



**The
Legal Aid
Society
2007
Pro Bono
Awards**

**Tuesday,
October 23, 2007**



PROGRAM

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**Welcome from the Chairperson of the Board
Alan Levine**

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Introduction of Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye

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Remarks by Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye

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Recognition of Davis Polk & Wardwell

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Recognition of Microsoft

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**Presentation of the 2007 *Pro Bono Publico* Awards
Chief Judge Kaye
Steven Banks**

*The Legal Aid Society expresses its appreciation to Time Warner
for hosting the 2007 Pro Bono Awards ceremony.*

Alan Levine, Chairperson of the Board

Theodore A. Levine, President

Steven Banks, Attorney-in-Chief

**David W. Weschler, Attorney-in Charge
of the *Pro Bono* Practice**

Marlene Halpern, Supervising Attorney, *Pro Bono* Practice

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY'S 2007 PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARDS

Presented by The Honorable Judith S. Kaye,
Chief Judge of the State of New York

The Legal Aid Society's 2007 *Pro Bono Publico* Awards symbolize the outstanding commitment of major New York City law firms to provide access to justice to low-income children, families and individuals. Nowhere in the world is the commitment as strong as it is in New York City. For more than 130 years, these law firms have served as the foundation of the Society's *pro bono* program, providing representation to the most vulnerable New Yorkers, including senior citizens, disabled children and adults, survivors of domestic violence, immigrants, low-wage workers, persons living with AIDS/HIV, and homeless and imminently homeless children and adults, and to the most forgotten New Yorkers, including inmates in the jails on Rikers Island and prisoners in correctional facilities throughout the State of New York.

PRO BONO PUBLICO AND PUBLIC SERVICE LAW FIRM AWARD

Davis Polk & Wardwell is honored for its extraordinary *pro bono* commitment to The Legal Aid Society and its clients. A long-time supporter of the Society, the firm has expanded its *pro bono* commitment by serving as co-counsel with the Society in a major federal lawsuit, which resulted in major improvements in psychiatric treatment for New York State prisoners with mental illness. The firm has provided *pro bono* representation on a continuing basis through the Criminal Appeals Bureau for prisoners in New York State correctional facilities who are appealing their convictions. The firm's support of The Legal Aid Society dates back to the early 1900s. Several partners have served on the Society's Board of Directors, including Allen Wardwell, who was the President from 1926 through 1936. Currently, **Daniel F. Kolb** is a member of the Board of Directors. He is being recognized for his outstanding service. Support has come in other areas as well. Key members of the firm's IT Department created a new website for the Society on a *pro bono* basis and continue to provide assistance.

Affirmative Litigation

Landmark Settlement Increases Treatment and Housing Programs for Prisoners with Mental Illness in New York State Prisons

Davis Polk served as co-counsel with Sarah Kerr of the Society's Prisoners' Rights Project and others in *Disability Advocates, Inc. v. New York State Office of Mental Health and Department of Correctional Services*, a state-wide challenge to the lack of adequate mental health treatment provided to prisoners in correctional facilities throughout the

State of New York. As a result, many prisoners in need of treatment were instead punished with lengthy stays in 23-hour per day isolated confinement, where they suffered severe psychiatric deterioration, including acts of self-mutilation and even suicide. After five years of litigation and two weeks of trial, a settlement provided for major improvements in psychiatric treatment for New York State prisoners with mental illness, including minimum numbers of hours of out of cell treatment, increased residential programs, and multiple reviews of disciplinary sentences. Davis Polk provided approximately 30,000 hours of volunteer attorney time and 10,000 hours of paralegal time to the litigation effort. In recognition of this *pro bono* commitment, **Senior Counsel James W.B. Benkard** received the New York State Bar Association 2007 President's *Pro Bono* Service Award for the First Judicial District. In addition to Mr. Benkard, we are recognizing other members of the litigation team including **Nancy B. Ludmerer, Candy M. Lawson, Lydia I. Kang, Lisa Scovotti and Dwayne Davson.**

Legal Aid Website

Michael Mills, Director of Professional Services and Systems, and **Gail A. Dedrick**, Managing Web Editor, are recognized for their outstanding *pro bono* contribution of designing and creating an innovative website for The Legal Aid Society which officially was launched on March 9. The Society is extremely grateful to Mr. Mills and Ms. Dedrick for designing the site and working with us to develop strategy and navigation schemes.

Criminal Appeals

Catherine Lifeso and **Kavita Kumar** are recognized for their outstanding *pro bono* work with the Society's Criminal Appeals Bureau.

PRO BONO PUBLICO AND PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATE AWARD

Microsoft Corporation is honored for serving as a crucial participant in The Legal Aid Society's efforts to make major technology advancements which include a complete overhaul and modernization of its technology infrastructure and applications. Through its contributions, including essential software, Microsoft has become an essential partner in the Society's goal to better serve its clients through technology. We recognize Microsoft for its outstanding efforts to improve IT skills for underserved individuals and communities.

MAJOR TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

Netapps is being recognized for providing The Legal Aid Society with a Storage Area Network System, which will house all of the Society's data including CMS data, e-mail and documents. The storage system represents a critical component of Legal Aid's current technology upgrade project.

Legal Aid is recognizing **InterSystems Corporation** for providing licenses for the CACHÉ high performance database as well as extensive engineering support to implement the database platform. Legal Aid was able to move forward with otherwise unaffordable, yet absolutely necessary, technological development to the benefit of the clients Legal Aid serves.

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANTS

The Legal Aid Society has fought to protect the rights of immigrants since it was established in 1876. Law firms that support the Society have been invaluable in this effort. Today, a number of law firms provide *pro bono* assistance by operating an immigration detention hotline, representing individual adults and children who face deportation, and serving as co-counsel with the Society on major law reform litigation to assist immigrant women and children.

Immigration Hotline

Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP is honored for its extraordinary *pro bono* commitment to provide assistance to immigrants. Partners, associates and paralegals from the firm work closely with the Civil Practice's Immigration Unit. Associates and paralegals from the firm operate the Society's Detention Defense Hotline and provide representation to the immigrants who face deportation. One of the most significant cases is the defense of Adamah Bah, who faces deportation to Guinea because of an invalid childhood visa. She is seeking asylum from Guinea's practice of female genital mutilation. The legal team is led by partner **Sara Cave**. Participants in the Hughes Hubbard legal team include **Carl Mills, Beatriz Biscardi, Nkasi Okafor, Sean Younh, Pauline Stamatelos, and William Sanchez**.

(Staff: Jo Jo Annobil)

Over the years, Hughes Hubbard has provided representation to Legal Aid clients in numerous practice areas. For several years, **Julius Rabinowitz** has given generously of his time and talent to Legal Aid clients in need of intellectual property counsel through the Harlem Community Law Office's Community Development Unit. Mr. Rabinowitz has acted as counsel to a Hispanic arts organization and has led intellectual workshop panels for nonprofit organizations and low-income small businesses.

(Staff: Stephen Falla-Riff)

Defense of Immigrants Facing Deportation

Cooley Godward Kronish LLP, under the leadership of Alan Levine, Partner in Charge of the firm's New York office and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Society, developed a cadre of associates who now are experienced in immigration practice and have become in-house experts in the defense of detainees facing deportation. The associates work closely with Legal Aid's Immigration Unit. *Pro bono* assistance is invaluable because the Society is the only free legal services organization available for

low-income immigrants in New York City who are detained and facing deportation because of criminal convictions. Tenacious representation by **Shannon McKinnon, Rachel Kane, Julie Calidonio, Joseph LoPiccolo, and Aristu Chadhury** has enabled numerous immigrants to remain safely in the United States with their families.

(Staff: Jo Jo Annobil)

William O'Brien and **Benjamin Kleine** are recognized for their outstanding *pro bono* assistance to The Legal Aid Society.

SAFEGUARDING THE RIGHTS OF A SEVERELY ILL LAWFUL RESIDENT

Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz is recognized for providing *pro bono* assistance in immigration matters and law reform research. Over the years, Wachtell partners have served on the Society's Board of Directors. Currently, **Theodore A. Levine**, of counsel at Wachtell, serves as the President and a Director of the Society on a *pro bono* basis. He is honored for his outstanding achievements on behalf of the Society.

Kevin Otero, who was formerly with Wachtell, and **Amanda Straub** are recognized for their outstanding representation of a severely ill lawful permanent resident who faced deportation to a Latin American country where adequate medical treatment would be unavailable.

(Staff: David Stern)

PARTNERSHIP WITH LEGAL AID'S NORTHERN MANHATTAN IMMIGRANT DEFENSE PROJECT

Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP is recognized for outstanding *pro bono* service through the Civil Practice's Northern Manhattan Immigrant Defense Project in representing immigrants threatened with removal. **Carlos Lopez** and **Donald Conklin** are recognized for preventing the deportation of a single mother of two young United States citizen children. They prevented her from being separated from her family and returning to a country she had left at the age of seven. Mr. Lopez also is representing a 53-year-old grandmother who is threatened with deportation.

Julissa Reynoso is recognized for her outstanding work with the project and for recruiting summer associates at the firm to help with a Citizenship Drive over the summer. Because of her efforts, the number of volunteer lawyers has grown substantially.

(Staff: Maria Navarro)

REPRESENTATION OF IMMIGRANT JUVENILES

Latham & Watkins LLP has dedicated the firm's resources over a period of years to obtaining legal status for immigrant youth with no remaining ties to their native country. Under the leadership of **Blair Connelly**, a team of Latham lawyers works

closely with the Juvenile Rights Practice to ensure that abused, neglected, and abandoned young people are able to successfully assert their legal right to remain in the United States.

(Staff: Katherine Fleet)

Complex Removal Case Before Second Circuit

Lawyers and paralegals from **Holland & Knight LLP** have been working with Olivia Cassin in the Immigration Unit for the last six years on a complex immigration case involving a mentally ill, gay Guyanese victim of torture. They have succeeded in preventing his removal and in getting him transferred to the custody of his elderly mother who lives in Queens, while the case is pending before the Second Circuit. **Christopher Nugent** and **Leon Fresco** from Holland & Knight and paralegals **Candace Jones** and **Sophia Thelusma** are recognized for their outstanding efforts on his behalf.

(Staff: Olivia Cassin)

New Pro Bono Immigration Initiative

Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP is recognized for its new immigration *pro bono* initiative in which associates are representing non-citizens in removal proceedings before the Immigration Court. Teams of associates, working with the Civil Practice's Immigration Unit, have successfully prevented the deportation of numerous Legal Aid clients, allowing them to remain in the United States with their families. **Randall Fox**, **Alexandra Skellet** and **Riki King** are recognized for outstanding *pro bono* service.

(Staff: Olivia Cassin and David Stern)

In addition to the immigration work, Dewey & LeBoeuf provides *pro bono* representation in other areas of practice including appellate work for both the Juvenile Rights Practice and the Criminal Appeals Bureau as well as individual cases in the Civil Practice.

Carol LaFond is honored for handling the appeals of numerous clients in the Juvenile Rights Practice and making it possible for the children awaiting permanent homes to be freed for adoption.

(Staff: Judy Waksberg and Gary Solomon)

Dewey & LeBoeuf associates **Krista Chiazzui**, **Gillian Epstein**, **Mayur Patel**, **John Schreiber** and **Roy Taub** are recognized for providing outstanding representation to clients of the Criminal Appeals Bureau.

(Staff: David Crow)

Prachi Shah, who served as an extern in the Brooklyn Neighborhood Office, provided invaluable assistance to a domestic violence survivor by obtaining for her 25 percent of her ex-husband's pension. She and their three children had been abandoned by him.

(Staff: Janet LeMaire)

PROTECTING HOMELESS NEW YORKERS

Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP and the legal team, led by **Richard W. Clary** and **Elizabeth L. Grayer**, have worked tirelessly as co-counsel on the *McCain* lawsuit, seeking to ensure that homeless children and their families receive lawful shelter and services. Members of the team include **Christopher Belelieu, Gillian Burgess, John Cleaver, Ryan Coughlan, Catherine Fisher, Allyson Heady, Anthony Imperati, Niki Kerameus, Leigh McMullan, Kristine Mentone** and **Michael Zulantt**.

(Staff: Steven Banks, Jane Sujen Bock, Joshua Goldfein, Judith Goldiner, Beile Lindner, Anya Maddow-Zimet, Amanda Moretti and Amy Mulzer)

Cravath's support of the Society dates back to the early 1900s. Over the decades, Cravath partners and associates have provided *pro bono* representation for Legal Aid clients in many areas of practice. Cravath partners have served as officers and as members of the Board of Directors. Currently, Mr. Clary is a Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Cravath serves as co-counsel with the Society's Law Reform Unit in *Messiah S. v. Alexander*, a federal class action seeking appropriate pre-release planning and transitional services, including mental health services and medical and subsistence-level benefits, for persons with psychiatric disabilities who are under the supervision of the New York State Division of Parole or are soon to be released to a residence in New York City from a State correctional facility in order for them to be successful in the parole program. The Cravath team to be recognized for outstanding *pro bono* service includes **Antony L. Ryan, Chelsea W. Teachout, Michael Zulantt, Jef Krazen** (formerly of Cravath), **Rebecca L. Rettig, Caroline Cole, Christina Langdale, Chris Newman** and **John Powell**.

(Staff: Scott Rosenberg, John Boston, Kenneth Stephens, Amanda Lockshin and Katie Kelleher)

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DISABLED, ABUSED OR NEGLECTED

Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP is recognized for the firm's outstanding *pro bono* efforts to meet the special educational needs of children in foster care who were abused or neglected. Three years ago, the firm initiated a special *pro bono* educational advocacy project and partners and associates began working closely with **Cara Chambers** and the Kathryn A. McDonald Educational Advocacy Project of the Juvenile Rights Practice.

Laura Padin is recognized for obtaining a private school placement to meet the special needs of a non-verbal 5-year-old child with severe developmental delays. Despite the severity of his needs, the child was never enrolled in a program. Ms. Padin also secured early intervention services and a pre-school special education program for three other siblings.

(Staff: Cara Chambers)

Wendy T. Wylegala is recognized for providing outstanding representation of an Ecuadoran teenager who suffered extreme physical abuse by his father. Ms. Wylegala successfully represented him in Family Court and continues to represent him in Immigration Court. She is seeking Special Immigration Juvenile Status on his behalf.

(Staff: Amy Meselson)

Cahill Gordon also has provided *pro bono* counsel in a number of practices. This year, the firm initiated a new project with the Civil Practice's Queens Neighborhood Office. Cahill Gordon is recognized for its effective leadership in initiating the Housing Preservation *Pro Bono* Project with the Queens Neighborhood Office that represents tenants in Housing Court actions to compel landlords to repair dangerous building conditions, threatening life, health, safety and continued occupancy.

(Staff: April Newbauer)

Fighting for the Rights of Individual Children

Anta Cisse Green of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP has continued her outstanding *pro bono* work for the children who are clients of the Brooklyn Office of the Juvenile Rights Practice in obtaining permanency outcomes on child protective cases. In one extraordinary effort, she obtained permanency for an 11-year-old girl who wished to live permanently with the foster family who had reared her since she was five.

(Staff: Karen Simmons)

Rebecca Morse, a paralegal at Greenberg Traurig LLP, provided paralegal assistance to four young clients of the Kathryn A. McDonald Educational Advocacy Project, who were in need of special education advocacy. Ms. Morse facilitated private school placements for two clients and obtained private physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy for the other two.

(Staff: Cara Chambers)

PRISONERS' RIGHTS

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP is recognized for its outstanding *pro bono* efforts as co-counsel with the Society's Prisoners' Rights Project in *Amador et al.*, a class action on behalf of women prisoners who have been sexually abused by male correctional officers in the New York State prison system. The firm's assistance has been invaluable in conducting approximately 50 depositions throughout the State, focusing on the women's individual damage claims against the correctional officers. The legal team includes **Maeve O'Connor, John Craig, Alison Mikkor, Donna Krouzman, Terrienne Muenzen, Lauren Sypek, Charlotte Fishman, Adil Haque, Matthew M. Riccarrdi, Christine Everdell, Jeffrey A. Alberts** and **Rosa Castello** (formerly of Debevoise & Plimpton).

(Staff: Dori Lewis and Lisa Freeman)

Securing Adequate Medical Care and Treatment

Dechert LLP is recognized for its significant *pro bono* contributions to protect the rights of prisoners to receive adequate medical care and of persons with mental illness who suffer from substance abuse to be provided with alternatives to incarceration. The firm also has provided *pro bono* representation to individuals.

David Hoffner and **José Almonte** have made a significant contribution as co-counsel with the Prisoners' Rights Project to preserve the 20-year consent judgment in *Milburn v. Goord*, a class action that created a Medical Auditor to ensure that prisoners at Green Haven Correctional Facility receive adequate care. With their assistance, negotiations continue for extension of the term of the Medical Auditor and of the Consent Judgment in order to address the lack of wheelchair accessible housing for mobility impaired inmates.

(Staff: Dori Lewis)

Dechert also is being honored for its extraordinary efforts in *Jobie O. v. Spitzer*, on behalf of clients with mental illness who have substance abuse problems to provide them with residential placements and community-based treatment services as an alternative to incarceration. **Shari Steinberg**, **Lavina Denniston** and **Scott Smedley** are recognized for their outstanding work.

(Staff: Kenneth Stephens)

Barrie A. Dnistrian, a senior associate at Dechert, who was supervised by Robert A. Cohen, one of the partners, dedicated countless hours and resources of the firm as co-counsel with the Society in the representation of the defendant in an international child abduction case filed in Federal Court. The case is now on appeal to the Second Circuit. The case was filed pursuant to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and involved learning the Hague Treaty and various aspects of family law in Poland. Ms. Dnistrian continued her representation while on maternity leave. The firm also underwrote hours of extensive phone calls to Poland and the hiring of two Polish family law experts.

(Staff: Josephine Flores)

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ELDERLY CONSUMERS AND LOW-INCOME HOME OWNERS

The Queens Neighborhood Office of the Civil Practice has been in the forefront of protecting the rights of elderly consumers and low-income home owners against improper credit restraints on senior citizens, "foreclosure rescue scams," and predatory lending. Assisting members of the staff who have developed an expertise in these areas of law are a number of *pro bono* attorneys who have provided invaluable assistance. We recognize their outstanding contributions.

Morton Gitter, a retired partner at Otterbourg, Steindler, Houston & Rosen, has vol-

unteered for two years at the Queens Neighborhood Office through the Helen L. Buttenwieser Senior Attorney Project. Mr. Gitter has represented and given advice to consumers in bankruptcy and consumer credit litigation. His intervention with creditors on behalf of numerous elderly clients has resulted in the release of improper restraints on their accounts and has provided them with freedom from harassing debt collectors.

(Staff: April Newbauer)

Robert Litwack, a solo practitioner, has been providing representation in Federal Court for low-income homeowners who were victimized by “foreclosure rescue scams.” He is an invaluable resource and has shared his extensive knowledge of lending and real estate practices, reviewing loan files and discussing litigation strategies.

David Cohen, the current president of the Queens County Bar Association and a former Legal Aid attorney, has been serving as co-counsel on a deed theft case, and, to date, has far exceeded the *pro bono* hours he originally promised. He has assisted with all aspects of the case, including depositions, and is prepared to assist with the trial.

Noah Lang (Seyfarth Shaw LLP) served as co-counsel in an Eastern District case on behalf of a client who sought to regain title and the equity in her home where she resides with her mother and two children. Mr. Lang assisted with various aspects of the litigation, including a brief successfully opposing the lender’s motion to dismiss.

(Staff: Oda Friedheim)

SAVING THE HOMES OF LOW-INCOME NEW YORKERS

Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP is recognized for working with the Civil Practice to save the homes of thousands of low-income New Yorkers who live in federal Section 8 housing. In September 2006, the Appellate Division First Department held that rent-stabilized landlords are required to continue accepting federal “Section 8” rent subsidies with respect to rent-stabilized tenants and are not permitted to opt out of this federal subsidy program. The case, *Rosario v. Diagonal Realty LLC*, was handled by the Society’s Law Reform Unit. When it was appealed, Cadwalader drafted an *amicus curiae* brief for AARP in support of Legal Aid’s position which helped to persuade the New York Court of Appeals. The 2007 Court of Appeals decision was a victory for affordable housing in New York City because it meant that low-income New Yorkers in 60,000 households who would otherwise have lost their apartments and might become homeless would be able to remain in their homes.

(Staff: Judith Goldiner)

Annie Mohan, *Pro Bono* Manager at Cadwalader, has been instrumental in building the firm’s active *pro bono* partnership with the Society. She is recognized for expanding the firm’s *pro bono* representation.

David Miller and **Lindsay Thomas** are honored for outstanding *pro bono* service to

The Legal Aid Society.

Preventing Evictions for Individual Families

Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP has provided *pro bono* representation to clients of the Civil Practice for a number of years. The firm also provides *pro bono* assistance to The Legal Aid Society.

Karen Thompson and **Tanya McDuffie** (formerly of Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe) made significant contributions as co-counsel to prevent the eviction of four families. The law firm contributed vital litigation support including the hiring of an architect whose expert opinion was crucial to a summary judgment motion. The landlord's claim that the apartments in which the families lived were not protected by the Rent Stabilization Law was dismissed.

(Staff: Rolando Gonzalez)

Samatha Rosenberg and **Ira G. Rosenstein** are honored for their service to the Society.

Preserving Public Housing

Leticia Smith-Evans and **Asher Rivner** of O'Melveny & Myers LLP provided excellent counsel on two separate Article 78 proceedings on behalf of tenants facing the loss of public housing.

(Staff: Edlyn Willer)

Robert Boller, **Kirk Conway**, and **Christopher Kercher**, associates at Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld LLP, represent a long-time NYCHA resident who faces loss of his childhood apartment, to which he returned years later to care for his ailing mother. After his mother's death, the Housing Authority initiated proceedings to evict him as an unauthorized resident. Akin's legal team won a stay of the Housing Court case and have filed a 30-page brief in the administrative proceeding to preserve tenancy.

(Staff: Joshua Goldfein)

Allen Joslyn, a retired Cahill partner, is working with the Society's Civil Practice as a Helen L. Bottenwieser Senior Attorney. He successfully represented a client in an Article 78 proceeding that saved her long-time public housing apartment. Mr. Joslyn's lawyering was especially noteworthy because the client already had a hearing when she was represented by a private lawyer who lost the hearing. Mr. Joslyn is representing another client in a remaining family member case to preserve his long-time public housing apartment.

(Staff: Judith Goldiner)

PERMANENT HOMES FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

Proskauer Rose LLP has been working with the Juvenile Rights Appeals Bureau

and providing outstanding *pro bono* assistance to young clients of the Juvenile Rights Practice who are awaiting permanent homes. Through Proskauer's efforts to remove legal barriers, these children are freed for adoption. **Susan Friedfel** oversees the project; **Harry Frischer** provides partner supervision, and **David Lewis** and **Andrew Gerber** provided excellent representation on numerous cases.

(Staff: Judy Waksberg)

In addition, the firm has been in the forefront providing counsel on a *pro bono* basis for the Society's Rockefeller Re-Sentencing Project, which is supervised by the Special Litigation Unit of the Criminal Practice. Proskauer lawyers **Joseph O'Keefe** and **Jason Schatz** are honored for their outstanding representation of a client with a prior federal felony conviction whose application for a lesser sentence was strenuously opposed by the District Attorney. When the client was diagnosed with melanoma, the Proskauer team secured the appropriate medical treatment from the prison system.

(Staff: Robert Newman)

MAINTAINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOW-INCOME RESIDENTS

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP represented the tenants of Noble Drew Ali Plaza Tenants Association for three years, helping to plan and navigate a course of action through the bankruptcy case that resulted in a total victory for the low-income residents of the housing project. The Paul Weiss bankruptcy team, consisting of **Penny Dearborn**, **Brian S. Hermann** and **Lori Kata**, worked closely with Mimi Rosenberg and Stephen Myers of the Brooklyn Neighborhood Office, and their efforts were instrumental in the tenants securing a victory that is unprecedented in scope and depth. Noble Drew was owned for several years by an entity that failed completely to make repairs and maintain even the most basic services. More than 100 families had been driven out or illegally evicted by the owner. The Paul Weiss team thwarted the owner's attempt to use the Bankruptcy Court to overcome state court victories previously won by the Tenants Association. Eventually, they were able to force the sale of the housing project to a new owner who has committed his company to massive renovations (which have already begun), to charge rents lower than those allowed under City and State guidelines, and to offer employment to residents.

(Staff: Brooklyn Neighborhood Office)

In addition, lawyers at Paul Weiss have provided individual representation to Society clients as well as law reform support. **Jay Greenfield** joined the Helen L. Bottenwieser Senior Attorney Project and works with the Manhattan Office of the Juvenile Rights Practice, representing youth in foster care. His advocacy helped clients to overcome obstacles to adoption and obtain necessary entitlements upon aging out of foster care.

(Staff: Louis Sartori)

Roberto Finzi and **Julie Romm** are serving as co-counsel with the Prisoners' Rights Project to ensure the provision of educational services, for young inmates at Rikers Island. The Second Circuit affirmed much of the relief sought in *Handberry v. Thompson*. However, there remains substantial disagreement with the City and the State about the scope and nature of the educational services, particularly special education, to which these young people are entitled.

(Staff: Dori Lewis)

CRIMINAL APPEALS

Shearman & Sterling LLP has worked with the Criminal Appeals Bureau for a number of years, providing outstanding representation to prisoners who are appealing their convictions. **Christopher Fenton**, **Ivan Lee** and **Amanda Schafer** are recognized for their outstanding *pro bono* service to the clients of the Criminal Appeals Bureau.

(Staff: David Crow)

Shearman & Sterling LLP also provided invaluable paralegal and technical assistance to the Prisoners' Rights Project in monitoring the consent agreement in *Ingles v. Toro*, a federal class action lawsuit that challenged the pattern of correction staff brutality and concealment in the City's jail system. **Denise Karamian** coordinates the *pro bono* effort and **Marianna Orenstein**, **Sara Padua**, **Raymond Remezo** and **Katherine Ward** (formerly of Shearman & Sterling) have been outstanding volunteers in the review of prison abuse reports and interviews of inmates at Rikers Island.

(Staff: Jonathan Chasan and Mary Lynne Werlwas)

Eileen M. Maguire and **Eva A. Rasmussen** are honored for service to the Society.

Habeas Corpus

Katherine Roberts, **Jane Kim** and **Abdallah Simaika** comprised the legal team from Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton LLP, who represented a client in a *habeas corpus* case before the Second Circuit. They were able to persuade the Second Circuit that the trial court improperly had restricted the defense from presenting exculpatory evidence, but under the restrictive rules of *habeas corpus* were unable to persuade the Circuit to set aside the verdict.

(Staff: David Crow)

LAW FIRM ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARD

Four law firms — **Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP**; **Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP**; **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP**; and **Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP** — are honored for exceptional client assistance through their transactional, litigation and first year associate externship programs. In addition, each of the firms has provided outstanding *pro bono* support to clients of the Society in other areas of law. Partners from these firms have been represented on the

Society's Board of Directors for many years.

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP – Fried Frank's externs worked in the Civil Practice's Harlem Community Law Office. **Elizabeth Kennedy, Heidi Sachs, and Rowena Villanueva** participated in Fried Frank's four-month externship program in the Community Development Project. **Daniel Jo** provided outstanding general counsel work on behalf of low-income cooperative housing projects, the only source of affordable home ownership for low-income New Yorkers.

(Staff: Stephen Falla-Riff and the Community Development Project)

Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP – Milbank Tweed's externs contributed outstanding services to a number of clients in various areas of our practice: **Tommaso Bencivenga**, Juvenile Rights Practice; **Brian Liu**, Immigration Law Unit; and **Alfred Wang**, Community Development Project.

(Staff: Louis Sartori, David Stern and the Community Development Project)

Lawyers at Milbank Tweed have provided exceptional *pro bono* service in other areas as well, under the leadership of **Joseph S. Genova**, the firm's *pro bono* partner. Through the Civil Practice's Low Income Tax Clinic, which operates out of the Harlem Community Law Office, **Stacey Mesler** litigated a successful refund suit in U.S. District Court on behalf of a low-income taxpayer whose earned income tax credit was improperly denied by the IRS. The suit was settled in March 2007 and our client received his refund of nearly \$3,700. **Michelle Jewett** represented another low-income taxpayer in negotiations with the New York State Department of Taxation & Finance that resulted in a \$7,000 reduction of his tax debt.

(Staff: Elizabeth Hay, William Nelson and Daniel Hsiung)

Since her externship in 2005, **Alyssa Rower** has continued as a volunteer attorney in the Manhattan office of the Juvenile Rights Practice, representing children in fact-finding, permanency, and custody hearings and spending countless hours advocating for her clients to obtain services from child welfare agencies.

(Staff: Louis Sartori)

Jane Hanson, a partner at Milbank, is recognized for her *pro bono* representation of The Legal Aid Society.

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP – Skadden Arps extern **James P. Nonkes** provided representation to clients in the Civil Practice's Harlem Community Law Office in a variety of litigated matters in diverse administrative and judicial forums during his four-month externship.

(Staff: Harlem Community Law Office)

Cynthia Fitzgerald is recognized for her tenacious representation of a Harlem resident who was the victim of identity theft. Through her zealous advocacy, she persuaded the United States Department of Education of the client's innocence and freed

the client from liability for a fraudulent student loan.

(Staff: Valerie Bell-Bey)

Philip Talamas, Manager of Network Operations at Skadden, is honored for service to the Society.

Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP – Tal Sapeika and Rocio A. Clausen were the first two externs in Weil Gotshal’s pilot extern program. These outstanding associates provided assistance in business legal services to dozens of low-income clients in the Civil Practice’s Community Development Project.

(Staff: Community Development Project)

Debra Dandeneau, a partner at the firm, is recognized for her extensive commitment to The Legal Aid Society by providing *pro bono* representation.

Karen Ballack, Conray Tseng and Shaina Varia are recognized for their outstanding *pro bono* representation of The Legal Aid Society.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Easter Seals Seniors Program has provided energetic and enthusiastic volunteers to assist the staff and clients of the Juvenile Rights Practice’s Brooklyn Office.

Monica Reid, a volunteer from the Foster Grandparent Program of the New York City Department of the Aging, is recognized for her commitment to the young clients of JRP’s Brooklyn Office. Ms. Reid volunteers in the Books for Kids Project and reads to the young clients who are waiting in the office. The children may take books from the project with them when they leave.

(Staff: Karen Simmons, Juvenile Rights Practice)

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY

Kaye Scholer LLP is recognized for its consistent leadership over a period of years in providing outstanding *pro bono* representation to Civil Practice clients with disabilities in Supplemental Security proceedings before Administrative law judges.

(Staff: Jocelyne C. Martinez)

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF LOW-INCOME WAGE EARNERS

Outen & Golden, a plaintiffs’ employment law firm, provides the Civil Practice’s Employment Law Project with training and case assistance on a regular basis. The firm’s attorneys have worked extensively with Legal Aid staff on Federal discrimination litigation and have been available 24/7 to support this important practice.

(Staff: Employment Law Practice, Civil Practice)

Michael Gordon (McKee Nelson, LLP), is recognized for giving generously of his

time and knowledge as a consultant to Legal Aid staff on employment law, and, in particular, on issues in federal practice.

(Staff: Marlen Bodden)

SERVICE TO THE SOCIETY

Craig Reicher, CB Richard Ellis
Christopher Mansfield, CB Richard Ellis
Michaele Freeman-Govan, CB Richard Ellis
Todd E. Soloway, Pryor Cashman LLP
Brooke Spanierman, Pryor Cashman LLP
Jonathan Weinberger, Pryor Cashman LLP
Caroline Maher, a lawyer in private practice
Taproot Foundation

The Taproot Foundation awarded The Legal Aid Society a grant and provided a team of experts to create a brochure about the work of the Civil Practice. The Legal Aid Society extends its gratitude to the Taproot Foundation and recognizes the outstanding *pro bono* services of **Zeev Klein, Regan Backer, Sara Ingram, Annabelle Ladao** and **Autumn Metcalfe**.

Alexander Shapiro and **Edward H. Smoot** of Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP represented two low-income entrepreneurs on issues including formation of the business entity, taxation, intellectual property and business planning. Mr. Shapiro led a workshop for low-income Harlem entrepreneurs on starting a small business and was instrumental in enlisting his firm to staff a workshop on the legal aspects of maintaining a website.

(Staff: Stephen Falla-Riff)

Arthur Rosner, Managing Partner of the New York office, and legal assistant **John Pasterick** of Nixon Peabody LLP offered invaluable assistance in resolving post judgment real estate issues in a complex matrimonial settlement.

(Staff: Emily Ruben)

Jonathan Braun and **Marc Mechanic**, summer interns in the Public Information Office, are recognized for creating the “Day in the Life of The Legal Aid Society” brochure for print and the Legal Aid website. Jonathan is a senior at Trinity and Marc is a senior at Friends Seminary.



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