Voices of MLAC

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Access to Justice Fellow Project 2017-2018

PREFACE

In his Access to Justice Fellowship with the Equal Justice Coalition, John Carroll interviewed leadership, staff, and other stakeholders in the Massachusetts legal services community. From these interviews, and using other historical resources, John authored the collection of narratives in this document, tracing the origins of civil legal aid in Massachusetts and detailing the vital services provided by the 14 programs funded by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (a co-founding member of the EJC). These narratives will be translated into a variety of formats (articles, blog posts, fact sheets) for the EJC, MLAC, and civil legal aid programs to use in outreach, legislative advocacy, and other educational efforts.

* Client names in this document have been changed to protect individual privacy.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the men and women who work in, and have worked in the legal services programs described here. This year marks the 35th anniversary of MLAC's existence. Over 30 current employees have been at their respective programs all that time. A special dedication to Lonnie Powers, who has been the Executive Director of MLAC since its inception.

Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the inexhaustible energy of Catherine Rizos, Director of Communications at MLAC. Her skills in formatting, editing and project management were indispensable in bringing this work alive. Special thanks to Emily Spiewak and Sean Smerczynski at Meehan Boyle, who continually assisted in the drafting and editing process. Thank you all.

May 9, 2018

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Center for Law and Education

In the late 1960's, under the auspices of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Sargent Shriver initiated an interdisciplinary research and assistance center at Harvard University called the Center for Law and Education (CLE). Its mission was to protect and advance the legal interests of the poor through research and action on legal implications of educational policies, particularly those affecting quality of educational opportunity.

From that small acorn, a mighty oak has grown. In its early days at Harvard, CLE was influenced by the leadership of Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund.

In 1970, CLE published "Inequality in Education," a journal that changed the landscape of education for those with nearly any form of learning disadvantage. In 1971, among other initiatives, CLE drafted and successfully advocated for the Massachusetts Transitional Bilingual Education Act, which required bilingual services be provided in school systems with more than 20 speakers of a language other than English.

Through the 1970's, CLE was at the forefront in publishing substantive manuals on student rights, school fees, and classifications. These were a tremendous aid to advocates working on behalf of students who were excluded from school for reasons including disability, limited English proficiency, race, indigence, and pregnancy. In 1972, CLE and the NAACP filed a class action lawsuit (*Morgan v. Hennigan*) on behalf of African-American parents and students enrolled in the Boston Public Schools for discriminatory practices. CLE prevailed and the verdict was upheld on appeal. For the next 20 years, CLE continued to represent these clients under monitoring and consent decrees.

In 1975, a CLE staff attorney argued *Goss v. Lopez* before the U.S. Supreme Court, which held that public school students are entitled to due process safeguards before suspension or expulsion.

Following the enactment of Pub. L. 84-142 in 1975, which entitled all children in need of special education a right to a free, appropriate public education, and promulgation of regulations in 1977, CLE staff conducted workshops in 47 states to help legal services attorneys and other public interest lawyers prepare for the onslaught of cases on behalf of children who had never been to school, were being educated in separate buildings, and/or were deprived of access to the general education curriculum provided all other students. 1977 was also significant in that CLE separated from Harvard University and became and independent institution. By this time, CLE was an established power in its own right. In addition to its numerous publications, both periodic and special, CLE started producing training materials and conducting nationwide seminars to help advocates challenge the misuse of competency testing.

With the advent of the 1980's, CLE opened an office in Washington, D.C. and in short order became a major presence in the development of legislation and regulations affecting low-income children.

The 80's also ushered in the Reagan Era, which was characterized by hostility toward legal services in general and its role in public education matters in particular. Reagan's bitter experiences fighting with (and largely losing to) California Legal Services left him poorly disposed toward legal services when he appeared on the national stage. His hostility manifested, among other ways, in his advocacy for legislation that barred legal services programs from representing students and parents in education cases. His bill was narrowly defeated. Despite relentless attempts to curtail or abolish federally funded legal services, especially CLE, the Center continues to be a beacon for the rights of parents and children.

As CLE entered the 90's, it continued to be a leader in education of children with various disadvantages. With new rights to services for infants and toddlers with developmental delay under Part H of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), CLE established a Parent Early Intervention Project, which was instrumental in notifying Massachusetts advocates, attorneys, and parents about the new rights under Part H. It also authored "Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities: A Primer for Advocates." This publication was

widely recognized in the advocacy world as a major contribution to helping attorneys and lay advocates represent parents of children in need of special education.

In 1995, at the same time that it imposed significant restrictions on the capacity of local programs, Congress eliminated all federal funding for legal services back-up centers, including CLE. CLE, along with most of the other centers, has continued on as an independent non-profit outside that federal system – actively pursuing the same kind of work – litigation and administrative complaints, state and federal policy advocacy, collaborative projects to implement programs and policies in schools, districts, and states, and research, materials, and other assistance.

Throughout this history, CLE has litigated landmark cases. In addition to those mentioned above, CLE cases have established important principles, including:

- Youth with disabilities in state correctional and detention facilities are entitled to a free, appropriate public education and transition services to prepare them to be re-integrated into their public schools (*Smith v. Wheaton; James v. McDonald*).
- Where a student with a disability is unable to obtain an appropriate education in public school, reimbursement is an equitable remedy under IDEA when parents unilaterally place their child in a private school (*Carter v. Florence County School District*, US. SCT 1994).
- The principles of racial equity in providing public education and dismantling segregation developed for elementary and secondary education apply to state college systems as well. Counsel (recognized as American Bar Association trial lawyers of the year) achieved a landmark $513 million settlement in this class-action lawsuit to end the State of Mississippi's 27-year-old battle over college desegregation and unequal funding of higher education (*Ayers v. State of Mississippi*, US SCT 2002).
- Before denying students promotion or graduation on the basis of tests, school systems must first ensure that the students have been adequately taught the skills and knowledge being tested and that the tests are valid and accurate measures of them (*Debre P. v. Turlington*); and a "zero tolerance" policy violates not only procedural but substantive due process when it results in exclusionary punishment grossly disproportionate to the offense (*LB v. O'Connell*).

Fifty years ago, none of this existed. In its short life, CLE has established itself as the heart and soul of education law.

Center for Public Representation

Steven Schwartz, founding executive director and current litigation director at the Center for Public Representation (CPR), entered Cornell University in the fall of 1964, a landmark year in the history of legal services. On January 8 of that year, President Lyndon Johnson, in his first State of the Union address, declared a "War on Poverty." Seven months later, Johnson addressed Congress again, this time seeking authority to wage war against North Vietnam by way of the infamous Tonkin Gulf Resolution.

The War on Poverty and the war in Vietnam came to represent two of the lasting legacies of President Johnson's administration. The War on Poverty was led by Sargent Shriver, who had the foresight to establish the Legal Services program within the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Shriver realized that the door to economic opportunity could be opened through access to legal representation. Subsequently, Shriver established legal services programs around the nation. He sought to cover just about every population center, establishing nearly 130 offices.

Shriver also understood that there was a deep need for "back-up" centers that could devote the time and resources necessary to achieve systemic solutions to recurrent and intractable problems met every day in street-level poverty programs. Under the umbrella of OEO, Shriver established several other anti-poverty programs, such as Head Start, Community Action Programs (CAPs) and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA).

In 1968, as Schwartz neared his college graduation, the impact of the Vietnam War and the civil rights struggle was a central focus of many college campuses, where sit-ins and other protests were common. These political events, protest movements, and civil rights cases convinced Schwartz that the best way to effect change was to become a civil rights lawyer. He applied to Harvard Law School and was accepted.

Upon graduation from Harvard Law School in 1971, and after a brief stint representing migrant farmworkers in Connecticut, Schwartz applied to be a VISTA attorney in Greenfield, Massachusetts, representing low-income tenants and organizing housing coalitions in Franklin County. He was hired by the Franklin County Community Action Commission, which had obtained several VISTA positions through the County Commissioners. His starting salary was $3,000 a year. Schwartz subsequently convinced the Franklin County Commissioners and then the Hampshire County Commissioners to apply for and designate 10 more VISTA positions to support four legal services attorneys and six paralegals. By 1973, Schwartz managed two new legal services offices in Greenfield and Northampton that provided legal assistance to low-income residents of Franklin and Hampshire Counties on housing, consumer, family, and public benefits issues. During that time, Schwartz was awarded a Reginal Heber Smith Fellowship to oversee these new offices and affiliate them with the growing OEO legal assistance program in western Massachusetts.

Within his jurisdiction were the Northampton State Hospital and the Belchertown State School—two massive institutions that confined over 2,500 individuals with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities. Both institutions were medieval in their structure, antiquated in their mission, and devoid of meaningful treatment of their residents. When a colleague who had been assisting residents at both facilities left a local legal services office, he asked Schwartz to take over his cases. After a brief tour of each institution, Steven had an "aha" moment and realized this was his calling. He secured another VISTA position and a few student volunteers and opened another legal services office directly in the Northampton State Hospital, providing legal assistance to individuals confined in both facilities.

One key case, *Boyd v. Registrar of Belchertown*, saw Schwartz suing to ensure that residents of state institutions would not be denied their right to vote. Schwartz also represented hundreds of residents of the Northampton State Hospital in civil commitment proceedings. That same year, the Appellate Division of the District Court held, in one of his cases, that the state had to consider all less restrictive alternatives as part of proof for civil

commitment. In an appeal brought the following year, the Supreme Judicial Court ruled that in all civil commitment proceedings, a district court must consider whether there is a less restrictive alternative to hospitalization (*Commonwealth v. Nassar*).

Schwartz was also active legislatively in his pursuit for change. In 1974, he and his colleagues advocated for legislation creating a right to consult with an attorney before signing a voluntary hospital application, which ultimately became law.

By this time, it was clear that the field of legal advocacy for institutional residents with disabilities was one where lawyers and paralegals were very much needed, yet no such program existed. In 1976, Schwartz, in conjunction with professors from Hampshire College and the University of Massachusetts Department of Legal Studies, obtained a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and launched the Mental Patients Advocacy Project (MPAP). With funds from NIMH, MPAP developed a nationally acclaimed program to train paralegals to represent institutionalized persons with disabilities. Over the next six years, MPAP trained over 30 students from Hampshire, Smith, and Mount Holyoke Colleges, and the University of Massachusetts, and assisted them in securing ongoing employment as paralegals in other emerging institutional advocacy projects throughout the country.

In 1976, shortly after the opening of MPAP, Schwartz met a young African-American patient at Northampton State Hospital who had an intellectual disability. About eight years prior, this man had been sent to the hospital for 20 days observation for a competency to stand trial evaluation, based upon a misdemeanor charge for touching the knee of a white woman on a public bus in Springfield. Eight years later, he was still languishing at the hospital, with no release date in sight. Steven filed a class action lawsuit, *Brewster v. Dukakis*, on behalf of eight hospital residents, alleging that their institutionalization violated their constitutional right to treatment in the least restrictive alternative. In 1978, the federal court approved a consent decree requiring the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to create community mental health services for all current and future residents of Northampton State Hospital.

In 1982, when federal funding for MPAP ended and federal support for legal services was in dire jeopardy, Schwartz and his colleagues, Bob Fleischner and Cathy Costanzo, founded the Center for Public Representation; Costanzo is now the organization's executive director. They secured funding from a newly created disability law clinic at Western New England Law School, as well as significant attorney's fees obtained in the Brewster case. In 1983, CPR was awarded a grant from the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation to operate one of its 13 Social Security Representation Projects. Shortly thereafter, in partnership with the Disability Law Center and the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, CPR became a state support center on disability issues for legal services and other public interest programs in the Commonwealth. In 1987, CPR was designated as the Federal Protection and Advocacy (P&A) program for individuals with mental illness (PAIMI) in Massachusetts. This federally funded, national program was created by Congress to provide legal assistance to individuals with disabilities in all 50 states and territories. The PAIMI authorization statute empowered the programs to gain access to institutions, to visit and represent residents, to examine their records, and to investigate abuse and neglect in these facilities. It is a very powerful tool to protect and give direct representation to institutional residents with disabilities.

In 1994, CPR became a national support center for P&A programs throughout the country, providing training, technical assistance, and materials to support for all 50 states' P&As and the 13 Territorial programs. CPR drafted program standards for the entire P&A network, co-counselled cases with other P&As in 20 states and filed amici briefs in over 40 federal and state courts.

In the same year, CPR opened a second disability clinical program, in conjunction with Harvard Law School. With Harvard Law students, it expanded its offices and provided representation to residents of the four community mental health centers that served the Greater Boston area.

Since 1989, CPR has appeared either as co-counsel or lead counsel in 25 reported cases throughout the country. All of the systemic reform cases relate to the representation of those who, before the work of CPR, had no voice in the area of institutional treatment of persons with mental disabilities.

CPR created new initiatives and filed precedent-setting cases for individuals with psychiatric disabilities who are deaf, for young

persons with disabilities in juvenile detention facilities, for adults in forensic institutions such as Bridgewater State Hospital, for persons with disabilities who were harmed by their caretakers, and for persons with mental illness forced to wait in hospital emergency rooms as a result of a lack of community mental health services. It authored law review articles on involuntary outpatient treatment, damage actions as a system change strategy, and standards for institutional advocacy. In 2000, CPR published a nationally acclaimed book, *Emergency Department Treatment of the Psychiatric Patient.* After 15 years of advocacy, CPR, in alliance with others, was able to create a new Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code enacted by the legislature.

In the last 30 years, CPR has been involved in most major institutional cases for individuals with disabilities. It undertakes its systemic litigation initiatives in partnership with major private law firms, including WilmerHale, Foley Hoag, Holland and Knight, Morgan Lewis, Nelson Mullins, Weil Gotshal, and Sidley Austin. It is recognized as the premier public representation organization in the United States and continues to expand its activities, opening a national policy office in Washington, D.C. in September 2016.

Through litigation, legislative advocacy, quality legal writing, and direct representation, CPR has become the national center of gravity for legal issues surrounding mental disabilities, including involuntary treatment, unnecessary institutionalization, access to community services, alternatives to guardianship, and other restrictions on choice and incarceration. It is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals with disabilities have sufficient support to live in their homes, with their families, and as part of their communities.

CPR has advocated for, and succeeded, in closing 10 institutions in Massachusetts and nationwide, including Belchertown, Dover, and Fernald State Schools; Northampton, Metropolitan, and Westfield State Hospitals; and four public institutions for persons with developmental disabilities in Florida and New Mexico.

In each case, CPR has ensured sufficient community services to allow formerly institutionalized persons to return home, receive appropriate care, and meaningfully participate in their communities.

Of the 10 colleagues that started with Schwartz, five are still active in legal services. These professionals speak to the dedication of those who labor in this field. When asked how he would describe his life's work, Schwartz said he was "bringing people who were invisible back home to their families."

Looking back, Schwartz has a sense of pride and camaraderie. Pride in the growth of CPR, which started out amorphously from a collection of VISTA advocates, through the phase when the program was a branch office of Western Massachusetts Legal Services, to the present, where it is now a nationally recognized powerhouse in creating bold new law for people with disabilities.

Children's Law Center of Massachusetts

Forty years ago, the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts (CLCM) opened its doors in Lynn with a mission to promote and secure equal justice and maximize opportunity for low-income children and youth throughout the Commonwealth. Since then, the organization has had remarkable success in protecting this vulnerable demographic group through local activism and by advocating and litigating for systemic change.

Consider the difference the organization made in the lives of 20-year-old Melissa and her two younger siblings. Abandoned by their father, they were left without any family when they lost their mother to cancer. Melissa's wish was to care for her siblings and keep them together. Given Melissa's youth and her school and work commitments, her plans to care for her younger siblings were dubious; the foster care system loomed. That is, until a CLCM attorney took charge. Against the odds, he helped Melissa get legal custody of her siblings. He then provided assistance so she could secure survivor benefits, health insurance, food stamps, utilities and housing. He taught her budgeting and financial management. Finally, the legal advocate sponsored small fundraising efforts to help Melissa acquire funds to keep the family afloat. Thanks to the commitment of this CLCM counsel, Melissa and her siblings remained together and have done quite well.

CLCM Staff.

CLCM's local advocacy is focused on individual legal representation of children in a range of substantive areas, including education, immigration, child welfare, mental health and juvenile justice. Its local advocacy service area encompasses Essex County and Greater Boston. CLCM provides comprehensive legal representation to more than 400 clients per year. An additional 1,500 children receive limited legal assistance.

Working more broadly, CLCM was influential in the reform of state and federal laws that mandated life sentences without parole for juvenile offenders. In 2007, the organization recruited a Fellow to investigate, research, and publish a definitive study on the sentencing of youth to life imprisonment without parole. At the time, only Massachusetts and Connecticut mandated that juveniles as young as 14 who were charged with first-degree murder (even if only an accomplice, under the felony-murder rule) were to be tried as adults. If convicted, Massachusetts law required that such children be sentenced to life without parole; because of the mandatory punishment the courts could not even consider the child's age or life circumstances in sanctioning kids convicted of the crime. Though other states had the discretion to, and would, impose such sentences, the Commonwealth stood virtually alone in the U.S. (and the world) in being required to do so.

Through a report published in 2009 — "Until They Die a Natural Death" — CLCM began advocating for changes in this legislation, a goal that was realized at both the state and federal levels. The issue ultimately made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Miller v. Alabama*, 132 S. CT. 2455 (2012) the court effectively ended the practice of sentencing juveniles to life sentences without parole. Miller stood for the premise that the state and federal governments are required to consider the unique circumstances of each juvenile defendant in determining an individual sentence in murder cases. Another U.S. Supreme Court case in 2016, *Montgomery v. Louisiana*, 577 US ____ 2016, held that the Miller case should be applied retroactively and also ruled such sentences unconstitutional. Since 2012, 28 states, including Massachusetts and

the District of Columbia, have changed their laws for juvenile offenders convicted of homicide. In 2013, in the Diatchenko case, Massachusetts formally invalidated the law that allowed juveniles to be sentenced to life without parole. The ruling was retroactive and required individuals serving such sentences to be given parole eligibility; under Diatchenko, these individuals can be eligible for parole in 20-30 years, depending on the facts of the case.

Aside from working on juvenile justice reform, CLCM engages in an array of educational and systemic change efforts, including research, appellate and legislative advocacy, impact litigation, and committee and task force work. It has produced informative, easy-to-read materials, such as "Quick Reference Guides" on issues ranging from the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative to special education, school discipline, and Child Requiring Assistance matters, documents regularly used by attorneys and advocates throughout Massachusetts. CLCM also has published, on an annual basis, community resource manuals that give parents, attorneys and providers for most cities and towns in southern Essex County and the Merrimack Valley a compendium of critical social and legal services available for low-income children.

The agency also conducts close to 100 trainings per year across the Commonwealth, reaching 2,000 – 3,000 attorneys, providers and parents.

CLCM is funded by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, the Boston Bar Foundation, and the United Way, as well as several private foundations, including Cummings, Clowes, Eastern Bank and HG Shaw, among others, along with individual and corporate donors.

In addition to its headquarters in Lynn, CLCM has project offices in Boston, Lawrence and Chelsea. The agency has nine attorneys, an AmeriCorps outreach worker, and a panel of about 30 volunteer private attorneys. Jay McManus, CLCM's director, is a public-spirited lawyer who, like his peers, is committed to helping vulnerable people. The good that this agency does is exponentially greater, many times over, than the resources it has at its disposal. CLCM punches well above its weight.

CLCM attorney Claire Valentin (right) with her client, Amilcar.

Community Legal Aid

When she sought help from Community Legal Aid (CLA), Brittany was a single, working mother from Central Massachusetts who put her children to bed each night on the floors of the homes of her family and friends. With no stable living arrangements and very little money, she had lost her sense of safety and security.

Prior to becoming homeless, Brittany and her two young sons had been living in a mold-infested apartment with heat that didn't go above 52 degrees. After she was hospitalized with pneumonia, she fell behind on the rent because she was unable to work. Her landlord took her to court and the family was forced to pack up and leave. Unable to find suitable housing, Brittany applied for emergency shelter but was denied.

CLA helped put Brittany and her children back on the road to stability and independence. Because she had fallen behind on her rent for legitimate medical reasons, her CLA attorney successfully argued that the state had wrongfully denied the emergency shelter for which she was eligible. Soon she and her children were safely placed in shelter and began the search for a permanent home without worrying where they would sleep every night. Meanwhile, Brittany's son was worried that he would have to change schools because their shelter was in a different school district. A CLA education attorney stepped in and worked with both towns to ensure that Brittany's son could continue to attend the school that he loved.

Helping low-income families and individuals escape homelessness is just one way CLA serves as a lifeline for thousands of clients each year. CLA provides legal assistance to eligible people in the most basic areas of need: homelessness prevention, employment, education, elder law, immigration, and family law. CLA's work is augmented by a panel of approximately 175 private attorneys who annually donate more than 2,700 hours of legal services to the organization.

Beyond handling cases for several thousand clients each year, CLA has many solid partnerships with local human service agencies and medical providers, and is proud to be the legal arm of the region's safety net. CLA works hard to be responsive to emerging needs in its client communities, and over the past several years has launched several exciting initiatives as a result of community input. Its most recent endeavors include the creation of Outreach and Advocacy Projects focused on Worcester's Southeast Asian communities; veterans across CLA's service area; and formerly incarcerated individuals hoping to overcome the barriers to self-sufficiency posed by their criminal records. CLA has also opened a new education law practice to help children stay and succeed in school, and the organization is the worthy recipient of a Legal Services Corporation Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant through which CLA and UMass Memorial Medical Center have created a robust medical-legal partnership.

With a service area that stretches from Worcester to the state's borders with New York, Connecticut, and Vermont, CLA serves all of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester counties. It has full-service offices in Worcester, Northampton, Pittsfield and Springfield, along with satellite offices in Fitchburg, Greenfield, Holyoke, North Adams, Southbridge and Milford. No other legal services program in Massachusetts covers such a broad swath of the state.

In addition to covering the largest geographical area of Massachusetts' regional legal aid programs, CLA's roots are among the oldest in the state. Most civil legal aid programs trace their birth to President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty" in

CLA Attorney Anita Conte speaks during a training about medical-legal partnerships.

1964, which led to the establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity and other anti-poverty programs. Having been established in 1951 as the Legal Aid Society of Worcester by a group of attorneys from the Worcester County Bar Association, CLA's origins precede even those programs.

As it has over the last six-plus decades, CLA will continue to grow and adapt to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents of Central and Western Massachusetts, ensuring they have access to justice and the dignity that all people deserve, regardless of their ability to pay for legal help.

When her case was resolved, Brittany declared her attorney "a miracle worker." "You work so hard," she said, "and you have gotten my family so far with your kindness alone."

At CLA, it's all in a day's work.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center

In the words of Executive Director Mojdeh Rohani, the aim of Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (CLSACC) is simply "to respect and uphold human dignity." It does this by providing free civil legal aid and affordable psychological counseling to low-income people so that they can meet their most basic needs for employment, housing, health, and safety.

CLSACC traces its history to 1968, when Dr. Joseph Brenner, a psychiatrist at M.I.T., founded the Cambridgeport Medical Clinic to provide free medical care to people unable to access existing medical services. In June 1970, recognizing the additional unmet needs of patients, Dr. Brenner and his colleagues launched the Cambridgeport Problem Center (CPC), which saw teams comprised of volunteer legal and mental health professionals, as well as laypeople, assisting patients in finding ways to solve problems and make better life choices. Medical services were suspended in 1973 and CPC eventually grew into Community Legal Services and Counseling Center, following the clinic's model of using volunteer professionals to provide services to the community's most vulnerable residents.

CLSACC's unique interdisciplinary service model addresses clients' legal issues and mental health needs. A woman escaping domestic violence, for instance, may need legal assistance to obtain a protective order against her abuser. She may also need counseling to help her recover from the trauma she has suffered, so that she can find or maintain employment, establish a safe place to live, and stabilize her life. CLSACC's legal program staff utilize in-house, volunteer mental health professionals for case management, supportive counseling, forensic evaluations, and/or consultation purposes, in order to work effectively with their clients and to achieve the best legal outcome for them.

Since its founding nearly 50 years ago, CLSACC has helped tens of thousands of low-income individuals and families facing non-criminal legal matters. Last year, the organization served 1,500 individuals and families.

CLSACC has grown significantly in recent years, and now has a staff of 21. The largest area

CLSACC staff members outside their new office in Cambridge.

of growth has been in programs assisting refugees and immigrants, which prompted the addition of immigration attorneys and clinicians with expertise in treating clients who have experienced torture and/or trauma.

In 2015, CLSACC established the Center for Global Human Rights and Resilience to more accurately reflect the nature of the agency's work with refugees and immigrants. In addition to helping the hundreds of local residents who walk through the door, CLSACC assists asylum seekers statewide, most of whom live in Greater Boston. Nearly 50 percent of asylum seekers are torture survivors from more than 40 countries in Africa, Asia, South America and Central America. Asylum seekers include those escaping Syria's civil war, the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and state-sanctioned extreme homophobia in Uganda.

Recently, one of the counseling program's doctoral students, Twyla Wolfe, established a pilot micro-lending project aimed at helping asylum seekers establish their lives in the U.S. Now directed by clinical volunteer Jordan Shaughnessy, the project provides material financial support and case management services to refugee and immigrant clients for up to 12 months. Clients receive a loan of $50 per month, empowering them to make private and independent purchasing decisions regarding their basic needs and to access community resources. They are expected to repay the loan once they have obtained legal status and subsequently are able to work legally in the U.S. As one client says, "You're

CLSACC volunteers at the organization's annual volunteer appreciation ceremony.

helping me now and I promise to help you and this program one day."

Aside from paid staff, who else does the helping at CLSACC? Pro-bono lawyers, counseling professionals and other volunteers (students, paralegals, interpreters) generously donated more than 14,000 hours of services last year, valued at well over half a million dollars.

CLSACC's annual budget includes funding from the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, which provides approximately 12 percent of its annual operating expenses. The remaining 88 percent coming from grants, contracts, foundations and individual donors.

CLSACC's leadership reflects the interdisciplinary nature of its work. Rohani, who earned a master's degree in social work from Boston University, has worked with survivors of trauma, torture, gender-based violence, and human trafficking. Deputy Director John Froio previously worked as CLSACC's Assistant Legal Director and is a housing and disability attorney.

In 2017, CLSACC entered an exciting new chapter, leaving the donated office space in Central Square where it had been headquartered since the late 1970s. CLSACC moved to its new office, located within blocks of the Lechmere MBTA stop and the Middlesex Probate and Family Court. The new location will allow the organization to accommodate its expanding staff and volunteer corps, and better respond to new and increasing needs in the communities it serves, especially immigrants and refugees. Most important, it will provide a safe and comfortable setting for CLSACC's clients and their families.

Disability Law Center

The Disability Law Center (DLC) is the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) organization for Massachusetts. As such, DLC is authorized under federal law to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect of people with disabilities in Massachusetts. Congress established the P&A system, based upon its concern that individuals with disabilities were being abused and recognizing that there needed to be an independent agency in each state to address that problem. DLC has a staff of 14 attorneys, three of whom are located in Northampton. It also employs four to five non-attorneys. In addition to serving individuals, DLC also serves as a backup center for disability issues statewide.

An informative website (www.dlc-ma.org), describes DLC's work with poignancy and depth. It gives touching and powerful examples of the lives it has made better due to its advocacy. It tells three wonderful stories of its effective advocacy across the Commonwealth, from a disabled child in Boston who needed special schooling, to a deaf woman in Lowell who needed accommodation when trying to pay her bills by phone, to a hearing-impaired child in Holyoke. In each example, caring and competent attorneys fought for and negotiated services and assistance for the individuals that needed their help.

Generally speaking, DLC helps in multiple ways; from furnishing information, to giving technical assistance, to providing representation. In addition to advocacy for individuals, DLC tackles systemic problems. One of DLC's most successful and well-publicized litigation efforts was an investigation and case brought against the restraint and seclusion of inmates at Bridgewater State Hospital. Spearheaded by Stan Eichner, Director of Litigation at DLC, the notorious Intensive Treatment Unit where men were routinely strapped down to their beds or held in seclusion, was forced to close. A consent order was created and DLC was appointed by the court to monitor its implementation.[1]

DLC works tirelessly to protect vulnerable individuals in schools, institutions, and communities across the state. Recently, after reports of excessive use of force in the Therapeutic Intervention Program at the Peck School in Holyoke, DLC conducted an investigation of the program. They found that lack of leadership, oversight, and training had led to a pattern of overuse of restraints, physical and psychological abuse of students, and inadequate reporting on the use of restraints. DLC's comprehensive report on these issues received widespread media coverage and brought about important changes at the school. DLC reached an agreement with Holyoke Public Schools and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the organizations to work together to improve conditions at the school. The school entered into a detailed remedial plan that includes ongoing monitoring by DLC for the next two years, revising policies and protocols on the use of restraints and seclusion, providing additional training for staff, and submitting periodic reports to track progress towards creating a safe and supportive learning environment for students.

With the recent retirement of longtime Executive Director Christine Griffin, whose steady leadership helped the organization win countless victories and protections for its clients, DLC welcomes a new leader in Marlene Sallo, a champion for the rights of vulnerable children and people with disabilities. Sallo previously worked in the Obama Administration, addressing alleged hate crimes and discriminatory practices under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. She has dedicated her career to improving outcomes for disenfranchised and marginalized youth and families involved in the juvenile justice, child welfare, and special education systems. There is no doubt that DLC, under Sallo's leadership, will continue the important work that has distinguished the organization for decades.

DLC advocates for the independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of the disabled population in all aspects of living, in their residence, work, school and all other institutions. In the process, DLC educates families and institutions about the rights of the disabled. As one mother said after DLC negotiated a special school for her hearing-impaired child: "Imagine a plane trying to take off, on a runway full of potholes. It cannot take off. DLC filled in the potholes. Now my daughter can fly."

1. Rezendez, Michael. "Humane care given a place at state's harshest hospital" *Boston Globe: 9 September 2017*

Greater Boston Legal Services

Boston has many identities, from the "cradle of liberty," to the "City on a Hill," to the "Athens of America," and so on. One identity less recognized but no less important is as the birthplace of a systematic service of legal representation for those least able to afford it. Starting in the 19th century, a smattering of law offices arose, principally in the cities of the eastern seaboard awash with immigrants. "Legal Aid" societies were formed, usually by lawyers of similar immigrant background, designed to help their own acclimate themselves in America. German Legal Services in New York, for example, formed in the late 1800s for exactly that reason.

Boston was unique. From its birth, there was a sense of "Noblesse Oblige," most conspicuously embodied in John Adams' defense of the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre, even before the country was independent. That spirit carried forward after the revolution. As Boston grew to economic prominence, its law firms followed. As law firms flourished, the leading law firms cultivated a spirit of legal services for those least able to afford it, and usually most in need. This carried forward through the 1800s.

GBLS client Shanice with her attorney, Ellen Shachter.

Around 1919, legal representation of the poor throughout America changed substantially. Reginald Heber Smith, a freshly minted lawyer just out of Harvard Law School in 1914, went to work as general counsel for what was then the Boston Legal Aid Society. Although he only stayed four years, he became inculcated with the sense of obligation that attorneys had to ensure equal justice to all citizens, regardless of their ability to pay for such service. In 1918 he went on to Hale and Dorr, a law firm within the inner circle of the Boston legal community. However, his sense that access to justice could not be purchased, that it was a matter of right, moved him to compassion. Consequently, in 1919, he published what was to become Gideon's trumpet for legal service to the poor: *Justice and the Poor.* It was essentially a study of the woeful state of American lawyers in their failure to act upon the bedrock ideas of equality set forth in the founding documents of our country.

Bar associations across the country responded. In every major city, legal services offices were opened, largely underwritten by the local chapters of the bar. Boston was no exception. In fact, Boston was the beacon and bellwether of such progressive services.

However, there was no overarching structure to the various programs. That all changed with President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" and "War on Poverty" in 1964. Johnson created the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and appointed a surprised and unprepared Sargent Shriver to be its first director. He was writing on a clean slate with a free hand.

Acting on the notion that access to justice was a necessary instrument for economic opportunity, he authorized grants to scores of legal groups across the country. They were to hire attorneys whose mandate was to serve the poor, which they did. In some quarters, it was thought they served the poor too well, especially when those bright young lawyers conceived of "impact" litigation which sought redress for the poor against entrenched business.

Johnson was followed by Richard Nixon, who did not share his predecessor's enthusiasm for the legal services programs. What ultimately followed were rollercoaster budgetary battles in Congress, depending on the priorities of the then-president.

Back in Boston in 1976, the Boston Legal Aid Society merged with the OEO-created Boston Legal Assistance Program, to form Greater Boston

Legal Services (GBLS). GBLS carries on the work as its forbearers, providing direct assistance to more than 10,000 low-income people every year. It is at the forefront of legal services to the poor, especially in the fields of family law, housing, public benefits, and bankruptcy.

By way of illustration, GBLS attorneys, under the direction of Lauren Song and former Executive Director Bob Sable, recently mobilized a coalition of city agencies, tenant advocacy groups, and law firms to challenge a notorious slum landlord in bankruptcy court and to create 59 permanently affordable housing units in the city of Boston, while protecting over 40 low-income, elderly and disabled tenants from homelessness and displacement. The team, applying some truly creative and collaborative lawyering, secured a ruling from bankruptcy court that the landlord's properties could be acquired by a nonprofit developer that was backed by the tenants. Although the nonprofit's cash bid was more than $1 million lower than the for-profit competitors' cash bids, the Bankruptcy Court affirmed that it was a higher and better bid when considered in conjunction with the conditional waiver of the tenants' claims—estimated at $3.5 million—against the landlord's bankruptcy estate.

This recent victory is but one example of GBLS' work on behalf of its clients. Other landmark cases include a Supreme Judicial Court decision enforcing protections for homeowners facing foreclosure; successful advocacy for a bill that expands the rights of parents to unpaid, job-protected leave following the birth or adoption of a child; and, in partnership with the Boston Center for Independent Living, a class-action lawsuit that forced the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to comply with state and federal laws governing accessibility of mass transit for people with disabilities. The importance of impact advocacy like this cannot be overstated; these cases have changed countless lives for the better.

GBLS enjoys a storied place in Boston's legal heritage. It traces its roots from the ideas and actions of this city's legal community. It has celebrated its 100th year of continuous service to those least able to afford legal representation, yet in most need of it. Working in harmony with the highest echelons of the Boston Bar, it has continuously served the highest aspirations of our American experience. At a time when some of our most cherished values are questioned, it serves as a compass heading of true north as to who we truly are.

Low-income tenants, fair housing advocates, GBLS attorneys, and pro bono attorneys are pictured after their victory to preserve 59 units as permanently affordable housing.

Massachusetts Advocates for Children

The driving force in the creation of Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC) was the legendary Hubie Jones. Son of a Pullman porter and raised in the Bronx, Mr. Jones came to Boston in 1955 to earn a Master's in Social Work from Boston University. In October 1956, Jones heard Martin Luther King speak at the Ford Hall Forum, recalling of his experience that "out of [King's] mouth came this extraordinary oratory that blew me away. It was part of cementing my commitment to work for social justice and social change in America."

Jones went on to work at the Roxbury Multi-Service Center in the 1960s. There, he led a task force (Task Force on Children Out of School) that resulted in an earth-shattering report showing that thousands of Boston Public Schools students were being excluded from schools because they did not speak English, were branded unteachable because of behavioral problems or physical disabilities, or because they were pregnant teens. As a result, in 1971, the Massachusetts legislature passed the first bilingual education law in the nation. A year later, the Massachusetts legislature promulgated policies that allowed pregnant teens to attend school and passed the first omnibus special education law in the nation (commonly known as "Chapter 766").

The Task Force incorporated and changed its name to the Massachusetts Advocacy Center (in 2002, it became Massachusetts Advocates for Children), serving as a model for Marian Wright Edelman's nationaly acclaimed Children's Defense Fund (CDF), which was founded in 1973. Following the model set by Jones, CDF issued its own report on the national level, "Children Out of School in America." In that report, Edelman and the CDF advocated for a national law, modeled on Massachusetts' legislation. In 1975, Congress passed the first nationwide Special Education law: "The Education for All Handicapped Children's Act" (now titled "The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act"). Since then, MAC has "refined its signature multi-strategic approach to achieve results on behalf of [its] constituency of children who face barriers to educational and life opportunities due to disability, language, race, ethnicity, and poverty" (from MAC's 40th anniversary report).

Today, MAC's major projects contribute to achieving its mission of being an independent and effective voice for children who face significant barriers to equal educational and life opportunities. MAC stays in touch with the needs of its clients through its "helpline" that fields approximately 1,200 calls per year and provides advice regardless of income, through its extensive network of coalitions. It represents low-income families through case advocacy, and by training of parents, educators, and psychologists. After identifying a systemic need, MAC uses its signature multi-systemic approach, choosing the strategy in collaboration with its partners that is most suited to address the need, whether that be legislative, administrative, media advocacy, negotiation, litigation, or more. It has a highly effective pro bono panel of attorneys from DLA Piper and other firms, who support MAC's individual and systemic advocacy.

Funded by the Ford Foundation in the mid-90s, MAC worked as an intermediary organization to reform district-wide policies at Boston Public Schools. Because MAC enjoyed respect from all stakeholders, it continues to work with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community partners on a panoply of issues, ranging from parent and community agencies to the hiring, training, and professional development of teachers. A catalyst for this was the landmark case of *Allen v. McDonough*, a 1976 class action suit against Boston Public Schools for noncompliance with Chapter 766. The suit lasted 22 years and resulted in the provision of enormous resources to maintain and improve the Special Ed law as implemented in Boston. It also led to the creation of the O'Hearn School in Dorchester, which became a statewide model "inclusion school," and to an agreement to increase the number of schools that provided quality integration for students with disabilities.

One of MAC's groundbreaking programs of special note is the Disability Education Justice Initiative (DEJI). DEJI has led the Commonwealth's special education community in advocacy to maintain what are among the strongest special

education protections for students with disabilities in the nation. In the early 2000s, when many in the legislature sought to water down protections in an effort similar to what was happening at the federal level, DEJI convened an interdisciplinary group that worked "across the table" with superintendents, principals, and others to reach agreement on language that was then successfully advocated by all parties and passed into law. As a result of that partnership, MAC, through DEJI, still retains the capacity to join together with those stakeholders to advocate for issues of mutual interest.

In response to skyrocketing numbers of calls from parents of children with autism, DEJI launched the Autism Special Education Support Center in 2002. The Center has since become a vital force within the autism community. It promotes training, legal assistance, advocacy, and service to thousands of parents and professionals to ensure that children with autism overcome lowered expectations and receive equal education opportunity. In addition, the Center addresses system-wide barriers affecting children with autism. The Center has successfully advocated for passage of legislation called the "Autism Individual Education Plan (IEP) Act," which required that school districts consider the individual special needs of children on the autism spectrum. In 2014, it advocated successfully for the passage of the Autism Omnibus Act, including expanded Medicaid coverage of intensive behavioral therapies and assistive technology device needs of low-income children with autism.

Another of MAC's groundbreaking programs is the Children's Law Support Project (CLSP). MAC set up this project in 1992 to bring together legal services attorneys from across the state to identify children's needs that exist within the legal services caseload and address them using a systemic, statewide approach. Almost simultaneously, legal services hotlines were ringing off the hook due to the school expulsion crisis created by the Educational Reform Act of 1992, which authorized school principals to suspend or expel a student who, in the judgment of the principal, was a threat to other students or teachers. This led CLSP to approach this issue in two ways. First, it organized the Education Law Task Force (ELTF) and second, it established a coalition that was first called the Task Force on Children Affected by Domestic Violence (now known nationally and internationally as the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, or TLPI).

The ELTF has gone on to address many issues. Its most recent accomplishment is its successful advocacy in passing "Chapter 222," which revised onerous school expulsion laws to limit the use of suspension and expulsion, providing alternative approaches to school removal and solidifying students' guarantees to due process. ELTF continues to work to implement the law so that students are not discriminatorily removed from the school.

The second way that CLSP has sought to address the school expulsion crisis has been on the preventive side. An early case in the 1990's involved representing a 15-year-old student who, while in a fight with another student, inadvertently made physical contact with a teacher who tried to intervene. He had already been expelled from school for two years when MAC met him. This child had witnessed much domestic violence, experienced removal from his mother for neglect, and abuse from the father with whom he was placed. MAC retained a psychologist who specialized in trauma to evaluate the boy. When the psychologist completed her evaluation, she stated: "Drop all those other diagnoses. He has Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)." At a hearing to reinstate the child, MAC staff stated, "You could have heard a pin drop after the psychologist spoke." This was the kind of trauma experienced by soldiers in combat. "People at the time didn't understand the underlying reason a student might act this way." As a result of the finding, the boy was admitted to a school that could address his emotional needs. The student has stayed in touch with MAC where staff say they have "gotten to see the transformation of a really bright young man."

Thus began a seminal paradigm shift in the field of the education of traumatized children, many of whom have special-educational needs. The key recognition is that traumatized students require environments that are safe, supportive, and trauma sensitive. Since all students benefit from such safe havens, a movement to create "trauma-sensitive schools" for all students was born. Working together with parents and experts across the disciplines of education, psychology, law, and neurobiology, MAC/CLSP first organized the Task Force in Children Affected by Domestic Violence within legal services, which produced several papers on the impact of domestic violence on education, family law, housing law, benefits, and related matters. These papers led to the publication of MAC's *Helping Traumatized Children Learn Vol. 1* (HTCL 1, www.

traumasensitiveschools.org) and development of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, which is now a joint partnership between Harvard Law School and MAC.

The combination of new scientific research and the advocacy of MAC/TLPI has let to an avalanche of change in the last 20 years to address the roots of the misunderstanding of many behavioral and learning problems and the need for whole-school, trauma-sensitive environments for all students. HTCL 1 has become vastly influential. It has been sold or downloaded over 150,000 times, both across the U.S. and throughout the world. It has led to invitations to speak at UNESCO's 30-nation summit in Thailand and the White House in 2016. It is a fair comparison to say that HTCL 1 is to its field as "Getting to Yes" is to the field of negotiation. For the first time, concepts known instinctively took concrete, conscious form, leading to an educational framework for helping traumatized children learn and providing a roadmap to enable them to learn. This framework has been included in over 10 Massachusetts laws and policies, including changes to the Massachusetts Anti-Bullying law, the Children Receiving Assistance Law, and the Act Relative to Children's Mental Health. Enlisting the aid of six Harvard Law Students from TLPI's Harvard Legislative Lawyering Clinic, MAC/TLPI successfully lobbied in 2014 for the omnibus law titled "Safe and Supportive Schools Framework" (MGL c. 69). This law establishes statewide environments where all students feel safe to learn. With an interdisciplinary coalition of the like-minded, MAC/TLP was able to garner the support of 100 legislators. Ultimately, by convincing legislators to include the safe and supportive school provision in a bill to tighten gun control (which was strongly backed by House Speaker Robert DeLeo), legislators voted the bill into law.

In addition to these magnificent projects, MAC has published at least 30 articles, manuals, papers, and led numerous workshops in the field of childhood education. It has not re-written the key literature, it has written much of it for the first time. From a seedling idea, a mighty oak with many branches has taken root. MAC has become an iconic institution on the forefront of the law for children and education. We owe them much.

MetroWest Legal Services

Framingham is a fairly large community by Massachusetts standards, with about 70,000 people who call it home. The city straddles the mid-point between Boston and Worcester and is divided neatly down the middle by Route 9.

It also has a sizeable number of residents who qualify for legal services because their annual income is at or below 125% of the federal poverty level, which is approximately $31,000 for a family of four. Fortunately, it is blessed with a robust legal services program: MetroWest Legal Services, which serves Framingham and 44 surrounding towns. Founded in 1978 as an arm of the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, it has emerged through several iterations to what it is today: a multi-service legal office.

MetroWest has about 15 staff attorneys and is headed by one of the most dynamic and innovative leaders in the field, Elizabeth "Betsy" Soulé. Soulé oversees units dedicated to housing, elder affairs, special education, domestic violence, immigration, victims of abuse, and worker-related issues, among others.

Additionally, she covers her service area like the politician she really is. Her service area includes 25-30 State Representative Districts and ten Senatorial Districts. She knows her legislators and they know her, and know that she serves their constituents very well. She tries her best to see that all eligible residents are served well, but the blanket is too small for the bed.

In addition to Soulé, there are many attorneys and staff members just as dedicated as she. A case in point is this recent incident: Late on Friday afternoon, a young couple came to the MetroWest office. They had two small children. The family had spent four nights prior sleeping in a car. Their request for emergency shelter had been turned down. A MetroWest attorney immediately went digging for the facts. Within a few hours, she learned that the agency case worker had denied their request without meeting them. If the caseworker had met with them, and asked the appropriate questions, he or she would have learned that the family did qualify for emergency services under a different program. Thanks to MetroWest's work, the family would not have to spend another night without safe shelter.

Almost 18 percent of all Massachusetts residents, or 880,000 people, qualify for legal services. But the need far exceeds programs' ability to help. About two-thirds of all eligible residents who request help go unserved, because the legal services provider, lacking resources to serve all those in need, must turn them away. Many more eligible people never ask for help because they do not know legal aid is available or that the problem they are facing is a civil legal issue.

Mr. Gold, an elderly veteran who received legal help from MWLS when he was facing foreclosure.

Soulé and her staff are the modern-day equivalent of Gideon's army, who fight the good fight in the fields of the lord. Goodness is where you find it. Often you have to look for it; rarely does it call attention to itself.

Access to Justice Fellow Bancroft "Bats" Wheeler is a perfect example. During a distinguished career at several Boston law firms, he specialized in trusts and estates for wealthy people while also handling numerous pro bono cases in the Probate and Family Court. But, after retiring a few years ago, he chanced upon an opportunity to continue his service to others. At an event, he met Soulé, who told him about the many low-income clients at MetroWest who were desperately in need of wills, trusts and related end-of-life documents. She encouraged Bats to work with MetroWest as an Access to Justice Fellow, a program that enables senior attorneys and judges to apply their skills and

experience in support of increasing access to justice at a legal services organization, nonprofit, or the courts.

In 2013, Bats started volunteering as a Fellow at MetroWest. Instead of making his clients come into MetroWest's office – like it had always been done – he offered to make house calls because so many of them were elderly, disabled or both. Bats has since made house calls to hundreds of clients in the cities and towns served by MetroWest. His program has affectionately become known as "Wills on Wheels," and he is beloved by everyone he has helped.

Bats has continued to serve MetroWest beyond his fellowship year, continuing to volunteer as virtually all fellows do. To date, over 70 fellows in the program, which is now run by Lawyers Clearinghouse in conjunction with the Access to Justice Commission, have contributed an incredible 45,000 hours of pro bono work. That is goodness multiplied.

MWLS attorney Jennifer Ollington with her client, Matteo.

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

Massachusetts is blessed with a cornucopia of excellent legal services programs, several of which have national reach. One such program is Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI). An early "Great Society" program, MLRI started out as a creature of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) Act, passed by Congress in 1964. OEO was chiefly an anti-poverty program.

OEO approached the provision of civil legal assistance for the poor in a two-pronged way. The front-line prong was the various local civil legal aid programs that sprung up in every state to provide representation to individual clients. The second prong was the establishment of national and statewide "law reform" centers, like MLRI, whose purpose was to provide leadership and support on substantive poverty-law issues, to undertake systemic advocacy and impact litigation on large-scale issues of importance to low-income people. These law reform-focused programs worked closely with client groups and anti-poverty movements to identify and redress widespread injustices and barriers encountered by the poor, and to challenge and remediate harmful laws, policies, and practices. As the late Sargent Shriver wrote, "A reform in the law may aid thousands of the poor in the time that it takes to solve a hundred individual problems."

In 1968, MLRI was founded as the civil legal aid poverty law and policy center in Massachusetts. It is multi-issue and multi-forum, using an array of strategies and tactics that include class actions, legislative advocacy, coalition-building, community lawyering, and public policy education. MLRI, as a law reform center, is focused on systemic change to address widespread problems and achieve long-term results that advance economic, racial, and social justice. It has a collective impact model, working in coalitions and collaborating with fellow legal aid programs, community organizations, service providers, and many other allies to achieve large scale common goals that advance fairness and justice for people in poverty.

From 1969 until his retirement in 2010, MLRI was led by Allan Rodgers, a fearless poverty law pioneer. In 2011, Allan was succeeded by Georgia Katsoulomitis. With her energy and vision, MLRI's reputation for excellence and effectiveness continues. A very small sampling of recent advocacy initiatives and successes include:

MLRI, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission and a diverse coalition of partners, spearheaded a successful campaign to expand the Massachusetts housing court statewide. One-third of the state's population – 2,047,000 people – in 84 cities/towns lacked a housing court. After a four-year campaign led by MLRI, the legislature passed and Governor Baker signed the legislation authorizing the expansion of the housing court to all areas of the Commonwealth. Low-income tenants, homeowners, and communities across the state will now be able to access the expertise and unique resources that housing courts provide to prevent homelessness, unfair evictions, improve housing conditions, enforce health and safety codes, and prevent blight.

MLRI, with co-counsel MetroWest Legal Services and the law firm Sugarman, Rodgers, Barshak & Cohen, settled a class action lawsuit against the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), the state agency that administers the state's cash assistance and food stamp programs. The case challenged practices that resulted in thousands of households improperly losing food assistance benefits. As a result of the litigation, the state stopped the flawed practice and over 17,000 households received retroactive food assistance benefits totaling over $9 million.

In 2017, MLRI, in partnership with Greater Boston Legal Services and a large coalition of other organizations initiated a campaign, "Lift the Cap on Kids," to repeal the harmful and discriminatory cash assistance "family cap" rule. Welfare benefits are calculated based on family size, and the family cap rule denies benefits to children who were born (or conceived) while the family was receiving cash assistance; families with a child subject to this rule are denied $100/month in benefits. Massachusetts is one of only 17 states in the nation that has a family cap rule. If this policy is successfully repealed, approximately 9,000 children (and countless kids

prospectively) will benefit.

MLRI led the negotiations to reform burdensome, ineffective state verifications that resulted in thousands of eligible low-income people and seniors being wrongly denied food assistance and other benefits. Thanks to MLRI and the work of their partners at Greater Boston Legal Services, the state implemented new streamlined procedures and technology changes that will remove barriers to critical assistance. This reform will benefit approximately 450,000 low-income households in our state.

MLRI, with the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, filed an administrative complaint against the agency that administers the state's emergency shelter system for homeless families. The complaint was based on the agency's failure to provide language access services to low-income, limited-English and non-English speaking families.

Aside from its high impact advocacy, one of MLRI's other very important roles is being the core resource and support center for the "front-line" legal aid programs funded by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC) and the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). This includes regional legal service programs throughout the state, as well as seven statewide support centers, all of which have a specialized focus or serve a focused population. MLRI also provides substantive legal and policy expertise and support to a large number of community organizations and advocacy groups that work with low-income people. It has over 200 advocacy partners and allies at the local, state and national levels.

MLRI accomplishes a tremendous amount of work on a budget of approximately $3 million. With a committed staff of about 30, this program works for the good of all, but with special emphasis on those most in need of protection.

MLRI has always been a critical player in Massachusetts, but now it is more importan than ever before. The current landscape and challenges it faces are the result of decades of economic instability and barriers to opportunity that have accumulated over the last 50 years. Even though Massachusetts is a relatively prosperous state, almost 900,000 Massachusetts residents live at or below 125% of the federal poverty level - $31,375 for a family of four - in 2018. These households include seniors, children, people with disabilities, and the working poor – people who work hard but are still unable to make ends meet. And, to add to the injustices and challenges faced by our poorest neighbors, there has been a longstanding unfair and inaccurate perception that the poor are less worthy than the rest of society. That is simply untrue.

Another misperception is that our nation launched and "lost" the war on poverty, but that's not true either. We need to remember that the "Great Society" programs of the '60's worked. Between 1965 and 1968, spending on programs to help low-income citizens doubled. As a result, within 10 years, the percentage of Americans living below the poverty line declined from 22.2% to 12.6%.

Unfortunately, between the two great recessions (mid-70's—2007-09) and the federal administrations of those years, the successful policies and investments that helped lift and keep people out of poverty were reversed. Millions were devastated and advances were thwarted, and now we face new challenges as important safety-net programs face potentially drastic funding cuts in 2018. However, MLRI and all the MLAC-funded programs are here to stay. In their many decades of existence, they have become stout and sturdy institutions and they have and will continue to withstand the occasional storm.

Just as it did during prior difficult periods, MLRI today remains undaunted and stands ready to tackle new challenges. We are lucky to have such dedicated and talented advocates in Massachusetts.

National Consumer Law Center

Prior to the presidency of Lyndon Johnson, there were no federally funded legal services programs. The programs that did exist were largely pro bono endeavors affiliated with local bar associations.

In 1965, President Johnson launched a "War on Poverty." It was a sweeping governmental initative on a scale not seen before in the history of the United States, with the possible exception of President Roosevelt's "New Deal." To lead the "War," Congress created the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Nothing in that legislation addressed funding for legal services. To the surprise of many, Johnson appointed Sargent Shriver as the first head of the OEO. He was given a free hand. Probably his most far-reaching decision was to establish a legal services program. Sargent felt the door to economic opportunity was entered through the halls of justice; that improving access to justice was the necessary antecedent to achieving economic justice.

Sargent envisioned a legal services program in every part of the country. Eligibility for those services was to be determined by the federal poverty guidelines. The programs were to be staffed by committed advocates from across the land, mainly freshly minted lawyers. He conceived a two-pronged legal attack: one in the trenches, the other on a more strategic, systemic level. At the street level, OEO would establish programs that represented eligible individuals at the local level, before courts and administrative agencies. These programs would give individuals access to our legal system they had never before experienced. The attorneys handled routine matters in an expeditious manner. They negotiated numerous problems that otherwise would have resulted in an adverse outcome for the low-income person.

The second prong of Shriver's vision was to establish regional centers whose mission was to engage in activities that led to systemic change in how the law impacted the poor. This led to a dual mission for these centers: as a "back-up" center for those in the field and as an initiator of legislation, or litigation, that impacted the poor on a large scale.

Within a very short time, OEO realized that the task of providing legal representation to all those eligible was overwhelming. So, by 1967, the Legal Services program focused on law reform as a national priority. The intent was "to reshape the legal aid movement." To accomplish that goal, national support centers were created. Perhaps one of the most successful back up centers was, and is, the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC).

Contemporaneous with the notion of national back-up centers as being central to OEO's mission, Father Robert Drinan, Dean of Boston College Law School and a vigorous advocate of the law as an instrument to aid the poor, submitted a proposal to OEO for a grant establishing a center for consumer affairs. At that time, Columbia University was a grantee of a "Welfare Center," and universities enjoyed an advantage over free-standing programs. The thinking was that research and writing publications were significant components of university activities and were badly needed components of advocating for consumers. In turn, they would assist legal services offices to conduct studies and propose changes in statutes, regulations, and administrative rules. Further, it was thought that affiliation with a law school would enhance the standing and visibility of the back-up center. Accordingly, in 1969, the National Consumer Law Center began operation at Boston College Law School.

In one of the first newspaper articles published about NCLC, William Willier, a Boston College professor and the driving force behind the Center, was quoted as saying "It may sound a little nasty…but our hope is to pick on the big boys." From the outset, NCLC "made efforts to ensure it would not be an ivory tower, university-affiliated office" far removed from the concerns and needs of the field offices. Additionally, the Center made clear it would not shy away from controversial issues, such as class actions.

One of the first major undertakings was to challenge the Uniform Consumer Commercial Code (UCCC). The UCCC was crucially important. It regulated an industry that affected the everyday credit interests of consumers. In 1950, for example,

the amount of outstanding consumer credit in the United States was $21.5 billion. By 2013, outstanding consumer credit was $3.1 trillon.

Since the vast majority of credit was extended to middle- and lower-income consumers, it formed a foundation of the standard of living for most Americans. If the UCCC as written was adopted, no American consumer could escape its provisions. The decision to attack it before it was adopted meant challenging many major institutions.

The UCCC was a product of NCCUSL (National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, now the Uniform Law Commission), a prestigious body where members are appointed by the governors of each state and which have drafted numerous uniform laws that have been adopted throughout the country in many areas of law.

The American Bar Association had approved the UCCC. Major financial institutions and credit industry trade associations had endorsed it. Further, efforts had been made to make it appear that the UCCC was drafted in consultation with and support of consumer representatives. It had not. NCLC's advocacy stopped the momentum to adopt the UCCC. Ultimately, only 11 states adopted some version of the UCCC. No large state, such as New York or California, adopted it. Of equal and probably longer-range importance, the credit industry and drafters of uniform laws were put on notice that they would face formidable opposition from NCLC if future draft laws did not include adequate consumer protections.

A salutary by-product of this fight included network-building and conferences of like-minded advocates across the nation, A conference co-sponsored with the National Legal Aid & Defender Association in 1969 was attended by 55 attorneys. In 1992, the first national Consumer Rights Litigation Conference was held in Boston, attended by 80 attorneys from across the country. By 2013, the same conference attracted 1,000 attendees.

Over the years, the growth of NCLC led to a search for larger quarters. In 1971, it applied for and received non-profit status by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In 1972, it re-located its headquarters to downtown Boston. In the 1970s, NCLC grew as never before. That was the era of Jimmy Carter and a very pro-consumer Chair of the Federal Trade Commission, Michael Pertachuk. In 1980, NCLC established a Washington, D.C. office to provide a strong pro-consumer voice in the regulatory environment of the nation's capital.

In 1994, anticipating Congress would eliminate funding for all national support centers, the Legal Services Corporation terminated all funding on its own, hoping to salvage the remaining programs. That year, NCLC was scheduled to receive $900,000, which comprised 40% of its budget. Further, Congress severely restricted the types of permissible legal services activity, greatly limiting their work before legislatures and administrative agencies. It also restricted the ability to bring class actions and prohibited the collection of attorneys' fees. As if clairvoyant, NCLC had earlier declined LSC's offer to forego its legal status and become a division of LSC.

Despite this massive loss of funding, NCLC's executive director, Willard P. Ogburn, led a systemic overhaul of the Center's fundraising. The organization quickly made up for the lost LSC funds and grew steadily in the late 1990s and 2000s.

In August 2008, after a successful building campaign raised more than $5.5 million, NCLC moved into a home of its own in newly renovated offices on the edge of Boston's financial district. By 2016, less than 2 percent of NCLC's income came from government sources, and yet the Center was bigger by far, stronger in dollars, more sophisticated with its advocacy, and far more successful in bettering the lives of low-income consumers nationwide.

Today, NCLC continues to fight for the rights of low-income families and provide resources to hard-working civil legal aid and private attorneys representing low-income consumers. The talented lawyers of the National Consumer Law Center provide policy analysis, advocacy, litigation, expert witness services, and training for consumer advocates throughout the United States. NCLC also works with federal and state policymakers and participates in major litigation across the nation.

Along the way, NCLC has inspired and helped to create two separate, independent consumer justice organizations: The National Association of Consumer Advocates and Americans for Fairness in Lending. NCLC has also developed its own initiatives on behalf of student loan borrowers and older consumers. Additionally, NCLC publishes a comprehensive set of legal treatises, considered by many to be the pre-eminent source on consumer law. The treatises are widely cited in judicial opinions by courts across the country, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

To this day, NCLC continues to play a large role in most consumer related issues, regardless of the vagaries of funding. In retrospect, NCLC's life has tracked the life of Legal Services; its ups and downs in the national political fortune of Democrats and Republicans. Notwithstanding the ups and downs, NCLC has resiliently been a beacon of hope and a force for the consumer in every decade of its existence.

Photo by Kenneth Martin

The National Consumer Law Center office at 7 Winthrop Square in Boston.

Northeast Legal Aid

George Weber, Executive Director of Northeast Legal Aid (NLA), has the zeal of the first wave of "Legal Aid" attorneys. In the heady days of the "War on Poverty," lawyers in programs funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) brought litigation in an effort to address systemic economic problems, realizing that legal problems faced by low-income people are symptoms rather than causes of poverty. As these programs approach the half-century mark, they have matured in philosophy and practice.

By the usual metrics employed to measure such programs, NLA looks very typical. It serves 56 cities and towns in Essex and North Middlesex counties. Several of the areas have a disproportionate number of people eligible for free legal services. Others, such as Lawrence, are sanctuary cities because of the high number of immigrants. The areas of practice are also typical: housing, family law, foreclosure prevention, elder, and public benefits law.

A closer look, however, reveals a program that still has the original philosophy of attempting to address systemic economic problems that result in legal problems. One such effort, launched in 2014, is a "Community Development Practice" designed to help low-income entrepreneurs and small business owners in Lynn and Lawrence with free legal advice before legal problems arise, thus avoiding common legal pitfalls and business-related problems. As George Weber described it: "This program is forward looking. It is about how to avoid legal problems, not just how to get out of them."

Jared Nicholson, the attorney who created the Community Development Practice, worked three years as a management consultant at McKinsey & Company in New York and Mexico City. There, he noticed how important legal aid was for businesses. Later, while studying for his law degree, he applied for a grant from the Skadden Fellowship Foundation, which is the charitable arm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom, LLP. The Foundation provides funding for recent law graduates who want to devote part of their professional lives to helping the poor, elderly, disabled, and others who usually do not have access to quality legal services. NLA agreed to host the grant. It quickly became known as one of the few projects in the region exclusively dedicated to providing free legal advice to low-income entrepreneurs and small business owners. Their problems are the same as any aspiring business: issues related to incorporation, compliance, licensing, permits, leases, and employment law.

Nicholson helped many who might have failed simply because they do not understand the rules and regulations, not because they are unwilling to work hard and honorably. He has since moved on to other work, but two lawyers in the program—Sumbul Siddiqui and Carson Wheet—have picked up where Nicholson left off and have expanded the program to more cities and towns, with the aim of reaching as much of the population as possible. The Community Development Practice continues to be a great program under NLA that is making a difference, providing impartial legal advice to those willing to open businesses to create jobs and thereby strengthen their communities.

Another innovative program developed at Northeast Legal Aid is its Caretaker of Children at Risk Project. With a $100,000 grant from the Tower Foundation and a $15,000 grant from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Northeast Legal Aid is making an effort to join in the battle against opioid use disorders. Specifically, NLA is offering free legal assistance to grandparents and other non-parent caregivers of children living in families struggling with opioid use disorders. Working with the Lawrence and Lowell Public Schools, the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, and other community organizations, an NLA attorney is reaching out to these grandparents and caregivers and providing free help with health and educational authorizations, guardianships, public benefit appeals, adoptions, wills, and many other legal matters.

Northeast Legal Aid, like many such programs across the state and nationwide, has come a long way since the days of President Johnson's "Great Society." However, the goal has remained the same and the programs remains steadfast in pursuit of that goal: to guarantee the opportunity for a great society to all.

Prisoners' Legal Services

On May 16, 2017, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the Americans with Disabilities Act applies to mentally and physically disabled prisoners seeking parole, requiring the state to assist them in developing release plans that address their disabilities with an eye toward reducing the chances that the paroled individual will re-offend and be returned to prison.

Prisoners' Legal Services (PLS) filed an amicus brief supporting the plaintiff, Richard Crowell, in this landmark case and was very pleased with his victory. Ensuring proper health care – including mental health services – for prisoners with serious medical needs is one of the organization's four litigation priority areas.

PLS's other litigation priorities are prison staff brutality, unfair and discriminatory segregation, and unconstitutional conditions of confinement, all of which, along with the health issue, the organization believes have reached crisis proportions in the state. For example, Massachusetts is one of a small handful of states in the country that allows solitary confinement for up to 10 consecutive years for one disciplinary offense. PLS succeeded in advocating for legislation to reform the use of solitary confinement in Massachusetts, and the organization created a powerful seven-minute documentary video about the lasting effects of solitary confinement. The organization also advocated for legislation that would allow for compassionate release, as was recently granted to former House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi at the federal level. Massachusetts is one of only three states that does not provide incapacitated or terminally ill prisoners the ability to die in their community.

Founded in 1972, PLS is funded chiefly by a direct appropriation and grants from the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation. This funding is augmented by grants from other funders, notably the Massachusetts Bar Foundation and the Boston Bar Foundation. Led by Executive Director Leslie Walker, the organization's small staff of nine lawyers, four paralegals and three support staff serve the entire state and county correctional systems. Prisoners and their family members often make contact with PLS through its website (www.plsma.org) or through defense attorneys who alert the organization when they have concerns about how detained or incarcerated clients are being treated within the prison system. Judges occasionally contact them for the same reason. PLS also disseminates a newsletter throughout the correctional system.

Walker's interest in prisoner's rights is rooted in her experience representing an inmate on an administrative charge – which she ultimately proved untrue – as a young Northeastern University law student. She recalled how her client once pointed out to her that, among the 45 prisoners in his cell block, many were relatives and friends from the client's neighborhood. At that point she realized that crime is a byproduct of poverty. The more Walker studied the field, the more she wondered about the purpose of punishment in light of statistics showing that more than 40% of prisoners in Massachusetts will be re-incarcerated within three years.

Prison does not prepare prisoners to re-enter society, Walker concluded. They leave with few marketable skills and because of their criminal record, many are barred from living with their families in public housing, families that could potentially provide material and emotional support, creating a recipe for failure in the free world.

Over time, Walker's philosophy on incarceration has evolved into three principals: 1) reward good behavior 2) ignore bad behavior if you can, and 3) punish in as limited a manner as possible.

Recently the Massachusetts legislature enacted sweeping criminal justice reform legislation – reforms that have been years in the making. These changes are steps in the right direction and they begin to build a more just system based on evidence-based best practices. Thanks to years of relentless work by PLS, Massachusetts now has moved our system away from a punitive, biased, harsh method of punishment and toward a new, more hopeful way of treating people who have become justice-involved.

While the reforms will require vigilance and oversight and more work needs to be done, the bill includes:

- *Solitary Confinement:* The bill established

accountability and regulation, including regular reviews and mental health screenings of prisoners in solitary confinement, who must be evaluated for return to the general population. It also expands access to programs and establishes an oversight committee to collect data on the use of segregation. PLS is a member of the nine-member oversight committee along with three mental health entities.

- *Compassionate Release:* The bill establishes a process through which a prisoner who is terminally ill or incapacitated – including those who are cognitively impaired – may be medically paroled. For the first time, Massachusetts joins 47 other states in recognizing the necessity of this process.
- *Prison Visitation:* The bill prohibits all correctional facilities from excluding in-person visits. Video visitation may be offered, but not exclusively.
- *Mandatory Minimums:* The bill eliminates mandatory-minimum sentences for certain low-level drug offenses that don't involve trafficking or minors.
- *CORI Reform:* The bill reduces the wait time to seal a conviction (from 10 to seven years for felonies and from five to three years for misdemeanors) and creates expungement for the first time in Massachusetts (currently records can only be sealed).
- *Bail Reform:* The bill establishes that bail should not be set at an amount higher than what would reasonably assure the appearance of the person before the court.
- *Felony Threshold:* The bill increases the threshold for a felony from $250 to $1,200 for theft and destruction of property offenses.
- *Fines and Fees:* The bill reduces the burden of fines and fees by accounting for "substantial financial hardship," adds a grace period in which fees are waived for probation and parole after release from incarceration, and increases the daily incarceration credit.
- *Phone Rates:* The bill requires the Department of Corrections and the Department of Telecommunications and Cable to study prison phone rates.
- *Transgender Prisoners:* The bill establishes a commission that will study transgender prisoner rights and access to treatment.

"If we viewed corrections in a less politicized way, with a greater respect for the intrinsic dignity of the incarcerated population," says Walker, "we would see that building more jails reinforces the problem rather than reducing it."

South Coastal Counties Legal Sevices

Susan Nagl has found her calling. She is a public-spirited attorney out of the American heartland who followed her dream from the wheat fields of Iowa, east through Appalachia, to the cradle of our country–Massachusetts. In early 1989, she began working at Cape Cod Legal Services, which served Cape Cod and the Islands. After several mergers with neighboring programs, it ultimately morphed into what is now South Coastal Counties Legal Services (SCCLS) and its subsidiary, the Justice Center of Southeast Massachusetts.

SCCLS' main activity centers are Fall River, Hyannis, and Brockton, and it serves all or part of the counties of Bristol, Barnstable, Plymouth, Dukes, Nantucket, and Norfolk, with a combined population of more than 1,300,000 people. Serving that population is a core of 34 attorneys, six paralegals, four administrative secretaries, and eight AmeriCorps volunteers. They provide representation in housing, immigration, employment, consumer, elder, family, and governmental benefits.

SCCLS' mission is to achieve justice for all disadvantaged and impoverished residents in their service area; they do this through community-based legal advocacy. In addition to its own staff lawyers, it has a panel of 200 private lawyers who donate their time and expertise to improve access to justice on the south coast. MLAC is SCCLS' largest funder, the next largest grantor is the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, which has awarded over $350,000 during that time.

One of the most powerful contribution SCCLS makes to the state's legal aid system is in the administration of the AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts (ALA-Mass) program. On their own initiative, Susan, the former director of SCCLS, and the staff conceived a plan to sponsor AmeriCorps Legal Advocates in legal services and other programs throughout the Commonwealth.

In 2005, SCCLS submitted an application to the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) for the 2005-2006 program year. In June of 2005, AmeriCorps awarded the entire statewide program to SCCLS, with a start date just three months ahead in September 2005. SCCLS scrambled to hire a program director, recruit members and partners, and sort out the enormous number of details for a program of this size. SCCLS called the program the Massachusetts Legal Assistance for Self Sufficiency Program ("MLASSP") and ultimately came to be known as AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts. By Labor Day, 25 AmeriCorps members began their service at 16 partner sites around the Commonwealth. Past and current host sites include Ascentria Care Alliance in Worcester, Catholic Social Services in Fall River, Greater Boston Legal Services, the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Northeast Legal Aid in Lowell, Lawrence, and Lynn, and the Volunteer Lawyers Project in Boston.

Since its creation, the AmeriCorps members of ALA-Massachusetts have provided over 600,000 hours of service, including 33,000 intakes of brief assistance, 11,000 with full assistance and engaged over 3,900 hours of volunteer legal assistance. CNCS has furnished funds to recruit and train approximately 30 AmeriCorps members per year to support Massachusetts legal services organizations providing free civil legal aid to low-income people.

The program was guided by Kathy Marx from 2007 to 2015. Since then, it has been headed by Amy Copperman. In 2010, SCCLS was recognized by America's Service Commissioners as one of the most innovative AmeriCorps programs in the country. To this day, te remains unique among national servie programs, with very few others using AmeriCorps resources in a legal setting. Susan and her staff are justly proud of the impact of this program has had on eligible residents across the Commonwealth, as a whole. As Jacquelynne Bowman, Executive Director of Greater Boston Legal Services said, "This program has enabled us to support a level of services that we otherwise would have had to reduce at a time when our clients need us the most… The AmeriCorps members come with a level of energy and commitment that is hard to replicate."

MLAC-funded Programs

Center for Law and Education
Kathleen Boundy, *Executive Director*

99 Chauncy Street, Suite 402
Boston, MA 02111
617-451-0855
www.cleweb.org

Center for Public Representation
Cathy Costanzo, *Executive Director*

22 Green Street
Northampton, MA 01060
413-586-6024
www.centerforpublicrep.org

Children's Law Center of Massachusetts
Jay McManus, *Executive Director*

298 Union Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 710
Lynn, MA 01903
781-581-1977
www.clcm.org

Community Legal Aid
Jonathan Mannina, *Executive Director*

405 Main Street, 4th Floor
Worcester, MA 01608
508-752-3722
www.communitylegal.org

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center
Mojdeh Rohani, *Executive Director*

47 Thorndike Street, Suite SB-LL-1
Cambridge, MA 02141
617-661-1010
www.clsacc.org

Disability Law Center
Marlene Sallo, *Executive Director*

11 Beacon Street, Suite 925
Boston, MA 02108
617-723-8455
www.dlc-ma.org

Greater Boston Legal Services
Jacquelynne Bowman, *Executive Director*

197 Friend Street
Boston, MA 02114
617-371-1234
www.gbls.org

Massachusetts Advocates for Children
Jerry Mogul, *Executive Director*

25 Kingston Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02111
617-357-8431
www.massadvocates.org

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Georgia Katsoulomitis, *Executive Director*

40 Court Street, Suite 800
Boston, MA 02108
617-357-0700
www.mlri.org

MetroWest Legal Services
Betsy Soulé, *Executive Director*

63 Fountain Street, Suite 304
Framingham, MA 01702
508-620-1830
www.mwlegal.org

National Consumer Law Center
Richard Dubois, *Executive Director*

7 Winthrop Square, 4th floor
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Northeast Legal Aid
George Weber, *Executive Director*

50 Island Street, Suite 203A
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www.northeastlegalaid.org

Prisoners' Legal Services
Leslie Walker, *Executive Director*

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