





Opening Doors

Often, by the time we meet them, our pro bono clients have started to take steps to build a better life. Many have made wrenching decisions that have closed doors on the lives they knew, risking what little they had to pursue something better but essentially unknown: a safer life in a very foreign culture, for example, or a life free of domestic violence, far from home and family.

Their courage inspires us to leverage the tools of our legal profession—as we do on behalf of all of our clients—to help them move forward. For most, our steadfast representation is the key to opening doors that might otherwise remain forever shut. In other cases, such as those involving large government agencies, our persistence, backed by volumes of meticulous documentation, enables clients to pass through doors that could perpetually revolve.

It is especially satisfying when our pro bono cases, such as the appellate work highlighted within this book, have far-reaching impact: opening doors not just for our individual clients, but for generations to come.

Doors open—and people benefit—when dedicated teams with common goals work together. Our ability to open doors for our clients can only be maintained through our collaborations with our partners in this work: nonprofits, legal service organizations, in-house legal departments, and the courts. Through such collaborations, we can find creative solutions that deliver the best outcomes for our pro bono clients and our communities.

R. Robert Popeo
Chairman

Robert I. Bodian
Managing Member

Susan M. Finegan
Chair, Pro Bono Committee

“Be an opener of doors.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Live and Love in Peace

In Russia, gays are often bullied and beaten merely because of their sexual orientation, and some have actually been killed, while police turn a blind eye. Such was the plight of “Alexei” and “Mikhail,” gay men from Russia who, in fear for their lives, were seeking asylum in the United States.

In Russia, Alexei and Mikhail were acquaintances. Mikhail fled to the United States in 2005 to escape an abusive relationship and persecution. For Alexei, the culmination of years of abuse came when he was kidnapped, beaten, and left unconscious by relatives of his partner. To escape almost certain death, Alexei fled to the United States in 2009. The two men reconnected in New York City, where they fell in love and married on July 24, 2011, the day that same-sex marriage was legally recognized in New York. But the couple’s troubles were far from over.

Mikhail had never taken the steps to seek asylum and Alexei had lost valuable time and money working with an impostor attorney who didn’t file the necessary papers. Without asylum, the couple would be deported back to Russia, where they would risk grave danger.

Immigration Equality, an LGBTQ immigrant rights organization, referred the case to a team of attorneys led by Terry McMahon. Terry’s team started with Alexei’s case, which was stronger. If Alexei could win, Mikhail would qualify for derivative asylum as Alexei’s husband. The attorneys argued for clemency based on “changed circumstances.” The team conducted interviews, drafted affidavits, and secured evidence that verified the abuses Alexei endured in Russia. Attorney Rachel Gholston, along with project analysts Kees Thompson and Reeva Dua, conducted research on Russia’s worsening conditions for LGBTQ individuals. Attorney Elizabeth Wilkinson prepared the clients for the Immigration Court proceedings, and former Mintz Levin attorneys Kelly Graf and Chris Difo provided valuable assistance.

The Mintz Levin team argued that Russia’s hostility toward homosexuality had demonstrably worsened since the couple’s flight. They also argued that a fake immigration attorney had swindled Alexei. On top of that, the team asked the court to recognize that deportation would effectively dissolve Alexei and Mikhail’s marriage and undoubtedly worsen Alexei’s mental health, which was compromised by the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) he had developed following the severe abuse he survived in Russia.

Despite tough questioning, Alexei held up under pressure. “He was respectful and articulate and remained steeled, though he had every reason to fall apart,” said Terry. After the questioning, the judge and government lawyer quickly agreed to grant asylum. The shift in energy was palpable as it dawned on Alexei that, from that day forward, he could live in peace.

“These are two great guys,” Terry said. “To make sure that they are able to live *and* love in peace was really gratifying.”



“We are extraordinarily grateful to Mintz Levin for generously committing time and resources to help our clients, who are fighting to escape horrific violence and persecution. Terry McMahon and his team are doing truly lifesaving work.”

Piibe Jogi
Staff Attorney
Immigration Equality



Justice in the Aftermath

We first profiled this pro bono case in “Crossing the Tracks,” a story in the 2010 Mintz Levin pro bono journal, Finding a Way. At the time of publication, our lawsuit against the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had just been withdrawn and applications for Hurricane Katrina relief aid overwhelmed the state of Mississippi. Here, we revisit what’s happened in the years since, and the broad impact our settlement had on thousands of lives.

Dorothy McClendon may live only several blocks from the coast in the town of Gulfport, Mississippi, but that short distance was all it took to delay desperately needed assistance after Hurricane Katrina ravaged her home in late August 2005. A railroad track runs between her street and affluent beachfront properties, creating a levee that blocked flooding to her neighborhood. But that didn’t prevent powerful winds from traveling 120 miles inland, shifting where her house stood and damaging her wheelchair access ramp. Dorothy’s historic lower-income community consists mainly of African-Americans, including many elderly homeowners without adequate insurance.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Congress allotted \$5.5 billion in emergency Community Development Block Grant funds to Mississippi. Governor Haley Barbour set aside \$3.2 billion of that funding to households damaged by water, yet homes like Dorothy’s damaged by wind were determined by the state to be ineligible for federal assistance. She was provided with a Federal Emergency Management Agency trailer. It wasn’t adapted to handle her disability, but it was her only option. Dorothy lived in the trailer far longer than intended, causing devastating respiratory problems. Like many of her neighbors, she was exposed to formaldehyde, a toxic gas found in the composite wood and plywood panels used in the thousands of hastily built travel trailers.

Two years after the storm, when nearly \$600 million in allocated federal funding for affordable housing remained unspent, the state sought to repurpose the money for an economic development project for the State Port Authority at Gulfport. HUD was responsible for ensuring the disaster relief funds were spent on their intended use, and instead it was allowing the diversion of such funds to the Port development project. Dorothy, three other individual plaintiffs, the Mississippi Conference of the NAACP, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and the Gulf Coast Fair Housing Center worked with Reilly Morse, of the Mississippi Center for Justice, and Mintz Levin attorneys to seek justice.

In December 2008, Mintz Levin filed a federal lawsuit against HUD in the US District Court for the District of Columbia, challenging the misappropriation of Mississippi’s housing relief funds. The Mintz Levin team consisted of attorneys Larry Schoen, Martha Koster, Andrew

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“A lot of people with water damage lost their entire property. But the people in my neighborhood were also dislocated, and we deserved help too. We didn’t back down, and I’m so glad we were able to receive help.”

Dorothy McClendon
*Hurricane Katrina Survivor
and Pro Bono Client*

“The attorneys kept a close eye on what was and wasn’t part of the negotiated agreement. I’m so thrilled with the work Mintz Levin has done.”

Reilly Morse
President and CEO
Mississippi Center for Justice

Nathanson, James Wodarski, Amanda Carozza, and Yalonda Howze, and former Mintz Levin attorney Noah Shaw.

On one of the trips to Mississippi, Larry, Noah, and Amanda met with plaintiffs and members of the Mississippi NAACP to observe the devastation and dire living conditions. “There was literally a racial divide in play, with wind-damaged victims who were disproportionately African-American intentionally being denied funds, so that the state could fund a Port development project that had nothing to do with the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina. It was an extreme injustice,” Larry stated.

Although the district court granted HUD’s motion to dismiss on standing grounds without granting a hearing, Mintz Levin promptly filed an appeal. The mounting pressure placed on HUD and the state of Mississippi eventually led to a settlement in the fall of 2010, in which previously ineligible wind damage victims were now eligible to receive up to \$75,000 per home for repairs and reconstruction.

Mintz Levin played a key role in the negotiation of the settlement, working with Reilly to thwart last-minute attempts by the state to insert bureaucratic hurdles that would make it more difficult for storm victims to obtain funds. “Mississippi attempted to create obstacles to tamp down participation and access to funds before the program was launched, which Mintz Levin was able to have relaxed,” Reilly said.

Reilly reports that an overwhelming 17,000 people applied for assistance within 60 days of the settlement. In all, the settled lawsuit resulted in 5,253 families being helped, for a total of \$213 million, with the last applicants receiving help nearly 10 years post-disaster. Reilly and his team monitored the outcome, and were pleased that key sections of the lawsuit precisely achieved the end result.

Dorothy received her funding within three to four months. With that money, she was able to have her foundation leveled and to install a ventilation system. Today she is living and breathing a little more easily.



*“Just because a door appears closed
it does not mean that it is locked
— nor that it will not open with
the right heart, call or touch.”*

— Rasheed Ogunlaru



A New Chapter in the New World

In the spring of 2014, “Pastor John,” a Christian minister and pastor of a large church in Pakistan, was sitting at the dinner table with his family in Karachi when four policemen came to the door. The officers said a complaint had been filed against the minister, and he needed to leave with them immediately. Instead of taking Pastor John to a police station for questioning, however, they blindfolded him and drove him to a Muslim cleric, who turned him over to the Taliban.

At a secret location, Pastor John was interrogated, brutally kicked, chained to a wall, and beaten with a pipe while he tried, in vain, to defend his innocence and cling to consciousness. Throughout that physical ordeal, he refused to deliver the false confession his torturers demanded—that he had been a spy for the United States and committed blasphemy against Islam.

In Pakistan, laws against blasphemy are often used to persecute Christians and other non-Muslims. Pastor John’s greatest crimes, in the eyes of his persecutors, were that he had preached the virtues of Jesus Christ at a recent Easter sermon, and that he had rebaptized a woman who had been born Christian, converted to Islam, and then wished to reconvert back to Christianity. Both actions were denounced by the Taliban as heretical and punishable by death.

On the second day of the pastor’s interrogation, his abusers applied mental and emotional torture: he was forced to watch a video of someone being beheaded, while the executioner from the video sat in the room alongside him. The Taliban then presented the terrified minister with a Hobson’s choice: confess and renounce Christianity, or die, after witnessing the execution of his own wife and children. Pastor John made the only choice possible. He was then released to prepare his family for a very public conversion ceremony.

A few days later, the minister and his family members fled, avoiding suspicion by leaving their home separately and empty-handed. Pastor John had a US visa and flew to the United States. His wife and three children went into hiding in Pakistan.

In September 2014, when Human Rights First—a nonprofit organization based in New York City—circulated a request for pro bono assistance to help Pastor John secure asylum, attorney Narges Kakalia responded. “I’m from Karachi, and have handled many asylum cases. When Human Rights First circulated this case study, the facts hit very close to home for me, and I was determined to help,” Narges said.

Sharing a common language helped Narges establish a good working relationship with her client, who spoke little English. “Being able to communicate in Urdu helped Pastor John feel more comfortable in a very alien setting,” Narges said.

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“I felt so confident with Mintz. Mintz treated me like a family member, and considered my problems as their own problems.”

“Pastor John”
Pro Bono Client

Pastor John's primary concern was his family members, who were in great danger. It was impossible to bring them into the United States without first winning asylum for Pastor John, so Narges and her Mintz Levin team moved swiftly to file his application for asylum and prevent his removal. After many attempts—including numerous calls, letters, and e-mails to the Asylum Office—they also succeeded in expediting the minister's asylum hearing.

Attorneys Rachel Gholston and Dan Bagliebter, senior patent agent Gurneet Singh, and project analyst Reeva Dua worked with Narges to contact witnesses in Pakistan, collect their sworn testimonies, and prepare written affidavits.

"As lawyers, so many times we have emergencies, and deal with things that are urgent. But this case was literally a matter of life and death," Rachel said.

Gurneet, who also speaks Urdu, acted as an interpreter when Narges wasn't available. In addition, he accompanied the minister to medical appointments. The doctors confirmed that the marks on the minister's body were consistent with torture and that he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). "The pastor's story touched me personally," said Gurneet, who saw many parallels between the minister's situation and that of his grandfather, who had been forced to leave his home in Pakistan in 1947.

At Pastor John's asylum hearing, the medical and personal affidavits collected by his attorneys supported his articulate account in every detail. Asylum was officially granted in August 2015, and his family joined him in the United States in September 2016.

Pastor John is currently studying English and working part-time with a new congregation.

"My family and I have received legal status. I see a great future [for us] in this country," he said.



*"No nation hiding behind
closed doors is free,
for it is imprisoned
by its own fear."*

— Bill Clinton



Statute of Liberty

An abusive husband changes his Facebook status to “widowed.” Another abuser, on the day his girlfriend is granted a restraining order, posts a photo of a gun and a not-so-veiled threat. A third, his account blocked from his ex’s social media pages, creates false profiles—in the names of family members—so he can continue a very disturbing campaign of threats and harassment.

Thousands of women and men in abusive relationships are threatened and stalked on social media every day. So when longtime pro bono client Jane Doe Inc. and several other support and advocacy organizations—the Women’s Bar Association, Women’s Bar Foundation, National Network to End Domestic Violence, and National Center for Victims of Crime—approached Mintz Levin to write an amicus (“friend of the court”) brief on their behalf in a case involving cyberstalking, attorneys Sandra Badin, Lyzzette Bullock, and John Nucci, and former Mintz Levin attorney Helen Guyton, volunteered.

Commonwealth v. Michael Walters raised the question of whether threats delivered through social media channels like Facebook can be considered threats under Massachusetts law—specifically under its stalking statute. Communications that qualify as threats under that statute may lead to possible criminal prosecution. The law was written before social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram existed, but through their research, the Mintz Levin team found that the application of the statute has evolved with the introduction of new communication technologies—suggesting that communications delivered via social media should also be covered by the law.

The stakes were high. If the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court had decided that posts on Facebook and other social media networks should not be covered by the statute, it would have been difficult to protect victims of domestic abuse from threats of violence made through these popular channels. That outcome would have been tragic, given that threats and stalking are reliable predictors of physical violence, according to the team’s research.

The case also raised the question of whether threats made on Facebook that are not specifically directed to their intended targets—including threats posted on stalkers’ pages but not their victims’ pages—should still be considered threats. “Even strong proponents of the First Amendment would agree that a threat, intended as such, is not protected,” Sandra said, “but they are more likely to want to protect statements that, while not obviously threatening—because, for example, they are not specifically directed to their intended targets or are not explicitly threatening—may yet be reasonably interpreted and understood as threats in their proper context.”

continued

“Ever-changing technology is used by abusers in alarming and dangerous ways as demonstrated in the case of Commonwealth v. Walters.

Once again Mintz Levin used its legal expertise and resources to promote survivor safety and offender accountability in partnership with the sexual and domestic violence advocacy community.”

Debra J. Robbin, Ed.M.
Executive Director
Jane Doe Inc.

Changing a Facebook status to “widowed” may not be threatening on its face, without knowing the background. But when the individual posting that status is facing prison for brutally beating his wife, the statement takes on a different meaning.

The fear and disruption caused by threats like these can be debilitating. “It isn’t just emotional harm,” Lyzzette said. “Threats have concrete social and economic consequences—forcing moves, causing isolation from family and friends, and squandering public resources by diverting funds to investigate whether the threats are ‘real’—that is, whether there is any danger they will be carried out.”

Weighing all of the evidence in this case, the Supreme Judicial Court ultimately ruled that no reasonable jury could have determined that the content on the defendant’s Facebook page constituted a threat under the statute; however, the Justices also agreed that a threat communicated via Facebook is still a threat, even if it isn’t specifically directed to its intended target. Going forward, that means that Massachusetts state courts will interpret the stalking law to include communications made on Facebook and other social media.

That’s comforting news for those threatened by domestic violence, and everyone working to protect them. Through the firm’s Domestic Violence Project, Mintz Levin’s pro bono attorneys have worked on behalf of victims and their supporters and advocates for more than 25 years.



*“Every now and then one paints
a picture that seems to have
opened a door and serves as a
stepping stone to other things.”*

— Pablo Picasso



Unmistaken Identity

When someone experiences an unthinkable crime and seeks legal services to pursue justice, receiving proper advocacy, support, and immediate action is incredibly crucial. Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC) provides such services in Washington, DC, empowering victims of all crimes through advocacy, case management, and pro bono legal services. Since opening its doors in 2012, NVRDC has served more than 2,000 victims of all types of crime—from aggravated assaults and homicides to identity thefts, sexual and gender-based violence, and elder abuse. The organization has quickly established itself as an innovative leader, going beyond legal and case management and providing holistic, therapeutic services to support healing and restored dignity.

In late 2014, NVRDC was located in close proximity to a nonprofit crisis center providing counseling and support services for sexual violence victims. With a change in leadership, the crisis center changed its logo to one that appeared very similar to NVRDC's design. Concerns grew quickly at NVRDC that the two organizations would be confused not only by donors, but by clients in their time of crisis.

The handling of the trademark infringement matter had to be approached in a sensitive manner in order to keep relationships intact and avoid litigation. To protect NVRDC's brand, attorney Susan Neuberger Weller stepped in to negotiate and quietly resolve the situation for the benefit of both organizations.

"As a trademark lawyer, it is my job to protect an entity's brand and its identity for a multitude of reasons. These protective efforts will help to ensure not only that victims of crime know where to go to get the help and support they need, but also that NVRDC gets the support it needs to carry out its laudable mission," Susan said.

Mintz Levin also helped NVRDC pursue its mission by working with the organization to obtain charitable solicitation licenses in Maryland, Virginia, and DC. Attorney Carrie Roll gathered documentation, submitted applications, and successfully registered the organization so it can solicit contributions. Bridgette Stumpf, NVRDC's co-executive director, said she can't overstate how invaluable Carrie's work was to helping the organization understand the jurisdictions in which it would need to file.

"Helping us comply with regulations saves us time and prevents us from taking focus away from our clients, which is so important to our mission," Bridgette said.

Carrie was pleased to assist such a passionate group. "I love feeling that I've done a small part to enable NVRDC to continue to provide victims with support."



"Mintz Levin's legal assistance has a huge impact on our ability to serve our clients."

Bridgette Stumpf
Co-executive Director
Network for Victim
Recovery of DC



Breaking a Chain of Despair

More than 6.4 million Americans age 65 and over are living in poverty. For these people, one adverse life event such as illness, income loss, or an unforeseen expense can start a chain of problems. For “Robert,” a retired schoolteacher from Quincy, Massachusetts, the dream of owning a home had become a nightmare.

By the time Mintz Levin attorney Adam Coffin met him, Robert was overwhelmed with unpaid mortgage and tax bills, and his condo and penalty fees were piling up. Robert had aged out of his profession and, due to illness, began having difficulty managing his finances. His condominium was heading toward foreclosure; the Board of Health had condemned the residence, relegating him to a homeless shelter; and his snowballing debt was an ongoing source of worry and anxiety.

Kathy McGrath, a fellow pro bono attorney and senior corporate counsel at Liberty Mutual, had been working through the Lawyers Clearinghouse to sort out some of Robert’s affairs when she asked Adam to assist in selling Robert’s condominium. At first glance, this seemed like a pretty straightforward task. It even appeared from his credit report as if Robert might come out ahead on the transaction. However, a more thorough investigation revealed that Robert was underwater on his mortgage; the amount he owed exceeded the potential sale price of his home.

Working with Mintz Levin attorneys Andrew Dean and Peter Gelzinis, Adam had to arrange for a short sale. What normally might have taken a couple of months turned into a five-month ordeal. Through perseverance and many hours, the team struck a deal that removed the weight that had been holding Robert down these many years. The lender agreed to waive tens of thousands of dollars.

While the financial matters were being resolved, there was also the matter of clearing out and cleaning up Robert’s dilapidated property to prepare it for sale. Thanks to some serious elbow grease from volunteers and Kathy’s and Mintz Levin’s legal services, Robert’s residence and debt were wiped clean. The Mintz Levin–Liberty Mutual pro bono partnership broke the chain of despair so Robert could move forward and get the medical and housing assistance that he needed.

“The fact that this was getting resolved was a huge relief to Robert. Getting his former residence out of the way made him eligible for subsidized assisted living which, all things considered, was the best solution for him,” Kathy said.



“Mintz Levin and Liberty Mutual have come together to provide thousands of hours of legal work to remove legal barriers that prevent people from escaping homelessness. This successful partnership has become the model by which law firms and corporate law departments work together to help people in need.”

Maribeth Perry, Esq.
Executive Director
Lawyers Clearinghouse



Skills for Success

Shemar Dacosta never would have predicted that by learning to code, he would be inspired to create a valuable platform to give people a voice to address social issues close to home. This very inspiration would lead him all the way to the White House.

Initially uninterested in his Code/Interactive (C/I) computer classes at the Bronx Academy of Software Engineering, Shemar eventually devoured the program's curriculum, and he and his classmates seized the opportunity to develop an app called Voices. The app serves as a forum for students to submit their opinions on a variety of issues, such as bullying, anonymously. Reports can then be made to school administration on issues students otherwise may not feel comfortable enough to address.

Shemar was one of two young students from New York City chosen to attend the 5th White House Science Fair in March 2015, where he presented the app and met the president. It was an opportunity that would not have been possible without Code/Interactive.

Founded in the Bronx in 2001 as a nonprofit organization, Code/Interactive has expanded nationally this year to now serve more than 5,000 low-income students nationwide; New York City and Central Texas are C/I's largest service areas, with approximately 3,450 and 1,500 students in each area, respectively.

Code/Interactive teaches in-demand technology skills to high school students from underserved communities. With these new skills, students become creators, rather than simply consumers, of technology. Working closely under the guidance of C/I, students create apps, video games, and websites. The organization also finds paid internships at tech companies for students, setting them on a path for long-term careers in technology.

"Now, we teach students how to code, and they have the opportunity to practice coding skills at hackathons and code camps, and can be placed in internships and apply their skills in professional settings," Executive Director Mike Denton said. "We wanted to teach students what they could do to help themselves out of poverty."

Attorney Stephanie Leopold started working with Code/Interactive in the summer of 2014. Through the organization's growth, Stephanie has been there to provide support—reviewing documentation and agreements, and advising the organization as it built official partnerships. The firm's New York office also hosts and documents board meetings, which Stephanie attends.

"We help contract the internships, review employment agreements, and make sure the organization, the students, and the company are all protected," said Stephanie. "It's truly amazing to see what attending these programs can do to change the lives of these students."

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"We are at the beginning of an inflection point that's very exciting. We have very strong intentions to make an impact on low income students, and we couldn't do it without Mintz Levin."

Mike Denton
Executive Director
Code/Interactive

Like Shemar, many students who attend Code/Interactive are motivated to use their new skills to make a positive impact in their communities. One group tackled community safety by prototyping an app called Safe Voyages, which helps students follow the safest pathway from destination to destination. The app features an API-powered map of reported crime—including theft, assault, and sexual abuse—and generates a route that avoids these areas. The brilliance of the app comes in its practicality: as a user approaches an intersection, the phone vibrates once to instruct the user to turn left and twice to turn right, eliminating the need to reveal the smartphone.

With the help of Code/Interactive—and Mintz Levin’s support—many more students will soon be applying their skills beyond the classroom. “We’re so lucky to have been supported by Mintz Levin for quite some time,” Mike said.



*“We must open the doors
of opportunity. But we must
also equip our people to
walk through those doors.”*

— Lyndon Johnson



A New Lease on Life

For years, “Theresa,” a woman in her 60s, had been complaining to her landlord that her apartment was uninhabitable. When it rained, water came into all of her rooms, destroying her furniture, computer, clothes, and other belongings. Two radiators were broken, so for two winters she had no heat. The interior stairs were almost impassible, doors wouldn’t lock, and there was an insect infestation. The conditions had been worsening over the years since Theresa had taken residence. “I don’t know how anyone could have survived in those conditions. It was shockingly bad,” said Mintz Levin attorney Michael Marion.

Despite many years of prompt rent payments, Theresa couldn’t get her landlord’s attention until she lost her job and missed a couple of payments. Then her landlord responded quickly, with a standard eviction notice. Working with Michael, Theresa learned that although she hadn’t deliberately withheld payments, she had every right to do so, because her landlord hadn’t provided a habitable apartment.

Every day, people like Theresa appear in courts trying desperately to retain their housing. Facing eviction, the potentially homeless tenants tend to be society’s poorest, and although many live in subpar housing conditions, they often don’t know that they can raise a defense based on housing code violations. In Washington, DC, while more than 90% of landlords who appear in court have legal representation, an incredible 98% of tenants do not.

To lighten the heavy caseload, the Landlord and Tenant Branch of the DC court system encourages landlords and tenants to work out deals in advance of a hearing, in the hallway outside the courtrooms. Many tenants assume that landlords have all the power and, out of fear and expediency, they sign off on the landlords’ payment plans. “What tenants don’t know is that the document the landlords’ attorneys have tenants sign is a consent judgment that states that, if a tenant misses a single payment, the eviction process can start immediately,” Michael said.

Michael, working with Mintz Levin attorney and Legal Aid Society board member Dionne Lomax, put Theresa’s landlord on notice that her apartment’s deplorable condition was so pervasively bad that Theresa was entitled to withhold rent payments. Once the landlord got wind that the Mintz Levin team would not let him get away with providing such uninhabitable conditions, he started making repairs. Ultimately, Michael was able to arrange a deal that forgave all of Theresa’s back rent and provided two free additional months—a life-changing amount of money for Theresa.

Thanks to the Legal Aid Society and the Mintz Levin team, Theresa’s apartment was restored with the basic comforts that are her right. “It’s a brand new start for her,” said Dionne.



“Keeping families in safe, affordable housing is at the core of Legal Aid’s housing law practice. Thanks to the hard work and commitment of attorneys like Michael and Dionne, we are able to offer our clients effective representation to assert their rights, avoid eviction, and ensure their landlords live up to their legal obligation to provide safe housing.”

Jodi Feldman

*Supervising Attorney,
Pro Bono and Training Programs*

*Legal Aid Society
of the District of Columbia*



Home at Last

In “Jamie’s” first decade of life, his father was sent to prison for drug possession and his mother, “Marta,” who battled drug addiction, rarely made the rent payment. Jamie was pulled out of school every three or four months as his mother and he moved from one place to the next.

With nowhere left to turn, Marta and 10-year-old Jamie moved in with Marta’s ex, “Raymond.” Raymond and Marta shared custody of two children born before Jamie was conceived. After about a month at Raymond’s, Marta disappeared, likely due to a relapse. Enough time passed for Raymond to realize that someone had to take care of Jamie; that “someone” would be Raymond.

Raymond had lost his job so he couldn’t afford a lawyer. Instead, he turned to the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, which referred the case to Mintz Levin attorney Rob Latta. A non-relative seeking custody of a child is a more complicated case than a relative seeking custody. On top of the typical obstacles of a custody case, San Diego County’s Health & Human Services Agency charged prospective guardians a \$700+ fee to conduct a guardian investigation. Raymond, in his individual capacity, and through other attorneys, requested a fee waiver. However, the agency responded with a nominal reduction to \$606, still way beyond Raymond’s reach. “Raymond may have fallen on tough times, but he was the best chance that Jamie had at a bright and fulfilling future. We could have paid the fee but we felt it was important to resolve this matter for others without counsel who might be similarly impacted by this unfair ruling,” said Rob.

Rob prepared a brief and served papers to all parties involved, including the general counsels of San Diego County and the Health & Human Services Agency. Raymond was awarded full custody of Jamie, and Rob and attorney Andrew Skale won the decision on the fee waiver. The precious dollars that could have gone to fees instead went to food, clothing, and shelter. Little did Raymond realize that the Mintz Levin petition on his behalf would also help countless other people like him have a chance at guardianship. The ruling on the fee waiver now stands as precedent for all non-relative guardianship fees in San Diego County.

When we spoke with Rob in the spring, Jamie, 11 years old, was about to complete his second full year of school. Prior to living with Raymond, Jamie had never completed a full year of education. Rob reported that Raymond had arranged counseling for Jamie, and that the boy is opening up and is less disruptive in school.

“In the end, we got the best result for the client, and, more importantly, we have aided in getting Jamie into a permanent, stable home,” Andrew said.



“When the case was complete, ‘Raymond’ left a voicemail at my office overcome with emotion as he expressed his gratitude and relief. He could not have navigated the complicated legal system without his dedicated volunteer attorneys.”

Leslie J. Mackay, Esq.
Staff Attorney
San Diego Volunteer
Lawyer Program, Inc.



Freedom from Pain

There is nothing more distressing to parents than watching their children suffer. It was particularly agonizing, then, for “Nadia” and “Rafi”—immigrants from Afghanistan—to watch their daughter, “Abiba,” writhe and grimace in pain while the help she needed remained out of reach.

Abiba was in her mid-30s when Legal Aid of San Diego referred her case to Mintz Levin. Gradually, as she grew into adulthood, she had begun to experience excessive bleeding and extreme pain during her monthly cycle. Diagnosed at birth with a severe intellectual disability, Abiba wasn’t able to say what was bothering her or how much it hurt. However, to Nadia and Rafi, her primary caregivers, Abiba’s movements and facial expressions made her agony clear.

Years earlier, when Abiba began to experience problems, her doctor recommended a hysterectomy. To expedite that remedy, her parents obtained a limited conservatorship. That legal arrangement, approved by a judge, enables a responsible party or parties to assist an adult with developmental disabilities who is unable to provide for his or her own personal or financial needs.

Given the nature of the surgery Abiba required, however, her parents found they needed more than a limited conservatorship to authorize her medical procedure. The law provides additional protections when a medical intervention will result in sterilization, and a hysterectomy, while relieving Abiba’s pain, would also make it impossible for her to ever bear children.

The extra protection is designed to ensure that life-changing decisions made on behalf of vulnerable individuals are in their best interests, and—to the extent that a court can determine—reflect their desires. “The provision protects individuals, and rightly so,” said attorney Antony Nash, who led the team that worked on Abiba’s case.

Antony collaborated with attorney Anne-Marie Dao and assistant Diane Johnson to find a path forward. Together they identified a unique combination of legal statutes that clarified what could be done in a case like Abiba’s. The key, they learned, is to establish that the medical procedure is for the individual’s well-being and not primarily for the purpose of sterilization. The case law also suggested that it’s important to prove that alternative treatments wouldn’t be adequate. The procedure must be a last resort.

The team also had to provide assurance to Abiba’s court-appointed attorney that this was in her best interest. Concerned that Abiba might want to have children down the line, the attorney wanted to discuss her capabilities, state of mind, and level of pain. The team also arranged for the attorney to meet with Abiba’s doctor, who discussed her condition and provided a written statement for the court.

continued

*“Thank you very much
for thinking about
our daughter and us.
We really appreciate
your kindness.”*

*“Nadia” and “Rafi”
Pro Bono Clients*

When the time came for Antony to present the case at a hearing, “all of that prep work enabled the oral argument to be much more of a formality than it would have been,” Antony said. The judge appointed Nadia as conservator and authorized her to consent to the hysterectomy on Abiba’s behalf.

Abiba underwent her surgery, and Nadia and Rafi are extremely relieved that she no longer spends a week of each month in agonizing pain, and very grateful for Mintz Levin’s assistance. In appreciation, they presented the team with a beautiful, handcrafted Afghan table runner—now proudly displayed in Antony’s office.

“Dealing with the legal system in addition to providing 24-hour care for a disabled child is very difficult,” Anne-Marie said. “It was very gratifying to know that every time we arranged for a doctor’s visit or handled one of the case’s many details, it made a tremendous difference in our clients’ lives.”



*“The doors of wisdom
are never shut.”*

— Benjamin Franklin



A Mother and Child Reunion

“Maria,” a single woman in her 20s, knew she didn’t yet have the resources to provide proper care or housing for her newborn child. Unable to afford an attorney, the mother appeared before the Probate and Family Court alone, agreeing to hand over what she thought was temporary guardianship of her son to her friend, the child’s godmother. What Maria did not realize was that she had consented to giving her friend permanent guardianship of her child.

Several months later, Maria was back on her feet, able to resume care and eager to regain full custody of her boy. Maria was horrified to learn that her so-called friend and her friend’s husband had no intention of relinquishing the child, and instead were attempting to adopt the boy. Again, with no money for a lawyer, Maria went to court on her own to file a petition for removal of the godmother as guardian. The court recognized, though, that the mother’s fundamental and constitutionally protected rights were at stake in this situation, so the judge sought guidance from the appellate courts as to whether the mother should have a right to an appointed lawyer.

Working closely with a companion case filed by attorneys at Community Legal Aid in Worcester, Massachusetts, a team of Mintz Levin lawyers took the mother’s appeal. Attorneys Sue Finegan, Sandra Badin, and Geoffrey Friedman prepared a brief to the Supreme Judicial Court, with assistance from attorney Nichole Beiner, project analyst Conlan Orino, and summer intern Emma Nitzberg. The Mintz Levin team, led by Sue, presented its case to the justices of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. “This was a cutting-edge issue—whether the right of indigent parents to counsel in guardianship of a minor extends beyond the initial petitions. If granted, this right would extend to hundreds, if not thousands, of parents each year,” Sue said.

The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Mintz Levin and Community Legal Aid. The court concluded that when an indigent parent who is not represented by counsel seeks to remove a guardian and thereby regain custody of the child or modify the terms of a guardianship, the parent has a due process right to counsel to file such a petition, and to be informed of this right, provided the parent presents a meritorious claim.

The result of this case is doubly good: other parents will be able to have a lawyer by their side when such momentous decisions are being made, and Maria and her child have been reunited and are doing well.



“I’m so happy that my case is going to be able to change the law so that other parents don’t have to live through the heartache that I did.”

“Maria”
Pro Bono Client



Knowledge Is Key

Research shows that diversity has a positive impact on everybody. We all benefit when we have exposure to the ideas, opinions, and life experiences of people from different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. That's why, for decades, Mintz Levin has played a significant role in helping the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice (LCCR) fulfill its mission of "combating racial discrimination and the resulting inequality of opportunity."

In the fall of 2015, LCCR called upon Mintz Levin to help file an amicus ("friend of the court") brief in the US Supreme Court's *Fisher v. University of Texas* case to counter one filed by UCLA Law Professor Richard H. Sander presenting the "mismatch" hypothesis. Sander's theory posits that a mismatch occurs when a minority student is accepted to a more selective university because of affirmative action, where the decision is based upon a "very large" racial preference. The claim is that at a more selective university, the minority student will be at a disadvantage—more likely to struggle, and less likely to thrive and graduate, than if the student had attended a less challenging school.

The problem is that social science and statistical research do not support Professor Sander's mismatch hypothesis. LCCR and Mintz Levin were compelled to make sure the Court was aware of all the facts. Attorney Mathilda McGee-Tubb, along with attorneys Colin Van Dyke and Yalonda Howze, and former Mintz Levin attorney Chip Phinney, worked with LCCR to finalize a 27-page brief that brought together the opinions and findings of distinguished academicians and scientists representing over 274 collective years in the fields of quantitative social science and statistical methodology.

"When the Supreme Court is presented with a social science theory that is meant to guide its thinking on an important constitutional issue, it is critical that the Court be aware of what the empirical research actually says," said Mathilda. The brief, which references over 40 articles and scientific studies, informed the Court of the substantial methodological flaws in the research supporting Professor Sander's mismatch hypothesis. For example, contrary to the mismatch hypothesis, at least one study referenced in the brief indicates that students admitted under an affirmative action policy earned higher than average grades, dropped out of schools at lower rates than other students, and were as satisfied with college life as the rest of the student body.

By effectively rebutting the mismatch hypothesis, the brief implicitly supports the benefits of diversity in education. "There is ample evidence to support that we are all better prepared to succeed when we have exposure to people from all walks of life," said Colin.

continued

"Mintz Levin has brought its incredible resources to bear to bring the struggle for civil rights from the streets to the courtroom. Without Mintz Levin we would have never been able to file the brief to bring this important perspective to the Supreme Court. We are grateful to have them as our partner in this historic case."

Iván Espinoza-Madrigal, Esq.

*Executive Director
Lawyers' Committee for Civil
Rights and Economic Justice*

“It’s always gratifying to provide legal support for individuals, but the work of LCCR strives to balance the playing field at a societal level. Mintz Levin is proud to be a partner in that important work,” Yalonda said.

On June 13, 2016, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the University of Texas, and correspondingly Mintz Levin’s brief, thus handing a victory to those who believe in the importance of diversity in education. LCCR Legal Director Oren Sellstrom stated, “Today’s decision reinforces the need for university officials to implement narrowly tailored measures to achieve the diversity that educators, military leaders, and business owners have said time and time again is imperative to our future success as a country in this increasingly global economy.”



*“American education is still
the wonder of the world, and
we must open the schoolhouse
doors, not close them.”*

— Lincoln Chafee



Additional Pro Bono Highlights from 2015

Access to Justice Fellows

Sponsored by the Lawyers Clearinghouse and the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission, and created and supported by Mintz Levin's Martha Koster and Sue Finegan, the Access to Justice Fellows Program matches retired and retiring lawyers and judges with nonprofits, legal services organizations, and court projects to address the unmet legal needs of the state's low-income residents. Since the program began in 2012, 53 fellows have provided over 40,000 hours of pro bono time. Mia Friedman serves as the program's Director at the Lawyers Clearinghouse, and Mintz Levin project analyst Haejin Hwang has provided important support for the program as well. The

fellows' projects this past year included addressing criminal justice reform, serving political asylum clients, working with veterans, mentoring junior lawyers in an incubator serving low and moderate income clients, managing a court-based mediation program for the Probate and Family Court, and more.

BioBuilder Educational Foundation

The BioBuilder Educational Foundation is a charitable organization with a mission to put current scientific research into the hands of teachers and students. BioBuilder converts exciting and ongoing research questions in biological engineering and other STEM subjects into teachable modules, including teaching curricula

continued

Burn Victim – Immigration Relief

In 2013, "Adam" and his father were victims of a horrific car accident in their home country. Their car was hit by a drunk driver and it went up in flames. Adam's father did not survive the accident, and 14-year-old Adam sustained second and third degree burns over 80% of his body and hovered between life and death for weeks. While Adam was treated as much as possible in his home country, the severity of his situation ultimately required a transfer to Shriners Hospitals for Children — Boston, one of the leading burn treatment facilities in the world. Although Adam and his mother, "Debbie," entered the United States as visitors (permission that is normally granted for no more than six months), Adam's condition necessitated a prolonged stay in the country so that he could receive continuing care. This situation has posed significant immigration challenges to Adam and his mother.

Attorneys Susan Cohen, Lisa Redepenning, and Maryanne Kline, legal assistant Christine Bazzinotti, and project analysts Jamie Dickerson and Zach Fields have been able to obtain a series of visa extensions for Adam and his mother

to ensure Adam's ongoing treatment. After Mintz Levin renewed their visitor status multiple times, Adam and his mother had to return to their home country and reenter the United States—a potentially perilous undertaking, as individuals with visitor visas are not generally permitted to spend lengthy periods of time in the United States. Mintz Levin Global Visa Manager Danielle Lifrieri worked with the Department of Homeland Security to facilitate the return of Adam and his mother to the United States, paving the way for Susan to meet the family's plane on the tarmac and escort them through the immigration screening, and to secure permission for them to stay for three times the normally permitted length of time granted to visitors. Secure in their lengthy "approval period," Adam and his mom have been able to put their immigration worries behind them and concentrate on Adam's healing process, which will require a series of surgeries throughout the coming year. Adam and his mother have said that they have no words to express their gratitude for Mintz Levin's pro bono immigration assistance, making it possible for Adam to receive the best possible medical care in the world.

ula, web-based animations, and in-class and laboratory activities. These modules increase student interest, engagement, and understanding of science and engineering.

Much of BioBuilder's original curriculum was developed by founder Natalie Kuldell, a professor at MIT. Mintz Levin attorney John Dellapa assisted BioBuilder in securing clear rights to its curriculum from MIT, and he and fellow attorney Rachel Weisblatt have since further assisted BioBuilder as it establishes contractual arrangements with collaborators, manufacturers, and others during a period of rapid growth.

Center for Collaborative Leadership

The Center for Collaborative Leadership is a Boston-based organization focused on boosting the leadership and collaboration skills of mid-level professionals. The organization's Emerging Leaders Program helps these future leaders join

together in pursuit of civic goals. The Center is based at the University of Massachusetts Boston's College of Management, and has reached over 500 participants to date. This past year, Mintz Levin attorneys Anthony Hubbard and Kathryn Dahlen drafted bylaws for the organization, providing it with its first corporate governance documents.

Chelsea's Light Foundation

In 2010, San Diego high school senior Chelsea King went for a run in broad daylight and didn't return. Five days later, her remains were discovered in a shallow grave. Chelsea had been raped and strangled by a known sexual predator. Following Chelsea's death, her parents, Brent and Kelly King, established a nonprofit charitable foundation in her name and helped pass a California law that increases penalties, parole provisions, and oversight for violent sexual predators convicted of attacking children. Since

the passage of that legislation, Chelsea's Law, the Kings have pushed for similar legal reforms across the nation. Chelsea's Light Foundation empowers individuals to help safeguard children, sponsors youth programs, and provides scholarships to high-school seniors who share Chelsea's commitment to positive change.

Attorney Andrew Skale started working with Chelsea's Light shortly after it was founded, and is now a board member. Along with attorneys Jacquelyn Lewis, Bardia Moayedi, Lance Kurata, and Tali Tuchin, and legal specialist Jacobo Dib, Andrew worked on a variety of matters for the organization. In 2015, Mintz Levin helped register the foundation's trademarks, handled agreements related to the annual Finish Chelsea's Run 5k, and reviewed employment agreements. The firm's team also reviewed agreements related to a documentary created by Chelsea's

brother, Tyler King. "Chelsea's Light: A Brother's Journey" tells Chelsea's story from Tyler's perspective while raising awareness about sexual violence against children and looking at how the criminal justice system often fails to protect them.

Clinic in a Box®

Mintz Levin has hosted several Clinic in a Box® workshops for in-house legal departments over the past several years, working with a number of collaborators. At the 2016 program, hosted at the Association of Corporate Counsel's national conference in Boston, nine Greater Boston nonprofits worked individually with in-house counsel volunteers on three critical areas—Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination policies, and Paid Sick Leave and Parental Leave—to ensure that they were meeting their organizations'

continued

Civil Appellate Pro Bono Program

The right to appeal is fundamental to our judicial system, but exercising that right can be a daunting task for those who can't afford a lawyer or don't know how to appeal on their own. In Massachusetts, a new pro bono program is working to balance the scales of justice by helping low-income, self-represented individuals navigate the state appellate court system.

The push to establish the new program began in 2013 when then-Associate Justice Ralph D. Gants, now Chief Justice, tasked a committee of the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission with assessing the state's need for pro bono services in the appellate courts. Attorney Sue Finegan, chair of Mintz Levin's Pro Bono Committee and now the co-chair of the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission, led the new initiative with SJC clerk Fran Kenneally, and they were joined on the committee by former Mintz Levin attorney Kim Parr.

Through its research, the committee learned that 14 other states around the country were already running various types of pro bono programs to help close the gap for unrepresented litigants involved in appeals. Closer to home, the committee learned that the Appeals Court in Massachusetts was fielding questions from at least 40 to 50 self-represented litigants each day, and that, as of January 2014, its docket was loaded with pending appeals involving at least one self-represented litigant.

To address the pressing needs of those trying to exercise their right to appeal and help alleviate the burden on the court system, the committee developed the Civil Appellate Pro Bono Program. A first of its kind in the Commonwealth, the program provides a weekly clinic and individual appellate representation, where warranted.

The Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association (VLP) and Mintz Levin took on the management of the program, opening the clinic's doors for an initial pilot phase at Boston's

Edward W. Brooke Court Service Center. "Thanks to its knowledgeable staff and existing volunteer base, the center was the perfect partner to help us get the clinic off the ground," said Kim, who managed the program with Sue. In December 2015, at the urging of Chief Justice Scott Kafker of the Massachusetts Appeals Court, and with great assistance from the Clerk of the Massachusetts Appeals Court Joseph Stanton, the clinic went statewide, moving to a dedicated space in the Appeals Court.

At the free clinic, held every Wednesday, trained volunteer attorneys are available for on-the-spot consultations with qualifying litigants, whose cases involve a broad range of civil matters. During these consultations, the attorneys answer questions and offer guidance on next steps. They may help litigants decide whether it makes sense to appeal a decision, provide guidance on appellate issues and procedures, and review appellate briefs or other filings.

In addition, volunteer attorneys in a merits review panel assess whether the clinic cases should be referred to participating law firms for individual appellate representation. (For details on a case referred to Mintz Levin, see our feature story on page 37.)

The program is steadily building momentum, and many of the top law firms in Boston, along with legal services organizations from across the state, have stepped forward to provide support. Recently, Mintz Levin attorney Brian Dunphy and attorneys from Goodwin Proctor and Foley Hoag have joined

Sue to administer the program. Additional members of the Mintz Levin team have included former project analysts Conlan Orino and Emma Nitzberg, current project analysts Warren Crandall and Parnia Zahedi, and former legal assistant Dan Goodrich, along with numerous attorney and summer associate volunteers.

188 individuals served to date

84 volunteer attorneys

29 merits review panel cases

evolving needs. Attorneys Anthony Hubbard, Drew Matzkin, and Gauri Punjabi trained their in-house counsel volunteers. The workshop was developed by Corporate Pro Bono; the Association of Corporate Counsel, Northeast Chapter; Mintz Levin; and Lawyers Clearinghouse, and was hosted by Mintz Levin's Pro Bono Chair Sue Finegan, attorney Katy Ward, project analysts Haejin Hwang and Parnia Zahedi, and former project analyst Pat Regan. "The program is a way to provide in-house counsel with an opportunity for meaningful pro bono work and the nonprofits with helpful legal insight," Sue said.

Concussion Legacy Foundation

The Concussion Legacy Foundation (CLF), formerly the Sports Legacy Institute, is dedicated to advancing the study, treatment, and prevention of the effects of brain trauma in athletes and other at-risk groups, including members of the military. Through its efforts, CLF aims to keep athletes safe, especially kids participating in youth sports, and to promote awareness of the risks of concussions and brain trauma. CLF has been at the forefront of raising awareness about concussion risks, and Mintz Levin and CLF have worked together since 2008 as the organization has grown. Attorneys Christine Baker, Keith Carroll, Brian Dunphy, Kelly Frey, Sean Grammel, Anthony Hubbard, Cynthia Larose, Kahlil Mitchell, Kate Stewart, Kaoru Suzuki, and Steve Weiner have provided CLF with guidance and

advice on a range of matters, including health law, corporate, contract, and intellectual property issues. In particular, Mintz Levin assisted with corporate work related to the organization's rebranding as the Concussion Legacy Foundation.

DC Central Kitchen

DC Central Kitchen works to reduce hunger and improve nutrition by recycling food; serving healthy school meals; getting fresh produce into food deserts, neighborhoods where nutritious food is hard to obtain; and training unemployed adults for culinary careers. In the past year, in connection with a strategic reorganization of operations, attorneys Tyrone Thomas and Alta Ray advised DC Central Kitchen on the creation of a new Chief Human Capital Officer position and provided additional services including advising on areas of improvement for the human resources function.

Defining Indigency - MA SJC Appeal

Attorney Emily Kanstroom represented a Massachusetts veteran in an appeal to the Supreme Judicial Court last year. The basic question was whether he should have been considered "indigent" for purposes of commencing a civil action under state law because he receives some form of veterans' benefits. The statute provided that a person is indigent if he or she "receives public assistance under...veterans' benefits programs." A second issue was whether the clerk at the lower court further ran afoul of

the statute by referring the indigency determination to a judge, instead of simply approving the request. The case was an uphill battle, because the veterans' benefits our client receives are not "means-tested" or "need-based," but rather are based on the fact that he is a veteran. On its face, this seemed somewhat incompatible with the notion of an "indigency" statute. But, as Emily argued, there are many situations in which veterans are accorded benefits because they are veterans, and the plain language of the statute does not limit indigency to those receiving only certain types of veterans' benefits. Although the client did not prevail, the Mintz Levin team succeeded in obtaining some clarity in this area, which is particularly important for the many self-represented litigants seeking a finding of indigency. Mintz Levin attorneys Meredith Leary and Joel Rothman, and former Mintz Levin attorney Robert Buchholz, provided invaluable assistance on this appeal.

Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism is a nonprofit organization established with the goal of improving the quality of life for people and families living with autism. The foundation is dedicated to increasing the awareness of autism and the unique challenges that families of autistic people face. In addition, the organization supports these families by helping them find the resources they need and by funding advocacy programs as well as educational, therapeutic, and recreational opportunities. Attorneys Katy Ward, Anthony Hubbard, and Mike Solet assisted the organization with general corporate matters as well as legal work related to a lease agreement.

Economic Justice Project

With the Economic Justice Project (EJP), Mintz Levin's transactional attorneys use their skills and resources to help low-income entrepreneurs who are starting or expanding small businesses located in underserved communities in Greater Boston. Once or twice a year, the attorneys involved with the EJP

conduct pro bono clinics to address the issues facing small businesses. Some of the entrepreneurs with whom the attorneys meet at the clinic become full representation pro bono clients, who typically need assistance with a range of issues relating to entity-formation, employment, real estate, and intellectual property protection. For example, the firm assisted a new small business with the acquisition of a beauty salon in Jamaica Plain, including the negotiation of the lease agreement and the financing for the acquisition. The firm, specifically attorneys Adam Davey, Peter Gelzimis, and Daniel Follansbee, and legal specialist Brenda Meyette, worked in concert with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation to help this small business get started. Attorneys Caroline Gammill and Lindsay Leone, current project analyst Haejin Hwang, and former project analysts Patrick Regan and Kristen Chapman coordinated the EJP projects in 2015. In addition to those previously mentioned, attorneys Adam Coffin, Andrew Dean, Anthony Hubbard, Daniel Wilcox, Kaoru Suzuki, and Katy Ward, and law clerk Allyson Wilkinson, also contributed to EJP in 2015.

Elizabeth Stone House

The Elizabeth Stone House is dedicated to serving homeless families and individuals in a goal-oriented, outcome-driven environment. The agency helps to resolve the issues that make people homeless, including domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness, so that they can attain and maintain permanent housing, personal safety, and economic stability. Mintz Levin—in particular, attorney Maryann Civitello—has been involved with the organization for decades.

Nine years ago, a two-alarm fire consumed the top floor of one of the organization's residences. While everyone made it out safely, the building became uninhabitable. Since then, the program has been crowded into the one building that is left. After a four-year search for a new site, an abandoned auto body shop became available within only a few blocks of the agency's transitional

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Domestic Violence Project at Mintz Levin

Mintz Levin's Domestic Violence Project has helped survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking to protect themselves and their children since its founding in 1989 by two first-year associates. In addition to providing pro bono legal services for individuals and families, the firm's attorneys have served as pro bono counsel to many nonprofit organizations that work to combat

domestic violence or support its victims by providing them with legal advice or representation on corporate, employment, immigration, tax, and governance matters. Several of the firm's offices participate in this important work.

We have also helped to draft laws, and lobbied at the state and federal levels, to enact reforms that help survivors and their children.

15 nonprofits helped in 2015

housing building. A team of Mintz Levin professionals from the Real Estate and Environmental Law practices worked to make purchasing the new site possible. For the past several years, and primarily during this past year, the firm has performed significant legal work in preparation for the acquisition and construction of a brand new shelter for victims of domestic violence. This has involved obtaining approval from the community as well as the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and securing a \$200,000 grant from the EPA to complete the environmental remediation of the new site. The new building will allow the organization to double the number of apartments for residents, build a day-care center to serve residents and parents in the community in need of day care, and construct a gym and outdoor play space so their children can, for the first time, have a safe place to play. The team also negotiated and executed an asset purchase agreement to sell the old building to another nonprofit, which will also help homeless families.

All of the legal work needed to make this project possible was accomplished by attorneys Maryann Civitello, Ray Estes, Susan Phillips, and Elissa Flynn-Poppey, with support from the firm's Pro Bono Committee.

Human Trafficking Prevention

In the past year, attorney Alec Zadek has dedicated his time to helping victims of human trafficking in a variety of matters. "Julia," a sex trafficking victim from the Boston area, came to Mintz Levin for help obtaining post-conviction relief. Several years before contacting the firm, she pled guilty to a prostitution-related offense and that conviction was now an impediment to her employment, housing, and education. Alec took on her case and convinced the court her guilty plea should be vacated in the interest of justice, because at the time she pled guilty to the offense she was under the influence of men who were forcing her to prostitute herself and profiting from her actions.

Greater Boston Food Bank

The Greater Boston Food Bank is the largest hunger-relief organization in New England and among the largest food banks in the country. The organization distributed over 45 million meals through its network of hunger-relief agencies in 2015 alone. Mintz Levin helped the organization with employment, trademark, and corporate governance matters. In 2015, the Mintz Levin team included attorneys Anthony Hubbard, Julie Korostoff, Drew Matzkin, Kahlil Mitchell, Poonam Patidar, Gauri Punjabi, Daniel Wilcox, Natalie Young, and Alec Zadek as well as legal specialist Brenda Meyette and former Mintz Levin attorney Jennifer Miani.

Greater Boston Legal Services

Mintz Levin assisted Greater Boston Legal Services with a variety of their clients' legal matters this past year. For example, attorney Bill Coffman helped a foreign national with a debilitating brain disease win approval of continued deferred action from US Citizenship and Immigration Services. This approval will allow the client to continue to receive care and allows the medical team to study the disease along with the client's progress and quality of life. The client is participating in therapeutic art

Once the court vacated Julia's guilty plea, Alec convinced the District Attorney's Office to dismiss the underlying prostitution-related charge against her. Attorneys Rebecca Raphaelson and Nichole Beiner were also key contributors to Julia's case.

Another woman, "Sarah," reached out to Alec after reading about Mintz Levin's successes representing sex trafficking survivors. Sarah had an open warrant in Boston for a prostitution-related offense she'd been charged with as a teenager. Now, more than 10 years later, Sarah was settled in another part of the country, and although she had long since escaped the control of the men who trafficked her, her open warrant in Massachusetts and prostitution-related offenses

classes, and some of the client's artistic creations were submitted as evidence during the deferred action application process.

Hatzalah Volunteer Ambulance Corps

Hatzalah is the largest volunteer ambulance service in the United States, with 16 local chapters in the New York metropolitan area, over 1,000 emergency medical technicians, 180 paramedics, and 80 ambulances. Mintz Levin provided a variety of legal services to the organization, under the guidance of attorney Jeff Moerdler. Jeff is an EMT with Hatzalah and co-president of its local chapter in Riverdale. He also serves on the executive board of the city-wide parent entity and as co-chair of its legal committee.

Attorneys Russell Fox and Ernie Cooper, with assistance from others, have continued to work on communications regulatory issues for Hatzalah. In 2015, the team had obtained a landmark ruling from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) allowing Hatzalah to be the first nongovernmental entity to be authorized by the FCC to receive caller ID information for blocked land lines and for cell phones. The attorneys then successfully sought a similar ruling from the New York Public Service Commission, and they are currently working to implement it. In addition, they have handled various other FCC permitting applications for

continued to haunt her. Alec was able to convince the District Attorney's office to dismiss the charges against Sarah and close the open warrant. In addition, Lavinia Weizel, another Mintz Levin attorney, convinced the court to seal Sarah's criminal record. Alec and Lavinia continue to work with Sarah to obtain relief in other jurisdictions where she had a prostitution-related conviction.

Alec and Lavinia also collaborated with Boston University Law School's Human Trafficking Clinic and others to draft legislation that would streamline the process by which sex trafficking victims can apply to a court to vacate their convictions. At this time, the process in Massachusetts for a sex trafficking

Hatzalah's private radio broadcast antenna network.

Attorney Michael Arnold has also handled various employment issues for Hatzalah, while Jeff and attorney Amy Lu handled several antenna leases for Hatzalah's antenna network.

Institute for Brain and Society

Mintz Levin represented the Institute for Brain and Society, which provides funding to the Brain Observatory, an organization dedicated to promoting wider access and study of the human brain. Specifically, the organization is working to set up a library where brains can be donated and preserved such that all researchers can have access to a brain database. Attorneys Andrew Skale, Natalie Prescott, Justin Nahama, and Katy Ward provided the Brain Observatory with guidance and advice that enabled it to protect its trademark rights.

Jane Doe Inc.

Jane Doe Inc. (JDI) is a Massachusetts nonprofit coalition that provides sexual and domestic violence advocacy as well as expert support and resources to over 60 community-based member programs statewide. These local programs are the hubs of expertise in their communities, advocating on behalf of

continued

survivor to obtain post-conviction relief is complicated and time-consuming. Twenty-nine other states have simplified the process by enacting legislation specifically designed to enable sex trafficking survivors to obtain post-conviction relief. Massachusetts Representative Mike Day, a Mintz Levin alumnus, sponsored a bill drafted by Alec, Lavinia, and their working group. While the proposed bill did not pass in the legislature this term, it did receive bipartisan support. Alec and Lavinia will continue to educate the community and legislators about their proposed legislation and will continue to work with Representative Day to convince state representatives and senators to enact it.

victims and offering confidential support and services to tens of thousands of victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence and their families each year. Mintz Levin has provided legal counsel to the organization for several decades. This past year, attorneys at the firm, overseen by Peter Biagetti and Sue Finegan, assisted JDI on a variety of legal issues.

Kisoro Children's Foundation

In 2015, the firm assisted with the formation of a new Massachusetts nonprofit organization, Kisoro Children's Foundation, Inc., founded to support the education, health, and welfare of children and families in Kisoro, Uganda. Mintz Levin continues to work with the newly formed organization and is working with the foundation to obtain federal tax-exempt status.

Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation

For 53 years, the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation has honored Marines by educating their children. The nation's oldest and largest provider of need-based scholarships to military children, the Scholarship Foundation pays particular attention

to those students whose parents have been killed or wounded in combat or demonstrated financial need. The Heroes Tribute Scholarship Program for Children of the Wounded provides up to \$40,000 of scholarship support for children of wounded Marines and Navy Corpsmen serving with the Marines. Since 1962, the organization has awarded more than 35,000 scholarships valued at nearly \$100,000,000. For the 2015–2016 academic year, scholarships were awarded to 2,300 students, totaling more than \$7,000,000. Mintz Levin provides the Scholarship Foundation with legal services in a variety of areas, including trademark, copyright, data security, information privacy, insurance, trust and estate, corporate, transaction, and investment-advisor relationship matters. The firm's legal support for the Scholarship Foundation was led by attorney Kevin Ainsworth (a director and general counsel of the Scholarship Foundation) and included attorneys Nancy Adams, Cynthia Larose, and Peter Miller as well as former Mintz Levin attorney Marty Lorenzo.

Medical-Legal Partnership & Dana-Farber

Clients referred to Mintz Levin from the Medical Legal Partnership (MLP) collaboration with the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI) face severe medical challenges and are necessarily focused on their illnesses and treatment. The legal difficulties that often accompany a serious medical diagnosis—such as complications with housing, problems associated with government benefits programs, or arrangements for guardianship and family planning—oftentimes create immense hardship for these individuals during one of the most vulnerable times in their lives. Mintz Levin attorneys step in to provide support and counsel on discreet but crucial legal matters so that MLP-DFCI clients can focus on their health and recovery.

During the year, Mintz Levin worked with a young mother of four named “Isabel” who had terminal cancer. When it was

clear that Isabel did not have long to live, attorneys Mathilda McGee-Tubb and Colin Van Dyke worked with Isabel to ensure that the proper paperwork was in place to allow her sister, mother, and the father of her two youngest children to make decisions and legally care for all four of her children. After Isabel passed away, Mathilda and Colin met with Isabel's sister and the father of her youngest children to confirm the guardianship and care arrangements for all four children.

Mintz Levin attorneys also worked with “Russell,” who was struggling with his Social Security benefits in the wake of a lung cancer diagnosis. Due to his illness and the effects of chemotherapy and radiation, Russell had not been able to earn any income for well over a year, but he had nonetheless been unsuccessful in pursuing disability payments from the Social Security Administration (SSA). In the midst of fighting

Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty

The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, also known as the Met Council, is one of New York's largest human services agencies, providing 100,000 New Yorkers with critical services in their fight against poverty every year. Since 1972, the Met Council has been a defender and advocate for New Yorkers in need and has raised awareness around the growing problem of Jewish poverty. Met Council provides services ranging from domestic violence counseling to kosher food pantries to career training.

Mintz Levin has been representing the Met Council for the past 16 years in the development of a government-subsidized, affordable assisted living facility on Staten Island. In 2015 the firm assisted with the Met Council's project to obtain and redevelop a portion of the Seaview Northern Parcel in Staten Island for senior and medically supportive housing. During this past year, attorneys Jeff Moerdler, Mike Solet, Kevin McGinty, Michael Arnold, and Amy Stillman assisted with contracts and leases for projects including the Washington Heights Jewish

Community Council, the Corona Homeless Shelter, and the Legal Services Project, and matters related to the Brooklyn telecom lease, the Lexington Avenue rooftop lease agreement, and the Ascot Partners subpoena.

National Network to End Domestic Violence

Founded in 1990, longtime pro bono client the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) is a national nonprofit membership and advocacy organization comprising a network of dozens of state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence that represent over 2,000 local organizations dedicated to ending domestic violence through legal, legislative, and policy initiatives, as well as to providing shelter, counseling, and legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence and their families. Last year, Mintz Levin attorneys submitted an amicus (“friend of the court”) brief on behalf of NNEDV in *Elonis v. United States*, an appeal before the US Supreme Court involving the use of Facebook to transmit threatening messages over the

continued

to survive his illness, Russell was only receiving about \$30 per month in Supplemental Security Income (SSI). In order to pay his bills and provide food for his son, he had to stretch this meager check as much as he could and rely on whatever help his several sisters could provide month to month.

After extensive research and document requests from the SSA, attorneys Nishant Dharia, Mike Katz, and Colin Van Dyke had to admit that due to quirks in Russell's employment history and the rigidity of criteria associated with the Social Security Disability Insurance program, Russell was not eligible for disability payments. Undeterred, the team turned its attention to the SSI program and determined that the payments Russell was receiving were far too low. After submitting a detailed brief to the SSA outlining the arguments for an increase, the attorney team went with Russell to his local SSA office to make his case

in person. As a result, the SSA was persuaded that Russell's SSI payments were in fact deficient, and he was awarded a far greater monthly payment that will allow him to pay bills and buy food, purchase essentials for his home, and better support himself and his son. Russell's courageous battle with cancer continues but the positive outcome in his SSI case did bring him some measure of relief and assurance as he forges ahead.

Mintz Levin attorneys involved with MLP-DFCI during the year included Inna Dahlin, Nishant Dharia, Mike Katz, Kevin Mortimer, Mathilda McGee-Tubb, Rebecca Raphaelson, and Colin Van Dyke, who had a supervisory role. Project analyst Parnia Zahedi also provided support.

Internet in violation of a federal statute. In its decision, the Court held that while the statute did not, as a matter of statutory construction, require proof of subjective intent, something more than a reasonable person standard was necessary to convict a person of culpable conduct; it then remanded the case back to the Third Circuit. In light of this decision, the Mintz Levin team has been helping NNEDV draft a legislative fix to the statute at issue. The firm's attorneys also provided counsel on corporate governance, real estate, and employment matters.

Attorneys Farrah Short, Joanne Hawana, Sandra Badin, Jennifer Sacco Smith, Tyrone Thomas, Mark Higgins, Anthony Hubbard, Matthew Cohen, Rob Sheridan, Ann Fievet, Colleen Witherell, and Alta Ray, along with former Mintz Levin attorney Helen Guyton, provided outside legal counsel to NNEDV throughout the year on a variety of matters. Project analyst Sam Rothbloom and senior research analyst Jessica Bumpous also provided support. Farrah Short served as the client liaison this past year.

NYC Family Court Volunteer Attorney Program

Under the auspices of the New York City Family Court Volunteer Attorney Program, Mintz Levin attorneys help unrepresented litigants address family law issues, including child support, domestic violence, visitation, and custody. The program began in Brooklyn Family Court and has since expanded to Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, and Richmond Counties, with over 200 participating attorneys from more than 35 major law firms and companies. The program has helped thousands of families throughout the years. Each month, the attorneys involved with the program meet with litigants for one-time sessions that typically last about 30 minutes each. Attorney Bethany Hickey has coordinated the program for Mintz Levin since 2015. Attorneys Todd Rosenbaum, Lauren Luptak, Stephanie Leopold, Elizabeth Kurpis, Yilei He, David Barres, and Rachel Gholston have also participated in the program in recent years.

Pedro J. Martinez & Brothers Foundation

The Pedro J. Martinez & Brothers Foundation serves low-income communities in the Dominican Republic and the United States. Created in 1998 by the now-retired Red Sox pitcher, the foundation focuses on education and youth. Corporate attorneys Anthony Hubbard and Will Bussiere helped the private foundation become a public charity registered with the Internal Revenue Service, enabling it to raise funds from the general public. The attorneys also helped the foundation with general corporate governance matters.

The Philanthropy Connection

The Philanthropy Connection is a nonprofit organization formed in 2012 by successful and influential women in the Boston community who come together to engage in collective philanthropy. The nonprofit makes high-impact grants to nonprofit organizations in Massachusetts that work to improve the quality of life for individuals and families living in Massachusetts. The Philanthropy Connection is a unique organization: after carefully selecting the grantee organizations and awarding the grants, the members of the Philanthropy Connection remain involved in collaborating with the grantee organizations. The Philanthropy Connection has grown to 250+ members, with membership dues of \$1,100 for those over 35 years old or \$550 for younger members. The Philanthropy Connection has thus far awarded 23 nonprofit organizations with over \$600,000 in grants, and is continuing to expand its membership and local impact. Mintz Levin attorneys Peter Demuth and Katy Ward have played key roles in the organization's development. The Mintz Levin team continuously provides general corporate representation to the Philanthropy Connection, advising at board meetings, assisting with filings, and working with the board and membership on matters of corporate governance.

Prisoners' Rights

The United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts appointed Mintz Levin to represent a formerly self-represented

plaintiff in his claims against defendants, the Massachusetts Department of Corrections and several corrections officers. Attorneys Sue Finegan, Mandy Carozza, and Joel Rothman represented the client in his civil rights action against the Department of Corrections defendants pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, based on the corrections officers' use of excessive force against him. Mintz Levin assisted him in amending his complaint against the Department of Corrections defendants, and throughout the discovery process. Fortunately, Mintz Levin was able to reach a favorable settlement for the client.

Project Citizenship

2015 marked the beginning of the collaboration between Mintz Levin and Project Citizenship, a nonprofit organization that helps legal residents of the United States pursue citizenship. Mintz Levin hosted a workshop for Project Citizenship at the firm's offices, where, under the leadership of attorneys Colleen Witherell and Derek Constantine, and former Mintz Levin project analyst Rachna Vyas, over 15 Mintz Levin employees from multiple practice areas volunteered their time to help nine legal residents obtain citizenship. The workshop was so successful that Mintz Levin hosted another workshop in June 2016, helping double the number of legal residents assisted. Applicants hailed from the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Haiti, Barbados, Cape Verde, Romania, Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zimbabwe.

San Diego Better Business Bureau

In 2015, attorneys Andrew Skale and Wynter Deagle served as arbitrators between consumers and automotive manufacturers for the Better Business Bureau in San Diego. By arbitrating cases in which a consumer would not have been able to afford a lawyer, and would have had to give away a large part of any resulting settlement, the Mintz Levin team gave consumers a chance to be heard without losing their money.

Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare

The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening relationships between patients and caregivers with the goal of promoting compassionate end-of-life care. The center was established through the vision of Ken Schwartz, a former Mintz Levin attorney who, while battling cancer, recognized how the human kindness he received from his caregivers made his plight a little more bearable.

Since helping to start the organization many years ago, Mintz Levin has played a major role in the success of the Schwartz Center. Attorney Steve Weiner serves as the organization's general counsel, and attorneys Peter Biagetti and Tony Starr serve on the board. In addition, over the past two years, attorneys Dianne Bourque, Sue Finegan, Rachel Irving Pitts, Kate Stewart, Susan Weller, Ryan Cuthbertson, and Carrie Roll, along with legal specialists Jacobo Dib and Jacquelyn Cannata, have performed work for the Schwartz Center. Former Mintz Levin attorneys Kim Gold and Sarah Hogan also lent additional pro bono support. The Mintz Levin team has helped the organization address governance concerns; structure and negotiate strategic initiatives, including facilitating its expansion into new geographic markets; restructure its business model with its affiliates for the provision of Schwartz Center Rounds; draft and review contracts; and handle intellectual property, trademark, and government relations issues.

Team IMPACT

Team IMPACT is a nonprofit created to improve the quality of life of children facing life-threatening and chronic illnesses. Core to the organization's philosophy is harnessing the power of teamwork by matching courageous children with college athletic teams. Team IMPACT children are "drafted" onto local college teams and, to the greatest extent possible, become official members of the teams for the duration of their treatment

19,668
pro bono firm hours

continued

and beyond. Mintz Levin has assisted Team IMPACT since its inception, providing advice related to corporate structure, reviewing releases used in the course of the organization's mission, and assisting in the hiring of a new executive director, among other projects. A number of attorneys have been instrumental in the representation, including Anthony Hubbard and Scott Ford.

United Teen Equality Center, Inc.

The United Teen Equality Center, Inc. (UTEC) is a youth education and workforce training program located in Lowell, Massachusetts. Mintz Levin served as counsel to UTEC and UTEC Hub, Inc. in a \$5.6 million New Market Tax Credit transaction to finance the acquisition of three additional

buildings. The new buildings will house UTEC's expanding programs and allow the development of a new Hub for Social Entrepreneurship (the "Hub"). The Hub expansion is a critical ingredient of UTEC's growth plan, providing the capacity to serve more young adults in Lowell and Lawrence while also broadening the organization's impact well beyond the Merrimack Valley. The new spaces will provide the unique opportunity to create a web of interconnected and sustainable-focused enterprises. UTEC is looking to produce, package, and distribute products made by the UTEC team, from food to furniture, and at the same time to produce, package, and distribute models so other agencies across the country can also develop social enterprises for at-risk youth. The transaction also included a childcare facility financed with an Early Education and After School Time

Victim Rights Law Center

Far too often, we hear of cases of children being sexually assaulted by adults. What we don't hear is that more than one third of sexual assaults on American children are committed by other minors. Recently the parents of a survivor of such an assault went to Juvenile Court to seek a harassment protection order against the alleged abuser. Intent on securing the survivor's safety, the trial court issued the order.

The Massachusetts statute governing harassment prevention orders sets forth three definitions of "harassment"—harassment, sexual assault, or stalking. Issuance of a restraining order in this sexual assault case was particularly significant because, prior to this case, the appellate courts had not addressed the sexual assault definition in the state's statute.

On appeal of the order after the hearing, the alleged abuser's attorney claimed the evidence put forward by the victim was insufficient. The attorney also challenged the judge's admission of some of the victim's statements as evidence.

Mintz Levin joined forces with the Victim Rights Law Center (VRLC) to defend the judge's harassment prevention order, and represented the minor on appeal. Former Mintz Levin attorney Kim Parr was the lead attorney and attorneys Sue Finegan and Andy Nathanson assisted Kim on the brief's development.

In June 2015, the Massachusetts Appeals Court issued its opinion, clarifying the standard by which a judge should assess harassment prevention matters involving sexual assault. Further, with respect to this case, it explicitly acknowledged that the evidence presented was sufficient to sustain the order.

"This is a victory for the victim and the victim's family, and it sets the standard for future victims of sexual abuse to get the protection they need and deserve," Kim said. "We were grateful to have the opportunity to represent this young survivor and the survivor's mother.

"It's imperative that victims and their family members know that everything is being done to protect their interests and to keep them safe," Sue said.

Loan from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, acting as agent to the Department of Early Education and Care. Attorney Colin McNiece spearheaded this work over the past year.

Volunteer Lawyers Project – Chapter 7 Initiative

The Volunteer Lawyers Project was established to provide legal representation in civil matters to the indigent of Boston, primarily through the pro bono services of private attorneys and paralegals. It is among the oldest organized pro bono efforts in the country. Mintz Levin works with the Volunteer Lawyers Project to provide pro bono representation to clients seeking consumer debt relief through Chapter 7 bankruptcy. A large Mintz Levin team of attorneys, summer associates, and legal specialists—led by attorney Adrienne Walker, with the help of attorneys Eric Blythe, Amanda Blaske, and Kevin Walsh—have helped lead numerous low-income clients toward financial independence.

Volunteer Lawyers Project – Housing Court Project

Lawyer for the Day, a joint effort of the Volunteer Lawyers Project and the Real Estate Section of the Boston Bar Association, recruits Boston attorneys to give advice and provide limited representation to self-represented tenants facing eviction. Mintz Levin's participation began as a pilot program in 2010 and became a monthly event in 2011. Under the guidance of the program's directors—attorney Katy Ward and former Mintz Levin attorney Esther Cho—six other Mintz Levin attorneys represented tenants in Housing Court in 2015, including Nick Armington, Derek Constantine, Mark Higgins, Matthew Karambelas, Julia Lindsey, and Kevin Mortimer.

Woman Care Global

Woman Care Global is an international women's reproductive health nonprofit bringing reliable information and access to contraception to communities around the world. The organization distributes its products in more than 100 countries worldwide, with a focus on underserved markets in Africa, Asia, and

Latin America. Mintz Levin is helping Woman Care Global with a patent license agreement from the Population Council, hand in hand with a sublicense. Both agreements are complex, but will bring the organization a major influx of cash and will enable it to launch a new birth control product in underdeveloped countries. Attorney Tali Tuchin has spearheaded this license agreement and successfully helped Woman Care Global acquire commercial rights for an innovative contraceptive ring, allowing women and couples in the developed and developing worlds greater access to family planning.

Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Assoc.

The Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association ("Y") is a community organization that provides a wide range of cultural, educational, recreational, and social activities for all age groups in Jewish communities. Attorney Jeff Moerdler, a past president of the Y board, has functioned as its general counsel for transactional matters for the past 31 years and regularly advises on a wide range of issues. This past year, a number of other attorneys also contributed pro bono services to the Y. For example, Bethany Hickey researched the New Jersey Cemetery Act and New Jersey Administrative code with regard to fees and taxes associated with transactions involving real property used as a cemetery. In addition, attorneys Michael Katz and Nili Yolin, and lead research analyst Christopher Pfefferle, assisted with projects regarding de-mapping of streets, expanding the Y building, and forming a partnership with a local hospital.





Pro Bono Committee

As of July 1, 2016

Sue Finegan <i>Chair</i>	Narges Kakalia	Nada Shamonki
Peter Biagetti	Samantha Kingsbury	Colin Van Dyke
John Delehanty	Dionne Lomax	Katy Ward
Megan Gates	Justin Nahama	Steve Weiner
Anthony Hubbard	Antony Nash	Alec Zadek
	Todd Rosenbaum	

We also want to recognize former committee members Muriel Liberto, Jeff Davis (retired Mintz Levin attorney), Michelle Gillette (former Mintz Levin attorney), and John Regier (Chair Emeritus Member), and to thank them for their long-standing commitment to the pro bono efforts of the firm.

We also extend our thanks to assistant Emily Paone, project analysts Sasha Dudding, Sarah Engell, and Haejin Hwang, and former Mintz Levin project analysts Jamie Dickerson, Rachna Vyas, and Dana Lindberg for their assistance with the pro bono program.

In addition, we extend a very special thanks to assistant and longtime champion of the pro bono program, Marie Jezequel, who has retired. We wish her all the best.

Thank You to Our Contributors

We are very grateful to the **382 contributing attorneys and staff members** across the firm who generously contributed their time, energy, and passion to the work of the Pro Bono Program in 2015. The stories captured in this journal represent only a fraction of the hundreds of pro bono cases we could highlight, just as the contributors mentioned in the stories reflect only a percentage of those who do so much to deliver the firm's pro bono services.

We are inspired by the dedication and commitment of the individuals who contribute to this important work, and extend our heartfelt thanks on behalf of the firm and our pro bono clients.

Pro Bono Honors

Citizen Schools awarded Mintz Levin the President's Volunteer Service award for its involvement in the organization's 7th Grade Writing Academy program.

Boston Business Journal recognized **Mintz Levin Chairman Robert Popeo** on its annual list of the **Power 50: Most Influential Bostonians**. Bob continues to devote substantial time and enormous energy to Boston's business community, as evidenced by his role in Boston 2024, the city's bid to win the Olympics; his continued leadership as president of the New England Chapter of the National Association of Corporate Directors; and his many civic and charitable contributions.

At the 2015 Top Women of Law event, **Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly** selected Mintz Levin **Pro Bono Committee Chair Sue Finegan** as a **Circle of Excellence Inductee**. Each year **Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly** honors women attorneys who have made tremendous professional strides and demonstrated great accomplishment in the legal field, which includes pro bono, social justice, advocacy, and business. The Circle of Excellence recognizes women who demonstrate professional, civic, and mentoring achievements year in and year out in the Massachusetts legal community. High-achieving women who are two-time honorees of the Top Women of Law are inducted into the Circle of Excellence.

Mintz Levin attorney **Randy Jones** received the **Earl B. Gilliam Bar Foundation's 2015 Legal Trailblazer Award**, presented to him at the foundation's annual Awards and Scholarship dinner. The foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to providing support for diversifying the legal community, mentoring African-American law students, and supporting African-American attorneys in their professional development.

City Year Washington, DC recognized Mintz Levin attorney **Dionne Lomax** as its **Idealist of the Year** at the organization's annual Idealism in Action Gala.

The **Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce** selected Mintz Levin attorneys **Brian Dunphy** and **Jason Georgitis**, and former Mintz Levin attorney **Paul Abbott**, for membership in its Boston's Future Leaders program for emerging executives in Greater Boston.

Mintz Levin attorneys **David Barmak**, **Michael Marion**, and **Lauren Moldawer**, along with former Mintz Levin attorney **Helen Guyton**, were all named to the **2015 Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll** by the **DC Bar Pro Bono Center** for providing 50 or more hours of pro bono service in 2015.

The **Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce** selected Mintz Levin attorneys **Lyzette Bullock** and **Caroline Gammill** to join a group of rising stars who will participate in the organization's **Women's Leadership Program**.

Mintz Levin associates **Nishant Dharia** and **Julia Lindsey** received **Greater Boston Legal Services' Exceptional Performance Award**, bestowed in recognition of their leadership in the 2016 GBLS Associates Drive at Mintz Levin. Nishant and Julia helped raise more than \$10,000 from their colleagues, the largest amount raised from individual contributions in this drive by any large firm in Boston.

Mintz Levin attorney **Mathilda McGee-Tubb** received a **Pro Bono Award for Commitment to Public Service** from the **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice**, in recognition of her pro bono work with the Lawyers' Committee.

The **Boston Bar Association** selected **Rachel Irving Pitts** for its **Public Interest Leadership Program**, which promotes civic engagement and public service by advancing the leadership role of lawyers in service to their community, their profession, and the Commonwealth.

Mintz Levin bestowed several awards at its annual pro bono reception. The firm presented attorney **Maryann Civitello** with the **2016 Richard Mintz Pro Bono Award** in recognition of her tireless advocacy on behalf of the Elizabeth Stone House, a Boston-based domestic violence shelter. In addition, former Mintz Levin attorney **Kim Parr** received the **Special Recognition Award for Extraordinary Pro Bono Service** for her dedication to the Volunteer Lawyers Project's Pro Bono Civil Appeals Pilot Program, and former Mintz Levin assistant **Marie Jezequel** received the **Lifetime Achievement Award** for her long-standing work on behalf of the pro bono program.



Our Continuing Commitment

Year after year, Mintz Levin's attorneys and staff are proud to provide legal services that open doors for our pro bono clients.

Helping those most in need of counsel to exercise their rights under the law is particularly rewarding work. We often build close relationships with those we assist. It is especially gratifying when the results that we help to achieve make a significant difference in their lives.

We extend our sincere thanks to all of the attorneys and staff members at the firm whose contributions make our work possible. With their participation, and the support of our partners, we look forward to continuing to respond—with renewed commitment—to our communities' most pressing needs.

For more information about our pro bono efforts, please contact

Sue Finegan

Chair of Mintz Levin's Pro Bono Committee

SFinegan@mintz.com



*“Our defense is in the preservation
of the spirit which prizes liberty
as a heritage of all men,
in all lands, everywhere.
Destroy this spirit and you have
planted the seeds of despotism
around your own doors.”*

— Abraham Lincoln

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