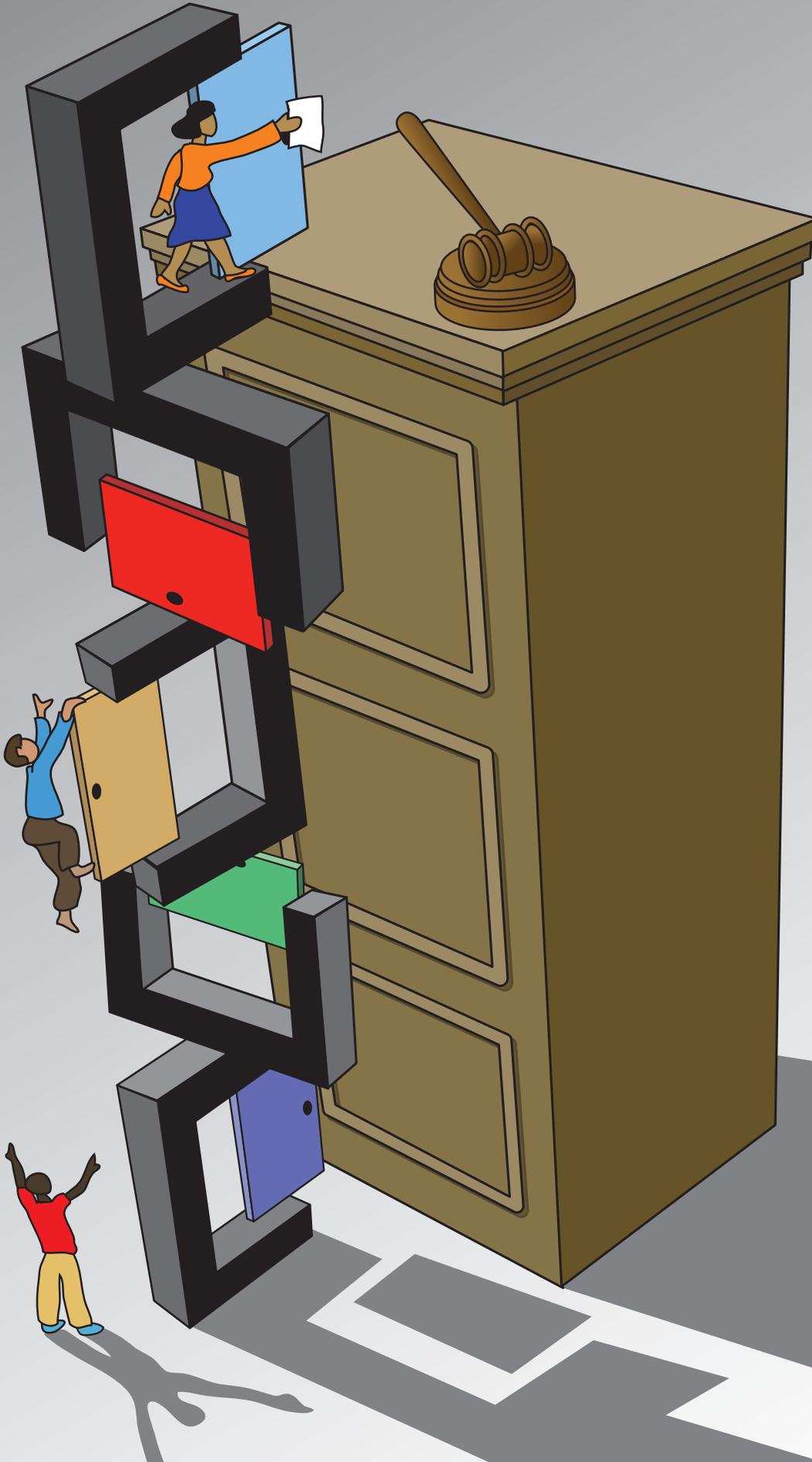


CONNECTICUT LEGAL SERVICES INC.

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



**OPENING
THE DOORS
TO JUSTICE
AND
PROMOTING
EQUALITY**

Service Area, Offices, and Staff

Connecticut Legal Services is a private, not-for-profit law firm dedicated to improving the lives of low-income people by providing access to justice.

In the CLS service area—all of Connecticut except the Greater Hartford and New Haven areas—more than 200,000 people are financially eligible for services (2010 census).

CLS has six full-service offices, four satellite offices, and one administrative office.

On June 30, 2014, the CLS staff consisted of

44.84 FTE lawyers

2.00 FTE paralegals

12.31 FTE legal assistants

.67 FTE child welfare advocates

7.88 FTE administrative staff.



CLS Helps Woman Keep Live-In Aide

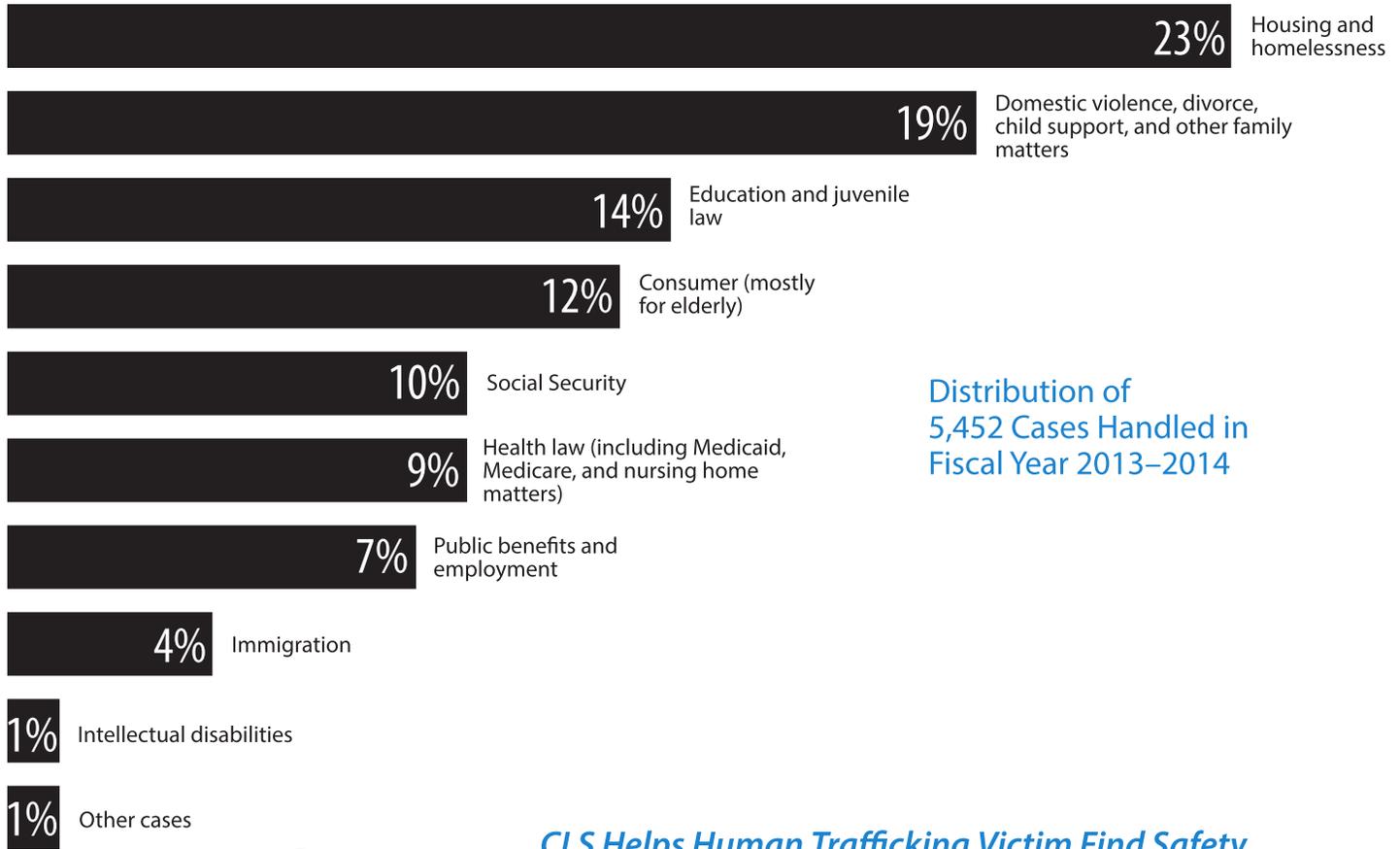


Elaine, an elderly woman, has Alzheimer's disease and needed help to continue living in the community. Tina, Elaine's niece, is her conservator. Seven years ago, Tina agreed to move into Elaine's subsidized elderly housing to serve as her full-time caregiver. Under the federal regulations applicable to Elaine's housing, a full-time caregiver is not considered a tenant, has no tenant's rights, and is not responsible for any rent. When the housing facility changed hands, the new management recalculated Elaine's rent and included the income Tina earned from a part-time job, which she used to pay her own living expenses. The property manager informed Tina and Elaine that because of that job, Tina did not qualify as a live-in aide, even though the federal regulations make no such qualification. The building manager gave them an ultimatum: Tina could quit her part-time job and lose her income or move out. Tina's moving out would leave Elaine without the care and family support she desperately needed, and she would face institutionalization.*

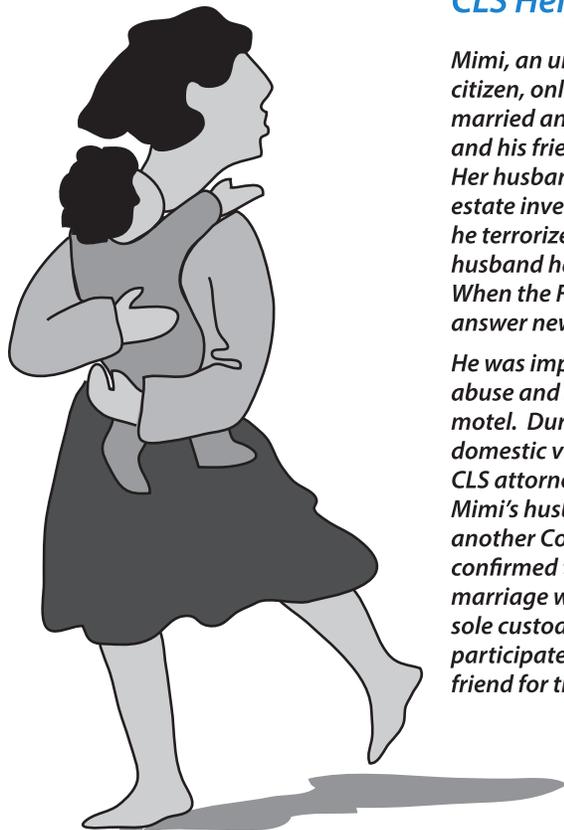
Unable to afford the higher rent, Elaine turned to Connecticut Legal Services for help. Elaine's CLS attorney helped her file a request for a reasonable accommodation under state and federal law and included a copy of the regulation and a letter from her doctor explaining that she needed the help Tina provided. After many negotiations, the manager finally agreed that Elaine had a right to have Tina care for her as a live-in aide and that the calculation of rent should not include Tina's income. Thanks to CLS, Elaine can stay in the community with appropriate support, and the housing management is complying with state and federal housing laws.

Distribution of Cases

In 2013–2014, Connecticut Legal Services received approximately 18,858 requests for service. We responded by opening 3,404 new cases for legal representation and counseling. We also worked on 2,048 cases opened in previous years. CLS services in these 5,452 cases benefited approximately 13,000 household members.



Distribution of 5,452 Cases Handled in Fiscal Year 2013–2014



CLS Helps Human Trafficking Victim Find Safety

Mimi, an undocumented immigrant from Asia, met her future husband, a U.S. citizen, online. He arranged for her to travel to the United States, where they were married and had a child. Immediately after Mimi arrived in Arizona, her husband and his friend began abusing her physically, emotionally, sexually, and financially. Her husband tricked her and her family out of thousands of dollars with fake real estate investments, and he did not move her immigration status forward. Instead, he terrorized her and kept her and their child prisoner. Mimi was not aware that her husband had a long criminal history and had violated probation in Connecticut. When the FBI found her husband in Arizona, he was returned to Connecticut to answer new fraud charges and his probation violation.

He was imprisoned, but Mimi was still not safe. Her husband's friend continued the abuse and moved her to Connecticut, keeping Mimi and her child locked in a cheap motel. During her stay at the motel, Mimi escaped with her child and fled to a local domestic violence shelter, which referred her to Connecticut Legal Services. Mimi's CLS attorney immediately started divorce proceedings but soon discovered that Mimi's husband was a party in another divorce action involving another woman in another Connecticut city. After some additional investigation, Mimi's CLS attorney confirmed that Mimi's husband had been married previously in another state. Mimi's marriage was not valid, and her CLS attorney was able to secure an annulment and sole custody of her child. Mimi continues to work on her immigration status and participate in prosecuting the criminal charges brought against her husband and his friend for the way they abused her, which amounts to human trafficking.

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Deputy Director

Linda C. Spada
Comptroller

Anne Louise Blanchard
Litigation Director

Astrid Lebron
Director of Development

Whit Freer
Information Technology Administrator

CLS Helps Parents of Sexually Abused Daughters Protect Their Family

Dan and Carol escaped to the United States to start a new life with their two daughters. As they struggled to make ends meet in Connecticut, a neighbor often babysat their girls while they worked at whatever entry-level jobs they could find. They soon discovered that the babysitter's relative was sexually abusing their daughters. Although they did not have legal immigration status and feared the ramifications, Dan and Carol called the police and reported the abuse. The abuser, who unbeknown to them was a registered sex offender, was arrested. Because of their fear of immigration problems from having gone to the authorities, Dan and Carol turned to Connecticut Legal Services for help.

Dan and Carol's CLS attorney notified them that because of their role in reporting the crime that had been committed against their daughters, they were eligible to apply for a U-VISA, which would legalize their immigration status based on their help in bringing the abuser to justice. Their CLS attorney filed these applications on their behalf. Dan and Carol, who had worked at skilled jobs in their native country, were able to establish a business in Connecticut, which gives them more flexibility to be at home and take care of their daughters. They also were able to afford to move out of their neighborhood and into one in which the family can feel safer.



Letter from Executive Director and Board Chair

Dear friends and colleagues,

Every day, Connecticut Legal Services helps improve the lives of people who live in poverty. CLS is a law firm dedicated to the idea that lawyers can open doors and level the playing field for people facing enormous life problems.

Consider the people you will read about in this report:

- Elaine, an elderly woman with Alzheimer's disease, would have been unnecessarily institutionalized without CLS.*
- Jay, 16 years old, would have been sent to a residential facility instead of his family without CLS.*
- Samantha, a mother of four, would have struggled to find safety from her abusive husband if she hadn't been referred to CLS.*
- Jackie, a young child with physical disabilities and cognitive brain disorders, was denied government assistance until CLS helped her.*
- Danna, a woman living with her children in a foreclosed apartment, would not have received the relocation assistance mandated by law if CLS had not come to her aid.*
- Cindy, a woman with intellectual disabilities, would have been homeless without help from CLS.*

For more than seven years, CLS has been under immense financial pressure in a very tough economy. You—our friends and supporters—have fought for and given the financial support that has kept our doors open during these hard years. Our staff has tirelessly assisted thousands upon thousands of people throughout the state who face problems like Elaine's, Jay's, Samantha's, Jackie's, Danna's, and Cindy's.

Our mission is to provide access to justice—not only because a fair society requires access to justice but also to make concrete improvements in the lives of our very poor clients—in other words, to open doors and promote equality.

With your help, we can and do help change people's lives. Thank you.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard F. Orr".

Richard F. Orr
Board Chair (2011–2014)



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven D. Eppler-Epstein".

Steven D. Eppler-Epstein
Executive Director

Financial Supporters and Other Income Sources for 2013–2014 Expenditures

Government Based Grants

Agency on Aging, Senior Resources (Eastern Connecticut)	\$	46,408
Agency on Aging, Southwestern Connecticut Area		47,899
Agency on Aging, Western Connecticut Area		53,231
Bridgeport Housing Authority		44,884
City of Middletown		10,000
Community Development Block Grant Program—City of Waterbury		9,145
Community Development Block Grant Program—Town of Fairfield		2,934
State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities		29,999
State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division		897,810
State of Connecticut Department of Aging		6,000
State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families		3,469
State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development		85,000
State of Connecticut Department of Housing		194,114
State of Connecticut Department of Social Services		726,947
State of Connecticut Judicial Branch		80,000
State of Connecticut Long Term Care Ombudsman Program		16,875
State of Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy		143,619
State of Connecticut Office of the Chief Public Defender		43,520
Town of Ashford		500
Town of Coventry		900
Town of Darien		2,000
Town of Ellington		2,200
Town of Groton		10,000
Town of Mansfield		6,000
U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs		91,134
Total Government Based Grants	\$	2,554,586

Private Grants

Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, Inc.	\$	7,464
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut		14,199
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut - Woman & Girls Fund - Southeast		5,324
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut - Woman & Girls Fund - Windham		4,985
Connecticut Bar Foundation (Interest on Lawyers' Trust Account)		1,317,984

Connecticut Bar Foundation (Court Fees Grants-in-Aid)		5,868,248
Connecticut Bar Foundation (Judicial Branch Grants-in-Aid)		766,074
Connecticut Community Foundation		3,997
Connecticut Health Foundation		20,000
Connecticut Health Foundation - Health Equity Solutions		183,333
Estate of Ruth I. Krauss		7,439
Fairfield County Bar Association, Inc.		2,700
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund—General Re Corporation Fund		1,000
GE Capital Corporation		5,000
Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation		57,633
Maurice Goodman Foundation		2,500
St. John's Community Foundation		4,501
The Cottonwood Foundation, Inc.		1,483
The Frank Loomis Palmer Fund, Bank of America Trustee		7,539
The Tow Foundation, Inc.		50,072
United Way, Central and Northeastern Connecticut		65,000
United Way, Greater Waterbury		16,600
United Way, Greenwich		13,500
United Way, Meriden and Wallingford		21,500
United Way, Northwest Connecticut		6,481
United Way, Southeastern Connecticut		32,381
United Way, Southington		5,000
United Way, West Central Connecticut		6,000
United Way, Western Connecticut - Litchfield County		500
United Way, Western Connecticut - Northern Fairfield County		4,500
United Way, Western Connecticut - Stamford		13,000
Universal Health Care Foundation		7,500
University of Connecticut School of Law		9,975
Xerox Corporation		10,000
Total Private Grants	\$	8,543,412

Donations and Other Income

Attorney Fees	\$	235,499
Campaign for Justice		285,512
Donated Goods & Services		224,301
United Way Donor Designations		18,091
Interest/Dividends Earned & Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments		2,399
Miscellaneous		5,504
Total Donations and Other Income	\$	771,306
Total CLS Income	\$	11,869,305

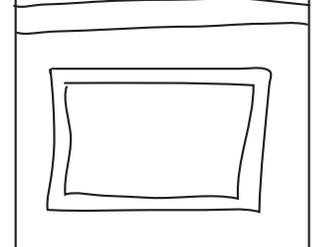
Statements of Financial Position—June 30, 2014, and June 30, 2013

ASSETS	June 30, 2014	June 30, 2013	LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	June 30, 2014	June 30, 2013
Current Assets			Current Liabilities		
Cash and Cash Equivalents—Operating Funds	\$ 1,546,808	\$ 1,354,252	Accrued Pension Liability	\$ 3,521,030	\$ 3,770,695
Cash in Escrow—Client Funds	2,214	1,887	Accounts Payable	203,347	106,592
Cash—Insurance Escrow	0	9,591	Accrued Expenses	32,891	50,380
Receivables			Refundable Advances	36,528	18,994
Grants and Contracts Receivable	\$ 103,569	\$ 86,086	Accrued Annual Leave	497,342	542,439
Promises to Give	654,884	722,784	Client Trust Deposits	2,214	1,885
Other Receivables	51,400	51,910	Total Liabilities	\$ 4,293,352	4,490,985
Prepaid Expenses	188,441	118,985	Net Assets		
Total Current Assets	\$ 2,547,316	\$ 2,345,495	Unrestricted		
Fixed Assets			Undesignated - attributable to operations	\$ 1,029,336	754,462
Property and Equipment	\$ 504,458	\$ 504,458	Undesignated - attributable to pension liability	-3,549,389	-3,665,097
Leasehold Improvements	776,457	766,295	Designated		
Total Fixed Assets Before Depreciation	1,280,915	1,270,753	Insurance Escrow	0	9,591
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-970,742	-921,099	Fixed Assets	310,173	349,654
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 310,173	\$ 349,654	Total Unrestricted Net Assets	(\$2,209,880)	(\$2,551,390)
Other Assets			Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	795,399	776,936
Security Deposits	\$ 21,382	\$ 21,382	Total Net Assets	(\$1,414,481)	(\$1,774,454)
Donated Common Stock	0	0	Total Liabilities And Net Assets	\$ 2,878,871	\$ 2,716,531
Total Other Assets	21,382	21,382			
Total Assets	\$ 2,878,871	\$ 2,716,531			

CLS Helps Abuse Victim Stop Running for Her Life

Samantha fled her residence in another state and moved to Connecticut with her four young children. She had been severely abused by her husband and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result. She had been seeing a therapist in the other state for the effects of the brutal abuse, but her husband accompanied her to the visits and waited for her. The abuse, which by then involved the children, became more brutal by the day. Samantha realized that she needed to protect her children and persuaded her therapist to help her escape. At their next appointment, the therapist distracted the husband while Samantha escaped through a back door. After arriving in Connecticut, she found her way to a domestic violence shelter. The shelter referred her to Connecticut Legal Services for help.

Her CLS attorney filed for divorce on her behalf and used a state law that allows a court to hear out-of-court testimony when one party is covered by a protective or restraining order. Under this statute, a videoconference hearing was permitted so that Samantha could proceed with her divorce without having to face her abuser directly, which would have left her too intimidated to testify. Samantha and her CLS attorney appeared in one courtroom, the judge sat in another courtroom in another Connecticut town, and Samantha's husband and his attorney appeared in a third courtroom. During a lengthy, two-day direct examination, Samantha's detailed testimony about the physical and emotional abuse she and her children had suffered clearly made a strong impact on the judge. The judge requested everyone's presence in court for the husband's testimony, which was not credible. The judge granted Samantha sole custody of the children and ordered that her now ex-husband provide financial assistance. Samantha and her children are now safe and overcoming the effects of their abuse.



Connecticut Legal Services Campaign for Justice

Partners (\$10,000 and up)

Day Pitney LLP and its partners
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Finn, Dixon & Herling
Kitchings Family Fund at the
Community Foundation of
Middlesex County
Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder, PC
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LLC
Dorothy M. Freeburg
Ross Garber

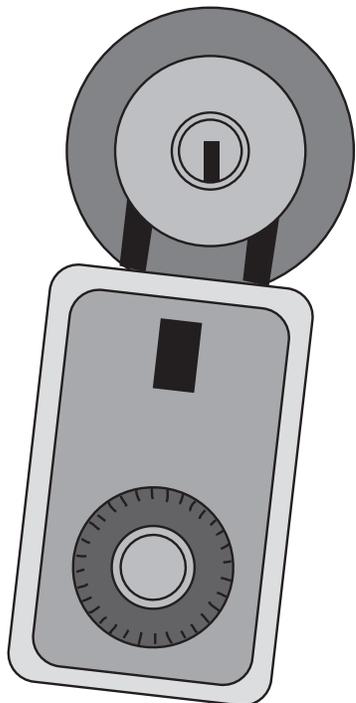
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Course
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D. R. Zito



CLS Helps Tenant Overcome Landlord Foreclosure

Danna and her minor children were tenants in a property that had been foreclosed. The agent for the foreclosing bank, and the bank itself, were both located outside Connecticut. The agent met with Danna in Connecticut and offered her only 50 percent of the statutory amount to assist with relocation needs. (Connecticut law establishes a minimum amount of money to offer in these situations.) Danna and her children could not afford to move into a new apartment; however, after the agent made the offer, she did not hear from him again. Danna's social worker tried to contact the agent but was unable to get a response. Danna applied to Connecticut Legal Services for help.

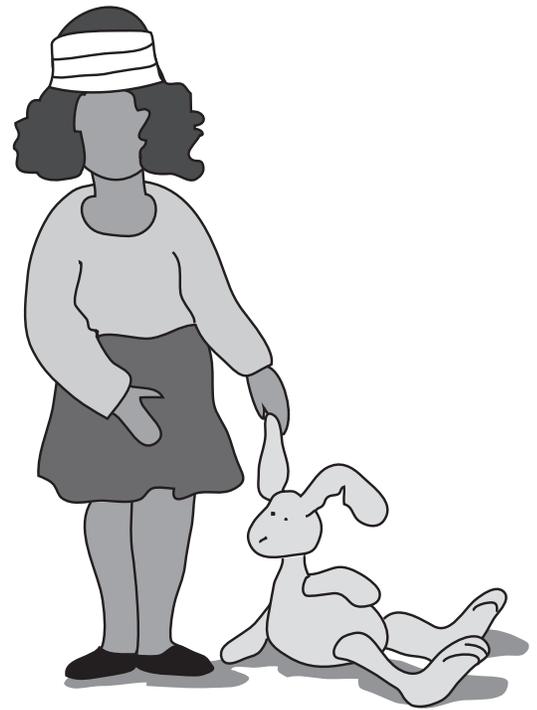
Her CLS attorney found that other tenants in the building were in the same situation. On behalf of the tenants of the building, the CLS attorney contacted the agent to discuss the offer and explained that it did not comply with Connecticut law. The attorney also spoke with the bank's legal department and provided the information about its obligations and the statutory requirements. The bank immediately responded with appropriate written offers for the tenants in the building. Within one month of the CLS attorney's involvement, the tenants were able to move into new homes.

Patrons
(\$200–\$499)

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 Attorney James Wu
 Nathaniel and Mary Yordon
 Martin Zeldis



**CLS Helps Child With Rare Disease
 Maintain Medical Services**

Jackie is a young child who was born with a very rare brain malformation. Because of her condition, she has experienced developmental delays, cognitive limitations, learning disabilities, and seizures. Shortly after Jackie was born, her grandmother, who is also her guardian, applied for SSI disability benefits for Jackie to help with the increasing costs of her much-needed medical care, but the application was denied. Jackie's grandmother requested a hearing, but the attorney she hired did not have much experience in SSI disability cases, and the administrative law judge (ALJ) assigned to the case denied the claim. Jackie's grandmother was devastated. She could not afford to pay the attorney for more help and didn't know where to turn. After making some inquiries, she found her way to Connecticut Legal Services.

Jackie's CLS attorney filed a request for review at the Appeals Council and submitted updated medical and educational documentation along with a memo of law arguing that the ALJ had committed several errors in rendering her decision. The Appeals Council agreed with Jackie's CLS attorney and remanded the case for a supplemental hearing. The CLS attorney presented the necessary information and legal arguments to show that Jackie qualified for SSI disability benefits, including those that she would have received in past years if her grandmother's initial application had been accepted. Thanks to the efforts of Jackie's CLS attorney, she was awarded \$12,488.00 in retroactive benefits and monthly benefits of \$337.75. Now, she and her grandmother will no longer have to worry about how they will pay for Jackie's medical care.

Campaign for Justice continued

Supporters (Up to \$199)

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Peter Arakas and
Karen Kellerman
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CLS Helps Disabled Woman Stay in the Community

Cindy has an intellectual disability. She has given power of attorney for financial matters to a family member but acts as her own guardian. She was in a state of emotional instability and experiencing great stress from numerous family members who were pressuring her and trying to make decisions on her behalf. This stress caused her to act out behaviorally, and she threatened to hurt herself. The biggest dilemma in Cindy's life was the breakdown of her 11-year marriage. Her husband filed for divorce the day she left a mental health unit in a local hospital. Because of the divorce, Cindy was likely to face homelessness. She was referred to Connecticut Legal Services for help. Her CLS attorney filed the necessary paperwork so that Cindy could continue living in her home, where she remained for another eight months until the divorce was finalized.

At that time, CLS, the Department of Developmental Services, and private providers worked together to make sure Cindy was receiving all the benefits to which she was entitled and made sure that she was participating in appropriate activities during the day to meet her needs. They helped her move out of the home she had shared with her husband and into her own apartment. She now has access to the resources she needs to live independently within the community, including nursing services to assist with her diabetes, access to a day program, and enrollment in a paid employment program. Thanks to CLS, Cindy no longer has to worry about being homeless and can live on her own in the community.

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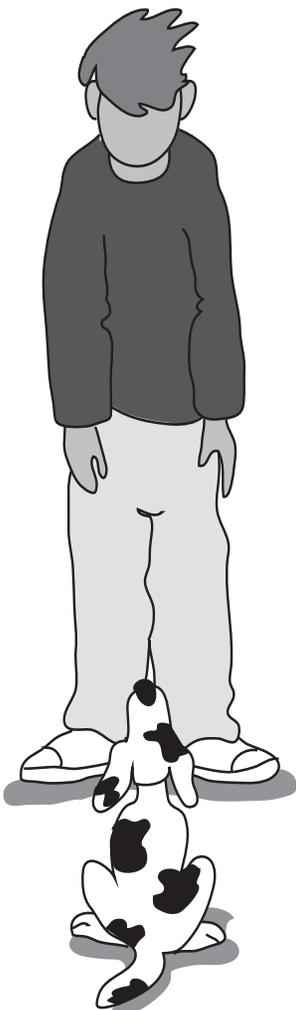
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In Memory of

Tim Aher
 Angelo Arocho



CLS Helps Neglected Child Find New Home

Jay is 16 years old and spent much of his life being shuffled from foster home to foster home before being referred to Connecticut Legal Services. The Department of Children and Families planned to transfer him to a residential placement facility even though Jay desperately wanted to live with a family. The DCF claimed that Jay could not be placed with a family because of his “documented” history of violence. This history consisted of false claims made by Jay’s mother that Jay had tried to kill his brother and their dog—the claims that had first resulted in Jay’s removal from her home and his being heavily medicated. In truth, Jay played well with his brother—the mother had wildly exaggerated their snowball fights—and he once said, “I could kill that dog” when he found that the dog had dirtied his bed with feces. His CLS attorneys worked closely with his school supports and clinician to get a better idea of his mental health issues. What was documented in Jay’s DCF file and what the CLS attorneys observed and were told by his school supports and clinician just didn’t add up. Jay did not demonstrate any hostility or anger; instead, he appeared dejected and sad. He rarely lifted his gaze to make eye contact; he mostly stared at his shoes and said little. It was determined that the volume of psychotropic medication he was taking caused his flat affect.

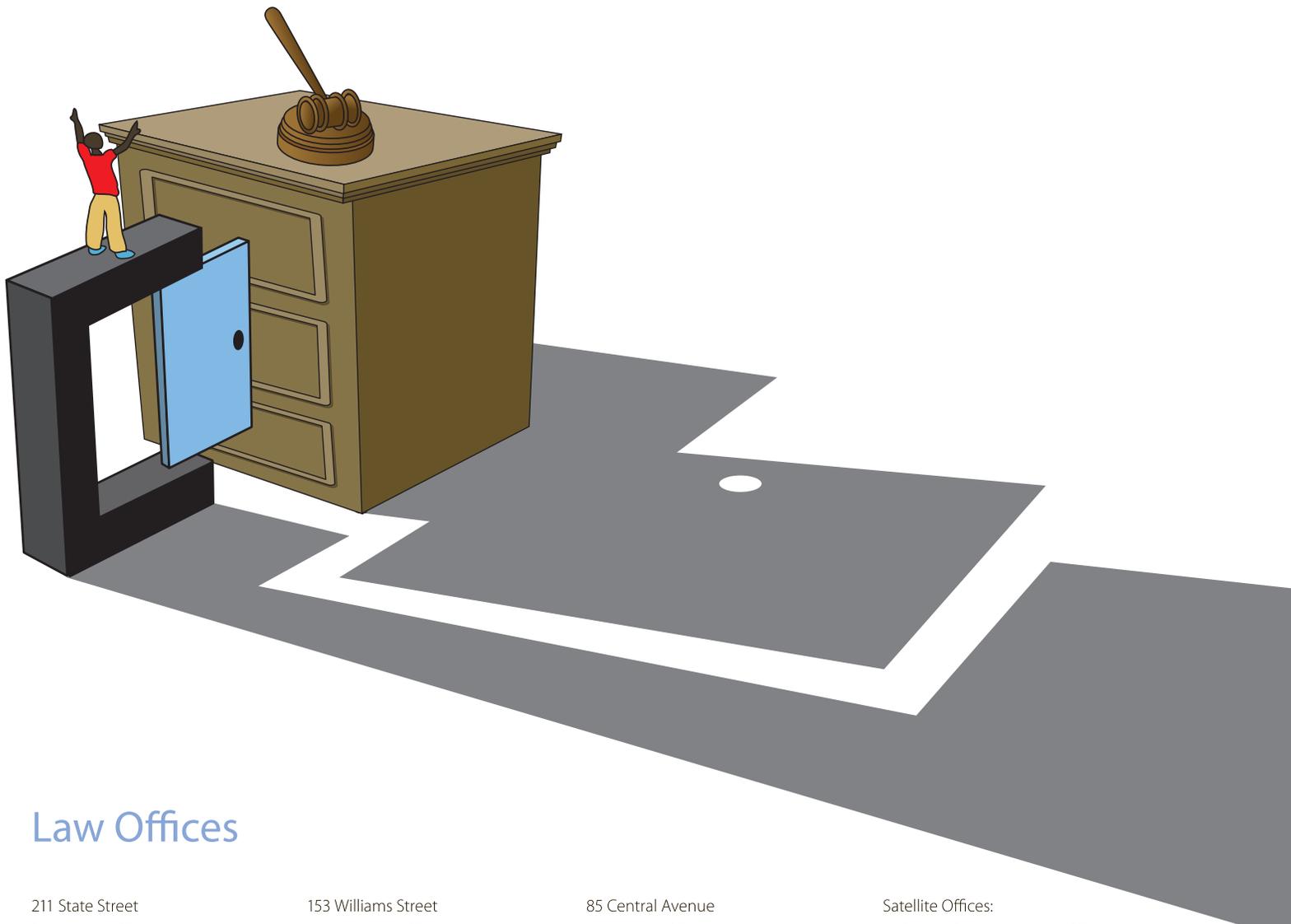
Jay’s CLS attorneys persuaded DCF to make a referral for a foster home. Pam, a single mother in a neighboring town, was identified as a possible placement. Jay met with Pam, and they decided that they would give it a go. It was months before Jay could trust Pam. He challenged her rules, but Pam didn’t fold and didn’t give up on Jay, proving to be a determined mother. Pam attended every school meeting and, along with Jay’s attorney and surrogate parent, she advocated for the best education possible for Jay. When he was first placed in her home, Jay attended an alternative high school that created an individual education plan. Unfortunately, it did not meet his specific needs. His CLS attorneys worked to correct the areas of the plan that were inappropriate and advocated for his participation in after-school sports. Jay was taken off the medications, and his athletic activities calmed any anxieties he felt and lifted his spirits. With the additional and appropriate services he received—which included four hours of tutoring per week, 208 hours of therapeutic mentoring per year, a six-week football camp every summer, a community-based life-skills program, and a mixed martial arts program—Jay transitioned back into the regular high school, and his grades improved from failing to A’s and B’s.

Now in his junior year, Jay takes college prep courses and hopes to attend Boston College after he graduates from high school. Pam decided to make Jay a permanent part of her family and moved to adopt him. Jay’s CLS attorneys ensured that the services that Jay needed were included in the adoption contract before it became final. During one of CLS’s last visits to him, Jay appeared content as he sat next to his mom on the sofa, talking about driver’s education. Jay has to log a certain number of hours at the wheel before he can take his driver’s test, so he has been driving Pam around. Jay flashed a big smile, said, “I guess I’m pretty happy right now!” and invited his CLS attorneys to his high school graduation next year.

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