



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

GREATER BOSTON
LEGAL SERVICES

... and justice for all

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greater Boston Legal Services accomplished great things in 2017. We provided life-changing legal aid to thousands of individual clients and their families. We also made significant gains on several large-scale legislative and policy issues that affect hundreds of thousands of low-income people in the Commonwealth.

At GBLS, we view our work as having a dual purpose – the first being to ensure equal access to civil justice, and the second to eradicate the barriers and issues that keep people in poverty. One of the biggest barriers for our clients – and one that impacts almost every aspect of their lives – is wealth inequality. The wealth gap in our country is widening at an alarming rate and, as it widens, the ability of low-income people to build or maintain stable, self-sufficient lives diminishes.

Here in the greater Boston area, our economy is strong, the unemployment rate has reached unprecedented lows, and the housing market is highly competitive. But this boom time means something different for people without higher education, families trying to afford market rent on modest salaries, undocumented workers, or those without assets. Their place in our community is more precarious than ever, and one stroke of bad luck can easily turn into something much worse. At GBLS, we endeavor to help people gain steady financial footing, safe and stable housing, freedom from violence, and the ability to work and care for their families.

GBLS' commitment to our clients often goes beyond their presenting legal issue. Our dedicated staff works to empower clients to break the cycle of poverty, such as supporting the single mother of a child with a serious illness in a disability benefits claim so that the family could get the financial resources for proper care, as well as giving the mother the opportunity to return to school to get a better-paying job. Or helping another client get approved for healthcare coverage that enabled her to avoid going into medical debt to treat her chronic illness and maintain her health. These are just two of the many clients whose lives have been stabilized as a result of GBLS' services, clients who now have the opportunity to not only meet their basic needs, but to thrive.



PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER RHODES

None of this work would be possible without our committed supporters – people like you, who value equal justice for all and who understand that we all benefit when we create opportunities for low-income families and individuals. Together, using the power of the law, we are making a difference in our community. Thank you for being our partner in justice.

Jacquelynne J. Bowman
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Greater Boston Legal Services' (GBLS') mission is to provide free civil legal aid to help individuals and families achieve justice and meet their basic needs, such as food, security, safety, and adequate shelter. GBLS helps vulnerable individuals and families retain affordable housing, gain protection from domestic violence, obtain subsistence income for food and necessities, access health care, seek immigration relief, and recover earned wages. GBLS accomplishes these goals through both individual representation and impact advocacy, working closely with a wide network of community partners. GBLS' philosophy is that justice should be for all people, not just those with the financial means to pay.



Chuc Dac celebrated his naturalization as a result of help from GBLS' Asian Outreach Project.



Mayor Marty Walsh joined GBLS' CORI Project and the Boston Housing Authority at the Gallivan Community Center Unity Day and Groundbreaking.



GBLS attorneys collaborated closely with staff at Rosie's Place in order to meet the needs of homeless women and domestic violence survivors.



GBLS' immigration attorneys educated colleagues and peers about up-to-the-minute developments with federal immigration laws and policies.

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Staff, volunteers, and pro bono partners

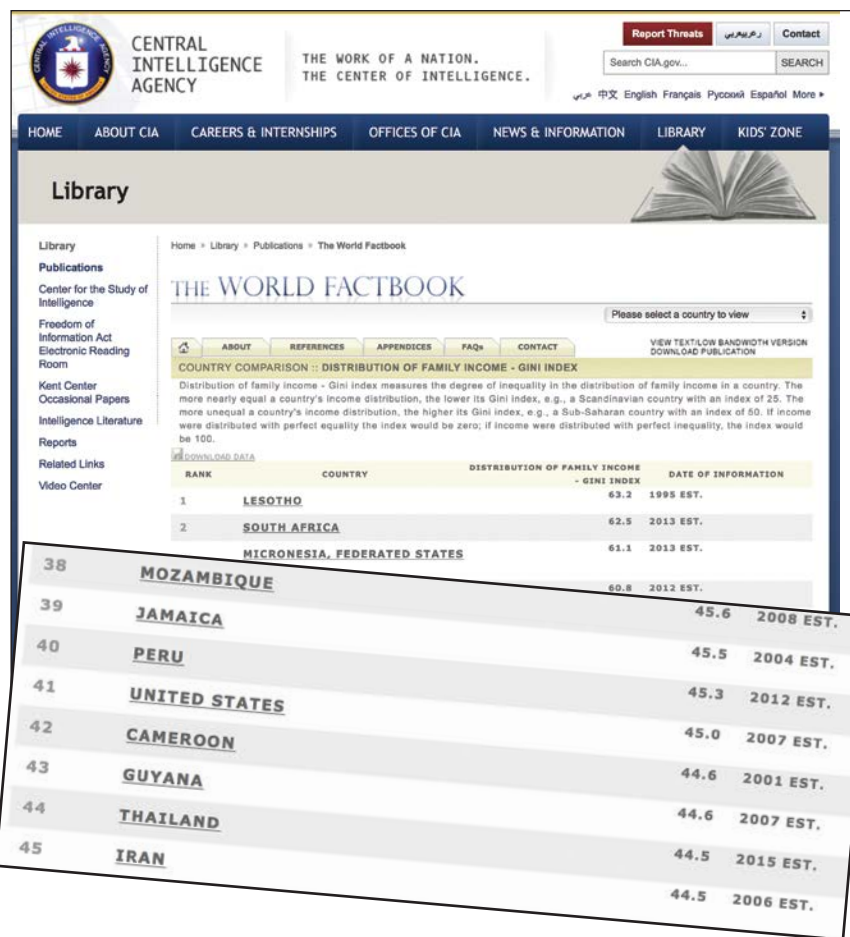
15 — SPECIAL THANKS

Acknowledging our donors and collaborators

WEALTH INEQUALITY

Wealth inequality is pervasive in this country, and on an upward trend. In 1900, the sixteen prominent attorneys who founded Greater Boston Legal Services, then the Boston Legal Aid Society, recognized that disparities in wealth between members of the Boston community had a negative impact on people's ability to access and receive justice. Noted legal leader Reginald Heber Smith stated in the Legal Aid Society's 15th Annual Report that without access to a lawyer, "the rich and poor do not stand on an equality before the law, and thus we have developed a system of justice which in practical operation results in an absolute denial of justice to millions of people." All of this holds true today.

Wealth inequality permeates every aspect of life and opportunity. It is the product of income inequality, earnings gaps, homeownership rates, retirement savings, student loan debt, and unequal assets and asset-building subsidies. It impacts daily life and a family's standard of living, as well as their ability to build assets, get an education, and work towards financial stability. The wealth gap is even more severe between white and non-white families. According to the Federal Reserve, white family wealth is seven times greater than black family wealth and five times



The screenshot shows the CIA's 'The World Factbook' website. The page is titled 'THE WORLD FACTBOOK' and displays a table of 'COUNTRY COMPARISON :: DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY INCOME - GINI INDEX'. The table lists countries with their Gini Index values and the date of the information. The countries listed are Lesotho, South Africa, Micronesia, Federated States, Mozambique, Jamaica, Peru, United States, Cameroon, Guyana, Thailand, and Iran.

RANK	COUNTRY	DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY INCOME - GINI INDEX	DATE OF INFORMATION
1	LESOTHO	63.2	1995 EST.
2	SOUTH AFRICA	62.5	2013 EST.
	MICRONESIA, FEDERATED STATES	61.1	2013 EST.
38	MOZAMBIQUE	60.8	2012 EST.
39	JAMAICA	45.6	2008 EST.
40	PERU	45.5	2004 EST.
41	UNITED STATES	45.3	2012 EST.
42	CAMEROON	45.0	2007 EST.
43	GUYANA	44.6	2001 EST.
44	THAILAND	44.6	2007 EST.
45	IRAN	44.5	2015 EST.
		44.5	2006 EST.

The Gini coefficient, a measure of inequality where 0 is perfectly equal and 1 is perfectly unequal, represents the income or wealth distribution of a nation's residents. According to the CIA, countries at the lowest end of the spectrum (i.e., trending toward equality) include Finland, Sweden, Belgium, Kazakhstan, Germany, and Iceland. The United States has a Gini coefficient of about 0.45, putting us in the highest third of countries, in league with Angola, Iran, Peru, and Saudi Arabia, among others.

greater than Hispanic family wealth.

And the wealth gap is widening. According to the Pew Research Center, in 1989, the median upper-income family held 28 times the wealth of the median low-income family. By 2016, upper-income families (those who earned \$127,600 or more per year) held 75 times the

wealth of the median low-income family (those who earn less than \$42,500). In other terms, in the U.S. the top 1% of earners now own 39% of the nation's wealth, while the bottom 90% now owns only 23% of the nation's total wealth.

At GBLS, we see clients struggling on a daily basis with hardships that are, at

best, exacerbated by lack of wealth and, at worst, caused by it. From elders who lack stable retirement income, to families driven further into poverty due to healthcare costs, to low-income homeowners who have lost what little they had due to predatory lending and foreclosure, many in our community are one small incident away from total crisis. Without money in the bank, low-income tenants are at risk of losing their housing if they're unable to work for a short period of time, or losing their job if their car breaks down and requires repairs that they cannot afford. The American ideal of upward mobility becomes even harder to achieve when the systems that are supposed to equalize people, such as higher education and public benefits programs, fail to do just that – evidenced by the skyrocketing cost of education that leads low-income students to take on almost insurmountable student

loan debt or programs that penalize enrollees for trying to keep or build assets while becoming financially stable.

Because the ideals of our country are rooted in the promise of justice, freedom, and equality, we look to our legal system to help ensure the reality of these values. So much of the work of civil legal aid is designed to help level the playing field. At GBLS, we recognize not only the impact of wealth inequality on our clients and community members, we actively strategize how to combat it. From our work helping to ensure that low-income workers are treated fairly and receive the wages they've earned, to connecting single mothers with needed childcare vouchers so that they can actually afford to go to work, to making sure that domestic violence survivors don't have to go to court alone to face opposing counsel and

their abusers, GBLS tries to close the wealth gap in measures large and small.

This is work we cannot do alone, of course, and we are grateful for our peers in the field, our generous donors and allies, and the leaders among us who recognize, as Reginald Heber Smith did, that “the fact remains that in the administration of our laws it is impossible in almost every case to ‘obtain right and justice’ without the assistance of a lawyer.” As attorneys and paralegals, we strive to achieve outcomes for our clients that will result in family stability and lead to self-sufficiency; to ensure that lack of wealth does not prevent anyone from having a roof over their head, safety from abuse, or food on their table. Thanks to your support, we will continue to protect and empower the most vulnerable among us, hopefully one day fulfilling the promise of a more just and equal society.

I have got no words to express my gratitude towards your tireless efforts to advocate for me in the most trying moment in my life. I appreciate every single help and support from you and your office and I will forever be indebted.”

~ GBLS client

COMBATTING WEALTH INEQUALITY THROUGH CIVIL LEGAL AID

DIRECT SERVICES

Greater Boston Legal Services provides direct legal assistance to thousands of low-income Massachusetts residents every year in an effort to help people meet their basic needs. Some of the ways that our direct services combat wealth inequality include:

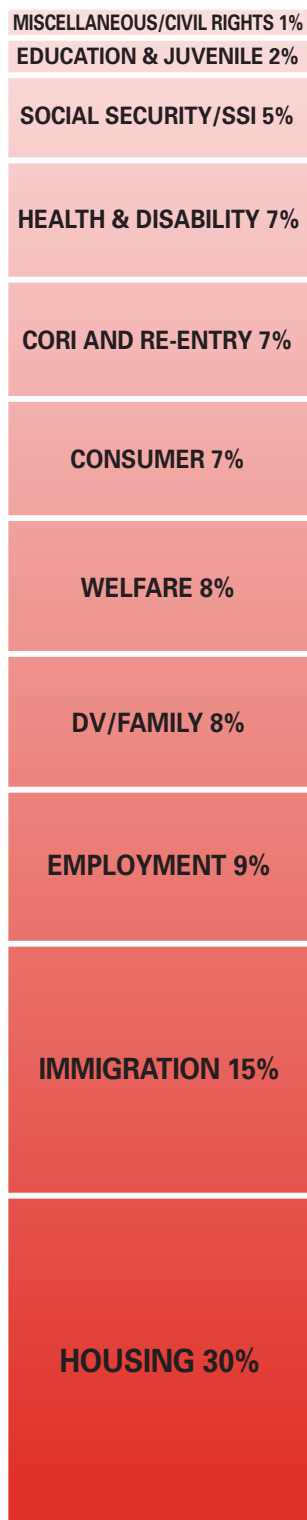
- Fighting wage theft – Wage theft directly impacts wealth and exacerbates inequality, while recovery of wages and damages helps stabilize families. Along with the Attorney General's office and other partners, GBLS holds clinics to help low-wage workers bring their own cases to small claims court, as well as directly representing plaintiffs;
- Representing worker co-operatives – Supporting worker co-ops so that people with limited assets or other limitations to employment, such as immigration status or a criminal record, can start their own businesses. We represent worker co-ops directly by counseling co-ops on entity formation and drafting governance documents;
- Supporting tax relief – Tax credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, and other refunds bolster wages and reduce income inequality;
- Helping domestic violence survivors become self-sufficient – Representing survivors of intimate partner violence in family law issues, such as child and spousal support, dissolutions, etc., so that they can be financially stable apart from their abuser;
- Criminal records sealing and expungement – Sealing or clearing CORI so that ex-offenders can access jobs and housing, helping to stabilize them and reducing recidivism;
- Protecting elders – GBLS works to protect elders who don't have sufficient retirement savings to survive, by helping them with housing and benefits issues, as well as remedying elder financial abuse by preventing the loss of stolen assets; and
- Combatting unscrupulous debt collection practices – GBLS' consumer work helps to prevent the unfair seizure of income and assets, ensuring economic stability for our clients and enabling them to begin to create wealth.

IMPACT ADVOCACY

Greater Boston Legal Services' impact advocacy helps even more low-income families and individuals by positively changing policies and laws that affect their well-being and self-sufficiency. In 2017, GBLS worked to level the playing field on a broader scale through a variety of activities, including:

- Fighting for affordable housing policies and practices for low-income tenants so that they can remain in their homes and communities. GBLS represented the Charlestown Resident Alliance at the Boston Housing Authority's Bunker Hill development to help ensure that public housing units remained affordable to low-income residents in perpetuity, and that the residents had a decision-making role in the redevelopment deal with private developer Corcoran/SunCal. With GBLS' help, an agreement was reached between the public and private partners to rebuild 1,110 units of deeply subsidized affordable housing units to serve the existing Charlestown residents and the public housing waiting list;
- Working with Raise Up Massachusetts on an effort to accomplish two things which will help combat wealth inequality, if successful: 1) Increase the minimum wage to \$15 in Massachusetts so that low-income workers can earn a living wage; and 2) Create paid family and medical leave so that low-wage workers can take care of their health or the health of a loved one without fear of losing their job or the risk of financial ruin. New parents, both mothers and fathers, would be able to take time off to care for a new baby, or a newly-adopted or foster child. Currently, access to paid family medical leave is much higher among wealthy white workers than low-wage workers of color, and only 4% of the lowest-income workers have access; and
- Seeking relief for the most vulnerable families in our community – single mothers with small children. GBLS identified a provision in the state annual appropriations act prohibiting the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) from charging copays to families getting Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)-related transitional and post-transitional child care, which EEC had been violating. Because of GBLS' advocacy, EEC stopped requiring copays and agreed to refund erroneously-charged copays to the approximately 8,000 families affected. As a result, working mothers who needed child care to go to work were able to save their limited resources to take care of their families.

OUR WORK IN 2017



10,935
CASES HANDLED
IN 2017

Every year, GBLS provides representation, advice, and other critical legal assistance to thousands of Massachusetts residents facing serious civil legal problems. In 2017, GBLS served more than 9,000 low-income people with nearly 11,000 legal matters. When there is nowhere else to turn, low-income families and individuals, elders, people with disabilities, and other underserved groups look to GBLS for help securing their basic necessities.

89¢
of EVERY
DOLLAR DONATED
GOES DIRECTLY TO
CLIENT SERVICES

9,159

SERVED

32

CITIES & TOWNS
PLUS AN ADDITIONAL
14 TOWNS IN WHICH
WE DO ELDER WORK

60%
of eligible clients
are turned away
due to lack
of organizational
resources to
serve them



56 ATTORNEYS
17 PARALEGALS
9 ATTORNEY FELLOWS

CLIENTS MUST HAVE
INCOMES LESS THAN
125%
of THE FEDERAL
POVERTY LEVEL
\$15,075 for a single individual
\$30,750 for a family of four

66%
of CLIENTS ARE WOMEN

77%
of CLIENTS ARE
PEOPLE OF COLOR

22%
of CLIENTS ARE ELDERS

25,417 PEOPLE BENEFITTED THROUGH DIRECT SERVICES

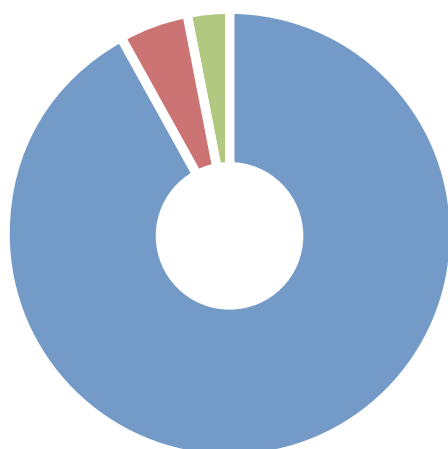
2017 FINANCIALS

INCOME

	2017	2016
Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation	5,524,854	5,202,617
Law Firms and Attorneys	3,804,483	3,839,795
<i>Cy Pres</i> and Other Similar Awards	101,607	549,706
Foundations / Corporations	1,991,370	1,488,456
Government Grants	2,150,070	2,013,446
Individual Contributions	1,108,219	999,734
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley	355,094	358,769
Miscellaneous	878,236	1,209,097
TOTAL INCOME BEFORE DONATED SERVICES	15,913,933	15,661,620
Volunteer Services	6,805,385	7,263,298
TOTAL INCOME	22,719,318	22,924,918

EXPENSES

	2017	2016
Salary and Benefits Subtotal	12,659,521	11,447,442
Non-Personnel		
Occupancy	456,874	495,965
Equipment and Supplies	484,285	448,241
Contract Services	404,230	294,486
Library and Litigation Expenses	213,790	227,618
Transfer to Capital	118,909	109,200
Miscellaneous	780,418	657,242
Non-Personnel Subtotal	2,458,506	2,232,752
TOTAL EXPENSES BEFORE DONATED SERVICES	15,118,027	13,680,194
Volunteer Services	6,805,385	7,263,298
TOTAL EXPENSES	21,923,412	20,943,492
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	795,906	397,892
CUMMULATIVE OPERATING NET ASSETS	6,975,826	6,550,743



2017 EXPENSES

Program Services	92%
General Administration	5%
Fundraising	3%

GBLS STAFF

Carolina Africano
Yanick Aldin
Lourdes Alvarez
Miriam Aponte
Valenda Applegarth
Luz Arévalo
Manisha Bhatt
Jacquelynne Bowman
Lisa Bradley
Dina Brownstein
Andrea Carrillo
Maria Casas
Rita Cheresnowsky
Ting Chiu
Nadine Cohen
Migdalia Cotto
Elizabeth Crimmins
Zoe Cronin
Ana Cruz
Frank Czolpinski
Ventura Dennis
Karen Dobak
Taramattie Doucette
Mercer Edwards
Li Fan
Maria Fernandes

Mithra Fernandez-Kan
Deborah Filler
Brian Flynn
John Flynn
Linda Garcia
Wynn Gerhard
Lizbeth Ginsburg
Maritza Gomez
Melissa González
Yanira González
Monica Halas
Shelly Harter
Susan Hegel
Abbe Hershberg
Liliana Ibara
Margaret Jean
Todd Kaplan
Nancy Kelly
Brian Kiwanuka
Linda Lank
Patricia Levesh
Sarah Levy
Bethany Li
Lisa Locher
Nancy Lorenz
Anne Mackin

Melanie Malherbe
Daniel Manning
Sandra Manzanares
Sonia Márquez
Laura Massie
Donna McCormick
James “Mac” McCreight
Elizabeth McIntyre
Naomi Meyer
Annery Miranda
Alexander
Mitchell-Munevar
Tram Nguyen
Yahaira Ortiz
Benjamin Pannell
Audrey Pransky
Jeffrey Purcell
Pauline Quirion
Armando Ramos
Martha Ramos
Audrey Richardson
Yolanda Rivera
Jane Rocamora
Hernando Romero
Jay Rose
Alexa Rosenbloom

Heather Ross
Constance Rossetti
Blanca Ruiz
Noriko Saito
Eneida Sánchez
Joanne Sanders
Levi Sanders
Ellen Shachter
Lauren Shryne
Brenda Smith
Sherry Smith
Lauren Song
Quinten Steenhuis
Hannah Tanabe
Sandra Tavaréz
Beverly Teal
Patricia Tellis-Warren
Jeroboam Tisme
Phi Tran
Margaret Turner
Juan Valdes
Gerald Wall
David White
Elizabeth Whiteway
John Willshire Carrera
Barbara Zimbel

2017 FELLOWS

Matthew Brooks
Jade Brown
Ting Chiu
Iris Coloma-Gaines
Frank Curren
Jannette Ekanem
Olivia Horton
Brittany Kerr
Joey Michalakes
Jessica Podesva
Sarah Reynolds
Javonda Spain
Sheba Varughese
Dvora Walker
Laticia Walker
Ariel Woodard-Stephens
Deena Zakim

MBA Young Lawyers Division Chair Victoria M. Santoro, GBLS Attorney Ventura Dennis, and MBA President Christopher P. Sullivan.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION



AWARDS & HONORS

STAFF

Luz Arévalo, Senior Attorney and director of GBLS' Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic, received the GBLS Dow-Gardiner-Landrum Award honoring long-term commitment to legal aid and ensuring access to justice for people with low incomes. Luz's colleagues admire her decades of dedication to her clients, incredible work ethic, legal talents, expert oversight of the clinic, team spirit and multi-forum advocacy.

Manisha Bhatt, Senior Attorney, was named Woman of the Year 2017 by India New England "for demonstrating how law can be used to create 'hope and spirit to elevate all of us.'" Manisha said, "As a lawyer, I have seen firsthand people lose their rights simply because they didn't know who to turn to for help or they talked to a lawyer too late. I wanted to change that."

Ventura Dennis, GBLS CORI and Re-entry Project Attorney and former Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Fellow, was honored with the Mass. Bar Association's Outstanding Young Lawyer Award. Through her work at GBLS, Ventura has been able to get criminal records sealed for hundreds of individuals, increasing their opportunities to obtain jobs, an education, and housing. "I feel very fortunate that I'm able to advocate and be on

the front lines for these poor communities in Massachusetts," Ventura said. "And because I'm from them myself and I have family and friends who are still in these communities, I feel like I'm able to have a direct effect on people's lives, and that is what motivates me to keep going."

Karen Dobak, Senior Paralegal, received the GBLS Dow-Gardiner-Landrum Award that honors long-term commitment to legal aid and ensuring access to justice for people with low incomes. Her colleagues describe her as "an extraordinary advocate who zealously and creatively represents her elderly clients to ensure that they obtain the health and income benefits on which they rely."

Brian Flynn, Asian Outreach/Employment Law Unit Managing Attorney, received the Mass. Bar Association 2017 Legal Services Award. Additionally, the National Lawyers Guild – Massachusetts Chapter honored Brian with a 2017 Lawyer Award.

Monica Halas, Lead Attorney, was honored as a dynamic woman leader by the Chinese Progressive Association, which celebrated 30 years of organizing immigrant women workers in 2017.

Anne Mackin, Unaccompanied Minors Project Senior Attorney, received the 2017 Boston Bar Association John G. Brooks Legal Services Award, an honor presented annually to professional legal services attorneys for their outstanding work on behalf of indigent people in the Boston area. The BBA stated, "From her steadfast dedication to clients to her generous mentorship of colleagues, Mackin exemplifies all that the Boston Bar looks to honor in the legal profession—dedication to excellence, commitment to public service, and the celebration of diversity. Her work representing immigrant children in Massachusetts is more important than ever, and we salute her perseverance in helping those most in need."

Nancy Kelly, Immigration Law Unit Acting Managing Attorney, and **Pauline Quirion**, CORI & Re-Entry Project Lead Attorney, were named Thomson Reuters Super Lawyers for the Massachusetts and New England region.

Tram Nguyen, Attorney, received the GBLS Reginald Heber Smith Award, which honors building community within and outside GBLS, innovation and excellence in legal work, and bringing a fresh perspective to GBLS' legal advocacy. Her colleagues described Tram as "an incredible and fierce advocate for victims of domestic violence, and

exceptionally deserving of this award."

Lauren Song, Attorney, and **Bob Sable**, Volunteer Attorney and former Executive Director, were recognized as Legal Team Honorees by the David A. Grossman Fund for Social Justice at Harvard Law School.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Vincent J. Pisegna, Krokidas & Bluestein LLP Partner, was named a 2017 Thomson Reuters Super Lawyer.

Andrew Troop, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman Partner, was honored by the Mass. Bar Association with the Access to Justice Awards Pro Bono Publico Award. He was also recognized by the DAG Fund for Social Justice along with staff, as a result of significant pro bono efforts with GBLS.

Gladys Vega, Chelsea Collaborative Executive Director, was honored as a dynamic woman leader by the Chinese Progressive Association during its celebration of 30 years of organizing immigrant women workers.

CORPORATION

The GBLS Corporation is comprised of members of the community — including lawyers, clients and interested citizens — who are elected to five-year terms. These individuals serve GBLS by electing the Board of Directors and Officers of the Corporation and by conducting any required business.

Michael L. Altman
Isaac D. Bantu
Carey L. Bertrand
Richard M. Bluestein
Bernard J. Bonn
John E. Bowman
Gregory E. Bulger
Myrnairis Cepeda
John F. Cogan
Zachary Coseglia
Joanne Daniels-Finegold
Jonathan G. Davis
W. Lee H. Dunham
Thomas E. Dwyer
Michael Elefante
Pamela Feingold
Steven S. Fischman
Rhys Gardiner

Marc Gary
Deirdre M. Giblin
Lena G. Goldberg
Katherine Haffner
Philip K. Hamilton
Susan A. Hartnett
Regina Healy
Daniel T. Heffernan
Robert J. Hildreth
John J. Hitt
Kay Hideko Hodge
David A. Kluft
Daryl J. Lapp
Paul W. Lee
William F. Lee
Donald G. Leka
Chelsea A. Loughran
Richard A. Marks

Susan A. Maze-Rothstein
Martha A. Mazzone
John T. Montgomery
Robert J. Muldoon
Joseph E. Mullaney
Robert J. Nagle
John D. Norberg
Stephen H. Oleskey
Rory P. Pheiffer
Michael N. Rader
David W. Rosenberg
Daniel Routh
David A. Rozenson
Mary K. Ryan
Robert A. Sable
Saul A. Schapiro
Jill Schwab
Thomas G. Shapiro

Robert H. Smith
Richard W. Southgate
Gary A. Spiess
H. Michael Stevens
Paul R. Sugarman
May Takayanagi
Melissa B. Tearney
Arthur Telegen
Jerome B. Tichner
Anne Trinquet
William B. Tyler
John B. Ward
Walter A. Winshall
John G. Wofford
Toni G. Wolfman
Stephen S. Young
Albert P. Zabin

"When I called your office to ask for help from an attorney I was nervous and very apprehensive not knowing what kind of person I would be getting to help with my case.

The day I met you my faith in the world was restored. You have been so wonderful, so kind and so understanding.

So really, thank you from the bottom of my heart."

~ GBLS client



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

ATTORNEYS

The following individuals, in addition to many law students, volunteered substantial commitments of time in 2017 to GBLS and its clients. Their contributions are valued at over \$6,800,000 in in-kind services to GBLS in 2017. We are also very grateful to the many pro bono attorneys, too numerous to list here, who handled GBLS cases at their firms.

Gary Allen	Emil Constantino	Gunter Hiort	Oliver Mavor-Parker	Robert Sable
Sarah Andries	Thomas Earl Crice	Paula Ho	Elizabeth A. Miller	Harvey S. Shapiro
Rebecca Ballesteros	Judith Diamond	Nadiyah Humber	Margaret Moran	Jane G. Smith
Dick Bauer	Hed Ehrlich	Harvey Kaplan	Ibone Moreno De Aray	Phillip Weinberg
Christina Bazak	Ellen Gabriel	Zachary Lichter	Linda Neary	Glenna Wyman
Michael Beauvais	Jane Gottschalk	Brian Lin	Hieu Nguyen	Albert Zabin
Jean Charn	John Harrington	Serena D. Madar	Richard Rafferty	
Susan Chimene	Regina Healy	R. Hardin Matthews	Edward Rice	

OTHER VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful to the following individuals who provided administrative or legal support services during the year.

Marilyn Batastini	Ran (Sarah) Gao	Wellington Mtshali	Barbara Sullivan
Lisbeth Britz	Abigail Geier	Rina Padua	Madhanga Wickramasinghe
Miguel Cabrera Chaparro	Thomas Gilbert	Geraldine Pierre	William Williamson
Cynthia Cobham	Sun Jin Jung	William Rosenfeld	Toni Wolfman
Joanne Daniels-Finegold	Simon Klein	Maureen Serio	Yung Hoon (Joseph) Yang
Hilary Deignan	Robert Lannon	Janet Slovin	
Laurie DesRosier	Jurett Mooltry-Weathers	Suzanne Small	
Harrison Fitch	Alexander Mordan	Jovanda Spain	

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Richard (Dick) Bauer, a Housing Unit volunteer attorney and former Senior Attorney who retired after nearly 30 years at GBLS, was honored with the Massachusetts Bar Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. "The cards are really stacked against people who don't have much money," Dick said. "They face fights with entities, landlords, government agents or banks that have a lot more power." He said he has spent his life "fighting for people who didn't have much and were entitled to have more. This has been a wonderful way to spend a career, and I feel very lucky and honored to have had the opportunity to do that."

John Harrington, Elder, Health and Disability Unit volunteer attorney, received the Richard W. "Archie" Southgate Volunteer Award that honors an outstanding volunteer at GBLS. His colleagues stated, "John's calmness, good humor, gentleness, intelligence and compassion, together with his considerable legal skills, make him not only an asset to the clients of the unit, but an enriching presence for everyone who works with him."

PRO BONO PARTNERS

We are grateful to the following law firms and in-house legal departments who provided pro bono services to GBLS and our clients in 2017, and to their many individual attorneys who dedicated their time and energy to ensuring civil justice for all.

Brown Rudnick LLP
DLA Piper
EMD Serono, Inc.
Fidelity Investments
Foley Hoag LLP
Gilmore Rees & Carlson PC
Goodwin Procter LLP
Goulston & Storrs PC
Hemenway & Barnes LLP
LPL Financial
Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC
Miyares and Harrington LLP
Nicholson Herrick LLP
Nixon Peabody LLP
Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP
Proskauer Rose LLP
Ropes & Gray LLP
Santander Bank
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
Sobosik Law
Sullivan & Worcester LLP
Taylor, Ganson & Perrin LLP
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP
Wolf, Greenfield & Sacks PC



A pro bono volunteer celebrates a win
in court with a client.

PRO BONO SPOTLIGHT

At 65, Brenda* had been homeless for years due to an old CORI record. A CORI documents all of a person's criminal court appearances in Massachusetts, including arrests, convictions, and dismissals, and Brenda's was from a time in her life when she was a victim of domestic violence and had no income. Due to her CORI record, Brenda had been repeatedly denied housing, and was now at risk of losing her job, as well.

Brenda was employed as a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) for a disabled client. When her client's health suddenly deteriorated, Brenda's role as his attendant required her to move in with him to provide live-in assistance. Unfortunately, that also meant she would have to pass his housing provider's CORI screening requirement for all occupants.

Brenda was so ashamed of her past that, despite many years of hardship, she had never sought help to address this critical barrier to housing and employment. When she was referred to GBLS by a local homeless shelter, her housing attorney quickly identified the CORI record as the root of Brenda's issues and connected her with Sheila Meagher, an associate with Ropes & Gray, who took on the case as pro bono counsel. Brenda's pro bono attorney was a tenacious and supportive advocate. Attorney Meagher was able to seal

all but one of Brenda's arrests, and went the extra mile to file a petition to have a judge seal the final record.

On a late fall day in 2017, in a crowded Dorchester District Courtroom, Brenda stood nervously before the presiding Judge. The Judge shook his head as he listened to Attorney Meagher argue the petition to seal the single record on Brenda's CORI standing between her and a new life. The Judge explained to Brenda – who was visibly distressed by his gestures and his long review of the petition – that he was not unsupportive of her petition, or of her able counsel. Rather, he stated that in all his time presiding in that courtroom, he had yet to address such a compelling set of responsibilities as Brenda had borne. And with that, he allowed her petition.

Attorney Meagher was fearless about arguing in court on behalf of her client, and Brenda felt it. Brenda said, "I thought I was going to go through my whole life with this hanging over me. When I was in court, I could not believe I was standing there with my lawyer next to me. That was one of the best days of my life. I will never forget it."

** Client's name has been changed to protect confidentiality.*

As part of its advocacy work, GBLS works on criminal justice reform, including CORI sealing. A recent legislative victory means that many people will be able to seal their records sooner, and often without the necessity of going to court. Pro bono advocates can play a crucial role in allowing people like Brenda a fair chance at a fresh start and new opportunities. To learn more about how you can get involved with this or other GBLS projects, contact Melissa González, Pro Bono Program Coordinator, at (617) 603-1604 or mgonzalez@gbls.org.

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GBLS is grateful for the generous support of the Boston legal community, without whom much of our work would not be possible. Thank you to the many attorneys, law firms, and corporate legal departments who contributed this past year to help make civil justice possible for vulnerable members of our community. In 2017, attorneys from across our region demonstrated their support for GBLS and access to justice by contributing in a variety of ways, including the annual Law Firm Drive, Associates Fund Drive, Corporate Fund Drive, In-House Counsel Drive, fellowships, and more.

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"Just wanted to say hi and let you know that NOT BEING HOMELESS has allowed me to live life a little more ... be more positive & focus on the important thing ... my daughter ...

I will never be more grateful to you & GBLS for all you did."

~ GBLS client letter to her attorney

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IN MEMORY OF SARAH ANDERSON

In 2017, Greater Boston Legal Services and the Boston community lost one of its bright lights with the passing of Sarah Beau Faith Anderson. An attorney with GBLS for over thirty-one years, Sarah cared deeply about achieving justice for the most vulnerable members of society. Her passion was advocating for the rights of the homeless and of people with disabilities, working with the Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program in her spare time. Sarah was a talented and compassionate advocate for her many individual clients at GBLS, and enthusiastically took on the most difficult and challenging cases.

For many years, Sarah managed the Health and Disability practice at GBLS. She was a wonderful mentor who was committed to the growth and professional development of her staff. Sarah was also a nationally-respected expert in the areas of health and disability law. She skillfully litigated important federal court class actions in the Social Security and Medicaid areas, helping to correct countless injustices over her many years of dedicated service.

At GBLS, we remember Sarah for her brilliance, her empathy, her fairness, her dedication, and her hard work. She changed peoples' lives for the better and enabled many to take charge of their own lives for the first time through her support and advocacy. Sarah accomplished what so many of us strive to do – she made an impact. On behalf of all of us at GBLS, and everyone whose life she touched, she will be missed.

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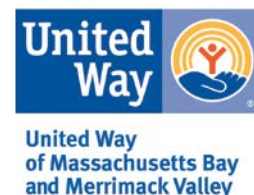
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Thank you to the many additional community-based groups and social service organizations with whom GBLS partners, which are too numerous to list here. We appreciate your hard work on behalf of our mutual clients. The collaborative work we do with partners to remedy critical community needs makes a significant impact in the lives of many. We look forward to continuing to work with you to find effective solutions and approaches to addressing emerging issues in the communities we serve.

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Thank you to the many individuals, companies and firms who generously donated gifts of goods or services in 2017. Your in-kind support helps GBLS conserve resources and serve as many clients and community members as possible.

While we make every effort to include all of our donors in this report, if we have inadvertently omitted any gifts, please accept our sincere apologies. Please contact Ana Cruz, Director of Development, at (617) 603-1565 or acruz@gbls.org with any corrections or queries.

WE'RE GRATEFUL . . .

Thank you to everyone who contributed towards GBLS' 2017 Hildreth Challenge grant and helped us exceed our goal! Your generosity – and the generosity of long-time GBLS supporter Robert Hildreth and the Hildreth Family Foundation – provided additional funding to help low-income immigrants access civil legal help. We're grateful to all of the donors who stepped in to help with this particular campaign in support of GBLS' immigration work.

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