



from Connecticut Legal Services

CLS Donors Matter— More Than They Know

The hundreds of men, women, law firms, and other organizations that donate money, time, and energy to support Connecticut Legal Services are essential. Without them, we could not accomplish our mission: provide access to justice as a means of improving the lives of low-income people.

Our work for low-income people is imperative if we are to ensure fairness in our society. After all, the legal system is based on the concept that people in dispute have equal opportunity to present their arguments before impartial decision makers. People who don't have enough money to hire lawyers have a difficult

In-Kind Donations: Creative Gifts

Several Connecticut Legal Services supporters have used their creativity to provide in-kind donations—in addition to financial contributions—to meet various CLS needs. Richard Orr, Esq., of BL Companies, Inc. (BL), sees in-kind donations as an opportunity to provide unique support. “It’s important to me and to BL Companies to support the communities in which we work. Donating our professional services to CLS allows CLS to remain focused on its core mission and enables us to provide needed expertise in areas outside the legal field,” says Orr, a member of the CLS Board of Directors and vice president and general counsel at BL.

BL Companies provides integrated services that include architecture and building engineering, civil engineering, utility and transportation engineering, environmental sciences, and land surveying to both public and private sector clients in the Northeast

(continued on page 2)

(continued on page 4)



(CLS Donors, continued from page 1)

time preparing and presenting their cases. When they don't have even pro se advice, they have little chance. Often, people who can't get our help are too terrified to show up in court.

When we can help, we can guarantee fair outcomes. CLS protects people from illegal evictions and physical abuse. We help people access medical care and education that creates opportunity for a better future. Our lawyers deserve huge amounts of credit—and every now and then, clients actually send nice thank-you notes!

CLS also sends thank-you notes to those of you who give. However, I think perhaps our supporters—and people who haven't yet contributed—don't realize how much their generosity means to us and how much our staff and clients depend on them.

First, of course, is the money. As donors realize the impact their gifts can make, we receive more and larger donations. This year, we expect our fund-raising campaign to reach \$300,000—almost double last year's contributions. The 2008 campaign will pay for the work of three or four legal services lawyers, representation for hundreds of households that otherwise would go unserved.

Second is the energy our donors put into helping us make the Governor and the General Assembly aware of the importance of our work. Periodically, we need to explain to state budget makers why we desperately need to increase our funding—the 2009 session will be one of those times. Our donors make up an incredible action network on our behalf, and legislators have told us that they are particularly effective in advocating for our cause.

Third, when we apply for United Way funds and foundation grants, funders want to know whether we have broad community support—for example, does the legal community “do its fair share” to support legal help for the poor—before they will agree to back our efforts. The CLS donor corps answers that question.

Finally, the hundreds upon hundreds of donations CLS receives are a powerful statement of support. Staff members sometimes feel that they are voices in the wilderness, their pleas for social justice unheard in an increasingly disconnected society. Each donation is a testimony to our hard-working staff that their efforts are not unnoticed or unappreciated.

To our donors: Thank you for all that you give!

To people who have not yet donated to the CLS Campaign for Justice: We need you. Please help us help low-income people find justice.



—Steve Eppler-Epstein, Executive Director

CLS Kicks Off 2008 Campaign for Justice

Connecticut Legal Services kicked off its 2008 fund-raising campaign in March with the ambitious goal of raising \$300,000. "With a committed team of volunteers and an initial fund-raising letter already mailed to potential donors, we expect to receive a strong response to this year's request for donations," says Astrid Lebron, the CLS director of development. "Our Campaign for Justice provides CLS with urgently needed funds to serve the growing population of our low-income clients in need," adds Aaron Bayer, CLS Board chair. "In addition, the strength of our campaign provides an indication to funders of the depth of our community support and helps CLS secure other funding."

The 2007 CLS fund-raising campaign was successful by any measure. The generosity of private organizations and individuals resulted in 484 donations totaling more than \$163,000. This funding helps CLS provide much-needed civil legal assistance to members of the low-income community. Please continue to support our work on behalf of low-income individuals and families who face harsh legal problems. Please see page 6 for information about how you can contribute to CLS.

2008 Campaign for Justice Volunteers

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Special thanks to the 2007 CLS Board of Directors Fund-Raising Committee:

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Stratton Faxon, Connecticut’s Firm for Trial Law, continues its generous fund-raising effort in support of legal services as the sponsor of the Fresh Faces Campaign, an innovative approach to increasing the number of new donors and dollars to legal services over three years. Stratton Faxon will match each contribution from a new donor—one who hasn’t donated in at least three years—dollar for dollar, up to \$1,000. This fund-raising effort challenges Connecticut Legal Services, the New Haven Legal Assistance Association, and Greater Hartford Legal Aid to find ways of attracting new donors to their respective organizations.

“Stratton Faxon’s commitment of \$250,000 over the three years of the campaign demonstrates its support for those members of the low-income community who need assistance in accessing the civil legal system,” says Steve Eppler-Epstein, CLS executive director. “It also shows a great respect for the legal services mission and the work that we do.” In launching its campaign, Stratton Faxon made a significant marketing investment,

- placing advertisements in
- the *Connecticut Law Tribune* and
- *Connecticut Lawyer* magazine.
- “The Fresh Faces Campaign is
- just that—our search for fresh new
- faces in the legal community who
- share in the quest for justice for all,”
- says Michael A. Stratton, partner at
- Stratton Faxon. “The goal of this
- statewide fund-raising effort initiated
- by our firm is to encourage those
- in the legal community who have
- never donated to legal aid—or have
- not donated in a while—to support
- legal services. Stratton Faxon will
- match all new pledges, dollar for
- dollar, which could result in a total of
- \$500,000 in new money. Hopefully,
- this will incite donors to make it a
- priority to support legal aid in their
- communities and ideally develop
- into a pattern of continual giving for
- them.”
- Every dollar donated to legal
- services makes a difference to
- families in crisis that need legal
- advice and/or representation. For
- more information, visit Stratton
- Faxon’s Web site at
- www.strattonfaxon.com/freshfaces.

(Gifts, continued from page 1)

and the mid-Atlantic region. The firm has seven offices in Connecticut, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

In the past year, BL has donated many hours of professional services to help with office redesign and physical-plant planning for several CLS field offices. “BL Companies has been very generous with its time and services,” says Astrid Lebron, CLS director of development. “When we moved our New Britain office, Greg Longo, a project manager at BL, reviewed our heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning system to make sure it was adequate to serve our needs.”

Lebron continues: “Steven J. Iovanna, AIA, an architect at BL, is helping us reconfigure our Stamford office. Steve also helped us evaluate a building for possible relocation of our Waterbury office. In addition, when we were looking for furniture to replace 20-year-old desks, Rich involved Gary Sarcione, facilities manager at BL. Gary not only found some furniture for us but also volunteered to help move it to our office. For a nonprofit organization like CLS, in-kind services such as the ones BL provides can be just as important as financial contributions.”

In addition to encouraging BL’s contributions, Orr gives generously of his own time and resources, serving on the CLS Board’s Fund-Raising Committee. “Rich Orr and BL Companies bring everything to the table to support us,” notes Steve Eppler-Epstein, CLS executive director. “Rich is an incredibly involved Board member and has gone beyond that to interest other employees of BL in the work of CLS. We are so appreciative of all the support Rich and other staff at BL Companies have given us. We are so glad to know that the people at BL understand our mission and care enough to go far above the call of duty.”

Additional in-kind donors are listed on page 11.

Support Continues for Waterbury and New Haven Children



Connecticut Legal Services will continue its Stop the School to Prison Pipeline project (STOPP) in Waterbury, thanks to the Tow Foundation's generous renewal of its \$50,000 grant. The STOPP project, a joint effort of CLS and the New Haven Legal Assistance Association (NHLAA), helps prevent Waterbury and New Haven students with disabilities from being suspended or expelled from school and referred to juvenile court because of their disability-based behaviors. Now, students (and their parents) who find themselves in such situations can ask their public defenders for a referral to legal services. "We are very proud of the work that we have done under this project and thank the Tow Foundation for making it possible," says attorney Nieka Thompson. "We will continue representing parents in obtaining appropriate educational services for children with disabilities."

STOPP, now in its third year, helps students like Jesse and Antonio, who were not receiving the services they are entitled to from their school districts.

Jesse hated going to school and skipped almost every day. On the days he did attend, he was withdrawn and struggled to keep up in class. Jesse was facing disciplinary action for truancy when he was referred to

CLS. After seven planning and placement team (PPT) meetings, the CLS attorney representing Jesse obtained a neuropsychological evaluation for him. The attorney also persuaded the district to modify Jesse's behavior intervention plan and send him to a therapeutic school where he would receive help with his school avoidance issues. The district agreed to provide a support services person to assist Jesse with his morning routine and ensure that he is transported to school daily. Now, with the aid of CLS, Jesse is getting the support he needs to attend school regularly.

Antonio was always in trouble at school and had little, if any, interest in his classes. He was facing school expulsion when he was referred to CLS. At his PPT meeting, Antonio's CLS attorney argued to keep him in school. The attorney convinced the school district that allowing Antonio to attend a computer programming class at an adjacent school would help motivate him. The school district also updated Antonio's objectives and behavior intervention plan to address his individual needs. Antonio is thriving in the computer programming class, and his school attendance has improved.

Thanks to the Tow Foundation's generous grant, CLS can continue advocating for children with disabilities who do not receive the services they need from their school systems.

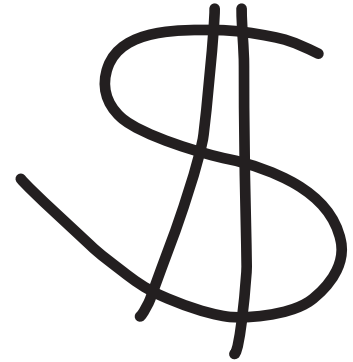
CLS Remembers Timothy Aher

Timothy Aher, a former Connecticut Legal Services intern in the Waterbury office, passed away unexpectedly in February. Aher, a second-year law student at the University of Notre Dame Law School, was studying abroad in the school's Concannon Programme of International Law, in London. He was planning to use his law degree for a career in legal services.



Aher spent the summer of 2007 interning in the CLS Waterbury office and planned to return this summer. He worked closely with the attorneys to assist clients with benefits and housing issues. "The Waterbury office feels blessed to have known Tim," observes attorney Tom Ford. "He was always enthusiastic about so much in this world, whether languages, eccentric and unusual music, art, film, or novel areas of law. We truly enjoyed learning how to describe our opponents in Russian and hearing about his latest all-night Wikipedia searches. This passion translated to his work for our clients."

Attorney Michelle Fica adds, "Tim displayed talent and creativity that belied his youth. He was a truly unique and beautiful individual who made an indelible impression on all of us." CLS will remember Aher, a Brookfield native and graduate of the University of Chicago, as an intelligent and gifted man who devoted his time to helping impoverished people.



Leave Your Mark for Future Generations

Imagine doing something today that will benefit someone else 30 years from now.

According to statistics published by Leave a Legacy (LAL), a national public-awareness effort to promote charitable bequests, Connecticut, for the most part, is a generous state. Each year, 72 percent of Connecticut residents give money to charities; however, only 5.7 percent leave charitable bequests in their wills. The number one reason for this gap? Most people say they were never asked.

- LAL Connecticut asks all Connecticut residents to think about charitable bequests. "Everyone can help, regardless of income, and each gift makes an impact," says Lyn Walker, co-chair of LAL Connecticut and a partner at Shipman & Goodwin LLP.

- LAL Connecticut encourages people to make gifts from their estates to their favorite nonprofit organizations. LAL also urges people to discuss their intentions with financial and estate planners who specialize in this field. Many estate-planning professional organizations throughout Connecticut participate in LAL's collaborative

- efforts, as do more than 500 Connecticut nonprofit organizations.

- LAL Connecticut and Connecticut Legal Services urge people to consider including charitable organizations in their wills. To learn more, visit the LAL Web site at <http://www.ctphilanthropy.org/lal> or call the United Way Infoline at 211.

- Please consider putting Connecticut Legal Services, Inc., in your will—your bequest will make a difference for low-income Connecticut residents. "There is no end to the good you can do."—Leave a Legacy Connecticut

The 2008 Campaign for Justice

I want to help CLS open doors for Connecticut's low-income population.

Name _____

Firm Affiliation _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

This is my PERSONAL FIRM'S Donation.

Total Contribution Enclosed/Pledged* \$ _____

Names will be listed under the following categories: Partners: \$10,000 and up; Leaders: 45,000-49,9999; Pacesetters: \$1,000-\$4,999; Sustainers: \$500-\$999; Patrons: \$200-\$499; Supporters: up to \$199.

Please print your name or your firm's name as you would like it to appear in our publications.

in honor of _____

in memory of _____

Visa Mastercard Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

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CONNECTICUT LEGAL SERVICES

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62 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457
Telephone (860) 344-0447, FAX (860) 346-2938
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*If pledge: To be fulfilled by _____, 2008

Contributions are tax deductible.

CLS Campaign for Justice

*Donations through
February 29, 2008*

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Albert, Ward & Johnson, P.C.
Anonymous (three)
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*“As a former (and longtime)
Connecticut Legal Services
attorney, I know firsthand
about the important work
that legal assistance lawyers
do everyday to help ease the
hardships that their clients
endure as a result of
poverty, domestic violence,
poor health, and the like.”
—Sharon Langer, attorney*

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*“By giving to Connecticut
Legal Services, I am repaying
my debt for the benefits and
opportunities our society has
bestowed upon me, and I am
helping insure that those same
benefits and opportunities are
available to as many of my
fellow citizens as possible.”
—Robert Dolian, attorney,
and former chair and mem-
ber of CLS Board of Directors*

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“I used to work at a legal services agency, so I realize the tremendous need for legal assistance by the poorer members of our society. I feel that contributing to Connecticut Legal Services is one of my public duties as a lawyer.”
—Anonymous

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“Many years ago, I was an intern at what was then the Connecticut Legal Services office in Tolland. [The lawyers] taught me to acknowledge the dignity of all litigants and petitioners, regardless of circumstances. I give to CLS in order to reach back and do for someone else what was done for me. If all could share my experience, how much better would our courts, our state, and our lives be?”
—Jay Carbonneau, attorney

briefly

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“I have seen firsthand how the quality of legal representation can make all the difference in the quality of justice available to the poor in any society. Connecticut Legal Services’ reputation for quality representation in a wide variety of legal matters is very high.”

—Anonymous

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“The only way to make sure that the rule of law remains viable is to insure that it protects both those who can afford representation and those who cannot. For that reason, [I am] very pleased to help support Connecticut Legal Services.”

—Kenneth Burrows,
the Burrows Foundation
and attorney

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“The reason that I give to Connecticut Legal Services is because I believe that the one area of our society that should not be discriminatory according to economic stature is the justice system. I realize that sounds great in theory but is very hard in practice.”
—Jim Randel, attorney

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“It’s always been my view that the courthouse doors should be opened wide to all those who need the court’s intervention in their disputes. Connecticut Legal Services helps to ensure that those with civil disputes are not shut out simply because they may have fewer economic resources available to them. It is only through the assistance of organizations like CLS that we can credibly claim to be providing justice for all.”
—Anonymous

briefly

Stuart Jay Sidney
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Administrative Office

62 Washington Street
 Middletown, CT 06457
 860-344-0447
 povertylaw@connlegalservices.org

Law Offices

211 State Street
 Bridgeport, CT 06604
 203-336-3851; 1-800-809-4434
 (serving Greater Bridgeport)

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 New Britain, CT 06051
 860-225-8678; 1-800-233-7619
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