Because equal access to justice is everyone’s fight.

Upcoming Events

**November 8** - Seminar: Representing Detained Immigrants in Bond Hearings; 12:15 pm; Zoom

**November 10** - New Volunteer Orientation; 12:15 pm; Zoom

**December 2** - Minor GAL Training; 12:00 pm; Zoom

**December 2** - Vino + Van Gogh; 6:00 pm; Zoom

Visit [cvls.org/event](http://cvls.org/event) for more details.

**NIGHTMARE NO MORE!**

GAL settles tricky custody case

In late 2020, CVLS was appointed as Guardian ad Litem (GAL) in a domestic relations case for two children: an 8-year-old girl and an 11-year-old boy. The children’s mother sought to restrict the father’s parenting time due to an ongoing DCFS abuse investigation. Our volunteer, Virginia Torres Ryan, investigated allegations that the father had been violent toward the mother during their relationship, that he was presently using parenting time as an excuse to harass her, and that he had abused the parties’ minor daughter during a recent visit.

At the time of CVLS’ appointment, the Court had issued a protective order, protecting the mother and both children from the father. Both parties retained counsel, and the case became highly contested. Virginia, a skilled domestic relations practitioner with many years of experience litigating family law and domestic violence cases, jumped right in and negotiated an initial temporary order for supervised parenting time. She also made referrals for the children to participate in mental health services.

Once the DCFS investigation was complete and had concluded that no abuse had occurred, Virginia monitored visits to ensure the children were safe during visits with their father. She interviewed both children and kept in close contact with the parties and their attorneys for over a year. A few months ago, Virginia helped the parties reach a final agreement, which allows the father to have reasonable yet limited parenting time with the children on alternating weekends. The parties and the Court were satisfied that this case was resolved amicably, thanks to Virginia’s expertise and her use of alternative dispute resolution.

Coronavirus. Evictions. Divorce. In a crisis, CVLS is there, providing critical services and support to our city’s most vulnerable. Every year, CVLS takes on about 3,000 new cases around the county. Your tax deductible gift enables CVLS to help vulnerable Chicagoans when they need it most.

www.cvls.org/donate
TAKING A CLOSER LOOK
Clinic Volunteers Successfully Appeal Denial of Unemployment Benefits

Renata came to CVLS through the Amicus Poloniae Legal Clinic. There, she met with attorney Robert Groszek about an unemployment case. Renata had been released by her employer and denied unemployment benefits. Without any income, she needed legal assistance in learning about her options and possibly appealing the denial of her benefits.

Robert and fellow volunteer, Crystal Lameka, first started with an intake interview; they asked Renata what happened. She told them that, after a verbal disagreement, her boss took her badge and told her to leave. Renata's application for benefits was denied, the Department of Employment Security reasoning that Renata wasn't actually fired – she was just asked to leave for the day. This was Renata's first problem with an employer and her first time applying for unemployment.

Crystal and Robert agreed to represent Renata and put together an appeal on her behalf. They argued that it was clear that Renata was let go because her boss took her badge, and without the badge, she no longer had access to the building. The Board of Review agreed that this constituted a final termination of her employment and that Renata had not done anything to warrant misconduct. They reversed the initial decision, awarding Renata benefits back to the date of her initial filing.

Evictions, foreclosures, and unresolved debt issues can have a long-lasting, negative impact on someone's future. Our Early Resolution Program (ERP) connects people with lawyers and other resources. This program is available to all residents of Cook County free of charge. An open court case is not needed to get help. Call 855-956-5763 or apply online to get help today. Please help spread the word.
LOCKE LORD SUCCESS STORY
Client Gets Not Only Divorce, but Peace of Mind

Evelyn is a mother to two minor children. She arrived at CVLS’ legal clinic at St. Procopius Church, seeking legal representation as she had just been served with a petition for divorce filed by her husband. Attorneys from Locke Lord LLP met with Evelyn, conducted an intake interview, and agreed to provide pro bono advocacy to ensure Evelyn’s best interests were represented in the divorce case.

Kerry Vyverberg and Ann Marie Walsh handled Evelyn’s case together. Although the parties were in agreement as to the divorce and there was no marital property, the case involved a number of complicating factors. To begin with, the husband was represented by different private attorneys throughout the case. His second and most recent counsel was unresponsive and unreliable, causing significant frustration and delay. Kerry and Ann Marie ended up doing most, if not all, of the legwork.

Evelyn was finally able to get divorced last month. The Court was very appreciative of the work done by her pro bono attorneys. Kerry did much of the work early on but had to transition out of her role, so Ann Marie saw the case through to the finish line. This was her first ever divorce, and it was a fantastic outcome. Great work, you two!

The case was further complicated by the fact that Evelyn’s husband was allegedly only paid in cash, had no bank accounts, and did not file tax returns. Proving his income for the purpose of calculating child support was difficult. The attorneys ended up taking the husband’s deposition at no cost to the client. Financial support for the client was imperative as Evelyn was the sole provider for her kids and at risk of losing her job since she worked for an employer facing financial troubles.

It’s no secret that CVLS volunteers are the backbone of Chicago Pro Bono. Without their sacrifice and dedication, thousands of people would needlessly suffer without representation.

We’d like to recognize our amazing Adult GAL volunteers who have signed up for new cases in the last couple months:

- Adam M. Stern: 2
- Alicia Petersen: 1
- Amy N. Gjesdahl: 1
- Amy S. Finn: 1
- Andrew M. Barrios: 2
- Brian M. Bentrup: 1
- Caroline O. Shoenberger: 3
- Damon W. Doucet: 1
- David A. Zulkey: 1
- Debra S. Davy: 1
- Donna M. Van Polen: 1
- Elizabeth M. Fink: 1
- Ericka F. Coners: 1
- Hayley M. Pieper: 1
- Hugh F. Smart: 2
- Jesse A. Footlik: 1
- Kevin C. Lichtenberg: 1
- Marcos A. Resendiz: 1
- Matthew W. McQuiston: 1
- Nola C. Pieper: 1
- Raveet Phull: 2
- Robert J. Hovey: 2
- Ruben M. Garcia: 1
- Sachin Saparia: 1

Thanks to caring advocates like these, Chicago Pro Bono is having a big impact in 2021.

Chicago Volunteer Legal Services is a proud partner of The Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network (IL-AFLAN). IL-AFLAN is a statewide hotline that provides legal information, advice, brief services (including the preparation and review of legal documents), and referrals to veterans, service members, national guard, reservists, and their spouses and dependents. Call 855-452-3526 to get started.
CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES presents...

VIN O +

V A N G O G H

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021 at 6 - 8 PM
VIRTUAL SOCIAL EVENT
$65 tickets which include art supplies

WWW.CVLS.ORG/VINOVANGOGH
PAINT ALONG
A local artist will guide attendees through the steps to paint a fun twist on a classic Van Gogh piece. Paint supplies will be provided to all registered attendees and will be mailed to you before the event.

MAYER | BROWN

KIRKLAND & ELLIS LLP

ROPE & GRAY

SIDLEY

Schiff Hardin

Skadden

Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg LLP | Latham & Watkins LLP
Quarles & Brady LLP | Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP

BakerHostetler | Beacon Hill | Berger Schatz | Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP | Epiq
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP | Kroll | Segal McCambridge Singer & Mahoney | Seyfarth Shaw LLP

WWW.CVLS.ORG/VINOvangogh
NO CLIENT LEFT BEHIND

Elderly Client’s Foreclosure Case Dismissed!

When 83-year-old Olivia’s escrowed insurance payments spiked, she fell behind on her mortgage payments. Her home went into foreclosure. Once Olivia found her way to CVLS, volunteer attorney Brian Coleman got his first foreclosure case, which he handled with aplomb.

Olivia didn’t speak English. Jose, her elderly son who lived with her did, but he was legally blind. Neither used email. Although Brian could communicate with his clients by phone, Jose had to take documents to a neighborhood service provider, Access Community Health Network, so that they could help him fax them to CVLS who would, in turn, email them to Brian. Then Brian would call Jose to discuss them, and Jose would relay the information to his mother. This process added significant time to the case.

When the lender offered Olivia an affordable loan modification, Brian worked closely with them to make sure they understood and could comply with the terms. He also navigated the court case to give his clients the time they needed to review and consider the terms. His diligence and patience paid off. The loan was modified, and the foreclosure dismissed. Olivia and her son are keeping their home, and Brian has his first pro bono foreclosure under his belt.

NEW STAFF JOINS THE TEAM

After graduating law school, Cristina joined the Immigrant Legal Center in Omaha, Nebraska as the domestic violence staff attorney, where she specialized in working on immigration cases with survivors of domestic violence and other violent crimes. During law school, Cristina worked a law clerk for a private immigration firm and at the Creighton School of Law Immigrant and Refugee Clinic. Cristina is fluent in Spanish and is our newest staff attorney specializing in family law.

PRO BONO BOND PROJECT NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Legal representation often determines whether an immigrant remains safely in the United States or is deported without ever having any legal counsel. Additionally, whether or not an immigrant is detained during removal proceedings greatly affects the outcome of their immigration case. While an immigrant can legally have an attorney represent him or her at any point in proceedings, representation cannot be at government expense. Statistically, only 14% of detained immigrants are able to obtain representation.

The AILA/CVLS Pro Bono Bond Project finds attorneys to represent detained immigrants that are unable to afford an attorney at their bond hearing. This project is for the limited representation of the detained immigrant at their bond hearing, but this limited representation is extremely helpful for the ultimate outcome of their removal proceedings. You do not have to be an immigration expert to make a difference! The Project provides initial training, as well as a helpful guide that includes a list of mentors who you can reach out to for case specific questions.

If interested, please contact us today to sign up for the next training. Email us at rebekah@cvls.org.
CHINESE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION HONORS TWO CVLS VOLUNTEERS AT 35TH ANNUAL GALA

CVLS is thrilled to announce that volunteer attorney, Eric Zhi, was recently honored with the Chinese American Bar Association (CABA) Rising Star Award. The presentation ceremony took place on October 13, 2021 during CABA’s 35th Annual Installation Gala at Bridge 410. CVLS Deputy Director, Phil Mohr, was in attendance and pleased to present Eric with this well-deserved award.

Eric is a transactional associate in the Chicago office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. He is also a founder of Lawyers Helping Our Community (LHOC), a CVLS clinic dedicated to addressing the needs of the Chinatown community. LHOC was started in 2020 by Eric and co-founder Erica Yang, who also attended that evening to celebrate Eric’s award. The clinic has provided remote help to hundreds of non-English speaking clients on coronavirus-related legal issues since its inception.

Another CVLS connection was honored during the Gala. Kim Leung is this year’s recipient of CABA’s Distinguished Service in Law award. She was recognized not only for her work with the Chinese American community throughout her legal career, but for her current position as Managing Attorney for the Chinese American Service League (CASL) and her role as Clinic Chair of the CVLS CASL Legal Clinic.

CVLS is proud to be associated with attorneys who go above and beyond for their communities. Their passions align perfectly with our goal of providing equal access to justice for everyone. We welcome you all to congratulate Eric and Kim on their awards.

RACE JUDICATA® RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who came out and showed their support at our 26th Race Judicata! The weather was perfect and the energy was fantastic. We look forward to next year as we once again show this city that Chicago Pro Bono is alive and well!

Fastest Lawyers
Female: Katie Bethke Parchman
Male: Yonatan Axel

Overall
Female 1: Laura Haffey
Female 2: Rebecca Denham
Female 3: Karen Pauleen

Male 1: Brendan Thielsen
Male 2: Gabriel Esparza
Male 3: Henry Mierzwa

Team Division 1
Female: Jones Day
Male: Schiff Hardin
Coed: Banner & Witcoff

Team Division 2
Female: Pintas & Mullins
Male: Ropes & Gray
Coed: Pintas & Mullins

Team Division 3
Female: US Legal Support
Male: Resolute Management
Coed: Resolute Management

Team Division 4
Female: Legal Aid Chicago
Male: City of Chicago Law Department
Coed: 2Civility

Team T-Shirt Contest
Illinois MCLE Board

All results can be viewed at: www.cvls.org/rj2021results