Chinatown Clinic Attorneys Fix Parking Fee

One day while running errands with her disabled 80-year old mother, Susan got a $200 parking ticket. She’d mistakenly left her disabled parking placard on her dashboard instead of in its proper place hanging from the rear view mirror. No big deal, she figured. She sent a letter to the authorities explaining her mistake with proper documentation. Her $200 ticket was upheld. She appealed that finding. As a result, her fine was doubled.

With one last chance to fight the ticket and $400 fine, she sought help at CVLS’ Chinese American Service League Chinatown Clinic. Quarles & Brady attorneys Chris Skey, CVLS’ Immediate Past Board President, and Adam Margolin, helped Susan challenge the city’s decision. They won, getting Susan’s ticket and fees dismissed. They even got Susan’s filing fees refunded!

According to Chris, “[M]y colleague Adam Margolin did a great job on this case . . . Everything was nicely set up for the hearing, and the outcome was precisely what Susan wanted.”

Susan’s fiercely-won victory was bittersweet because her mother died before the case was resolved. However, she deeply appreciated the support, care, and advocacy that Chris and Adam gave her when she needed them most.

CVLS Volunteer = Peace of Mind

A custody case can be a painful ordeal for everybody. Emily, a working, single parent of two young children, had always avoided going to court. But, when she learned that the father of her two children was building a home in Mexico and planned to take his children there, she realized she and her children needed security and stability.

So, she turned to the Schiff Hardin Clinic at H.O.W. in Rogers Park. Schiff attorney Adam Diederich filed a case for Emily, seeking sole custody and child support. After a lengthy two year court battle, Emily’s mind is at ease. She was awarded sole custody of her children and the father’s visitation was restricted to prevent him from taking them out of the country. In addition, he is now ordered to pay child support.

Emily had Adam’s skill and support throughout the process. Adam stepped up for Emily because he knows that there is a constant demand for free legal services, especially for regular people like Emily who work hard but can’t afford our legal system. He is doing his part to help meet that need. Thank you Adam!
CVLS Visitation Clinic Celebrates Summer

As Chicago’s summer waned, CVLS’ Visitation Clinic held its annual party on August 24th.

Clinic Chair Mary Anne Smith graciously opened her home to a group of volunteers that is nothing short of remarkable, having already helped nearly 70 low-income Chicagoans with legal issues this year.

The wooden dining room table creaked and hollered as it was set with a potluck feast fit for Thanksgiving. The table, leaves in, held the happy, collegial crowd, ready to eat, drink and make merry.

The group sat long after the food was gone, swapping great stories and good wine.

It was clear that these were longtime friends who held a passion and commitment to their work and their community.

The Visitation Clinic meets monthly at 843 West Garfield Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60621. Contact Daniel Santrella at dsantrella@cvls.org for more information.

Meet Debi, Northwestern Law Student & CVLS Intern!

As Guardian ad Litem (GAL) for a young boy who had been abused and bullied at home and at school, CVLS 7-11 intern Debi Filipovich encountered one of her most difficult yet most rewarding cases.

In order to advocate for the boy, labeled a “problem child” because of his history of fighting at school, she first had to get through to him. It was hard, but the boy eventually opened up. He told her that he liked the fact that she treated him with respect—something no one else had shown him. Through their conversations, Debi discovered he had been getting picked on because he was biracial.

“You could tell that no one had ever given him a shot,” Debi says. “There was a point where he realized, ‘I can actually talk to this person.’”

Working toward a career in litigation, Debi, a Northwestern University School of Law 3-L, came to CVLS because she wanted hands-on experience. She enjoyed CVLS’ collaborative work environment, the cases and all of the different day-to-day experiences. She also believes that the experiential “trial by fire” process is the best way to learn, especially for someone like her who loves to argue in court.

As a GAL for Minors Program intern, Debi worked with Program Director Rebekah Rashidfarokhi and Staff Attorney Susan DeCostanza. In addition to conducting interviews with clients and parties, and appearing in court daily, she also explored the emotional aspect of cases involving children. Her CVLS work showed her how impressionable young people are, and motivated her to do anything she can to help.

Debi recommended to the court that her client be returned to live with his mother. Her young client was thrilled when the court agreed with his GAL’s recommendation.

The experience of getting to know her client and finding what was best for him is part of why Debi feels pro bono matters. “Everyone deserves that shot,” she says, especially given the biases her low-income clients often face. These biases and the different, often unfair circumstances that land people in poverty are why she believes it is important for legal professionals to find the time volunteer for pro bono cases.

“I feel like I’ve actually made an impact on people’s lives,” she says.
Our Very Own Rebekah Rashidfarohki Featured in ILAO’s Faces of Justice!

This month, Illinois Legal Aid Online featured Rebekah Rashidfarokhi, Director of our GAL for Minors Program, as one of its Faces of Justice!

In her segment, Rebekah discusses the first example of justice she encountered, what prompted her toward a career in legal aid, what justice means to her and more.

See what Rebekah has to say! Watch the video at: http://cvls.org/news/rebekah-featured-ilaos-faces-justice

New Seminar Available for Online Viewing

CVLS’ recent seminar, “Deceased Borrowers: Helping Remaining Family Members Save Homes in Foreclosure,” is now available for online viewing and one (1) hour of CLE credit!

Staff Attorney Tracy Walsh addresses that sticky intersection between foreclosure and probate. When parents die, children frequently take over their mortgage payments. But when the children try to apply for a loan modification, the banks often clam up. What do you do?

Tracy shares legal strategies and loss mitigation options, as well as her experience in dealing with these issues.

View the seminar: http://cvls.org/onlinecle

Our Gala Silent Auction is Shaping Up!

We’re excited to offer items and packages from the Spa at Trump Tower, Walt Disney World, Shedd Aquarium, Brookfield Zoo, Chicago Athletic Clubs, East Bank Club, Eppy’s Deli, Fado Irish Pub, Revolution Brewing, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Chop Shop and many more!

Tickets Available for our 50th Anniversary Gala!

Fifty years ago, the concept of a pro bono civil legal aid organization didn’t exist — until John M. Ferren saw a need and a solution. He organized 15 of his friends and colleagues to meet low-income Chicagoans in church basements and community centers on nights and weekends. CVLS was born. 50 years later, we’re Chicago’s first and pre-eminent provider of civil legal aid services.

This October, we’re celebrating John’s achievement and five decades of CVLS history upholding the ideas of 1964’s Civil Rights Movement by fighting for equal access to justice for those who need it most.

Join us at the Chicago Cultural Center on Thursday, October 30! Tickets are $190, with a discount available for academic, legal service and government employees.

Purchase your 50th Anniversary Gala tickets! cvls.org/50years/registration
RACE JUDICATA® 2014

Race Judicata® 2014 was a huge success! With more than 5,000 runners, we surpassed our record for highest runner participation. Nearly 100 volunteers made sure everything ran smoothly. We’d like to thank everyone involved in making this year’s race, the 20th anniversary, our best year yet!

We could not have done it without our sponsors, volunteers, supporters and runners.

Special thanks and congratulations go to Matthew Berry of Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom, this year’s top individual race fundraiser. As a runner, Matthew raised $950 for CVLS – WOW!

Read on for Race Judicata® results, recap and photos!

RESULTS

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

Fastest Lawyer
Dave Strubbe 16:39
Emily Savas 19:16

Overall: Male
Jared Reynolds 16:15
Kai Karlstrom 16:53
John Hammond 17:25

Under 20
Joe Piatkiewicz 23:54
Kevin Noonan 25:54
Alex Stomberg 26:03

20 - 29
Nick Vasdekas 17:51
Josh Bashioum 18:03
Michael Stumpf 18:20

30 - 39
John Craig 17:40
Matthew Schmanki 18:20
Ian Wolfe 18:36

40 - 49
Michael Gordon 19:18
Mike Sauriol 19:33
Ken Kansa 19:58

50 - 59
Louis Glaser 17:58
Dan Marks 18:36
David Wigle 19:11

60 and Over
Michael Roth 22:18
Peter Bender 22:32
Stephen Moore 22:41

TEAM RESULTS

Division Male
Division 1 Sidley Striders
Division 2 Dykema
Division 3 US Legal Support
Team CCSAO Duane Morris LLP
Seyfarth Shufflers SRR

Division Female
Division 1 Sidley Striders
Division 2 Dykema
Division 3 Schiller DuCanto & Fleck

Division Co-Ed
Division 1 McDermott Will & Emery
Division 2 Duane Morris LLP
Division 3 Cornerstoners
Sidley Striders SEC

Congratulations to everyone who ran or walked in this year’s race!
All results: http://www.cvls.org/judicata-results

For more information on all things Race Judicata®, visit: cvls.org/judicata
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2. Chuhak & Tecson
3. Franczek Radelet

HONORABLE MENTION
1. Berger Schatz
2. WBAI ISBA IBF IJA AIJ IJC JJA
3. Querry & Harrow
Upcoming CVLS Events

Wednesday, October 8
Seminar: Expungement of Juvenile Criminal Records
Presented by a Legal Aid Foundation VISTA Attorney
CVLS Offices, 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM

A VISTA attorney from the Legal Aid Foundation (LAF) will provide an overview of juvenile records and juvenile expungement laws in Illinois, including information on eligibility and how to refer clients for free legal help.

Learn more, register and download relevant materials at:
http://cvls.org/seminar/seminar-expungement-juvenile-criminal-records

Thursday, October 2 and Thursday, November 6
Training: New Volunteer Orientation
CVLS Offices, 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Do you know anyone who would be interested in using their legal skills to help low-income Chicagoans? Spread the word about our upcoming volunteer orientations!


Please visit www.cvls.org/cle to register for a seminar!

Interested in getting involved with one of our clinics?
Visit www.cvls.org/clinics for information!