Volunteer Lawyers Project Executive Director **Sheila Hubbard** has been elected to a three-year term on the Council of the Boston Bar Association. [Click here \[PDF\]](#) for a full list of newly-elected BBA officers and Council members.

Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly will hold their 5th annual Top Women of Law event on October 12. The event celebrates legal educators, trailblazers and role models who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in their chosen fields. **Joanna George Allison** of Volunteer Lawyers Project, **Stephanie Balandis** and **Jaquie Bowman** of Greater Boston Legal Services and **Jennifer Dieringer** of Community Legal Aid will be recognized this year.

Resources

Free Offers from NCLC

Publications:

- [Borrowers on Hold: Student Loan Collection Agency Complaint Systems Need Massive Improvement \[PDF\]](#), May 2012
- [Rethinking Prepaid Utility Service: Customers At Risk](#), June 2012
- [Model Family Financial Protection Act \[PDF\]](#), June 2012
- [The Other Foreclosure Crisis: Property Tax Lien Sales](#), July 2012

Issue Briefs:

- [Full Utility Credit Reporting: Risks to Low-Income Consumers \[PDF\]](#), July 2012
- [Myths & Realities About the CARD Act Independent Ability-To-Pay Provision \[PDF\]](#), June 2012
- [The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Should Rein in Mortgage Servicers' Use of Force-Placed Insurance \[PDF\]](#), May 2012

Tech Tip: All About the Accent!

To insert the following accent marks in Microsoft Word or Outlook, you need to first press and hold different keys such as CTRL, Shift or ALT. Press and hold all of the keys together and then release them. Next, type the normal letter that appears on the keyboard. For the capitalized version of the accented letter, press and hold Shift after releasing, then the normal letter.

Grave (à è ì ù ò)	Press and hold Ctrl and the left apostrophe (appears on the same key as ~), then the letter.
Acute (á é í ó ú ý)	Press and hold Ctrl and the apostrophe (near the enter key), then the letter.
Circumflex â ê î ô û	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and the "caret" (over the 6) then the letter.
Tilde (ã ñ õ)	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and the "~", then the letter.
Umlaut (tréma) (ä ë ï ö ü ÿ)	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and ":", then the letter.
Circle over a letter (å)	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and "@" then the letter.
Joined letters (æ)	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and "&", then "a."
Joined letters (œ)	Press and hold Ctrl, Shift and "&", then "o."
Cedilla (ç)	Press and hold Ctrl, comma then "c".
Spanish inverted marks (¡ ¿)	Without releasing, press and hold CTRL, Alt, Shift and "!" or "?"
Euro €	Type 20ac, and then press ALT and X together.

--Tricia Shaugnessy, MLAC Support and Training Specialist

Save the Dates

NCLC Consumer Rights Litigation Conference

The 21st Consumer Rights Litigation Conference will be held from Oct. 25-28 in Seattle. There are more than 17 hours of breakout sessions and plenaries offered, as well as 57 courses and top speakers. This annual conference is the premier gathering of attorneys and advocates providing aggressive and professional representation for consumers in the United States. A limited number of partial scholarships are available. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is August 13, 2012.

MAC Annual Celebration

On October 11 MAC will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Chapter 766, the Massachusetts landmark special education law, at its annual celebration. [Click here for details.](#)

Media Highlights

For a full list of media coverage, visit the [News](#) section of MLAC's Web site.

[Op-ed: Law service deserves state support \(Cape Cod Times\)](#)

[Top funding needed for legal assistance corporation \(New Bedford Standard Times\)](#)

"People Pages"

CLICK HERE to print "People Pages," an alphabetical directory of Massachusetts Legal Services staff members and their contact information (NOTE: You must log in to MassLegalServices.org in order to access the list). You can also look up staff individually by last name using the search feature on MassLegalServices.org.

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