



# Meg in the CBA Record on Why Legal Clinics Work

The Chicago Bar Association based its October issue of the CBA Record on “the challenges and rewards of pro bono work” to coincide with the Chicago Bar Foundation’s 11th annual Pro Bono Week.

In one of this month’s features, Meg discusses legal clinics, a model of legal aid that originated, in Chicago, with CVLS. Our founder, John Ferren, removed a huge barrier between low-income clients and the legal services they sorely needed by bringing legal services into their neighborhood churches and community organizations.

This approach not only improved access to legal services, but also fostered collaboration with social service agencies to expand the scope of help available to those who could not otherwise afford it.

Meg outlines the benefits of legal clinics for communities, clients and attorneys alike.

PRO BONO WEEK 2015—RISE ABOVE YOUR NARROW CONFINES

By Margaret C. Benson

Five Decades of Legal Services

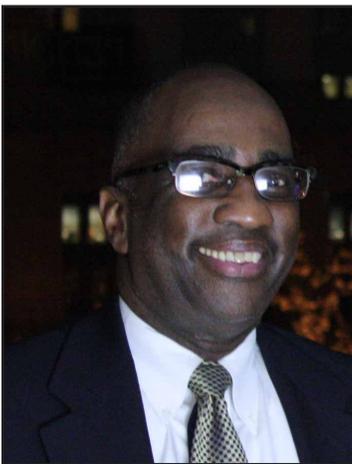
## Neighborhood Legal Clinics: Why They Work



CVLS began with a handful of young attorneys providing free legal advice in church basements on nights and weekends. Here, one of those original volunteers stands outside the Holy Trinity Legal Clinic in 1964, in front of a sign reading “Five Law Aides: Professional Lawyers Here to Serve You Every Tuesday Evening.”

## VOLUNTEER HONOR ROLL

### James T. Derico, Jr., TUCC Legal Clinic



In his practice, Derico & Associates, longtime volunteer **James Derico** works to meet the needs of small and mid-size businesses.

With CVLS and the Trinity United Church of Christ Legal Clinic, he has taken on upwards of 70 cases

throughout the years – wow!

Jim began volunteering with CVLS in 2006, taking on torts and landlord tenant cases; he has now handled an amazing variety of cases, advocating for clients facing foreclosure, bankruptcy, divorce, discrimination and more.

### Furqan Mohammed, Indo American Legal Clinic



The Indo American Center’s mission is to promote the well-being of South Asian immigrants through services that facilitate their adjustment, integration, and friendship with the wider society.

throughout the years – wow!

**Furqan Mohammed** uses his legal expertise to further that mission, volunteering with CVLS’ Indo American Legal Clinic. His specialty in employment matters has proven beneficial to the clinic, but Furqan doesn’t stop there – he often takes on cases outside his regular practice area.

Furqan’s outstanding work and dedication shines through in his commitment to bringing the experience he has gained as a litigation associate with Perkins Coie to the low-income clients who seek help they could not otherwise afford.

## Thank You, Folarin!



This month we're saying farewell to our Board of Directors President, **Folarin Dosunmu**, as he moves on to a new opportunity! Folarin has accepted a position as Risk Management and Operations Counsel for GE Aviation in Cincinnati.

A truly outstanding board president, from his tireless efforts in overseeing CVLS' 50th Anniversary celebrations to his general enthusiasm and positivity in leading the board, Folarin will be missed.

Please join us in wishing him all the best in his new venture!

Stepping into the role of Board President will be **Kristen Hudson**, principal at Chuhak & Tecson, who has been invaluable to the Board of Directors for nearly four years, most recently as Vice President of Development.

Kristen has been involved with CVLS throughout her legal career; she's consistently volunteered and dedicated herself to pro bono since interning at CVLS, and was instrumental in the success of the 50th Anniversary Gala.

Folarin, we're sad to see you go - but we can't think of anyone better to take over CVLS' Board of Directors than Kristen.

Congratulations and thank you to both these incredible attorneys!

## Access to Justice Volunteer Provides Closure for Grieving Client

When Jeffrey's grandmother died in 2008, Jeffrey mourned her death and didn't pay much attention to the assets she left behind. After a few years, Jeffrey began to realize that he was one of her heirs and that his aunt, executor of his grandmother's estate, hadn't transferred his share to him.

Jeffrey filed a lawsuit. After three amended complaints and years of discovery, Jeffrey and his aunt were at an impasse.

Judge Rita Novak appointed CVLS under the Access to Justice Program, and **Stephen Malato** of Hinshaw and Culbertson graciously agreed to take this complicated case, complete with bitter, feuding family members. Within a few months' time, Steve settled the case with compensation for Jeffrey.

Thanks to Steve, Jeffrey can now put his grandmother's death in its proper perspective.

## Happy 25th Anniversary, Amicus Poloniae!

Please join us in wishing a very happy 25th anniversary to our Amicus Poloniae Legal Clinic!

Amicus Poloniae, sponsored by the Polish National Alliance (PNA), provides services in a variety of civil law areas from immigration to probate.

Amicus Poloniae has exemplified the PNA's mission of providing access to legal services to those in the Polish community who could not otherwise afford to hire a lawyer.

Look out for photos from the clinic's 25th anniversary party in the next newsletter!

Interested in volunteering? Contact chair Mark Dobrzycki at (773) 763-8520.

**CLIENTS SAY ...** "Everyone from reception desk, my attorney and her support staff was always accessible, thorough in helping me understand my case and proceedings, taking initiative in keeping me informed. Always with a caring tone, generous with their time. I am very thankful for CVLS."

## Just in Time for ARDC Registration Season ...

ARDC registration forms arrive in a few weeks! We have a few suggestions on how to strengthen your section on pro bono and support for legal aid ...

### **VOLUNTEER!**

Whether you're an attorney or a law student, you have the legal knowledge and skills to make a difference in someone's life.

Visit  
**CVLS.ORG/VOLUNTEER**  
to get involved!

### **DONATE!**

Our volunteers do amazing work every day, but they can't do it without you. Your donations pay for CVLS' highly qualified staff, who offer essential training and hands-on support, and for comprehensive facilities the volunteers need.

Visit  
**CVLS.ORG/DONATE**  
to help us fight for equal access to justice!

### **LEARN!**

CVLS is pleased to offer monthly CLE seminars entirely free of charge. Attend in person or online to expand your legal knowledge and earn MCLE credit!

Visit  
**CVLS.ORG/CLE**  
to take advantage!

**... Stay Current with Pro Bono Activity, Stay Involved with CVLS!**

## St. Malachy Clinic Needs Volunteers!

The CVLS St. Malachy - Precious Blood Legal Clinic has been serving Hispanic and African American communities since 1994. Its long-time chair, Bruce Zumstein, is retiring in November 2015. Thank you, Bruce, for your support and dedication over the years!

CVLS needs more volunteers to staff the clinic, and a new clinic chair. This would be an excellent opportunity for Spanish speaking attorneys to become involved in one of CVLS' neighborhood clinics. You don't speak Spanish? Fear not, the clinic has an experienced interpreter.

Bruce says a volunteer attorney usually sees about two or three clients per clinic, with slightly more during tax season. Typical cases include landlord/tenant matters, small claims, insurance and foreclosures.

The clinic is located at the St. Malachy + Precious Blood Church on 2248 W. Washington Blvd. The clinic meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Appointments are scheduled through Juanita Avila at 312-733-1068 ext. 13.

Please contact Kathy Koester at 312-332-7521 or [kkoester@cvls.org](mailto:kkoester@cvls.org) for more information.

## Another Happy Client!

Keith came into CVLS in 2012 with a complicated foreclosure case. This month, he finally received a permanent loan modification. This sweet thank-you he sent to Tracy made us smile:

*Thank you so much for all of your help. I can't believe I've made it to a real loan modification. This struggle of trying to save my home has gone on a long time. Please thank all of those important people who worked helping me, such as: Attorney Walsh, Attorney [Hulstein], Attorney Turnipseed, etc... All of you are the best team an individual could have on his side. .... I'm really happy that there is an organization around like yours to help people through such a long process.*

# Upcoming CVLS Events

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## NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE:

### **GAL for Minors | GALs and School-Related Issues**

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- Presented by Brianne Dotts,  
Legal Council for Health Justice

View this seminar online at:  
[CVLS.ORG/ONLINECLE](http://CVLS.ORG/ONLINECLE)

Most GALs for Minors are not experts in education or school law, but virtually all GALs work with children who are in school (or may be entitled to school services or early intervention). Therefore, it is critical to know the basics of education law, how it can impact your representation as a GAL, and how to advocate for your child in common school-related issues.

This session will provide an overview of the basics of education law, including:

- What to do if the minor is facing suspension or expulsion
- How to advocate for minors with special education needs, including signs that a child may have unidentified special education needs
- Rights of minors with limited English proficiency
- Early intervention for children ages birth to 3 years old
- Student confidentiality and records access issues

### **GAL for Minors | Trauma Informed & Motivational Interviewing**

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*CVLS Offices, 12:15 PM*

**Thursday, November 19**

- Presented by Lisa Parsons

Lisa Parsons, Supervising Attorney at The Legal Council of Chicago, will provide an overview of trauma informed and motivational interviewing for attorneys, how to employ these techniques and how the approach might benefit pro bono clients and cases.

## TRAININGS

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### **New Volunteer Orientations**

*CVLS Offices, 12:15 PM*

- Thursday, December 10

We'll cover the skills required to be a successful volunteer attorney, as well as the issues that may come up during cases. Training is for new volunteers working with CVLS.

Please visit [www.cvls.org/cle](http://www.cvls.org/cle) to register for a seminar!

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