

## LEADERSHIP

Our Board of Directors and advisory board include community members and other friends of CLSEPA.

## STAFF

### **CANDICE GREENBERG, ESQ.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### **MARY DUTCHER, ESQ.**

STAFF ATTORNEY, IMMIGRATION

### **SHIRLEY HOCHHAUSEN, ESQ.**

SUPERVISING ATTORNEY

ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING INITIATIVE

### **JEANNE MERINO, ESQ.**

SUPERVISING ATTORNEY, HOUSING

### **JULIE HANSEN QUINLAN, ESQ.**

SUPERVISING ATTORNEY

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PROGRAM (VAP)

### **MARILIA ZELLNER, ESQ.**

STAFF ATTORNEY, IMMIGRATION

### **NEIL BABRA, ESQ.**

STAFF ATTORNEY, IMMIGRATION

### **JONATHAN FROHNMAYER**

PROGRAM DIRECTOR (VAP)

### **VICTOR RAMIREZ**

HOUSING PARALEGAL

### **MARICELA CASTILLO**

OFFICE MANAGER

## COLLABORATION

In order to provide the best possible services to our clients, CLSEPA collaborates extensively with community organizations, non-profit groups, government agencies, businesses, Stanford University and Stanford Law School. CLSEPA and the Stanford Community Law Clinic cooperate to provide services without duplication of effort, overlapping only in those areas where the needs of our clients exceed the capacity of either agency.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- 1 MAKE A CONTRIBUTION
- 2 DONATE OFFICE EQUIPMENT
- 3 VOLUNTEER

OR ANY COMBINATION OF 1, 2 & 3!

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

CLSEPA has received extraordinary support from local foundations, law firms and sponsors. CLSEPA has benefited from countless hours of volunteer service from local firms, individual attorneys, other professionals, law students, and community volunteers.

## SOME OF OUR SUPPORTERS

ALC Legal Technologies • AON • Atkinson Foundation  
California Bank & Trust • Blue Oak Capital  
Blue Shield of California Foundation • Blackstone Discovery  
Cooley Godward Kronish • Cornish & Carey Commercial  
Davis Polk & Wardwell • DLA Piper US LLP • Dorsey & Whitney  
Doty Barlow Britt & Thomas • Equal Justice America  
Fenwick and West • Finnegan Henderson Farabow Garrett & Dunner  
Houlihan Lokey Howard & Zukin • Howrey • Lakin Spears  
Lexis Nexis • Morgan Lewis • Morrison & Foerster • Murray & Murray  
Nolan, Armstrong & Barton • Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe  
Philanthropic Ventures Foundation • Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund  
Palo Alto Community Fund • Rector Motor Car Company  
Renee Glover Chantler Law Office • Robert Half Legal  
Saal Family Foundation • San Francisco Foundation  
Sand Hill Advisors • Silicon Valley Campaign for Legal Services  
Silicon Valley Community Foundation • Simpson Thacher & Bartlett  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom • Skyline  
State Bar Legal Services Trust Fund Program  
TBI Construction & Construction Management  
Thoits, Love, Hershberger & McLea • Townsend and Townsend and Crew  
VanLobenSels/RembeRock Foundation • Vita Benefits Group  
Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati Foundation  
Winograd-Hutner Family Fund • Zellerbach Family Foundation

## VOLUNTEER LAW FIRMS

Bingham McCutchen • Cooley Godward • Davis Polk & Wardwell  
Dechert • Dorsey & Whitney • Dewey & LeBoeuf • DLA Piper US  
Fenwick & West • Gibson Dunn & Crutcher • Heller Ehrman  
Hoge Fenton • Howrey • Latham & Watkins • Mayer Brown  
Miller Starr Regalia • Morgan Lewis & Bockius • Morrison & Foerster  
Nolan, Armstrong & Barton • Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe  
Quinn Emanuel • Simpson Thacher & Bartlett  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom • Sullivan & Cromwell  
Thelen Townsend and Townsend and Crew • Wilmer Hale  
Weil, Gotshal & Manges • Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati

*Various individual attorneys*



## COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES IN EAST PALO ALTO

Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) provides free and low cost legal services to low-income and under-served people in East Palo Alto and the surrounding communities. Our practice areas include housing, immigration, general civil litigation and anti-predatory lending.

Through the efforts of volunteer attorneys, law students, community volunteers and our dedicated staff members, we provide life-changing legal services to individuals and families in need.

CLSEPA opened in September 2002. We serve nearly 1300 clients each year. We are a community-based organization funded by grants and donations from foundations, law firms, legal organizations and individuals.

*CLSEPA is located on University Avenue  
in the heart of East Palo Alto.*



2117-B University Avenue  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303



Tel. (650)326-6440  
Fax. (650) 326-9722



Email: [info@CLSEPA.org](mailto:info@CLSEPA.org)  
[www.CLSEPA.org](http://www.CLSEPA.org)

### Housing Program

In a community with tremendous need for help with housing questions, CLSEPA turns no one away. Supervising attorney Jeanne Merino and paralegal Victor Ramirez see clients both at evening clinics and on a walk-in basis. They are assisted by Stanford Law School students who participate in our twice-monthly advice sessions, interviewing and counseling tenants under the direction of CLSEPA staff.

### Advice & Information

CLSEPA advises clients on their rights and responsibilities regarding eviction and threatened eviction, habitability, rent levels, Section 8 housing, discrimination, retaliation, and security deposits. Our office helps tenants write letters and complete documents. We also attend inspections.

### Brief Services

CLSEPA writes demand letters, helps file answers in court, and negotiates with landlords and opposing counsel on behalf of clients. We frequently assist clients who represent themselves in unlawful detainer cases and in small claims court.

### Community Outreach & Education

CLSEPA is available to do presentations in English and Spanish on topics ranging from recovering a security deposit, to working with a landlord and other tenants in the building, to reducing habitability problems. In addition, CLSEPA offers regular outreach sessions to community residents

### Volunteer Attorney Program (VAP)

Through our Volunteer Attorney Program, Community Legal Services helps people with a wide range of legal problems, including consumer fraud, insurance, debt collection, car financing, contracts, and general civil issues.

Trained Stanford Law School students assist clients under the direction of supervising attorney Julie Hansen Quinlan. They conduct interviews, write legal memoranda, provide advice, advocate, and negotiate as appropriate in each case. Clients with more intractable legal problems are referred to attorneys from local firms who provide their services free of charge.

### Anti-Predatory Lending Initiative

Home loans are probably the largest financial transaction most people will ever enter into. The ongoing mortgage crisis demonstrates the widespread harm that can be brought on by predatory home loans. Systematic equity-stripping is occurring across the Bay Area and bad loans, loan foreclosures and evictions resulting from illegal loans keep our most vulnerable communities in poverty. CLSEPA supervising attorney Shirley Hochhausen works in conjunction with leading Bay Area law firms to counsel borrowers, reform loans and litigate illegal loans.

### Referrals

CLSEPA refers individuals to social service agencies or private attorneys when additional assistance is needed.

### Immigration Program

CLSEPA provides free and extremely low-cost immigration legal services for our local communities. In EPA, where two thirds of the population is Latino or Pacific Islander, these services are crucial.

### Advice & Information

Trained, supervised Stanford Law Students interview clients and relay advice to them on how to regularize their own or family members' immigration status. Bilingual information handouts on immigrants' rights topics are available.

### Brief Services, Applications & Representation

We help clients with Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) claims, U-Visas, family petitions, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, green card renewals, and more.

### Community Outreach & Education

CLSEPA does presentations in Spanish and English on immigrants' rights and responsibilities, legislative updates, avoiding "notario" scams and getting a green card. These presentations have reached hundreds of people.

### Policy Work & Advocacy

CLSEPA offers technical assistance and legal expertise for local leaders of immigrant groups, grassroots organizers, and law enforcement officials.

### Immigration Raids

CLSEPA helps safeguard the constitutional rights of victims of raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) by connecting them with pro bono attorneys in appropriate cases.





COMMUNITY  
LEGAL SERVICES IN  
EAST PALO ALTO

## WELCOME

In the summer of 2002, it was not entirely apparent that CLSEPA would take hold and survive. The need for legal services in East Palo Alto was obvious and urgent. We had a courageous staff and big-hearted board with a strong sense of purpose and a will to succeed. Some of you with us tonight – our first donors – caught the staff and board's enthusiasm and got out your checkbooks. On a shoestring budget, the agency opened in two very small rooms on Bay Road, offering assistance with housing issues, immigration and a variety of civil commercial matters.

Who among us in those days could imagine that this year we would be able to serve 1,300 families and individuals? We've grown in other ways as well. CLSEPA staff are now able to represent clients in court when attempts to negotiate settlements fail. Five years ago, we began to assist victims of predatory lenders, saving their homes and apartments. Today we have stable funding and dozens of private attorneys willing to take our clients on a *pro bono* basis. All this is possible only because of your support – your checks, your *pro bono* service, your volunteer efforts, your generous gifts of time and talent. Tonight we want to say thank you.

The Four Seasons Hotel of Silicon Valley and their staff are our hosts this evening. We hope you enjoy the wonderful food and the drinks that they have most generously donated. The Wobogo Jazz Ensemble and the Peninsula Youth Orchestra will have us tapping our feet. Our heartfelt thanks to them all!

THANK YOU – WE CAN'T SAY IT TOO OFTEN

Enjoy!

Candice Greenberg  
Executive Director



## CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

Ruben Abrica  
Mayor

David Woods  
Vice Mayor

A. Peter Evans  
Councilmember

Carlos Romero  
Councilmember

Laura Martinez  
Councilmember

Alvin D. James  
City Manager/City Clerk

Vincent C. Ewing  
City Attorney

June 3, 2009

Candice Greenberg, Executive Director  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto  
2117B University Avenue  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dear Ms. Greenberg:

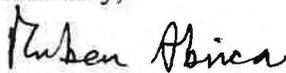
As Mayor of East Palo Alto, I commend Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) for providing free and low-cost legal services to members of our community unable to pay for it. Often, those most in need of an attorney can least afford to engage one. Thanks to your fine staff and to the private attorneys who donate their services, our residents have received high quality legal assistance. I note that many of the lawyers aiding our residents have their offices in East Palo Alto. We thank them for their community mindedness.

East Palo Alto has been hard hit by the economic downturn. Our residents are taking the brunt of the current difficulties. They are losing their jobs, their homes, their credit and their family stability. CLSEPA has helped them fight back against fraudulent mortgage lenders and assert their rights when threatened with eviction. The agency has negotiated on behalf of clients with banks and landlords to protect families and the elderly from being put out on the street. CLSEPA has also assisted residents of our mobile parks and supported the work of our Rent Stabilization Board.

In addition to your invaluable service in the area of housing, CLSEPA has continued to help clients in cases ranging from identity theft to "bait and switch" used car contracts. The agency has provided essential information about individuals' rights and responsibilities at immigration outreach events, helped our residents regularize their immigration status and aided the unfortunate victims of domestic violence protected under certain provisions of the immigration statutes. It would appear that your thorough preparation to aid those swept up in ICE raids has discouraged the Department of Homeland Security from scheduling such raids here. Our thanks to your staff and the many volunteer attorneys who are trained and ready to assist.

Our city has much to be proud of, including your fine agency started and guided through the past seven years by members of our community. I congratulate you on your accomplishments and wish you well as you continue to offer help in difficult times.

Yours truly,

  
Ruben Abrica  
Mayor of East Palo Alto

June 1, 2009

Candice Greenberg  
Executive Director  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto  
2117 University Ave., Suite B  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Dear Candice:

At the occasion of your celebration this week, we wanted to send you a quick note of congratulations for all of CLSEPA's outstanding work. Like virtually every community in the United States, the mid-Peninsula suffers from a significant access to justice crisis. Free or low-cost civil legal services are tragically scarce, and many go without any advice or representation as they face serious threats to their housing, income, or other services vital to their families' security. In the face of this scarcity, the assistance you provide to the low-income members of the East Palo Alto and surrounding communities is absolutely vital, and we are proud of the long-standing partnership between your agency and Stanford Law School.

Because CLS shares a building with our Community Law Clinic, we have the opportunity to work closely together and to know very profoundly how the two offices complement each other. While the services of our clinical program are limited to the areas of housing, criminal record expungement, and workers' rights matters, you at CLSEPA provide legal assistance in a much broader range of issues, including immigration, consumer affairs, and predatory lending. We refer hundreds of clients each year to you, and do so with complete confidence that they will be greeted with a friendly ear and the utmost professionalism. In the housing arena, where our practices overlap, our program has been immeasurably strengthened by the ability to share resources and strategy ideas with the CLS attorneys and staff, and to ensure that together we are able to serve the maximum number clients possible in the most appropriate way.

We also want to congratulate CLSEPA for the terrific *pro bono* program it runs, and, from our perspective as legal educators, for the opportunities that program provides for SLS students to get involved in direct legal services work as soon as they arrive on campus. As you know, our clinics are not available to students until their second year of law school; however, in their first year, scores of them take advantage of the chance to get out to East Palo Alto and start providing legal information and resources to low-income people under the auspices of your *pro*

*bono* program. This opportunity signals to them right from the start of their legal education that SLS considers *pro bono* services an integral part of every lawyer's professional duty and, just as importantly, gives them the chance to discharge that duty in a welcoming atmosphere of collegiality and support.

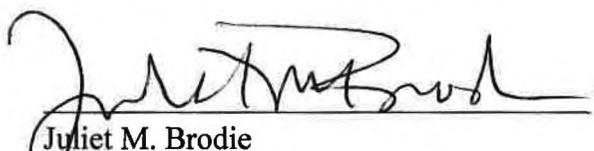
Congratulations on your continued success! We look forward to more years of collaboration in our shared mission of providing outstanding legal services to low-income members of our community, and to training law students in the personal and professional satisfaction that comes from using their education and skills to advance justice.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L Marshall". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lawrence C. Marshall

Associate Dean for Public Interest and Clinical Education

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Juliet M Brodie". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Juliet M. Brodie

Director, Stanford Community Law Clinic



COMMUNITY  
LEGAL SERVICES IN  
EAST PALO ALTO

## 2008 Wiley Manuel Award Winners

### **Attorneys**

Althea Tomijima  
Debora Eizips-Dreyman  
Einat Arbel  
Jeanne Merino  
Maleeha Haq  
Susan Solomon  
Robert Kane  
Martin Murphy  
Michael Hale  
Montgomery Pisano

### **Paralegals**

Amir Adibi  
Estelle Houtchens  
Marcia Tipton  
Sandra Gatton  
Erik Connell  
Shira Solomon  
Erich Wilson  
Sean Quirk  
Elizabeth Lyons  
Aylon Steinhart

### **Law Students**

Randi Stebbins  
Nerea Sholl  
Amir Steinhart  
David Lee

### **Other Non-Attorney Award Winners**

Nancy Shepherd  
Court Skinner  
Valicia Saucedo  
Carolyn Tucher  
Sam Hiatt  
Mike Sanchez  
Jackie Marcelos  
Nozipo Wobogo  
Courtney Matteson



COMMUNITY  
LEGAL SERVICES IN  
EAST PALO ALTO

## 2008 Wiley Manuel Award Winners

### **Dechert LLP**

David A. Klein  
Sabir Ibrahim

### **DLA Piper US LLP**

Andrew P. Valentine

### **Fenwick & West LLP**

Emmett C. Stanton

### **Howrey LLP**

Farah S. Anthony  
Robert M. Harkins  
Christopher L. Kelley  
Gregory K. Storey  
Sara Jenkins  
Aaron Myers  
Ann K. Miller  
Anne M. Ortel  
Daniel W. Bedell  
David Lisi

### **Latham & Watkins LLP**

Robb W. Kapla  
Lucas V. Munoz  
Jon M. Novotny  
Edward A. Tran

### **Miller Starr Regalia**

Bruce Laidlaw

### **Morrison & Foerster LLP**

Jarod Buna,  
Dara Tabesh  
Joseph Kanada  
Christopher Robinson

### **Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP**

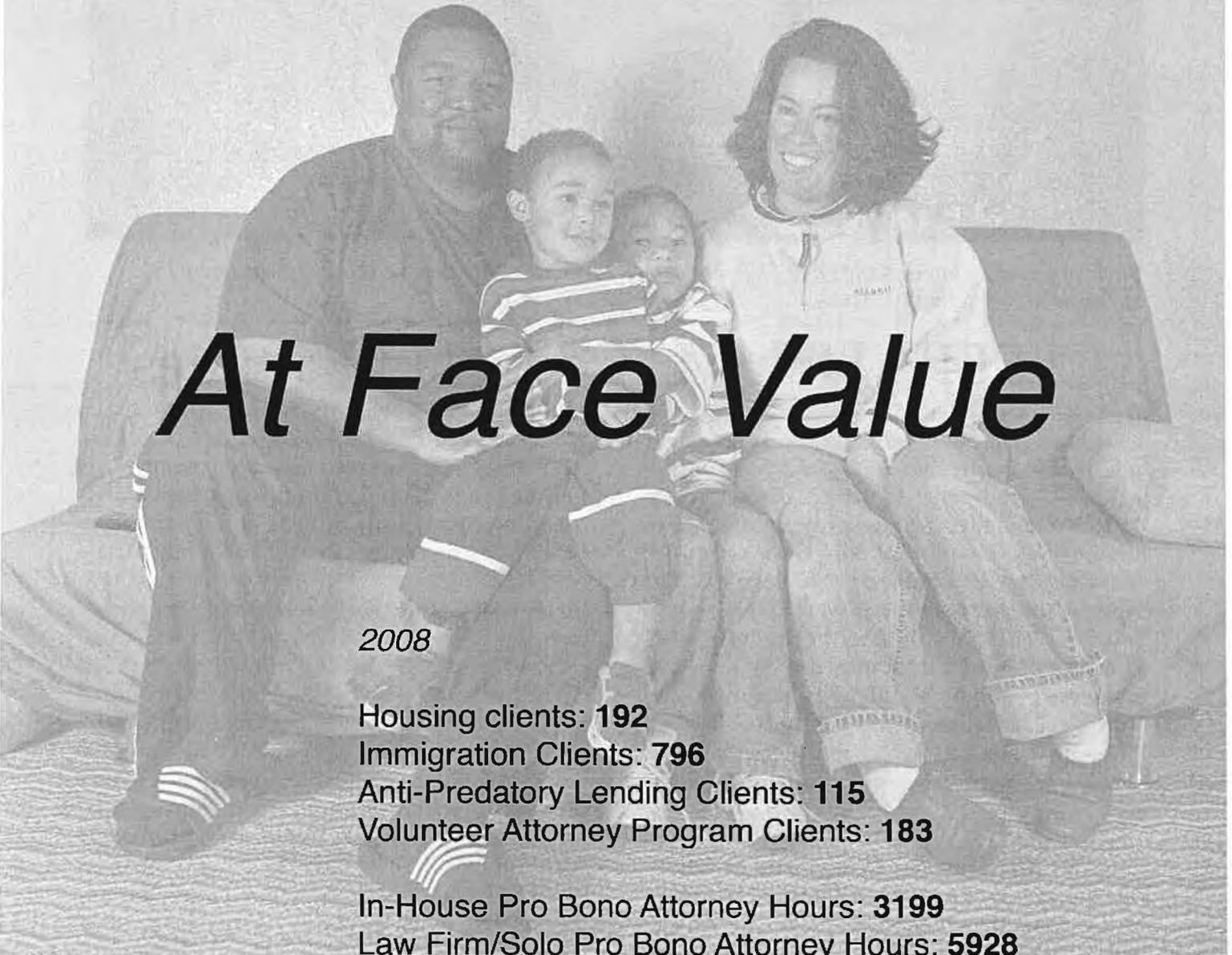
Justin Aragon  
Nancy Harris

### **Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP**

Jonah VanZandt  
Ray Cho  
Jason Breeding  
Jennifer Wang  
Carrie LeRoy  
Sarah Scollard  
Anne-Kathrin Kroemer  
Lanelle Meidan  
Kristin Major  
Lisa Chen  
Christy Peetz



COMMUNITY  
LEGAL SERVICES IN  
EAST PALO ALTO



# *At Face Value*

*2008*

Housing clients: **192**

Immigration Clients: **796**

Anti-Predatory Lending Clients: **115**

Volunteer Attorney Program Clients: **183**

In-House Pro Bono Attorney Hours: **3199**

Law Firm/Solo Pro Bono Attorney Hours: **5928**

08-09 Fiscal Year Budget: **\$472,000**



*Predatory lending intern Katie Flores, left, discusses a case with staff attorney Shirley Hochhausen and volunteer attorney Kathryn Latour*

## CLSEPA Helps Hardest-Hit Families

The global economic crisis remains as turbulent as it was in September 2008. Yet while universally felt, the degree to which the crisis has impacted families varies profoundly. Many low-income families in San Mateo County stand on the very brink of homelessness. For those victimized by bad or illegal loans, or who rent from landlords themselves on the edge of foreclosure, legal assistance can make a tremendous positive difference. Over the last months, Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto has devoted more resources than ever to making the future hopeful for these clients.

Consider the following family: The M family was the victim of a mortgage scam perpetrated by their own loan broker. At closing, the broker had a check for \$200,000 issued in his own name, thereby stealing all of the loan proceeds. Without the money to meet the high cost payments on the loan, the M family was one week away from losing their home in a foreclosure sale.

With the help of the law firm Liuzzi, Murphy and Solomon, LLP, CLSEPA brought a lawsuit to stop the sale of the property and litigated

the case to a settlement which revised the home loan terms and recovered the stolen money. The M family and their 4 children look forward to spending many years in their home, while the broker is presently in jail awaiting trial.

Mr. F, meanwhile, had been renting an apartment for 23 years when his landlord was foreclosed. Twice, the lender tried to evict him. Each time, staff at CLSEPA contacted counsel for the lender, explained the circumstances of Mr. F's tenancy, and provided copies of East Palo Alto's Rent Stabilization Ordinance which prohibits evictions without good cause. Twice the lender ignored our letters and proceeded with the eviction. Finally, Mr. F, accompanied by a CLSEPA attorney, demanded a trial on the merits. The eviction case was dismissed, and Mr. F continues his 24th year of residence.

In all, CLSEPA's anti-predatory lending expertise has assisted 68 individuals and families with foreclosure-related issues. Of the 14 post-foreclosure eviction lawsuits on which we have assisted, we obtained three dismissals and 11 positive settlements for our clients.

*Continued*

CLSEPA has also worked actively to educate homeowners on relevant legal issues. In February 2009, in conjunction with the University of San Francisco, School of Law, CLSEPA published a 12-page guide to mortgage foreclosure prevention, entitled "Loan Default and Foreclosure: A Brief Guide for California Homeowners." The guide describes the foreclosure process and the documents homeowners may expect to receive in foreclosure. The guide highlights some of the important options and considerations of which homeowners must be aware when their home is threatened by foreclosure. The guide is available online at <[www.law.usfca.edu/homeownerguide.pdf](http://www.law.usfca.edu/homeownerguide.pdf)> and <[www.clsepa.org](http://www.clsepa.org)>, and is available in English, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. As of May 2009, with the assistance of *EPA Today*, we have distributed over 5,000 copies of the guide in East Palo Alto, where approximately 30% of homes are currently in default.

In addition to educating about and reducing foreclosure, we have made it a top priority to help clients get out of debt and start over with a clean slate. Toward the end of 2008 and early 2009, increasing numbers of clients called to inquire about filing for bankruptcy. In response, CLSEPA began offering bimonthly pro bono bankruptcy advice clinics, staffed by consumer attorneys Fred Schwinn and Raeon Roulston of the Consumer Law Center and Ben Dupré of the Dupré Law Firm.



*Consumer attorney Raeon Roulston, center, lectures CLSEPA clients on bankruptcy*

As of May 12, 2009, 44 clients have been educated on filing for bankruptcy, dischargeable debt, non-dischargeable debt, exemptions, secured creditors, and debtor's rights. "Thank you for helping me see the light at the end of the tunnel," one client said with gratitude and relief.

At Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto, service is our mission. Creating positive outcomes is our bottom line. Yet we, too, need a life-support system. All of our work is a direct consequence of the generosity of the donors and volunteers who are reading this article now. We are deeply grateful to you for giving us the opportunity to serve. We urgently ask for your continued strong support during these challenging times.

## Help Support CLSEPA Golf Tournament



On Columbus Day, October 12, 2009, at the Stanford University Golf Course, the Palo Alto Area Bar Association will hold its 20th Annual Charity Golf Tournament benefiting Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto. Last year, the tournament drew 107 participants; this year, we are hoping for even more. Participants enjoy a full round of golf followed by hors d'oeuvres and jazz music.

The tournament is a great way to support Community Legal Services while enjoying a round of golf at one of the finest courses in the country. The tournament cost is \$350 per golfer. Sponsor-

ships start at \$1,000, with four-player Tee Sponsors at \$2500. If you are interested, please contact Candice Greenberg at (650) 326-6440 ext. 304 or [Candice@clsepa.org](mailto:Candice@clsepa.org), or Jon Frohnmayer at (650) 326-6440 ext. 305.

# CLSEPA Advocates for Immigrant Victims of Crime

CLSEPA continues to aid those most vulnerable among us. Much of CLSEPA's immigration work involves providing assistance to immigrant victims of crime, including domestic violence. The U visa statute was approved by Congress in 2000 to provide permission to be in the United States and work authorization to immigrant victims of crime who aid law enforcement in the crime's investigation or prosecution.

## *Approved*

◇ As of October of 2008, 85 out of 13,300 applicants nationally had been adjudicated, with 65 approved. Of those 65, nine were CLSEPA clients. On April 29, 2009, CLSEPA celebrated its 20th U visa approval.

## *Removal Intervention*

◇ We met one of our clients, a sexual assault survivor, after she had been in a Santa Clara County detention facility with an ICE hold for more than three months while waiting to testify against her abuser at trial. The District Attorney was not going to certify her U visa application until the trial was over. CLSEPA attorney Marilia Zellner convinced the DA that waiting would probably result in the client being deported, since she already had a removal order and would no longer be necessary as a witness once the trial concluded. The DA decided to certify her application and called in a favor to its Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contact, who gave the client a Stay in the United States and released her from detention. The client is now awaiting approval for her U visa.

◇ Another client in removal proceedings was the husband of a previous client, whom we had assisted in applying for U visa relief based on her being kidnapped for hire to be murdered.

*Continued*





We placed the husband as a derivative beneficiary on the earlier client's U visa application. When the U visa application was approved on April 20, 2009, the husband's removal proceedings were terminated, and the family was able to stay in the United States.

### *Advocacy*

◇ CLSEPA participated in a nationwide advocacy effort that indigent survivors of domestic violence not be required to pay the \$545 fee to file form I-192 (request for waiver for having entered the U.S. without a visa). CLSEPA's efforts were successful: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) now allows applicants to file fee waivers.

◇ As part of the U visa regulations USCIS approved in February 2007, law enforcement agencies had to designate person(s) to certify the helpfulness of the applicant, and that this designation had to be detailed in writing. CLSEPA, as well as a number of other organizations, argued that the requirement to state the designation in writing was a large burden on law enforcement agencies. As a result, USCIS dropped this requirement, and decided to accept any signature on the certifying form itself as proof that the person signing was the designated certifier.

◇ CLSEPA filed the first brief in the country with US Citizenship & Immigration Services on the "any credible evidence" standard used to U visa applications for victims of certain serious crimes who have been helpful to law enforcement. The brief illustrates that Congress and USCIS policy that U visa adjudicators should use a broad and flexible standard of evidence.

◇ CLSEPA has been able to establish a strong relationship with the Mexican Consulates in both San Francisco and San Jose, which has expedited the issuance of passports for many of our clients. Passports are a requisite of the U visa application. One of our clients had her Mexican consular ID confiscated, and couldn't get married or receive her U-visa without evidence of her nationality. CLSEPA requested that the Mexican Consulate issue her a passport in as little time as possible, and it did so in less than one day.

# Pro Bono Results: Late 2008 / Early 2009

To say that pro bono attorneys are essential to our work would be an understatement. Pro bono attorneys *are* our work - the very reason we were able to offer meaningful assistance to nearly 1300 clients in 2008. We are deeply appreciative to all those who assist CLSEPA clients.

Solo practitioner **Robert Chastain** represented a client who was receiving demand letters from a collection agency for \$78,000 allegedly relating to a mortgage opened in his name. The client believed he was the victim of identity theft. In less than one month, Mr. Chastain was able to clear the client's entire debt with the collection agency and get them to cease all collection activity.

Mr. Chastain simultaneously represented a second client who was being sued for \$19,788 by a major insurance company for allegedly causing a car accident on the freeway. The initial police report assigned blame to the client; however, after a subsequent re-investigation, the police amended the report and concluded the other vehicle was at fault. Mr. Chastain was able to get the lawsuit dismissed and cleared the client of the entire debt.

**Lisa Chen and Morgan Lopez**, associates at a Bay Area law firm, represented a mother and her three minor daughters, one of whom was disabled, who were being evicted by Page Mill Properties for allegedly being involved in gang activity. Asserting that the eviction lacked merit, Ms. Chen and Mr. Lopez were able to get the lawsuit dismissed and obtained a settlement allowing our clients to remain in their apartment and keep nearly all terms of their lease agreement.

**Cooley Godward Kronish LLP** partner **Wendy Brenner** and associate **Scott Petersmeyer** represented an HIV-positive tenant with hepatitis, neuropathy, and high blood pressure being evicted from Page Mill Properties for possessing a dog in his apartment, despite the fact that the client had a doctor's note identifying the medical need for the dog. Ms. Brenner and Mr. Petersmeyer successfully obtained a settlement that allowed the client to remain in his home and keep his dog.

**Cooley**  
GODWARD KRONISH LLP

**Cooley Godward Kronish LLP** associate **Ilana Landsman** represented a client being evicted by Page Mill Properties for alleged nonpayment of rent. Ms. Landsman took the position that: (1) the landlord's three-day notice to pay or quit was invalid since the landlord had never paid the client interest on her security deposit; (2) the landlord had failed to address numerous habitability concerns with the apartment; and (3) the eviction may have been unlawful in retaliation for the client's complaints to property management personnel regarding habitability concerns. Ms. Landsman obtained a settlement dismissing the lawsuit and allowing the client to move out on favorable terms.

**Sean Coutain**, associate at a Bay Area law firm, represented a client who purchased a used vehicle which stopped working three days

after purchase. Taking the position that the dealer had committed fraud in representing the vehicle as functional and attempting to conceal flaws in its condition, Mr. Coutain was able to obtain a favorable settlement from the dealer.

**Gal Dor and Michael G. Cross**, associates at a Bay Area law firm, represented a client who purchased a used vehicle which stopped working almost immediately after the sale. Taking the position that the dealer had committed fraud in representing the vehicle as functional, and that the dealer had not included a smog certificate per California law, Ms. Dor and Mr. Cross were able to convince the dealer to rescind the contract and reimburse all of the client's money.

**Fenwick**  
FENWICK & WEST LLP

**Scott Maurer**, of the **Katharine and George Alexander Community Law Center**, together with **Fenwick & West LLP** associates **Dawn Belt**, **Ruomu Li**, **Abraham Zuckerman**, and **Rita Tan**, conducted several intake clinics at CLSEPA, advising clients on consumer-related legal issues.

**HOWREY**  
LLP

**Howrey LLP** associate **Brett Jackson** represented a Section 8 client being evicted for alleged nonpayment of rent. Asserting that

the landlord had failed to cure numerous habitability concerns, including a cockroach infestation and a faulty heater, Mr. Jackson was able to obtain a settlement allowing the client to keep her Section 8 benefits and relocate to a new apartment on favorable terms.

Solo practitioner **Bill Keegan** represented a client being sued for \$5,598 by a debt recovery agency, allegedly stemming from an original debt of approximately \$900 that the client believed was the result of an identity theft. Mr. Keegan achieved dismissal of the lawsuit two weeks before trial.

## LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

**Latham & Watkins LLP** associate **Andrew Farthing** represented a client who was being asked to pay over \$4,000 for a debt originally based on one month's rent of \$1,300. Taking the position that the debt collector had violated numerous debt-collection statutes, Mr. Farthing was able to obtain a settlement favorable to the client.

**Latham & Watkins LLP** associates **Elif Kimyacioglu** and **Matthew Titolo** represented a client who was being sued for causing a car accident, despite



the fact that he was not the driver of an involved vehicle, and the vehicle in which he was a passenger was not at fault. Ms. Kimyacioglu and Mr. Titolo succeeded in getting the lawsuit dismissed.

**Latham & Watkins LLP** associates **Edward Tran** and **Jon Novotny** represented a client who purchased a vehicle that the dealer subsequently attempted to repossess after changing the terms of the contract to increase the monthly payments. Taking the position that the dealer's failure to provide a copy of the new contract to the client violated the Rees-Levering Act, Messrs. Tran and Novotny were able to negotiate a settlement whereby the dealer waived all payments of interest on the vehicle.



## MILLER STARR REGALIA

**Miller Starr Regalia** partner **Bruce Laidlaw** represented two clients who were being charged substantial sums of money by debt collectors. Mr. Laidlaw was able to reach settlements in both cases.

## MORRISON | FOERSTER

**Morrison & Foerster LLP** associates **Susan Vaughan** and **Christopher Robinson** represented a client being evicted by Page Mill Properties for a verbal altercation involving his sister and Page Mill Properties management, after Page Mill attempted to tow a number of vehicles owned by their tenants.

Ms. Vaughan and Mr. Robinson succeeded in getting the lawsuit dismissed, allowing the client, his sister, and his sister's two children to remain in their apartment.

## SIMPSON THACHER

**Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP** associates **Kristyn Greene**, **Victoria White** and **Stephen Blake** represented a client who was being evicted for alleged breaches of her lease agreement. While the lawsuit was underway, a fire started in the client's apartment, rendering her homeless. The landlord declared that she was liable for the damages. Ms. Greene, Ms. White, and Mr. Blake negotiated a settlement that dismissed the lawsuit and protected the client's Section 8 benefits for future tenancies.

**Sarah Scollard** and **Dede Orraca-Cecil**, associates at a Bay Area law firm, represented a client at small claims appeal who was being sued by her sister's abusive ex-boyfriend. The client had dented the plaintiff's car with a plastic broom in an effort to stop the plaintiff from driving away without putting the client's four year-old nephew into a seat with a seat belt. Ms. Scollard and Ms. Orraca-Cecil won the trial, and the client did not have to pay plaintiff any damages for the repairs.

Ms. Scollard and Ms. Orraca-Cecil simultaneously represented the client's sister in a custody dispute with the same plaintiff, where they successfully obtained full physical and legal custody with supervised visitations.

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