



## **Bringing families together one mom at a time. *continued:***

She was arrested and charged with shoplifting after aimlessly walking through and then outside a store. Although she never took anything from the store, confused, afraid and without understanding her rights or the ramifications, she pled guilty to shoplifting. For years, she felt ashamed of this blemish to her record and worried that it would prevent her from becoming a citizen. Eventually, she sought help at CVLS'AILA Legal Clinic, where Ann Peters helped her complete the paperwork and, more importantly, prepared her for the interview with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officer. She was approved. After years of worry and guilt over a misunderstanding, this hardworking mother and wife, with an otherwise clean record, was able to become a U.S. Citizen. Her story speaks for to many lawful permanent residents, who may have pled guilty to crimes they did not have commit because they did not understand the consequences of their plea. With legal help, Ayla woman was able to show that she is a person of good moral character and deserved the discretion of USCIS. Today she is proud to be an American citizen. She is grateful to CVLS for our help in getting her there. Great Job Ann!

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## **CVLS is ushering in a new age of pro bono.**

Shop for pro bono opportunities  
Anytime and from anywhere  
With only an internet connection.

View and edit case notes.  
Track pro bono hours.  
Access training materials.  
All online with the click of a button.

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It's not exactly a secret that times are a'changing. Widescreen flat panel plasma televisions and large display multitasking smartphone/mp3 players are everywhere. Gone are the days of typewriters and whiteout. Technology has evolved, and so too must pro bono.

CVLS has a new and exciting way to shop for, manage, and track your cases that is available to every one of our volunteers. Our new legal server online database allows you to do almost everything from the comfort of your very own home! Contact Jessica Engle at [jengle@cvls.org](mailto:jengle@cvls.org) to get set up and join the new age of pro bono today!

The sky is the limit. Free yourselves form the old ways and join a new breed of volunteer right now.

## CVLS Honor Roll:



*David Cutler, The Ark Legal Clinic*

David has shown a generous and steady commitment to helping numerous low-income families through the bankruptcy process, making it possible for them to get the fresh start the law ensures. David accepts case referrals without hesitation and, most importantly, serves his clients with the highest level of dignity and respect, regardless of their ability to pay.



*Scott Jensen, First Congregational Church of LaGrange Legal Clinic*

Scott, a former CVLS legal clinic volunteer, recently returned to FCC LaGrange as a volunteer and hit the ground running. He has been invaluable to those served at the clinic by helping to address their legal issues, by volunteering on days when no other volunteers were available, and working to ensure that the attorneys from the clinic's new sponsor, Tressler LLP, was seamless. Thank you for your hard work and dedication, Scott.



*Kathleen Robson, Circuit Court of Cook County Foreclosure Mediation Program*

Over the program's two year life span, Kathleen has been a superstar. Handling 31 cases, she identifies significant issues and stands up to the lenders on behalf of her clients, usually obtaining successful results. Even better, CVLS never has to ask her to take a case—she calls us! What's not to love about that?

## Junior Board looking for new members.

Have you ever said to yourself, "I wish I could be involved with a great organization where I could help others AND hang out with other fabulous young professionals in the legal industry?" You're in luck! CVLS' Junior Board of Directors is holding elections for new members next month!

This is your chance to get involved and to meet new friends as a member of this classy group. Put your unique skills to work furthering CLVS' mission to provide equal access to justice to those in need. Heck, it will even look good on your resume.

For more information about how you can throw your hat in the ring, contact Matt Pollock at [mnp@cvls.org](mailto:mnp@cvls.org) or Emily Schnidt at [ees@pw-law.com](mailto:ees@pw-law.com).

Elections will be held during their April board meeting so contact them today!

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## Our Lady of Mercy is the place to be.

Are you a practicing attorney? Do you speak Spanish? Are you interested in family law? Wow—what a coincidence—we know a place that needs you. CVLS' Our Lady of Mercy Legal Clinic, located in the vibrant north-side community of Albany Park, is looking for someone just like you. Now is your chance to volunteer and take advantage of the opportunity to learn and practice family law in a friendly, neighborhood clinic environment with excellent administrative support and other welcoming, supportive volunteers. If you are interested or want more information, contact: Michael Edelberg at [medelberg@cvls.org](mailto:medelberg@cvls.org).

## Accounting trick leads to nightmare.

Patricia Baxter and her two children needed their Section 8 voucher in order to be able to afford the rent on their apartment. Each of them suffered serious mental and physical disabilities that prevented them from working and limited their income to a combination of minimal state and federal benefits. One of the state agencies that provided in-home care to Patricia's son, made their payments through Patricia, listing her as their "employee" even though Patricia was simply a "pass-through". Patricia, understanding that this was not her money, always kept it carefully segregated in a separate bank account.

When the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC), as administrator of Patricia's voucher, ran Patricia's employment verification, agency officials saw that she "worked" for the agency that paid her son's benefits. The search also revealed the additional bank account Patricia used to budget her son's benefits. Claiming that she never reported this income and that she had submitted altered social security award letters, HACC terminated her voucher.

Terrified that she and her family would be homeless, Patricia attempted to appeal the administrative decision. Although she tried to explain the facts at the administrative hearing, Patricia, who needs a motorized wheelchair and has a very serious speech impediment, was not able to make herself understood and her petition for reconsideration was denied. Patricia sought judicial review. The Chancery Court judge appointed CVLS to represent her.

First, CVLS secured an injunction that required HACC to continue to pay Patricia's voucher while the case was pending. Later, midway through the case, the CVLS attorney had to petition the court to enforce the injunction after HACC unilaterally reduced the voucher amount. CVLS then briefed the issue, arguing that HACC erred when it attributed income the Patricia, failed to prove that she altered social security award letters and failed to consider the family's disabilities.

The case was clear and, ultimately, the court adopted CVLS's arguments on every point. HACC was ordered to reinstate Patricia's voucher at the original rate. CVLS now working with Patricia to make sure this problem is not repeated.

Chicago Volunteer Legal Services Presents

# LAW & Disorder

Featuring Pat McGann

## **Our second annual award ceremony and comedy show with silent auction.**

- Featuring Pat McGann, House MC of Zanies Comedy Club, and honoring
- Attorney General Lisa Madigan for her successful work on behalf of Illinois homeowners and consumers
- Honorable Mary Ellen Coghlan, Presiding Judge, Probate Division
- And many more CVLS volunteers who make all the difference!



**Thursday, April 18, 6:00 PM**

Hosted by Jenner & Block  
353 North Clark Street

Laugh along with us as we celebrate the spirit of pro bono and the volunteers that make it possible at our second annual Law and Disorder fundraiser and award ceremony. Peruse the amazing items we have available for silent auction and make a bid on whatever catches your eye. Enjoy having Pat McGann, House MC of Zanies Comedy Club, tickle your funny bone as you watch our show. Honor the good works of our volunteers and the commitment to equal access to justice that changes lives in our community every day. We invite you to experience all of this and more at our second annual comedy show and fundraiser.

Tickets to the event can be purchased for \$80. Legal service organizations and governmental employees receive a \$40 discount. Tickets include reception, drinks, light finger food, access to the award ceremony, comedy show and silent auction. Seating will be on a first-come-first-served basis.

Purchase a table and enjoy the show with your friends! For only \$550 you will receive a cocktail table with a view of the show and four tickets. A large table that includes six tickets is also available for \$650.

**Visit [www.cvls.org/lawanddisorder](http://www.cvls.org/lawanddisorder) for tickets!**

# **CVLS Seminar Registration**

**April 5 "Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Training."  
by Eric Sutton, Supervising Attorney of the Foreclosure  
Mediation Program, 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM**

Eric Sutton will train volunteers to represent homeowners in pre-trial mediation. Attendees will learn: Basic information about mortgages and the foreclosure process; why mediation is an important tool for conflict resolution and how the mediation process works; how to effectively represent your client in foreclosure mediation including information about relevant federal foreclosure relief programs, loss mitigation and negotiating a graceful exit. Volunteer attorneys with all levels of experience are welcome to attend.

**April 10 "Old Wine, New Bottle -  
How to Effectively Authenticate ESI and Get It Admitted."  
by Dara Chevlin Tarkowski, 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM**

This session aims to provide a basic overview of the relevant rules and caselaw governing electronically stored information, including how to properly preserve it, collect it, produce it, request it, review it, and most importantly, use it.

Please visit [www.cvls.org/seminars](http://www.cvls.org/seminars) to register

# Celebrating 25 Years!



On February 28th some dedicated volunteers gathered at Calabuzzi's Café to celebrate Visitation Clinic's 25th anniversary. This amazing clinic, with these amazing volunteers, and an even more amazing clinic chair, Mary Anne Smith, have brought pro bono legal services to the Englewood neighborhood since 1988. Congratulations and thank you to Mary Anne and her fabulous attorneys, students and others who have made this clinic one of CVLS' shining stars.

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## Babies.



*Gray Oliver Blaney-Koen*



*Dylan Michael Sandford*

Congratulations to CVLS volunteer Daniel Blaney-Koen and his wife on their new baby boy Gray and to CVLS Board member Sandy Morris and her husband Derrick Sandford on their 3 lbs 15 oz baby boy Dylan.

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