



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES
OF PHILADELPHIA

Our Pledge: Justice for All

Providing Free Civil
Legal Services to Philadelphia's
Low-Income Communities

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2006





For over 40 years, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia (CLS) has provided the highest quality legal assistance to low-income Philadelphians who cannot afford legal counsel when they most need it.

Our Pledge: Justice for All

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Created by the Philadelphia Bar Association in 1966, CLS is widely recognized as one of the most sophisticated, respected nonprofit legal services programs in the nation. In the past year alone, CLS has helped over 17,000 Philadelphians, fighting consumer fraud and predatory lending, preventing homelessness, ensuring fair treatment in the workplace, stabilizing families, and protecting women, children and the elderly. Since inception, CLS has served well over a million individuals at the most critical times of their lives.

For more information on Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, visit www.clsphila.org.



From the Executive Director

Community Legal Services celebrated its 40th anniversary! Early in November 2006, we took time out for a raucous party with Philadelphia Legal Assistance and our sister pro bono organization Philadelphia VIP, who were also marking significant anniversaries, and some 300 great friends. See page eight for pictures of that memorable event.

Anniversaries and self-assessment go hand-in-hand. Our 40th has inspired us to take a fresh look at our organization, our clients and our work. How have our clients and the issues they present changed? How

for the elderly. We stabilize families. We help sick people gain access to the medical treatment they need and disabled children claim the benefits they deserve. We stand with our poorest neighbors against fraudulent businesses. We assist people starting up small businesses and community organizations in the most blighted neighborhoods.

In the process, CLS is making national headlines, bringing the issues that most affect poor people to the attention of the public. As the subprime mortgage debacle unfolds, CLS is a leading voice nationally on the impact of predatory loans on the poor. CLS also brought the recent class action on behalf of elderly, disabled refugees and asylees whose meager Supplemental Security Income benefits have ended because they were unable to prove citizenship within seven years, a requirement next to impossible to fulfill since 9/11. And CLS has

“Equal justice under law is not merely a caption on the façade of the Supreme Court building. It is perhaps the most inspiring ideal of our society... it is fundamental that justice should be the same in substance and availability without regard to economic status.” – Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell

has our work changed? What challenges do we face? One in four Philadelphians live in poverty, the highest percentage among the 10 largest U.S. cities, according to recent studies. Clearly, poverty is not going away. However, the face of the poor has changed since CLS first began. For example, in our early years, most clients received public assistance. Today the people crowding our waiting rooms are more often the working poor, struggling to make ends meet in low-wage jobs. In addition, we see immigrants from all over the globe, and the number of people who have criminal records that affect their ability to get jobs, housing, or public assistance has soared. While lack of education continues to be a barrier to work, a prison record or even a plea bargain also makes it difficult to join the mainstream economy. We have worked hard to ensure that our expertise continues to meet the changing needs of our clients. However, our goal remains the same: to ensure that poor Philadelphians have the same access to justice through the legal system as their wealthier neighbors.

CLS’ legal work addresses the most important issues confronting low-income Philadelphians. We keep families in their homes, and the heat on

given testimony before Congress on how the misuse of public criminal records by employers creates barriers to employment for low-wage workers. In these areas and others, CLS is changing the landscape for poor people across America.

Our outstanding team of lawyers, paralegals and support staff address these issues with creativity, dedication, and intelligence. They are responsible for our success. And standing with us, making our work possible, are our generous donors. Through your support for CLS, you live your belief in equal access to justice.

In the coming year, CLS will continue to be on the front lines addressing emerging issues with clients, policymakers, and the public-at-large. We invite you to join us as we move forward toward a future of hope, dignity and justice for all.

Catherine C. Carr, Esq., *Executive Director*



CLS Units

Community Legal Services is composed of nine legal units specializing in particular areas of civil poverty law. Each unit represents individual clients, engages in advocacy concerning systemic issues identified through direct client work, and provides community education on relevant legal issues to clients and to the professionals and advocates who work with them.

Our Closest Partners

Community Legal Services and its federally funded sister organization, Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA), work closely with Philadelphia VIP, the hub of pro bono legal services in Philadelphia, to expand access to justice for low-income clients.

CLS and PLA serve as the main intake and referral sources, sending clients to VIP's pro bono attorneys, collaborating in training and mentoring the private bar on issues of poverty law, designing appropriate and effective pro bono representation, and building cooperative projects.

Housing Unit

Represents private, public, and subsidized housing tenants in matters involving eviction, illegal lockouts, and substandard housing. The unit also uses systems advocacy and litigation to address issues ranging from lead paint elimination, to federal housing policy changes, to tenant eviction laws.

Public Benefits Unit

Counsels clients, provides education and outreach services, and advocates regionally and nationally on welfare, disability, and healthcare issues. The unit is also home to the Advocating on Behalf of Children Project, which helps disabled children access medical care.

Family Advocacy Unit (FAU)

Advocates for parents to keep their children at home or have them returned from foster care to a safe home, and provides assistance and training to other family advocates. The unit monitors and advocates for improvements in dependency court and foster care.

Energy Unit

Protects the rights of low-income utility customers on service and payment issues, in addition to representing group clients on utility rate change cases and serving as the Public Advocate in representing all Philadelphia Gas Works residential customers.



PAYDAY LENDING

CLS was instrumental in preventing state legislation that would have legalized loans with rates up to 500% per year.

“Without your involvement I would be in a dark and terrible place. Thanks to you I am financially self-sufficient and thanks to you I am able to see my doctor...Please accept my infinite gratitude and deepest respect....

–CLS client thanking his attorney

Employment Unit

Represents clients with employment-related problems, including claims for fair wages, family and medical leave, discrimination, and barriers to employment. The unit advocates nationally and at the state level on workers’ rights issues such as maintaining the protections of the unemployment compensation system.

Elderly Law Project

Represents seniors in a wide range of public benefits and consumer matters, including challenges to denials of Medicaid benefits, decisions by managed care organizations to deny care, and violations of residents’ rights and quality-of-care requirements in nursing homes and personal care homes.

Consumer Law Unit

Provides representation in homeownership disputes, residential foreclosures, fraudulent consumer practices, and issues with banking or check-cashing agencies. The unit uses systems advocacy and litigation to address the predatory lending crisis and other fringe banking issues.

Community Economic Development Unit

Represents small and start-up community associations, faith-based institutions, social service organizations, nonprofits, and businesses to improve the quality of life and the economic viability of Philadelphia’s low-income neighborhoods. In addition, the Child Care Law Protect (CLLP), a special project of the CED Unit, is devoted to representing child care providers.

Language Access Project (LAP)

Works to ensure that Community Legal Services is accessible to Philadelphia communities with limited or no English-speaking ability, and that legal issues specific to this population are addressed. The illegal failure to provide interpretation and translation services necessary for these communities to access public services is an important focus of the project’s work.

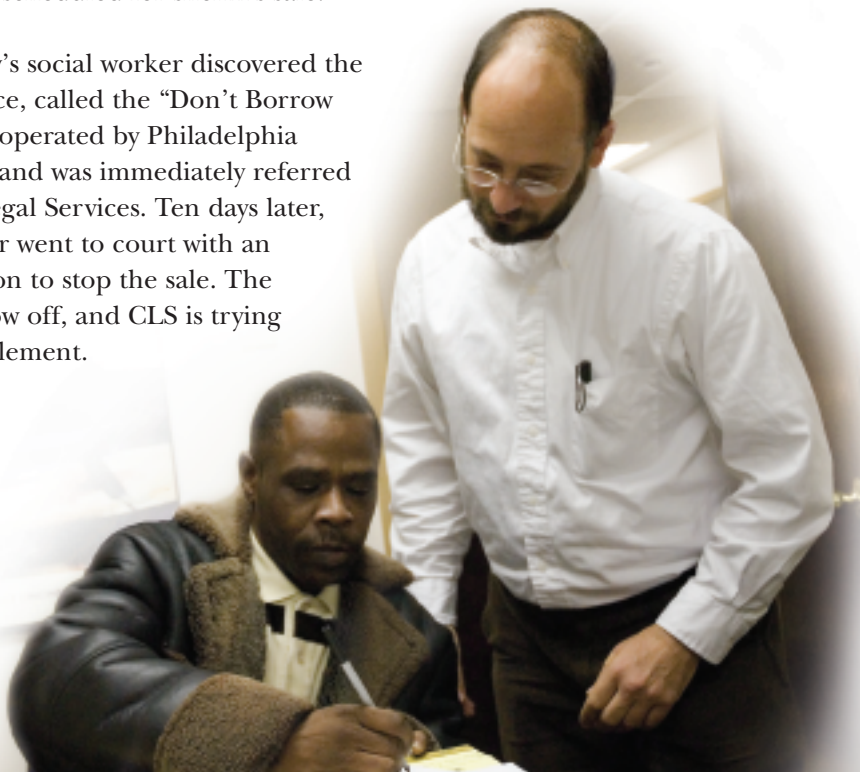
Making A Difference

CLS Fights Predatory Lender

Mary's Story *(Name has been changed.)*

Elderly and bedridden, Mary lives off her Social Security income and her pension. She has owned her home for over 40 years. When a relative applied for a \$2,000 emergency loan, the loan company convinced the family that a much larger \$40,000 loan made sense. Mary put her house up as collateral, and last February, the lender showed up at Mary's bedside to get her signature on the loan agreement. However, with taxes and insurance, Mary's monthly mortgage payment ballooned to over half of her monthly income. Within months, Mary's home was scheduled for sheriff's sale.

Fortunately, Mary's social worker discovered the sheriff's sale notice, called the "Don't Borrow Trouble" hotline operated by Philadelphia Legal Assistance, and was immediately referred to Community Legal Services. Ten days later, Mary's CLS lawyer went to court with an emergency petition to stop the sale. The sheriff's sale is now off, and CLS is trying to work out a settlement.



"How do I thank you? Words cannot convey my gratitude to you and your organization. I must help others as your collective efforts have helped and blessed me."

- A CLS client

Saving Homes

Faced with a mortgage foreclosure crisis brought on by predatory lending and other issues, CLS preserved the homes of hundreds of low-income Philadelphians, while advocating for strengthened federal, state, and local policies. As media coverage of predatory lending exploded nationwide, the U.S. Senate, Pennsylvania's Department of Banking, and the Federal Reserve Board, among others, called on the expertise of CLS attorneys in their efforts to protect homeownership.

Public Housing

CLS obtained a court order requiring the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) to pay some \$6 million to public housing tenants to assist them in making utility payments after gas utility rates increased and PHA failed to raise utility allowances for tenants.

Protecting Tenants

Representing a tenant organization, CLS was successful in getting a Philadelphia ordinance passed that requires landlords to obtain certification that a property is free from City Code violations prior to renting it to a tenant.

Keeping the Heat On

Carmella's Story *(Name has been changed.)*

Carmella is an HIV/AIDS patient and a customer of Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW). She makes fixed monthly payments under their Customer Responsibility Program, which helps low-income customers better afford their bills and maintain service. When she reported a possible gas leak, PGW came out to investigate, turned off her gas, took her meter, and told her to fix her stove. Carmella immediately made arrangements to repair her stove, but PGW refused to restore service, alleging that she had tampered with the meter. Even though Carmella had no motive to tamper with the meter (it would not reduce her fixed monthly bills), PGW accused her of stealing gas and demanded a payment of over \$1,500 to restore service, an amount that was out of her reach. Carmella was unable to get details about the alleged tampering or an explanation of how PGW had determined that she owed \$1,500.

After filing an informal complaint with the Public Utility Commission (PUC) with no success, Carmella worked with social workers who advocated on her behalf with both PGW and the PUC, to no avail. Carmella and her son then lived without hot water and cooking gas for six months. When she came to CLS seeking help, CLS filed a formal complaint with the PUC and requested an emergency hearing because of Carmella's medical condition and because her son had contracted bronchitis by then. CLS served PGW with discovery requests for documents supporting their claim that tampering had occurred and that Carmella was responsible. PGW quickly agreed to restore Carmella's service and reinstate her in the Customer Responsibility Program. Without representation by CLS, Carmella and her son would have faced winter without gas heat and might have resorted to unsafe heating alternatives.



Assisting Medicare Beneficiaries During the Transition to Medicare Part D.

Faced with a burgeoning mortgage foreclosure crisis brought on by predatory lending, among other issues, CLS obtained a court-imposed moratorium on sheriff sales, preserving the homes of hundreds of low-income Philadelphians. CLS negotiated greatly increased access to the Homeowner's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, and is working to make long-term reforms in the foreclosure process.

Making A Difference

Emergency Medical Assistance in a Time of Need

Leona's Story

(Name has been changed.)

At age 83, Leona traveled from her home in Jamaica to visit her children who had settled in Philadelphia. During the visit, she suffered a devastating series of seizures which left her unable to walk, and with little ability to communicate or use her hands. To meet her basic needs, she needed full assistance. Her children struggled to care for her at home, but she continued having seizures and lost weight dramatically. With the help of CLS' Public Benefits Unit, Leona obtained emergency Medical Assistance coverage so that she could receive the medical treatment needed to stabilize her. Then, because she needed 24-hour care, the hospital transferred her to a nursing facility. However, Leona did not have coverage to pay for the nursing home, so the home informed Leona and her family that she would be involuntarily discharged.

CLS' Elderly Law Project (ELP) appealed the nursing home's decision to the Department of Public Welfare and successfully negotiated an agreement for Leona to remain in the home while a source of payment was sought. In addition, ELP also helped Leona's daughter address concerns she had about her mother's nursing home care.



"In providing access to justice for the poor, the forgotten, our clients, we serve as missionaries of the Constitution, making this country work. In some measure we lift the cloud of worry and concern that pervades our clients' lives. In the years ahead, I feel confident that CLS will continue to carry out this mission. "

-Terry Clattenburg, Esq.,
upon retiring from CLS after 38 years of service.

Disabled Children and Supplemental Security Income

CLS has led the effort to obtain Supplemental Security Income benefits for disabled children and young adults who are leaving the custody of Philadelphia's Department of Human Services.

Supplemental Security Income for Disabled Refugees

CLS brought a nationwide class action and encouraged legislative action to protect the rights of elderly and disabled refugees and asylees to receive income support through the Supplemental Security Income program. Current policy requires that these individuals become citizens in seven years in order to retain benefits. However, because of changes since 9/11 resulting in administrative delays, many are unable to do so, despite their best efforts.

A Young Child Receives the Benefits She Desperately Needs

Clara's Story *(Name has been changed.)*

Clara is one of many children with physical or mental disabilities who have received help from Community Legal Services when their Supplemental Security Income, which helps to pay for medical care, is cut off.

Clara is an adorable little third grader with a cleft palate. However, because of her facial disfigurement, she is teased unmercifully at school, isolated and physically abused by the other children.

Clara's grandmother, who serves as her guardian, is very loving toward Clara and has been diligent about following through with Clara's many appointments with dental and plastic surgeons and other doctors. After many operations to establish a roof for her mouth, Clara's Supplemental Security Income was suddenly cut off. Clara's grandmother came to Community Legal Services for help.

The CLS attorney helping Clara and her grandmother found that no one person was coordinating Clara's care at the local children's hospital, so she gathered the records of Clara's care from various departments herself. Eventually, the CLS attorney won a hearing ensuring that Clara will receive her Supplemental Security Income payments and be able to continue her care. In addition, the attorney's request for a special needs social worker to coordinate Clara's care was granted.

Finally, the hospital asked CLS to provide training about Supplemental Security Income for their social workers. Today Clara and her grandmother are happy and well.

"Once again thank you for all you do for those in need."

—A social worker on behalf of CLS client



Court Interpreting

CLS worked with legislative staff to support Senate Bill 669, which establishes a system of certified interpreters in the court and administrative agencies so that those who speak little or no English can be heard in criminal, civil and family law matters. The bill was passed by the General Assembly and signed by the governor in November 2006. CLS is involved with ongoing advocacy and training efforts to support implementation of the bill, now known as Act 172.

CLS Celebrates 40 Years!

In November, Community Legal Services celebrated **40 years of service to low-income Philadelphians**, along with its sister organizations—Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA) and Philadelphia VIP, celebrating 10 years and 25 years respectively—and 300 great friends.



Philly Fellow **Katie Derickson** wrote this review:

Never one to shy away from a party, I attended the CLS, PLA, and VIP anniversary party more tentatively than usual. After all, I was pretty new and didn't know that many people associated with CLS. What I found out was this: beyond their commitment to justice, legal aid employees foster a deep enjoyment for all things "partytastic." Not only did the wine flow like water, the fun was waist-deep. And the waists were doing the electric slide.

What made the CLS, PLA, and VIP anniversary party at World Café Live a success was good food, a full bar, a band that rocked all night long, and over 300 wonderful staff and supporters. The band, Amsterdam, played crowd pleasers such as "Proud Mary." A highlight for me was when the drummer rapped while he played along to a cover of Beyonce & Jay-Z's "Crazy in Love." Behind it all was a backdrop slideshow of vintage photos replete with rotary phones, afros, and massive shoulder pads!

The party raised money for all three organizations, netting about \$15,000 each.



11/1/06 JOINT ANNIVERSARY PARTY SPONSORS:

Blank Rome LLP; Pepper Hamilton LLP; The Montgomery Benefits Group; Citizens Bank; Independence Foundation; Schnader Harrison Segal and Lewis LLP; Professor and Mrs. Louis Rulli; Joe Prim, Esq.; Carl "Tobey" and Kimberly Oxholm; Dashevsky, Horwitz, DiSandro, Kuhn & Novello, P.C.; Eve Biskind Kloth and Kenneth Kloth; and the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN).





Community Legal Services Announces the William R. Klaus, Esq., Chair in Public Interest Law

When Bill Klaus died in 2005, Community Legal Services lost a true friend, one who played a seminal role in our founding, and then saw us through our first 22 years as chair of the Board. We searched around for some way to show how much he meant to us and to the greater legal services community.

Well, we've found it.

After talking with Bill's wife, Janet, and his good friend and colleague at Pepper Hamilton, Edward M. "Ned" Madeira, Esq., CLS has decided to establish a chair in Bill's name, one of the first at any legal services organization. The William R. Klaus, Esq., Chair in Public Interest Law will be awarded to a rising young attorney who has been practicing public interest law at CLS for less than 10 years to reward that person for commitment to public interest lawyering, for energy and creativity, and to encourage him or her to continue in the field. We hope to raise \$350,000 to fund the Bill Klaus Chair, and have asked many friends and colleagues to contribute in Bill's name.

Among those contributing to date are several members of Bill's book club, who included these words along with their gifts:

"We are delighted to support...Community Legal Services, an institution that Bill Klaus breathed into life and chaired for 22 years."

"From 1998 until his death, Bill was a loyal and contributing member of the Unnamed Book Club. These contributions are in memory of him, with respect and admiration."

Bill was a special man, a brilliant and diligent corporate attorney. At the same time, he recognized early on the tremendous need for legal services among the poor, and acted

with passion and creativity to address this need. His vision and leadership led to the founding of CLS.

In addition to serving for many years as the first chair of CLS, Bill was instrumental in ensuring the viability of legal services nationwide. In fact, as a member of the American Bar Association committee that interfaced with Congress, Bill wrote the act that established the Legal Services Corporation, the entity which now provides federal funding to legal services organizations across the country. Through CLS and his work in support of legal services generally, Bill "lived" his commitment to a value he held dear: equal access for all to justice through the legal system. He believed in it wholeheartedly and worked diligently to realize it.

Please help us reach our goal!

If you would like to contribute to support the William R. Klaus, Esq., Chair in Public Interest Law, please call Development Director Kevin A. Peter, CFRE, CAP, at (215) 981-3743.

"Bill Klaus invested so much of himself in Community Legal Services. I know he would be very proud to see that we are honoring his memory in this way."

—Catherine C. Carr, Esq.

Leave a Legacy of Justice!

Access to justice for all, regardless of income, is one of our most deeply held values, part of the very fabric of our society.

When you support Community Legal Services through your will or with another kind of planned gift, you reinforce your commitment to access to justice, while making a statement about your belief in the importance of community. In addition, you ensure that these values endure into the future.

Please include Community Legal Services in your will or other estate plans. It doesn't require great wealth, and it's easy to do.

If you let us know that you have included CLS in your will or another planned gift, we will enroll you in our Legacy of Justice Society, and your name will appear in future editions of our annual report and other publications.

If you have questions about how to include CLS in your will, or want to let us know that CLS is in your will, please call the Development Department, at 215.981.3732. Or go to the planned giving portion of our website, at www.clsphila.org and click on "How You Can Help."

Financial Year 2006 Financial Statement

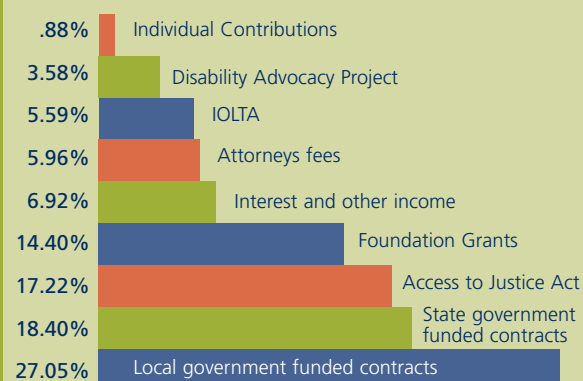
Support & Revenues

Foundation Grants	\$1,222,685
IOLTA	\$475,068
Disability Advocacy Project	\$304,347
Access to Justice Act	\$1,463,016
State Government	
Funded Contracts	\$1,563,091
Local Government	
Funded Contracts	\$2,298,184
Individual Contributions	\$75,000
Attorneys Fees	\$506,274
Interests & Other Income	
(includes Law Firm and	
United Way Gifts)	\$587,716
Total Revenue	\$8,495,381

Expenditures

Salaries	\$5,374,998
Fringe Benefits	\$1,580,723
Consultants & Contractors	\$271,277
Travel	\$41,424
Space Costs	\$700,525
Consumable Supplies	\$66,575
Furniture & Equipment	\$102,821
Law Library	\$81,432
Printing Costs	\$15,610
Telephone	\$46,929
Postage	\$24,153
Court Costs	\$31,128
Other	\$114,284
Total Expenditures	\$8,451,879
Before Depreciation	\$8,451,879
Depreciation Expense	\$21,617
Total Expenditures	\$8,473,496

Sources of Funding in Fiscal Year 2006



An Opportunity to Make a Difference

Your generous support enables Community Legal Services to provide outstanding civil legal services free of charge to our low-income clients at what is often the most critical time of their lives. Please help. CLS is able to accept gifts of stock, or you may want to show your support by making a gift on your credit card. To make a gift online, or to learn about the many ways you can help CLS help low-income Philadelphians, please visit our website at www.clsphila.org and click on "How You Can Help." Or call the Development Office at 215.981.3732.

Thank you!

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Community Legal Services thanks the following donors for their generous support.

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17th Annual Breakfast of Champions

Friends and supporters of Community Legal Services celebrated the 17th Annual Breakfast of Champions, the official kick-off event for CLS' 2006 Bar Campaign, on May 10, 2006, at the Westin Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association sponsored the event. By the end of 2006, CLS' Bar Campaign had raised over \$357,000!

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