

CHICAGO
VOLUNTEER
LEGAL
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Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

Because equal access to justice is everyone's fight.

Upcoming Events

- **February 9** - Spotting Inadmissibility Issues in Immigration Cases, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- **February 13** - CVLS Closed, Lincoln's Birthday
- **February 16** - Preparing 2016 Income Taxes, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **February 20** - CVLS Closed, President's Day
- **February 22** - GAL For Minors Training, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **March 2** - U Visa and the Latest Trends, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **March 6** - CVLS Closed, Pulaski Day
- **March 14** - New Volunteer Orientation, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **March 30** - What You Need To Know: Highlights From the 2017 Income Shares Act, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

CVLS partners with immigrant advocates to ensure equal access to justice

As part of the tremendous outpouring of support from Chicago's legal community in response to recent executive actions on immigration, the legal aid community has mobilized a coordinated response, led by the National Immigrant Justice Center. CVLS is working with NIJC and other legal providers through two distinct avenues:

1. CVLS volunteers from the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) have joined their colleagues at O'Hare and elsewhere to help newly-arrived travelers being detained.
2. Rebekah Rashidfarokhi, Director of CVLS' GAL for Minors Program, and Margaret Benson, Executive Director, are working with NIJC and others to disseminate information on guardianship for Chicagoans who need to make provisions for their children in the event the parents are arrested and detained.

The situation is fluid with constantly changing information and issues. We will do our best to keep our volunteers and supporters up-to-date. In the meantime, please do what you can to help, either by volunteering your time or donating.

We're in it for the long haul.

Margaret C. Benson



Executive Director

What you make possible

Our volunteers, donors and supporters make it possible for CVLS to do pro bono our way, making CVLS a class of its own. In 2016 we supported:

5 court appointment programs
24 legal clinics
800 court appointments
2,095 volunteers
9,995 Chicago-area residents helped
5,000 Race Judicata® participants

Visit cvls.org/donate to support our mission of ensuring equal access to justice.

Spotlight On: Magda Derisma

Magda Derisma left her career as a teacher to become a public interest attorney in 2007, in part, so she could find new ways to strengthen working class communities.

Previously, Magda taught 4th and 7th grade students with Teach for America. She realized that she was able to tell how well a school was likely performing based on the state of its surrounding neighborhood. "You can tell the progress of the school by the progress of the neighborhood. I think a lot of times the schools are reflections of the neighborhood."

Since November, Magda has worked as a JEP Fellow with CVLS, helping clients with loan modifications, bankruptcy and consumer debt. Her time as a teacher taught her the limits of what a teacher can do to help a community thrive. "A teacher can only do so much when a student is coming into the classroom with housing insecurity, when that child is moving from one rental property to another and coming into school midyear." By helping to keep families in their home and on stable financial footing, Magda has seen how families are able to grow and thrive and how neighborhoods are strengthened as a result.



CVLS' JEP Fellow Magda Derisma

Debra Davy for the Defense

By *Costa Nikolaidis*

CVLS is dedicated to protecting the rights of those without the means to protect themselves. This is only possible through the valiant efforts of volunteers like **Debra Davy**. Debra has been practicing law for 37 years, working exclusively as a defense attorney in civil litigation. She cites the spirit of the 60's and her hero, Clarence Darrow, as the impetus for her career in defense and promoting civil rights.

Debra's passion lies in the courtroom where she voraciously fights for her clients' rights. Retired after decades defending professionals against malpractice claims and serving as Department Chair of her law firm, she eventually felt called back to the courtroom. Knowing CVLS's reputation for taking all kinds of cases and having attended law school with CVLS Executive Director Meg Benson, Debra knew she would be right at home. At CVLS, Debra has defended clients in cases ranging from landlord-tenant rights to negligence. Moreover, Debra enjoys the camaraderie she shares with the other attorneys here, noting the lack of competition for partnership and the refreshing way everybody works together.

Always looking to challenge herself, Debra writes for a magazine, and she is working to develop a specialty in guardianship cases. Fight on, Debra!

Case Notes

Vira, an 82-year-old widow, came to CVLS looking for help with her reverse mortgage. Due to an internal error, the loan servicer thought Vira let her homeowner's insurance lapse, which is considered a default under her reverse mortgage contract. Despite Vira's attempt to communicate their error the loan servicer began foreclosure proceedings. The judge

referred Vira to CVLS through the Access to Justice Program.

Volunteer attorneys, **Erica Minchella** and **Stephanie Arsenty**, of Minchella and Associates, proved to the court and the lender that Vira had insurance. The case was settled with a dismissal and an assurance against future actions. Thanks to Erica and Stephanie's hard work, Vira is able to keep her home.

After Michelle was laid off from her job in 2011, she struggled with her mortgage payments. She was able to get a modification on her own, but she was let go from her temp job and defaulted. Fortunately, she got a new full-time position, and the foreclosure court referred her to CVLS' Access to Justice Program. CVLS placed the case with **Dan Brown**, a pro bono attorney through the CBA's Justice Entrepreneurs Project. With Dan at her side, Michelle secured a new modification with a lower payment and saved her home.

Mr. M was volunteer attorney **Karen Choudhury's** first foreclosure mediation case in late 2010. He was a bricklayer that lost steady employment in the economic downturn.

The mediations, 5 or 6 of them, were tough, uphill battles with Chase. They moved forward because Mr. M was alert, thoughtful and offered information to help Karen provide a great defense, including that bricklaying should be eligible for the seasonal work exception.

That led the mediator to recommend one last mediation. That eventually led to a modification in late 2012. Through it all, the mediators and attorneys worked together to find an agreement that worked for all parties, including Mr. M.

In 2012, Mr. M landed a job as a bricklayer with the City of Chicago. He's remained employed since then. This year Mr. M made sure to include Karen on his Christmas card list.

Lawyers Looking For Big Fees Need Not Apply



Because equal access to justice is everyone's fight

CVLS is one of the largest general pro bono practices in Illinois. We accept most types of civil cases and offer a variety of ways to volunteer. CVLS volunteer attorneys find their cases to be challenging, stimulating and rewarding. Our dedicated staff works hard to make sure that every volunteer has what they need to serve the needs of our clients as successfully as possible.

CVLS offers training, sample pleadings, access to office space and facilities, malpractice insurance coverage and one-on-one personal help from experienced staff attorneys. There are many ways to volunteer. Sign up now and see a variety of cases through our panel program, get guaranteed court time through one of our court-appointment programs, or hit the pavement and see clients in their neighborhoods through one of our 24 community clinics.

Volunteers receive valuable experience while reaping the rewards of making a positive change in someone's life. **Please contact office manager Jessica Engle, jengle@cvls.org, to register for our**

Paul Simon could have been singing about CVLS.

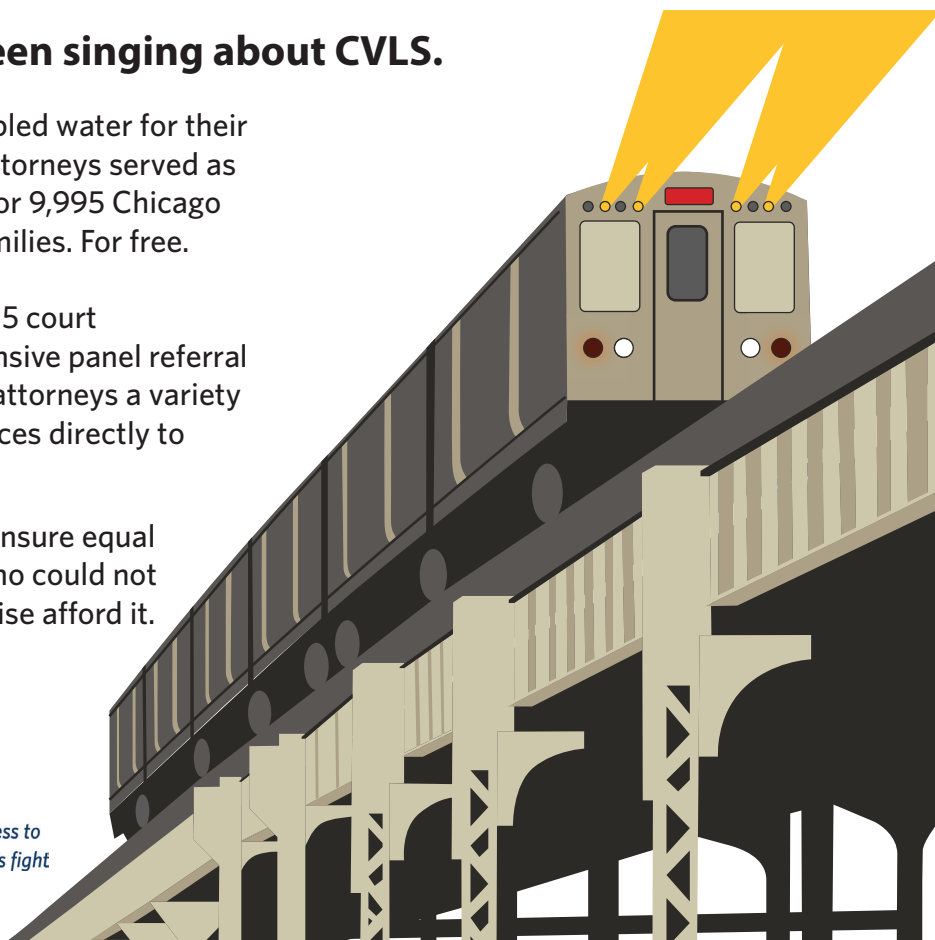
Our pro bono attorneys bridge troubled water for their clients. Last year 2,095 volunteer attorneys served as bridges over troubled legal waters for 9,995 Chicago area low-income individuals and families. For free.

With 24 neighborhood legal clinics, 5 court appointment programs and an extensive panel referral network, our delivery system gives attorneys a variety of ways they can provide legal services directly to low-income Chicagoans.

Visit **CVLS.org/donate** and help ensure equal access to justice for those who could not otherwise afford it.



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Volunteer Success Stories

Julia came to CVLS' American Immigration Lawyers Association Legal Clinic after five unsuccessful attempts and 20 years of trying to get a green card on her own. Brand new attorney Nicole Minnis agreed to help. Because Julia needed proof of a 20-year-old crime, Nicole visited courthouses looking for archived documents. She discovered that a police officer's initial statement led to the original denial of Julia's visa. Nicole convinced the police department to issue a corrected statement for the immigration appeal. Success! Julia's nonimmigrant visa will allow Julia to get a green card in three years and U.S. citizenship a few years later. After becoming documented, Julia thanked her attorney, saying, "My heart has been moved and touched. My life became light."

We love highlighting the excellent work our volunteers do. If you've successfully handled a difficult case, came up with a creative solution, or heard some nice words from a grateful client, please let Development Associate Lindsay Welbers know by sending an email to lwelbers@cvls.org to be highlighted in a future newsletter.



CLE credit available online

CVLS offers Continuing Legal Education (CLE) seminars, for free, throughout the year.

Seminars cover a wide range of topics, from the nitty-gritty details of foreclosure law, to the basics of becoming Guardian ad litem for an adult or minor or reducing stress through mindfulness exercises. CLE seminars are presented by people with first-hand knowledge of the topic so you can be sure they know their stuff.

Visit CVLS.org to see our upcoming seminars.

A CVLS Baby Boom

Clockwise from top right: Louise Marie Hawver, born November 4, 2016 to Greg and Kelly Hawver; Josephine Sydney Garber, born January 22, 2017 to Stacy Dembo and Adam Garber; Daniel Marek, born January 7, 2017, to Michelle Marek Figueiredo and her husband Bernardo Figueiredo; Leo Christian Sharping, born October 8, 2016 to Janice Dantes, her husband, Ian Sharping, and big brother Kai Sharping.





Sponsorship opportunities available for Law & Disorder

Laugh along with us as we celebrate the spirit of pro bono and the volunteers that make it possible! CVLS' spring comedy show and award ceremony is hosted by CVLS' governing Board of Directors.

Peruse amazing silent auction items and make a bid on whatever catches your eye. Enjoy having Pat McGann, House MC of Zanies Comedy Club, tickle your funny bone while you enjoy the show with your friends. Honor the good works of our volunteers and the commitment to equal access to justice that changes lives in our community every day. We invite you to experience all of this and more at our fourth annual comedy show and fundraiser.

In addition to offering a unique marketing opportunity, sponsoring this event demonstrates that your company values the good works of our volunteers and their commitment to equal access to justice. Sponsorships begin at the \$500 supporter level and include your company's logo on event sponsor boards, online recognition, and a complimentary ticket to the event.

A Title level sponsor has the exclusive opportunity to see their company recognized on all event invitations and mailing, top billing on all event materials, a banner ad on the Law & Disorder web page as well as a complimentary large table at the event, with premium placement and bottle service.

Tickets include reception, drinks, light finger food, access to the award ceremony, comedy show and silent auction. Tables will be provided for individual private table holders and sponsors at the Philanthropist level and higher.

Multi-event sponsorship packages, including our other signature networking events Race Judicata® and Vino + Van Gogh, are available. Visit cvls.org/sponsor for more information about how your company can support CVLS' mission of providing totally free civil legal aid to the poor and working poor.

Upcoming Events

All events take place at Chicago Volunteer Legal Services' administrative office, unless otherwise stated. We are located at 33 N. Dearborn St., Suite 400, Chicago.

Please see our website, cvls.org, to register for an upcoming seminar, or for more information.

•February 9 – Spotting Inadmissibility Issues in Immigration Cases,

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

New to immigration law and unsure if your client is admissible or don't even know what that means? Come learn about common inadmissibility issues, how to spot them, and when waivers apply.

•February 16 – Preparing 2016 Income Taxes, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Longtime volunteer Larry Krupp of Kessler, Orlean, Silver & Co., P.C. will interpret and explain the latest version of the tax code. He will discuss changes and concerns that can affect your business, your personal finances or those of your clients. Larry is a JD and CPA and has been presenting this CLE for nearly 25 years.

•February 22 – GAL For Minors Training, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.,

Rebekah Rashidfarokhi, Director of CVLS' Minor GAL program, will cover the necessary skills to be a successful GAL for children in contested guardianship cases. She'll also discuss issues that often develop during cases. This training is for licensed attorneys interested in working as pro bono Guardians ad Litem for children through CVLS. No prior experience is necessary.

•March 2 – U Visa and the Latest Trends, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

With an annual 10,000 u visa cap each fis-

cal year. There are currently pending over 150,604 u visa applications. Once the u visa application is approved the applicant is placed on a waiting list. What benefits can you receive while on the waiting list? How do you apply for employment authorization while you are on the waiting list? This seminar will answer those questions and more.

•March 14 – New Volunteer Orientation, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.,

Come to one of our new volunteer orientations and sit down with a CVLS staff attorney as they take you through the ins and outs of being a Chicago Volunteer Legal Services volunteer. Please note, you must be an attorney to sign up for one of our new volunteer orientations.

•March 30 – What You Need To Know: Highlights From the 2017 Income Shares Act, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.,

Effective July 1, 2017, Illinois will join the majority of states in adopting the "income shares" model for calculating child support. This CLE will explain the major changes to the law and take participants through a sample hypothetical to understand the law's application.

•April 13 – Preparing Hardship Cases, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.,

Attorney Gina Reynolds will present the basics of preparing an immigration

hardship case.

•April 20 – Mindfulness and the Law, 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.,

Jeff Bunn, chair of the CBA's Committee on Mindfulness and the Law, will share the benefits for lawyers of practicing mindfulness in their practices and in their lives. "Mindfulness is not religion-based. It is not some alternative wisdom. It's certainly not contrary to traditional business practices. It is an effective legal and business tool, consistent with notions of professional civility. Most importantly, mindfulness is supported by evidence-based science." Jeff has litigated business, intellectual property and probate cases for 30 years. A few years ago he discovered the professional and personal benefits of mindfulness and, since then, has shared that knowledge with colleagues. According to Jeff, "For me, mindfulness is three things: Simple. Secular. Scientific." As our world seems to be more stressed out than ever before, this program, which qualifies for Professional Responsibility CLE credit, may provide you with a sense of peace.

•May 17 – Consular Processing,

12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m

Immigration attorney Erica McFee will discuss how to prepare a client for processing through a foreign council.

Rising Stars

CVLS resident attorney **Joanna Long**, (pictured left) of Long Law Office, P.C., was recently named as a Rising Star in the Chicago legal community by her peers at Super Lawyer. That means she's one of the best. Super Lawyer's Rising Stars are chosen from the top 2.5 percent of Illinois lawyers, who are 40 years old or younger, and who have been in business 10 years or less. The list will be included in the annual 2017 Super Lawyers Magazine and in Chicago Magazine's February 2017 edition.

A member of the Justice Entrepreneurs Project, Joanna's practice focuses on personal injury, estate planning, probate, and general civil litigation where she works with her clients to achieve "creative-fee" arrangements that make legal services affordable at every budget.



New Online CLE

CVLS Flashback

CVLS strives to offer Continuing Legal Education programs that are engaging and useful to the viewer. Although all presentations are hosted in our offices, those who are unable to attend an in-person training, can watch them online, from anywhere, at any time and still earn CLE credit.

Overview of Immigration Law Part 1

1.5 hours CLE credit

This presentation is the first in a series of presentations that cover the fundamentals of immigration law practice for attorneys interested in volunteering at the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)-Chicago Volunteer Legal Services clinic. Parts 1 and 2 give an overview of immigration law, the most common case types encountered at the AILA Clinic, how to handle those cases, and issue-spotting.

cvls.org/seminar/overview-immigration-law-part-1

Overview of Immigration Law Part 2

1.5 hours CLE credit

This is the second presentation in a series that cover the fundamentals of immigration law practice for attorneys interested in volunteering at the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)-CVLS clinic.

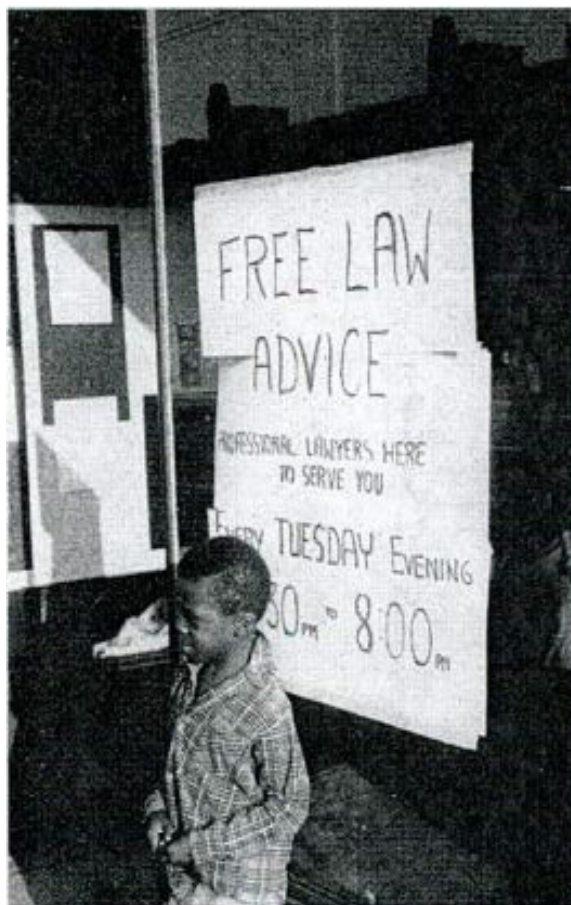
cvls.org/seminar/overview-immigration-law-part-2

Cyber Security Basics

.75 hour CLE credit

This presentation features a discussion on the Illinois class action lawsuit, *Coinabul, LLC v. Johnson & Bell, LTD* that arose from a claim that the defendant law firm's cyber security practices were negligent. The presentation features an explanation of cyber security terminology and offers straightforward solutions to cyber security challenges.

cvls.org/seminar/cybersecurity-basics



CVLS was founded on the notion that effective legal assistance should be provided for the underprivileged "lest our adversary system be included under the merchandiser dictum that 'you get what you pay for.'"

In 1964 fifteen attorneys partnered with neighborhood churches to create what they called "an experiment in the ministry of legal aid." Today, 2,095 volunteer attorneys walk the path those attorneys forged 52 years ago.

Visit cvls.com/donate to ensure we continue to guarantee access to justice in Chicago.



The logo for Chicago Volunteer Legal Services is a black, stylized shape resembling a speech bubble or a banner. It has a pointed left side and a pointed right side. The text "CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters inside the shape. The text is arranged in four lines: "CHICAGO", "VOLUNTEER", "LEGAL", and "SERVICES".

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33 North Dearborn Street, Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60602