

## YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK

### Crossing a Border to Safety with Child in Tow

As one mother grew desperate enough to flee domestic violence in Honduras, she was forced to make a “Sophie’s choice.” Bringing her youngest child with her to safety in the U.S., she left behind her older son. Facing hunger, dehydration and disease, their journey took five weeks, through several countries. “Ariana” had suffered violence at the hands of her husband for years, but as the abuse escalated and her young daughter began to be abused as well, she knew she had to leave.

They were apprehended at the U.S. border and placed in detention facilities - separately. After several painful weeks without each other, mother and daughter were reunited and “paroled” out of detention to face an Immigration Judge. The court gave them a list of free legal providers and Ariana sought help from CLSACC with only days to file an application of asylum before her filing deadline. CLSACC lawyers met with her, filed an expedited motion with the court, and were assigned a trial date on a very short timeframe. A volunteer attorney eager for court experience took on the case, working with a veteran CLSACC pro bono lawyer who was fluent in Spanish. Interns from local law schools prepared country condition documentation to support the case, and chased down medical and police reports of the abuse in Honduras. A volunteer clinician at CLSACC counseled the client and prepared a forensic evaluation detailing the violence. She also testified as an expert witness during Ariana’s trial, explaining clearly the devastating impact intimate violence has on a woman and on a family. Ariana and her little girl were granted asylum in the U.S., and CLSACC was able to petition to bring her son here to join them as well. *To protect “Ariana’s” identity we have not used her real name and have excluded identifying details particular to her case.*



*CLSACC reunites family in safety in the U.S.*



**HELP US RAISE AN ADDITIONAL \$20,000 THIS YEAR TO ASSIST MORE FAMILIES IN NEED!**

Volunteer Elizabeth Ennen and Executive Director Barbara Mitchell meet in CLSACC’s new space.

Last month CLSACC leased additional office space to provide much needed intake and meeting space for clients and volunteers. “Because of the overcrowding in our small West Street space, it has been virtually impossible to increase the number of appointment times for clients,” says Executive Director Barbara Mitchell. These new offices offer essential meeting spaces for attorneys to schedule client meetings when West Street is full, which happens on an almost daily basis. The office space is being leased from sister agency Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC) where CLSACC’s housing and disability units were relocated in 2010. CLSACC will need to raise an additional \$20,000 this year to fund this expansion in services.



Check out  
CLSACC'S  
ADDITIONAL  
SPACE—  
Located at  
11 Inman Street in  
Cambridge, MA.



John Froio,  
Assistant Legal  
Director, meets  
with Disability  
and Housing  
clients in his  
new office  
space at CEOC.



### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAMED "TOP WOMAN OF LAW"

CLSACC Executive Director, Barbara Mitchell, was honored as a Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly 2013 Top Women of Law honoree at a luncheon on October 31st. The award was in recognition of "women who have made great professional strides and demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in private practice, the corporate arena and social advocacy." CLSACC's Immigration Fellow Laurie Carafone and Immigration Attorney Lisa Weinberg were similarly honored in 2009 and 2011, respectively.

### VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY SELECTED AS ACCESS TO JUSTICE FELLOW

CLSACC Volunteer Immigration Attorney John Hand is spending 2013 - 2014 as one of twelve Access to Justice Fellows who are partnering with non-profit and legal service organizations on pro bono projects throughout the Commonwealth. This first of its kind program in the state, launched in 2012, enables experienced and accomplished attorneys who have retired or are transitioning into retirement an opportunity to provide critically needed legal assistance to underserved populations. The retired Litigation Director of Westchester-Putnam Legal Services, John's fellowship will focus on preparing political asylum cases. He will also work on a project to identify community resources for CLSACC's immigrant and refugee clients.

The Access to Justice Fellowship was conceived in response to severe cutbacks in funding that forced legal services programs to reduce staff and restrict services despite the increasing need among populations they serve. Members of the Access to Justice Commission sought to address this problem by mining the talents of experienced lawyers approaching retirement age who wish to remain active members of their communities and help people in need of legal services.

“Last year's pilot program worked so well that this year we have increased the number of Fellows from seven to twelve,” SJC Justice Ralph Gants said in a press release announcing the 2013 Fellows. "The success of this program in pairing attorneys transitioning into retirement with important pro bono projects has made it a national model, which will likely be replicated in other states."

### YOUR SUPPORT HELPS COUNSELING PROGRAM FILL A GAP FOR DEAF CLIENTS

In our Spring/Summer Newsletter, we profiled volunteer clinician Jori Agate. During the summer Jori, who is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL), began seeing deaf clients at CLSACC. She is one of only a handful of counselors who is fluent in ASL offering free or very low cost counseling services in the Boston area. Jori says that it is extremely rewarding "to be able to use my ASL to help my clients".



YOUR SUPPORT WILL MAKE  
THE DIFFERENCE

Make your annual gift online at  
[www.clsacc.org](http://www.clsacc.org) or send your check  
to CLSACC, One West Street,  
Cambridge, MA 02139

