

YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK

"Ann" was abused for many years, but like many women represented in CLSACC's Family Law Unit, she was afraid to leave. She did leave, once, but returned "for the sake of my children." Several times the police and other advocates told Ann that she was in danger of being killed by her husband. Finally, when her husband learned she was talking to police and became even more enraged, Ann obtained a restraining order, which gave her custody of the children, and ordered the husband to stay away from the family and the house. The husband was arrested on a felony, and at a dangerousness hearing, he was deemed a threat and held for several months without bail.

Caring for her children forced Ann to leave her well-paying job. With no job, no child support and no savings, Ann could not afford to hire an attorney and was referred to CLSACC for help. CLSACC's Legal Director, Ellen Wilbur, represented Ann in her restraining order hearings and divorce. CLSACC obtained a court order mandating supervised visits between the children and their father at a visitation center, and with the assistance of two family law volunteers, she represented Ann over a four-year period as Ann's ex-husband attempted to gain custody of the children. During those years, CLSACC worked as part of a team of domestic violence service providers to help Ann and her children navigate the road to safety.

Ann is now divorced and receiving child support. She and her three children are living in safety. The children are all doing well in school, and Ann is now involved in advocacy efforts on behalf of other survivors of domestic abuse and their children.

"I have so much awe and gratitude towards CLSACC ... the healing and rebuilding process has been long and challenging, but I now feel strong and capable in a way that I haven't in years."—client



**Client's name, and any other identifying details, have been changed to protect the client's identity.*



FGM STATEHOUSE TESTIMONY

CLSACC immigration attorney Deirdre Giblin testified on behalf of the Massachusetts Women's Bar Association (WBA) at the Judicial Committee Hearing at the Massachusetts State House on Dec. 1, 2015 on the legal standards in asylum cases involving the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in an effort to encourage Massachusetts legislators to expand the rights of women and girls, both those who fear the procedure and ones already suffering from its consequences. On October 25, 2016, she will join the Task Force from the WBA for a presentation of a resolution on FGM by the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators. The Task Force was featured on ABC News: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/underground-american-woman-underwent-female-genital-mutilation-forward/story?id=39728421>

The position of the federal government has been expanding with regard to recognizing FGM as a violation of human rights and a ground for a claim of persecution. The state legislation, "An Act Establishing Civil and Criminal Penalties for Female Genital Mutilation" (House bill H1530; Senate S1116), calls for parallel statutes imposing state civil and criminal penalties.

More than 125 million girls and women alive today have been cut in the 29 countries in Africa and Middle East where FGM is concentrated. It is recognized internationally as a human rights violation, torture, and a form of extreme discrimination against women and girls. The draft law before the Massachusetts Legislature includes provisions for mandatory reporting under child abuse laws and civil remedies for victims, and a task force has been networking and promoting the proposed legislation to broaden support.

CLSACC WELCOMES NEW STAFF TO ADDRESS DEMAND FOR SERVICES



L-R: Glenda Fuentes, Belinda Teye, Susan Corcoran, And Yarlennys Villaman

With dedicated funding from the Massachusetts Office For Victim Assistance (MOVA), CLSACC was awarded a grant to expand its services to refugee and immigrant victims of crime with the addition of three

MOVA-funded positions. We are excited to welcome Yarlennys Villaman as a Case Manager, Susan Corcoran as a Volunteer and Training Coordinator, and Belinda Teye as a Staff Attorney. Glenda Fuentes joined us in September as the new Office Assistant to replace outgoing Assistant, Yarlennys Villaman.



CLSACC WAS ONE OF ONE HUNDRED AREA NONPROFIT AGENCIES SELECTED TO RECEIVE A CUMMINGS FOUNDATION "100K FOR 100 GRANT."

CLSACC EVENT IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE Featured Image: "Once More"



To commemorate the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (June 26th) and the World Refugee Day (June 20th), CLSACC hosted an event to promote therapeutic self-expression, resilience and recovery among torture survivors. CLSACC collaborated with the EDI Institute, a nonprofit organization that facilitates therapeutic self-expression through photography and Expressive Digital Imagery. The theme for the event was "New Beginnings." Participants worked with photography and digital imagery to create individual expressions, modifying images on digital tablets to express what new beginnings have meant to them in their

journeys. They were then asked to write a caption for their image. Participants were given an opportunity to speak about their images and to share both their struggles and their hopes for the future. CLSACC recognizes the right to rehabilitation for survivors of torture, which occurs in more than 141 countries worldwide. CLSACC's programs help survivors restore their lives through a combination of medical, psychological, legal and social support services. CLSACC provides integrated services to nearly 200 survivors of torture each year. You can learn more about this event and see the digital images created by event participants at www.clsacc.org.



Staff Immigration Attorney Lisa Weinberg has been appointed to the national American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Asylum and Refugee Committee for a one year term.

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED DURING OUR ANNUAL FRIENDS APPEAL!

Individual donors now make up our **LARGEST** source of funding!

You can make a difference between now and December 31, 2016. Please make a gift to CLSACC during our Annual Friends Appeal online at www.clsacc.org or by sending a check to CLSACC, One West Street, Cambridge, MA 02139.



Thank you to our **2016 Summer Legal Interns:**
Pictured left to right—
Rochelle Guillou,
Madeleine Muller, and
Daniella Earsy

