"I LOVE MY NEW LOOK"
CLS Helps Abused Woman and Her Children Find Safety

A local domestic violence shelter referred Elena* to Connecticut Legal Services. She started a divorce action against her husband and needed help getting full and sole custody of their one-year-old child. In addition to mental and emotional abuse, Elena suffered numerous beatings throughout her marriage. She had her husband arrested when he turned his violence against their children. He attacked Elena’s five-year-old son and their one-year-old son, breaking 13 of the boys’ ribs. Elena’s husband faces charges of assault, risk of injury to a minor, and first-degree assault with extreme indifference to life. Elena’s CLS attorney represented her in the divorce proceeding and ensured that restraining and protective orders were in place. Elena obtained a divorce, full and sole custody of their child, and financial support for herself and her children.

*Names and identifying information in CLS client stories were changed to protect client confidentiality.
Service Area, Offices, and Staff

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, two satellite offices, and one administrative office.

On June 30, 2019, the CLS staff consisted of
- 49.95 FTE lawyers
- 2.00 FTE paralegals
- 11.80 FTE legal assistants
- .55 FTE child welfare advocates
- 10.00 FTE administrative staff.

Distribution of Cases

In 2018–2019, Connecticut Legal Services received approximately 16,912 requests for service. We responded by opening 3,895 new cases for legal representation and counseling. We also worked on 2,175 cases opened in previous years. CLS services in these 6,070 cases benefited approximately 13,997 members of low-income households.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing and homelessness</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer law (mostly for elderly)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence, divorce, child support, and other family matters</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health law (including Medicaid, Medicare, and nursing home matters)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and juvenile law</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public benefits and employment</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual disabilities</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cases</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to working on individual cases, CLS conducted 242 community legal education events attended by 5,182 people in 51 cities and towns across Connecticut.
2018–2019 Board of Directors and Advisory Council

Officers
Ann Taylor, Esq.—Chair
Retired Senior Vice President and General Counsel: Connecticut Children’s Medical Center
Carolyn Wilkes Kaas, Esq.—Vice Chair
Associate Professor of Law: Quinnipiac University School of Law
Helen Harris, Esq.—Treasurer
Partner: Day Pitney LLP
Tadhg Dooley, Esq.—Secretary
Partner: Wiggin & Dana LLP

Executive Committee
Mike Hanley—Senior Consultant: Partnership for Strong Communities
Ivy McKinney, Esq.—Retired Vice President, Deputy General Counsel, and Chief Ethics Officer: Xerox Corporation
Richard Orr, Esq.—Special Counsel: University of Connecticut
Kevin Rasch, Esq.—Vice President of Government Affairs and Programs: Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare
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Courtland Hall—Connecticut State Marshal
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Laura Jordan, Esq.—Senior Director of Ethics and Government: Cablevision
Peter Knight, Esq.—Partner: Robinson & Cole LLP
Basam (Bas) E. Nabulsi, Esq.—Partner: McCarter & English, LLP
Jeffrey Plotkin, Esq.—Partner: Finn Dixon & Herling LLP
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Joel Freedman—Glastonbury, Conn.
Karen Jarmoc—Executive Director: Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Jay Malcynsky, Esq.—Partner: Gaffney, Bennett & Associates, Inc.

2018–2019 Chief Office Personnel
Deborah R. Witkin
Executive Director
Anne Louise Blanchard
Deputy Director
Nilda R. Havrilla
Litigation and Advocacy Director
Keith Boyce
Financial Director
Astrid Lebron
Director of Development
Whit Freer
Information Technology Administrator

CLS Helps Employee Get Benefits She Needs
Margie, a desperately poor Haitian woman who speaks little English, worked as a health care aide. When she lost her job at a nursing home, she started collecting a small amount of unemployment compensation. About ten months later, she received a letter from the Department of Labor (DOL) stating that it had overpaid her by several thousand dollars. The DOL demanded that she return the amount of the overpayment and pay a hefty penalty. The agency informed Margie that it would deduct the amount owed from future unemployment payments, which meant she would not have enough money to pay her rent or buy food. She requested a hearing that she and her daughter attended. It was found that the overpayment was not Margie’s fault, and the penalty was removed. However, DOL required that she return the overpayment.

Margie’s request for a waiver of repayment was denied. The law allows the DOL to waive repayment of overpayments if the overage was not the fault of the recipient and if the recipient’s income is below the poverty level. Margie met both conditions. Desperate, she and her daughter turned to Connecticut Legal Services. Her CLS attorney represented Margie at a DOL hearing, and the waiver was granted. In addition, Margie was able to keep the small amount of unemployment compensation to which she was entitled. That benefit enabled Margie to pay her living expenses while she looked for another job.
Dear Friends,

Thank you for your commitment to the community we serve. Together, we protect critical civil legal rights and make the world a more just and equitable place for those struggling to access justice, despite the challenges of poverty and serious life issues.

In 2018–2019, Connecticut Legal Services developed a four-year strategic plan to provide a strong and vibrant road map to our future. We used the planning process as an opportunity to reflect, refine, and recommit ourselves to CLS’ mission, vision, and values while focusing on the needs and opportunities of today and tomorrow. We use the goals and strategies in our plan to deepen our work, reinforce our infrastructure, and collaborate and build partnerships in ways that will have an even greater impact on those we serve.

In addition, we re-energized our communications efforts to better reflect our dynamic work. We enhanced our website, increased our social media presence, and updated our look, as the design of this 2018–2019 Annual Report shows.

These efforts enhance our work as a state leader in providing access to justice through individual and systemic advocacy. As a private, nonprofit organization, we rely on your partnership as we work to remove barriers to justice and opportunity for low-income people in crisis.

Finally, as the COVID-19 pandemic heightens challenges to our clients and staff, we want to assure our friends that CLS continues to focus on helping clients navigate the additional pandemic related challenges they face.

Thank you for your support of our mission.

Sincerely,

Deborah R. Witkin
Executive Director, CLS

Ann G. Taylor
Chair, CLS Board of Directors
# Financial Supporters and Other Income Sources for 2018–2019

## Government-Based Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency on Aging, Senior Resources (Eastern Connecticut)</td>
<td>$50,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency on Aging, Southwestern Connecticut Area</td>
<td>48,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency on Aging, Western Connecticut Area</td>
<td>52,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Middletown</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Block Grant Program—City of Waterbury</td>
<td>10,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Block Grant Program—Town of Fairfield</td>
<td>3,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park City Communities</td>
<td>44,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Court Support Services—Family Matters Training Program</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services</td>
<td>90,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>109,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Department of Social Services</td>
<td>689,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Judicial Branch</td>
<td>111,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program</td>
<td>8,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Nonprofit Grant Program</td>
<td>139,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Office of the Chief Public Defender</td>
<td>106,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Connecticut Office of Victim Services</td>
<td>1,629,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Ashford</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Coventry</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Ellington</td>
<td>2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Groton</td>
<td>7,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Mansfield</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Government-Based Grants</strong></td>
<td>$3,131,981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Private Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children's Community Programs of Connecticut</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut, Women &amp; Girls Fund</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Foundation of Fairfield County</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Foundation of Greater New Britain</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Foundation of Middlesex County</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Bar Foundation (Bank of America Settlement Funds)</td>
<td>734,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Bar Foundation (Court Fees Grant-in-Aid)</td>
<td>6,528,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Bar Foundation (Interest on Lawyer's Trust Account)</td>
<td>1,707,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Bar Foundation (Judicial Branch Grant-in-Aid)</td>
<td>707,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Bar Foundation (Singer Fellow)</td>
<td>56,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Community Foundation</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut Health Foundation</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Justice Works Trafficking Victims Protection Act Fellow</td>
<td>54,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Distress Research Project</td>
<td>466,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Loomis Palmer Foundation</td>
<td>3,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meriden Foundation</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John's Community Foundation</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera Institute of Justice, Inc.</td>
<td>73,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Central and Northeastern Connecticut</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Greater Waterbury</td>
<td>16,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Meriden and Wallingford</td>
<td>21,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Northwest Connecticut</td>
<td>3,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Southeastern Connecticut</td>
<td>25,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, Southington</td>
<td>3,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way, West Central Connecticut</td>
<td>3,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Private Grants</strong></td>
<td>$10,620,923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Donations and Other Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign for Justice</td>
<td>$298,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donated Goods and Services</td>
<td>274,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>31,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Fees</td>
<td>218,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way Donor Designations</td>
<td>9,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Donations and Other Income</strong></td>
<td>$833,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total CLS Income</strong></td>
<td>$14,586,487</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

6
## Statements of Financial Position—June 30, 2019, and June 30, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>June 30, 2019</th>
<th>June 30, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents— Operating Funds</td>
<td>$1,579,508</td>
<td>$2,400,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash in Escrow—Client Funds</td>
<td>$2,368</td>
<td>$19,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term Investments</td>
<td>1,494,751</td>
<td>$749,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Contracts Receivable</td>
<td>$997,345</td>
<td>$416,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promises to Give</td>
<td>$1,778,491</td>
<td>$1,588,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Receivables</td>
<td>$25,971</td>
<td>$114,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
<td>$116,211</td>
<td>$114,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>$5,994,645</td>
<td>$5,402,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, Equipment, and Software</td>
<td>$1,728,712</td>
<td>$1,588,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leasehold Improvements</td>
<td>$311,118</td>
<td>$334,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fixed Assets Before Depreciation</strong></td>
<td>$2,039,830</td>
<td>$1,922,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Accumulated Depreciation</td>
<td>($1,171,998)</td>
<td>($1,124,810)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fixed Assets</strong></td>
<td>$867,832</td>
<td>$798,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Deposits</td>
<td>$66,038</td>
<td>$69,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Assets</strong></td>
<td>$66,038</td>
<td>$69,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>$6,928,515</td>
<td>$6,270,314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</th>
<th>June 30, 2019</th>
<th>June 30, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Pension Liability</td>
<td>$5,036,631</td>
<td>$3,645,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$263,599</td>
<td>$223,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Expenses</td>
<td>$242,136</td>
<td>$221,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
<td>$11,719</td>
<td>$585,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Annual Leave</td>
<td>$488,536</td>
<td>$472,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Trust Deposits</td>
<td>$2,368</td>
<td>$19,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,044,989</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,167,328</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Donor Restrictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributable to operations</td>
<td>$561,921</td>
<td>$1,376,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributable to pension liability</td>
<td>(1,830,386)</td>
<td>(1,430,802)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>(1,268,465)</td>
<td>($53,817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Donor Restrictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets With Donor Restrictions</td>
<td>$2,151,991</td>
<td>1,156,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$883,526</td>
<td>$1,102,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,928,515</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,270,314</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLS Helps Grandmother Care for Grandchild

Jack has lived with Wanda, his grandmother, since birth because his mother has a history of violence and mental illness. Jack’s mother claimed that she lived with Wanda, was Jack’s primary caretaker, and was eligible for state benefits. However, Wanda had Jack’s mother taken off the lease months earlier when she moved out and left Jack behind. Both the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) became involved, but Jack’s mother refused to tell anyone where she lived. Wanda finally discovered Jack’s mother’s address and reported it to DSS. Connecticut Legal Services helped Wanda prepare an affidavit detailing all the facts in the case and requested a hearing. Wanda’s CLS attorney was able to persuade DSS that Wanda did have physical custody of Jack. DSS reopened the case and granted benefits back to the date that Jack’s mother had been taken off the lease. Wanda now receives cash and food assistance to help with the expenses of raising Jack.

As an added benefit, Wanda was eligible for HUSKY A as the caretaker of her grandson. This makes accessing care for her own disability issues much easier. Jack, who now has an individualized education plan because of his autism, has been making tremendous progress in school. Everyone familiar with the situation agrees that Wanda is providing the stability and support that Jack needs.
Campaign for Justice Contributors

**Partners:**  
$25,000–$49,999  
Shipman & Goodwin LLP

**Trailblazers:**  
$10,000–$24,999  
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McCarter & English, LLP  
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**Leaders:**  
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Claire L. Helsing Foundation  
The Ruth Krauss Foundation, Inc.  
James Randle

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Center for Medicare Advocacy Inc.  
Leslyn O. Clark  
Christina E. Clayton  
CT Chapter of American Immigration Lawyers Association  
The Flood Law Firm  
Dahlia Grace  
Ursula L. Haerter  
Courtland H. Hall  
J Casey Healy  
Felicia Hoeniger, Attorney-at-Law  
Marianne B. Kilby  
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**Patrons:**  
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Susan Brown  
Michael P. Byrne  
Suzanne E. Caron  
Dennis Ciccarillo  
Richard P. Colbert  
Mary A. Conklin  
Edward Cosden  
Sonja M. Devitt  
Maureen Dewan and Stuart C. Belkin  
Tadhg Dooley  
Marianne Barbino Dubuque

CLS Helps Woman Get Disability Services

Elia is 54 years old and severely disabled because of advanced Huntington's Disease. She sought Social Security disability benefits but was denied. The SSA stated that her medical records were insufficient to support her application for benefits. Elia was referred to Connecticut Legal Services for help. Her CLS attorney reviewed the records and arranged to obtain additional medical records that more clearly detailed Elia’s disabilities. Her attorney then sought an on-the-record decision from an administrative law judge. The judge awarded Elia the benefits she desperately needs and to which she is entitled.
CLS Helps Disabled Woman Avoid Homelessness

Teri, a person with disabilities, is the caretaker for her grandchildren and niece. After renting an apartment for 13 years, she complained to her landlord and the health department about problems with mice and bedbugs. Although the health department told the landlord to exterminate, he did not. Instead, he told Teri to get a cat. His refusal to obey the order to exterminate frustrated her, and she decided to use some of the rent money to buy traps and sprays. Her landlord started an eviction action against her for not paying the full amount of rent. During this time, Teri became eligible for a Section 8 voucher. However, an eviction based on nonpayment of rent would have jeopardized that eligibility. She appealed to Connecticut Legal Services, which represented her in the eviction action. We helped Teri obtain a settlement agreement that gave her time to find another place and did not jeopardize her Section 8 eligibility.

Supporters:

up to $199

Henri Alexandre
Alliance Data
Allied World
AmazonSmile, proceeds from sales
Andrews & Young, PC
Anonymous
Ann & Henry Arnold

Robert Arnold
Bill and Catherine Bachrach
Livia Barndollar
Melissa Barton
Donald L. Becker
Hon. Thomas A. Bishop
Linda K. Blanchette
Raymond C. Bliss, Esq.
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Michael A. Brown
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Robert D. Coffey
Arlene Cohen
Consumer Law Group, LLC
Christopher M. Cosgrove
Douglas Crockett
Andrea Daniels
Garry H. Desjardins
Marc W. Dost
Eduardo Dostal
Lorraine L. Dugas
Mary Eaves
Klaus and Joyce Eppler
Nancy Evans
Michael C. Fahey
Marvin and Evelyn Farbman
Melissa Farley
Seth and Betty Feigenbaum
Law Offices of Seth Feigenbaum
LLC

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Kathleen Flaherty and James Valentino
Gary D. and Veronica S. M. Foster
Harry and Polly Geller
James J. Gentile
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Ellin Grenger
Madeleine Grossman
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The hardworking and dedicated
CLS staff
Darien Wellness
Marvin Farbman
Judge Joseph Goldberg
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The work of Sydney and Josh
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CLS Helps Keep Abused Child Safe
Maria came to Connecticut Legal Services for help obtaining full custody of her nine-year-old daughter, Susie. While staying overnight with her father, she was sexually assaulted on multiple occasions by her 14-year-old half-brother. Susie’s father refused to believe her and did nothing to lessen the danger and trauma of forcing Susie to continue to interact with her abuser. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) became involved, and the half-brother was criminally charged for his assaults on Susie. Because of the DCF findings and CLS advocacy, Maria retained sole custody of her daughter. The father no longer has overnight visitation with Susie, and he is forbidden from allowing contact between Susie and her half-brother. She is now safe from abuse, and Maria no longer fears for her daughter’s well-being.

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CLS Helps Elderly Cancer Victim Get Health Care

Jane is an elderly Asian woman who doesn’t speak English. She moved to Connecticut from New York after being evicted from her home because she could not pay the rent and to obtain medical treatment when she was diagnosed with cancer. Jane was in a nursing home, and when she applied for Medicaid benefits, the Department of Social Services (DSS) denied her coverage. The nursing home referred Jane to Connecticut Legal Services for assistance. Jane’s CLS attorney discovered that DSS believed that Jane was part owner of a fish market in another state and that income and assets of that fish market should be attributed to her. Jane had been involved with the market many years earlier, but she was not a part owner, and there was no corporate structure or partnership agreement. When Jane became ill, the fish market continued without her, and she didn’t receive any income or assets.

Jane’s CLS attorney secured a translator/interpreter to communicate with Jane. Her attorney also investigated the issue of the fish market, talking to the owner (who does not speak English either), and obtaining and analyzing bank records and tax returns for the business. Through this work, CLS was able to show that Jane did not benefit from the business and convinced DSS that Jane was eligible for and should receive Medicaid assistance. CLS kept Jane from being discharged from the nursing home when she had nowhere else to go and needed help treating her cancer.