



Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

Because equal access to justice is everyone's fight.

Upcoming Events

April 25 - Seminar: The Jaded Lawyer - 12:15 p.m., CVLS Office

April 30 - GAL for Minors Training - 1:30 p.m., Perkins Coie

April 30 - GAL for Adults Training - 12:00 p.m., CVLS Office

May 1 - Child Rep Training - 1:30 p.m., CVLS Office

May 2 - Seminar: Decedent Estates- 12:15 p.m., CVLS Office

May 16 - Seminar: How to Handle a Workers' Compensation Case - 12:15 p.m., CVLS Office



George Vasios, CVLS Volunteer

A PRO BONO HAPPY ENDING

Rosa's Adoption Story

Adoption cases often involve happy endings to unhappy beginnings.

12-year-old Rosa doesn't remember her biological parents. Shortly after she was born, her father abandoned her and her mother. Rosa's mother then passed away when Rosa was just three years old. After her mother's death, Rosa was raised by her cousin Gloria and Gloria's partner, Edgar.

Last year, Gloria and Edgar wanted to make their relationship to Rosa permanent - by formally adopting her as their child. Through our Jane Addams Clinic, CVLS placed their case with attorney George Vasios.

George filed a Petition for Adoption and worked with a Guardian ad Litem to ensure that the adoption is in Rosa's best interests. The GAL recommended the adoption, and the Court agreed. Edgar and Gloria are now officially Rosa's adoptive parents!

The family was grateful to George and to CVLS for their legal representation. Although Rosa grew up not really knowing her biological parents, she is in the very good hands of adoptive parents who love her and have cared for her nearly her entire life.

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

CVLS volunteers, do you want to work right in the middle of Chicago's legal scene but worry that you can't afford the office space? Well today's your lucky day! CVLS has some prime office space available for rent. For more information on how you can take advantage of this rare opportunity, contact Eric Donahue at esd@cvls.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

KIRKLAND & ELLIS LLP

Schiff
Hardin
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New FREE CLE seminars available online!

**A Free Tool for Any Case - Mediation
at the Center for Conflict Resolution**
*Rae Kyritsi, Programs Director at Center
for Conflict Resolution*
0.75 hrs CLE credit
<https://goo.gl/6k4PJ>

Adoption
Phil Mohr, CVLS Deputy Director
Tiffany Horstein, JEP Attorney
1.25 hrs CLE credit
<https://goo.gl/dqQY1D>

Preparing 2018 Income Taxes
Larry Krupp, CPA, Wipfli, LLP
1.00 hrs CLE credit
<https://goo.gl/KswzeB>

More available at
www.cvls.org/onlinecle



CVLS INTERVENTION

Homeowners Helped through Hardest Hit Fund

Defending a foreclosure is especially difficult for the elderly and disabled. There are programs meant to help, but homeowners often can't navigate the programs' complexities. For example, the Hardest Hit Fund (HHF) is a large grant overseen by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to help homeowners who hit a rough patch catch up on their mortgages.

Although the HHF Program offered help to homeowners Patricia, Angelique, and Rheda, each faced physical and legal challenges that prevented them from accessing funds:

Patricia is elderly and wheelchair-bound. She fell behind on a loan modification after her renter stopped paying and moved out. Because the lender never countersigned her modification, there was an inaccurate reinstatement figure that IHDA could not accept.

Angelique lost her job after a freak medical emergency left her disabled. The stretch between her last paycheck and her benefits caused a mortgage

default. Although she had applied for HHF, processing delays caused the reinstatement figure to crest above program limits.

Rheda has dementia and is mentally incompetent. Her daughter has power of attorney and applied for HHF, but a looming foreclosure sale was going to cut short the review period.

They **all** needed an attorney.

Thankfully, foreclosure judges referred these women to CVLS through the Access to Justice (A2J) Program. CVLS fended off foreclosure and worked closely with IHDA and housing counselors to get each HHF application reviewed.

It worked. The result--IHDA dispersed over \$100,000 to reinstate the delinquent mortgages, saving all three women's homes.

CVLS extends our special thanks to Peter Sellke and Leslie Cain of IHDA for their help.

NO MORE DEBT FOR THIS VET

Rising Star Helps CVLS Client

Overburdened by student loans, a defunct car note, and medical debt, Brittany was in desperate need of filing for bankruptcy. Brittany is a veteran of the United State Army, but her VA benefits are not enough to pay her debts, care for her six-year-old son, and hire a private bankruptcy attorney.

Brittany served her country, and it was time for CVLS to serve her. She was able to connect with us through the Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network (IL-AFLAN). We reviewed her case and placed it with volunteer attorney, Justin Storer of Lakelaw.



Justin Storer, Lakelaw

With Justin's help, Brittany was freed from over \$30,000 of debt. Around the same time Brittany received a resolution in her bankruptcy case, Super Lawyers Magazine recognized Justin as a "Rising Star," an honor he has received every year for the last five years!

In response to a closing e-mail from CVLS, Justin thanked us for the opportunity and wrote, "Working with y'all is one of my favorite parts about this job."

Thank you, Brittany, for your service to our country. We are proud to have provided you with an excellent attorney like Justin, who is committed to his clients and his community.



Andrew Ryerson, Polsinelli

SWEET TREATS FOR SWEET OUTCOME

Polsinelli Attorney Resolves Case as GAL

Erica is 19 years old. She suffers from cerebral palsy and other medical conditions that make her incapable of bearing her own weight. She is non-verbal, requires a wheelchair, and is incapable of making her own personal and financial decisions.

Evonne, Erica's mother, filed for guardianship of Erica. The Probate Court appointed CVLS as Guardian ad Litem to investigate the facts of the case and provide a recommendation. CVLS assigned the case the pro bono volunteer, Andrew Ryerson of Polsinelli P.C.

During his investigation, Andrew conducted a home visit and spoke to all of Erica's family members. He took care to explain his role clearly and fully. Andrew's detailed interviews and note-taking resulted in a comprehensive GAL Report that recommended the entry of an order granting Evonne much-needed guardianship of her daughter.

Although Andrew's work on this case was entirely pro bono, Evonne wanted to express her gratitude to him in her own way. She made him some homemade fudge, which Andrew shared with CVLS staff. It was delicious!

After the case was over, we thanked Andrew for his hard work. He said, "Evonne is an angel - it's a pleasure to help folks like that."



IT'S A BOY!

CVLS would like to congratulate Justice Entrepreneur Project attorney and CVLS volunteer Emily Welter and her family on the birth of a beautiful baby boy, Calvin Hugh Qualls.

CONTEST WINNER

We received many submissions for our Friendly Lawyer's Conference contest. Thank you to everyone who submitted, and to our winner, John Festa.

"For the last 2 years I have been the co-chair of the Wills for heroes program through the Chicago Bar Association Young Lawyers section. The program provides free estate planning for all first responders and their spouses or partners. We hold 8 to 9 clinics a year and most are about 5 hours long.

Doing this is a commitment. It means giving up the better part of a Saturday, and an hour or two leading up to at clinic. But, at the end of the day, the people we take care of run into burning buildings and towards gunfire. Every month I learn more and more about estate planning. It helps make me a better lawyer. Mostly though it's seeing the client's reaction. Knowing that people appreciate what they do for every one, and seeing what hearing thank you means to them."

John Festa, The Law Office of John Phillip Festa, LLC

CVLS' 2018 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE!

CVLS is pleased to announce that our 2018 annual report is now available online at cvls.org/annual-reports. In it you will see many examples of seemingly small pro bono cases having big impacts on people's lives. Every day our volunteers do little things with great love, and in doing so change this city for the better.

As we move into our 55th year, CVLS is more committed than ever to fulfilling our role of providing free civil legal aid to Chicago and building on all of our success. Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors and allies like you, so thank you for empowering us to make a difference!



LEARN THE ROPES WITH CVLS

Take advantage of our free CLE courses

Illinois requires their legal professionals take a certain amount of CLE each year. If you are lucky enough to have an employer that covers this expense, that's great news! Not all legal professionals are so lucky, and the costs associated with fulfilling the required number of hours can get expensive.

But there's no need to fret. Thanks to CVLS, your CLE credits don't need to be expensive to be valuable. We offer some great continuing legal education courses that cost nothing to every one of our volunteers. We even offer CLE eligible online courses available at your convenience 24/7.

Check out what we have to offer at www.cvls.org/cle. While you are there, please consider making a small contribution to CVLS and help us to continue creating these valuable resources for our volunteers.

We handle all CLE requests in-house, so please be kind and don't wait until the end of the reporting season to submit your requests. Our staff member in charge of processing the requests thanks you!

UPCOMING SEMINARS

The Jaded Lawyer
Thursday, April 25, 12:15 p.m.

Recent studies have confirmed that the overwhelming stress that is commonplace in our legal profession disproportionately results in attorneys suffering higher levels of depression, anxiety, addiction, and other serious issues at rates much higher than those seen in the general population. While changing the nature of the legal profession is likely to be a slow process, individuals have the capacity to make small changes that have been scientifically shown to mitigate the negative impact of stress, reducing the likelihood of burnout. Participants in this program will learn:

- What Burnout is;
- The signs and symptoms of Burnout;
- What factors make lawyers particularly vulnerable to Burnout; and
- Best practices for prevention of Burnout

How to Handle a Workers' Compensation Case
Thursday, May 16, 12:15 p.m.

When an employee is injured at work, Workers Compensation benefits are available to cover lost wages and medical costs related to the injury.

Join Howard Ankin, of Ankin Law Office, as he covers the whats, whens and whys of these interesting cases. This seminar is designed to help familiarize you with this aspect of the law, and to get you ready to succeed during your next Workers Compensation case.

LAW & Disorder

2019 SPONSORSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE



Thursday, May 30 - 5:30 pm

River Roast, 315 N LaSalle St

Tickets \$100

Small Table /w 4 Tickets \$550, Large Table w/ 6 Tickets \$650

Hosted by CVLS' Board of Directors, Law & Disorder brings Chicago's diverse legal community together to celebrate pro bono and the wonderful volunteers who make it possible. Held annually since 2012, this awards and comedy show has become a favorite social event of the spring. The night begins with a relaxed reception featuring light hors-d'oeuvres, beer and wine. Attendees mingle with other members of Chicago's legal community, learn about the impact CVLS volunteers have had over the year, and check out the array of silent auction items, looking for an amazing deal. Next comes a fast-paced award ceremony highlighting the work of a few notable organizations and individuals, followed by the main event—a sidesplitting comedy show featuring well-known local comedians.

All proceeds of Law & Disorder will be used to further CVLS' mission to coordinate, support and promote the voluntary pro bono legal representation of the Chicago area's poor and working poor. Sponsoring this event shows that your company honors the good works of our volunteers and the commitment to equal access to justice that changes lives in our community every day.

SPONSOR LEVELS

	Patron \$5,000	Philanthropist \$3,500	Benefactor \$1,500	Supporter \$500
Recognition on all event materials, media promotion, invitations and mailings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Logo placement on event website with link	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Logo/company name displayed on large screens and/or signs at the event	Premium	Premium	Preferred	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tickets to the event	Large Table + 6 Tickets	Small Table + 4 Tickets	3	1

Visit www.cvls.org/lawanddisorder for more information or to become a sponsor!

In 2018

2,483 Active Volunteers



Closed Cases

3,128

Your generosity makes a difference.

Last year's donations provided life changing support to thousands of families.

PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT
cvls.org/donate

The logo for Chicago Volunteer Legal Services is a black, stylized shape resembling a speech bubble or a document page with a folded corner. The text "CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters inside the shape.

**CHICAGO
VOLUNTEER
LEGAL
SERVICES**

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