

Building **Bridges** | Mintz Levin Pro Bono Journal



Building Bridges

Difficult journeys are easier to undertake when you travel in good company. When energy flags or the hurdles along the path seem insurmountable, it's immeasurably helpful to know you have a strong partner who is committed to helping you reach your goal. Attorneys and professionals across our firm's eight offices stand with hundreds of pro bono clients each year to help them bridge the distance between often dire circumstances and a better future.

While the principle that everyone is equal before the law is fundamental to our judicial system and democracy, in practice those who face legal challenges without the benefit of capable legal counsel are unlikely to prevail. We collaborate with nonprofits, legal service organiza-

tions, in-house legal departments, and other law firms to provide high-quality legal assistance to clients who would otherwise go it alone, ill-equipped to anticipate and manage the formidable obstacles in their way.

Supplying legal legwork and insight along with equal doses of encouragement and compassion, the dedicated attorneys and professionals in our Pro Bono Program not only become their clients' best advocates, but often keep in touch with them long after they have successfully crossed their bridges and set off on fresh paths on a stronger footing. The stories in this book provide a brief look at the challenges that they and their tireless legal teams encountered and mastered on their shared journeys.

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A Bridge to Stability

“Salma” defied the odds and broke free from domestic violence. Salma had been in a relationship with “Jeff,” who repeatedly physically and sexually abused her. However, the young mother from Morocco, who had recently immigrated to the United States, soon faced a battle with her ex-boyfriend over their young son, “Robby.” Jeff was a registered, level-two sex offender whose parental rights to a child from a previous relationship had been terminated because he was deemed an unfit parent. Child protective services suspected that Jeff had physically abused Robby. Yet Jeff remained relentless. He adamantly demanded that he have custody of Robby.

Mintz Levin and Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) partnered to represent Salma in the child custody trial in Middlesex Probate and Family Court. Co-counseling with experienced GBLS family law attorney Manisha Bhatt, Mintz Levin attorney Matthew Levitt provided guidance in trial strategy and preparation, and attorneys Lyzzette Bullock and Jane Haviland solicited witness testimony and led Salma through practice sessions to prepare her for the frightening experience of testifying in court. Because Jeff was representing himself, Salma needed to be prepared. The same man who abused her so horribly in private would be cross-examining her in public.

Assisted by Mintz Levin summer associates Nicole Henry and Emma Nitzberg Follansbee and former Mintz Levin paralegal Sigrid Wheatley, the legal team delved into Jeff’s criminal background, conducting legal research, doing background checks, assembling exhibit books, lining up expert testimony, and interviewing witnesses, including a mental health expert who had evaluated Jeff. The team subpoenaed Jeff’s previous employment records and discovered that he failed to disclose that he was registered as a sex offender on his employment application. They

then combed through his recent bankruptcy filings and uncovered omitted assets and overstated liabilities.

At trial, Lyzzette elicited testimony from a veteran social worker from the Department of Children & Families who had stopped conducting visits at Jeff’s home because she was afraid of him. Having this witness corroborate Jeff’s propensity toward intimidation and violence was an important moment in the case. The background research and the subsequent witness preparation enabled the team to demonstrate that it would be in Robby’s best interest that Salma have sole custody.

The judge’s decision was very favorable for Salma, enabling her to retain sole custody and specifying that Jeff’s visits would be supervised to ensure Robby’s safety. The judge also ordered Jeff to pay child support to Salma.

“[The] trial work was outstanding—to the point that the judge incorporated large parts of the expert witness testimony that Jane solicited and the witness testimony that Lyzzette solicited directly into her findings,” Manisha said. The ruling is expected to provide far-reaching protection against any future legal actions by Jeff.

Salma had tears in her eyes when she learned the great news. She could not stop thanking the team for their unparalleled efforts in representing her. She is relieved that the case is over.

“It is incredibly gratifying to be able to help a young woman out of an extremely difficult situation, and to see her take major steps toward having a more stable life for herself and her son,” Lyzzette said.

“Matt, Lyzzette, and Jane were dedicated to our client’s case in every way imaginable.”

Manisha Bhatt
Senior Attorney
Greater Boston
Legal Services



Looking out for Our Neighbors

“John,” a young man with a serious medical condition, required an extended hospital stay that caused him to lose his job and fall behind on the rent on his San Francisco apartment. However, when Mintz Levin attorney Matt Show presented the landlord with information about John’s new job, he was able to negotiate a settlement that not only gave John time to pay the back rent, but allowed him to stay in his home.

The burgeoning population and scant housing supply in San Francisco have kept prices high in the area for years, but the recent tech boom has exacerbated the problem, leading to stratospheric rental prices across the city. Given the potential profits for landlords, many are looking to evict long-standing tenants to get newer tenants who are willing to pay much higher rents. Indeed, there were 1,881 evictions filed in the city in the past year alone. Before an eviction can proceed to court, however, the landlord and tenant must participate in a housing settlement conference, similar to the one John had with his landlord.

Historically, 95% of tenants participating in these housing settlement conferences have negotiated with their landlords without the benefit of advice from an attorney. To help balance the scales of justice, the court system, the Eviction Defense Collaborative, and the Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco collaborated in 2006 to establish the Housing Negotiation Project. A component of the Justice & Diversity Center’s larger Eviction Defense Project, it is overseen by the bar.

“We’re providing equal access to justice,” said attorney Carolyn Gold, Project Director for the Bar Association of

San Francisco’s Volunteer Legal Services Program.

“We help level the playing field for tenants, since virtually all the landlords have attorneys.”

Today, Mintz Levin attorneys are among those who donate their time to the Housing Negotiation Project to ensure tenants’ rights are protected. Often

an attorney can help a tenant come to a settlement agreement and avoid getting taken to court, and can sometimes help the tenant retain a stable living situation.

“Many of our clients are at a disadvantage,” said Matt, who received an award for his volunteer work with the project. “Some are on government assistance and have no savings, or they have a mental or physical disability. Sometimes they’re one step away from living on the street. Some of the cases we work on are heart-wrenching. But at the end of the day, you know that you helped someone, whether it’s protecting them from crushing debt or finding a way for them to stay in their home.”

Given the surging housing prices in the San Francisco market, Matt believes that John wouldn’t have been able to find comparable housing in the city if he’d lost his apartment. “He was very happy with the outcome of our settlement,” Matt said.

“Pro bono support is critical to the success of our program. Without Matthew’s very capable legal assistance and help from other Mintz Levin attorneys in the firm’s pro bono program, some low-income tenants facing unfair evictions would be left at a severe disadvantage.”

Carolyn Gold

*Project Director, Volunteer
Legal Services Program*

*Bar Association
of San Francisco*



Quick Teamwork on the Travel Ban

Mintz Levin Pro Bono Chair Sue Finegan was attending a Saturday evening gala at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts when she received an urgent phone call from Susan Church, chair of the New England Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. It was January 28, 2017, the day after President Trump signed the executive order for his administration's first travel ban, and Church needed legal help at Logan Airport, where some incoming travelers had been detained by US Customs and Border Protection officials. The president's initial order blocked travelers from seven countries (Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) and encompassed green-card and visa holders—wreaking havoc with travel throughout the world.

"My husband and I, and Mintz Levin legal intern Merry Sheehan, literally dropped everything, raced out of the gala, and jumped into a taxi, leaving our coats and valeted cars behind," Finegan said.

Church's request, though a little untimely, wasn't entirely unexpected. "Susan Cohen, chair of Mintz Levin's Immigration Practice, and I had been getting updates from Susan Church over the course of the day, alerting us that a legal challenge to the travel ban might be filed, and we discussed the potential of Mintz Levin getting involved as pro bono counsel," Finegan said. Earlier Church had also spoken with ACLU of Massachusetts Executive Director Matthew Segal to update him on what was happening at the airport, as the ACLU was mounting legal challenges to the ban in several cities.

At the airport, where thousands of protesters had gathered, Finegan met up with Church and other attorneys.

There, they learned that a complaint was in the process of being filed on behalf of two lawful Massachusetts residents—professors from the University of Massachusetts, returning to Boston—who were being detained. There was a rumor that a federal judge was on the way to the airport. When the legal

team learned that the judge would instead hear the case at Boston's John Joseph Moakley US Courthouse, the group headed there. It was hardly business as usual.

"At first we couldn't get into the courthouse," Finegan said. The group of mostly female attorneys, and some members of the press, waited outside in the bitter cold for 15 to 20 minutes before they were allowed entrance.

Joined by Cohen, herself racing from a friend's birthday party, the assembled attorneys began to help Segal and Church craft the arguments for the temporary injunction. But no one had come prepared for a full evening's work, let alone a court appearance. "The only person dressed appropriately was Matt," Finegan said. One attorney had been hiking all day. Another had borrowed a pair of shoes that didn't fit. As people used their cell phones to research case law and draft filings, the phones started to die, and only one person had a charger. Since documents have to be filed electronically in the federal docketing system, Church's husband, a lawyer, was put to work filing various

"We will never say it enough: just how grateful we are for the critical representation Mintz Levin provided on the Massachusetts case. These are issues of profound existential importance to Oxfam and the people we serve. It is the human face of these policies that you represent. They need you. And thank you, as we do."

Robert Silverman

*Senior Advisor
for Private Sector
Oxfam America*

(continued)

Quick Teamwork on **the Travel Ban** *(continued)*

motions from home. Most of the group hadn't eaten dinner, so they shared what they had: cough drops and thin-mint cookies, staples found in the pocketbooks of mothers everywhere. It was a memorable team effort.

Magistrate Judge Judith Dein and US District Court Judge Allison Burroughs of the US District Court were soon on site to hear the case in an emergency session. The Department of Justice hadn't been briefed on the executive order before its release, so the government's litigator—who happened to be a former Mintz Levin attorney—hadn't been given any directive from Washington on how the government should respond. “It was quite unusual,” Cohen said.

A little before 2 am, the judges ruled in the team's favor. The decision put a seven-day hold on enforcement of the Trump administration's order. In addition, the government was instructed to notify airlines with flights into Logan Airport that passengers would not be detained or returned solely due to the ban, and should therefore be allowed to board their planes. Airlines face steep fines for allowing people without appropriate documents to board international flights, so they have a strong disincentive to board passengers whose documents may be in doubt.

With the original plaintiffs released from detention that night, the team needed to file an amended complaint shortly thereafter. With the support of the firm's management, Mintz Levin became co-counsel on that filing.

“It's a privilege to work at Mintz Levin, where management immediately grasped the significance of this immigration crisis,” Cohen said, “and where we were able to pull an incredible, top-notch team together to work seamlessly with our partners within the Boston community, and with

the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and our clients, to undertake this historic litigation.”

Over the next several days, Finegan, Cohen, and many other firm attorneys—including seasoned litigators Betsy Burnett, Peter Biagetti, Michael Gardner, Narges Kakalia, and Andy Nathanson—co-counseled with the ACLU, Church, and others to represent the new plaintiffs, including Oxfam America and other individuals, alongside the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. In addition to filing a motion to extend the temporary restraining order, they spent time ensuring that the seven-day order approved by the judges was implemented. “Although it required the Department of Homeland Security to inform airlines that they had to let the passengers on the planes, the Department resisted, and airlines didn't get the message from Customs and Border Protection. We had to work our channels to convince airlines to follow the court order, and that took us three days,” Cohen said. Immigration attorney Doug Hauer played a key role in that effort. Meanwhile, the firm's phones were ringing off the hook. Attorneys responded to clients concerned for their employees, spoke with local attorneys and others wanting to help, and fielded questions from the press. Internally, dozens of attorneys and staff from all Mintz Levin offices volunteered to assist, and were put to work.

Burnett, who joined the case on Sunday after attending an immigration rally in Boston, spent many late nights working with the ACLU of Massachusetts, Church, other attorneys, and the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. “It was really exhilarating, and an honor, to work with them so closely,” she said. “All were highly professional and passionately committed to justice.”

While Federal Judge Nathaniel Gorton declined to extend it that next Friday, the seven-day restraining order that the team had helped put in effect helped many travelers during the course of the week. “Once the news got out, our understanding is that stranded people around the world rebooked flights so they could land at Logan. It was considered a safe place to come to, and the location of the most expansive travel ban,” Cohen said. And, two

hours after the team received word that the judge was not extending its restraining order, the state of Washington issued one, ensuring that an order would stay in effect without a gap in coverage.

The legal arguments developed by the team were also leveraged around the country in successful efforts to restrict the ban. The case will be argued in the fall of 2017 at the United States Supreme Court.



“We have a long way to go
before we are able to hear the
voices of everyone on earth,
but I believe that providing
voices and building bridges is
essential for the World Peace
we all wish for.”

Joichi Ito



Overcoming Barriers to Citizenship

Recently “George” dropped into a workshop in Boston for help with his citizenship application. Years ago he completed an application for US citizenship on his own, only to find out much later that he filled out the wrong form. This time, with the help of a volunteer attorney familiar with the forms and fluent in their legalese, George was able to complete the correct paperwork, right on the spot.

Many people dream of becoming American citizens. For some, however, the idea of applying for citizenship can be overwhelming. Some may be discouraged by language barriers, the steep application fee, or the complexity of the application process. Others may worry they’ll invite unwanted scrutiny from the government, and risk deportation. In fact, although there are an estimated 300,000 permanent residents in Massachusetts who are eligible for citizenship, only 10% of these legal permanent residents apply.

Project Citizenship reduces these barriers to citizenship by offering eligibility screening, application assistance, legal referrals, and other support. Since 2011, Project Citizenship has helped more than 6,000 people from 152 countries of origin apply for citizenship. The organization is also able to help waive the \$725 application fee for many people.

Beginning in 2015, Mintz Levin began collaborating with Project Citizenship to host workshops in our Boston office and elsewhere, and to date we have provided pro bono legal services to assist several dozen low-income immigrants with prescreened applications for citizenship. Attorneys Derek Constantine and Colleen Witherell oversee these workshop activities with Pro Bono Chair Sue Finegan. Approximately 40 Mintz Levin attorneys, project analysts,

and summer associates have worked directly with workshop participants to help them fill out the necessary paperwork.

The workshops give immigrants an opportunity to sit down with an attorney who can help them navigate the process and address any potential roadblocks to citizenship before they present their paperwork to US Citizenship and Immigration Services. “Knowing they have someone knowledgeable here to help them is important to them,” Derek said. “There are many aspects of the paperwork that can be confusing if you’re not familiar with it. It’s fulfilling to be able to have a tangible result at the end of the workshop that will help someone’s life.”

The immigration policy issues raised during the 2016 presidential election also brought higher demand for immigration services and many concerns among people who had not yet applied for citizenship. Project Citizenship has been able to meet this increased demand and help people through what may prove to be an extremely stressful time for those without citizenship in place. On January 20, 2017, more than 200 legal professionals from Boston-area law firms participated in Project Citizenship’s Inauguration Day of Service, where the Mintz Levin team volunteered their time to help hundreds of legal residents complete applications. “It was very empowering to help people take the first step toward citizenship with so many other legal professionals in Boston,” Sue said.

“Mintz has been so supportive of Project Citizenship clients for the past three years. We are very grateful for the individual, empathetic, and professional attention provided to our immigrant clients on their paths to citizenship.”

Veronica Serrato
Executive Director
Project Citizenship



Giving Open Hands a Helping Hand

In New York City, one of the wealthiest cities in the world, nearly half of the population lives near the poverty line, defined as an income of \$20,160 a year for a family of three. Earning very meager salaries, these New Yorkers struggle to afford basic necessities, including food and housing: 1 in 6 New Yorkers relies on soup kitchens and food pantries every day, while 3 in 10 spend more than half of their incomes on rent.

For many low-income New Yorkers, paying the rent while putting food on the table can be a virtually impossible balancing act. The slightest slip, such as a minor legal issue, can set off a downward spiral that leaves an individual homeless, jobless, or in danger of losing custody of a child.

Under the auspices of Open Hands Legal Services, Mintz Levin attorneys Yilei He and Rachel Gholston visit places like soup kitchens, shelters, and community centers to provide legal clinics to people in need. Founded in 2009, Open Hands brings free legal clinics to 10 host nonprofits throughout the city and currently serves approximately 900 low-income New Yorkers.

“With so many people from so many different areas of the city, you never know what the day will bring,” Yilei said. At an Open Hands legal clinic, Yilei may help someone find suitable housing, fight an unfair eviction, seek

protection from unfair labor practices, or avoid the collateral consequences of a prior criminal conviction.

“No matter how different the issues might be, all of my cases have one thing in common: the clients want to be listened to, and for that they have enormous gratitude,” she said. “Most of my clients cannot

believe that anyone would care about them. They are some of the most ignored people in our population.”

Yilei meets her legal clinic clients for only one brief point in time, so she needs to make sure she gets it right. “We really try our best to be a resource to get them to the right place to address their issues,” she said. Since the goal of the clinic is to provide brief, same-day advice, Yilei doesn’t learn the ultimate outcomes. What she does know is that people often come to her confused, nervous, and even scared, and usually leave with a better understanding of their situations and some direction as to what they need to do to resolve their issues.

“At Open Hands, we believe the law is one of the most powerful anti-poverty tools out there. By using the law to fight evictions, we help low-income New Yorkers break the cycle of poverty. We could not do this work without our volunteer attorneys and are grateful for the time and dedication Mintz Levin attorneys provide to our clients.”

Kathleen Slocum

Executive Director

Open Hands Legal Services



Opening the Gates of Freedom

“Mohammed” was first exposed to Christianity through one of his guitar students in Iran, and soon began to attend bible study classes—a secret first step on a compelling but treacherous spiritual journey.

In Iran, turning away from Shia Islam, the state religion, is serious business. While minority faiths aren’t officially outlawed, Muslims who convert to other religions are persecuted and may be sentenced to death.

Aware of these dangers, Mohammed left for Italy to pursue additional studies. Thinking he could practice Christianity freely there, he even attended mass.

It wasn’t until he’d completed his first year of studies and returned to Iran that he realized he’d been reported, probably by an Iranian he’d met in Italy. When Mohammed tried to renew his teaching certificate and file forms to go back to Italy, he was referred to the police. Soon officers were tracking him down at home and interrupting his lessons to question him. To avoid more trouble, Mohammed left for Europe, and from there obtained a US visa.

After arriving in Boston in April of 2012, Mohammed attended a Christian church, but also took advantage of his freedom to explore other beliefs. When he discovered the Baha’i faith—which seemed to combine the best elements of Christianity and Islam—he felt he’d found a spiritual home, and decided to convert.

Unfortunately Baha’is also face discrimination, persecution, and even execution in Iran. Fearing for his safety if he went back, Mohammed decided to seek asylum.

A friend connected him to the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation (PAIR) Project, and PAIR referred him to attorney Jacque Burke, who filed Mohammed’s initial paperwork and worked with him on developing his asylum submission. Later attorney Sarah Kommineni also worked on Mohammed’s case. Meeting with him every month for a few years, she helped him with his written statement, a lengthy declaration that would back up his asylum claims; gathered affidavits from the Baha’i community confirming that Mohammed was an active member; drafted a separate legal memo; and completed a country conditions report on Iran.

Prior to Mohammed’s asylum interviews with the Immigration service, Sarah spent many late nights at the office gathering information. She also conducted mock interviews with Mohammed to help him prepare. It was imperative to ensure that her client, generally soft-spoken, could communicate his beliefs effectively. At both the mock and official interviews, former Mintz Levin project analyst Parnia Zahedi, whom Mohammed trusted implicitly, was on hand to translate his responses.

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“Asylum applicants with counsel are five times more likely to be granted asylum than unrepresented applicants. Without Sarah’s very capable representation, our client—given the challenges posed by his case—would most likely now be back in Iran, where his life would be in peril.”

Seth Purcell


Staff Attorney

Political Asylum/
Immigration Representation
(PAIR) Project

Opening the **Gates of Freedom** *(continued)*

Mohammed's life depended on whether the Immigration officer believed that he'd faced persecution in Iran and had a reasonable fear of harm if he returned. Within 30 days, Mohammed learned the answer: his application had been approved. He is now teaching music in California and has applied for his green card.

"I'm glad I could be a part of helping this client secure asylum in this country, where he will be free to practice the religion of his choice. The support I received at Mintz was remarkable and spoke volumes to me about the firm," Jacque said.



"I like to see myself as a
bridge builder, that is me
building bridges between
people, between races,
between cultures, between
politics, trying to find
common ground."

T. D. **Jakes**



A Lifeline to a **Better Future**

“Cheryl” was no more than 14 years old when she was first forced into prostitution, and for the next five years she was trafficked across the country. During this period, Cheryl was repeatedly arrested and convicted of prostitution-related offenses while the man who trafficked her forced her to solicit sex for his profit. Although Cheryl escaped from her trafficker years ago, her criminal record is a constant reminder of the trauma she endured and a continued impediment in her life.

For the past five years, Alec Zadek and others at Mintz Levin have represented sex trafficking survivors such as Cheryl in open criminal matters, immigration cases, and post-conviction relief proceedings. In particular, the attorneys have seen how sex-trafficking survivors are plagued by prostitution-related convictions that can make it difficult to pursue an education, gain employment, find housing or childcare, and otherwise rebuild their lives. Having succeeded in moving courts to vacate prostitution-related convictions, Mintz Levin attorneys understand the procedural challenges of these proceedings first-hand. For one client, 10 attorneys and paraprofessionals spent over 100 hours compiling the necessary filings and legal research to build a successful case. For another client, Alec and attorney Rebecca Raphaelson, with assistance from Mintz Levin project analysts, prepared a 216-page filing that included multiple motions and affidavits and nine exhibits. For many survivors, who should never have been convicted in the first place, the path to post-conviction relief is time consuming, expensive, and uncertain. Having navigated the Commonwealth’s complicated legal processes on behalf of multiple survivors, Mintz Levin has become a sponsor and champion of reforms to streamline the procedure for survivors to obtain

post-conviction relief in Massachusetts.

In 2015, Alec and Boston University Clinical Associate Professor of Law Julie Dahlstrom, later joined by Mintz Levin attorney Lavinia Weizel, convened a working group to draft legislation that would streamline this procedure. In late 2015, State Representative (and former Mintz Levin attorney) Michael Day filed the product of their efforts, An Act to Reduce Sexual Exploitation of Victims of Human Trafficking. “This bill gives survivors a chance at a new life—not defined by their exploitation but by their courage,” Professor Dahlstrom said. Together, she, Representative Day, and Mintz Levin continue to advocate for reform and are optimistic about the future of the pending legislation. This law could help survivors like Cheryl regain their lives. Although she is more than 10 years removed from being trafficked, the convictions and open arrests—her only criminal record—continue to haunt her. She learned of Mintz Levin when she read a news story about Alec’s work with survivors and reached out immediately. Alec still recalls his first contact with Cheryl. “I had a message from someone I didn’t know that described in detail her abuse, her convictions, and the challenges posed by her criminal record. It was clear she needed help and was

“When Alec and Julie called me to discuss this issue, it didn’t take long to recognize the level of experience Mintz Levin had already achieved in this area of the law. I’ve enjoyed working with the team tremendously, and their professionalism, compassion, and dedication to this issue have helped me push this legislation through some potential barriers. I’m hopeful we can celebrate the signing of this bill into law sooner than later.”

Hon. Michael S. Day
State Representative
State of Massachusetts

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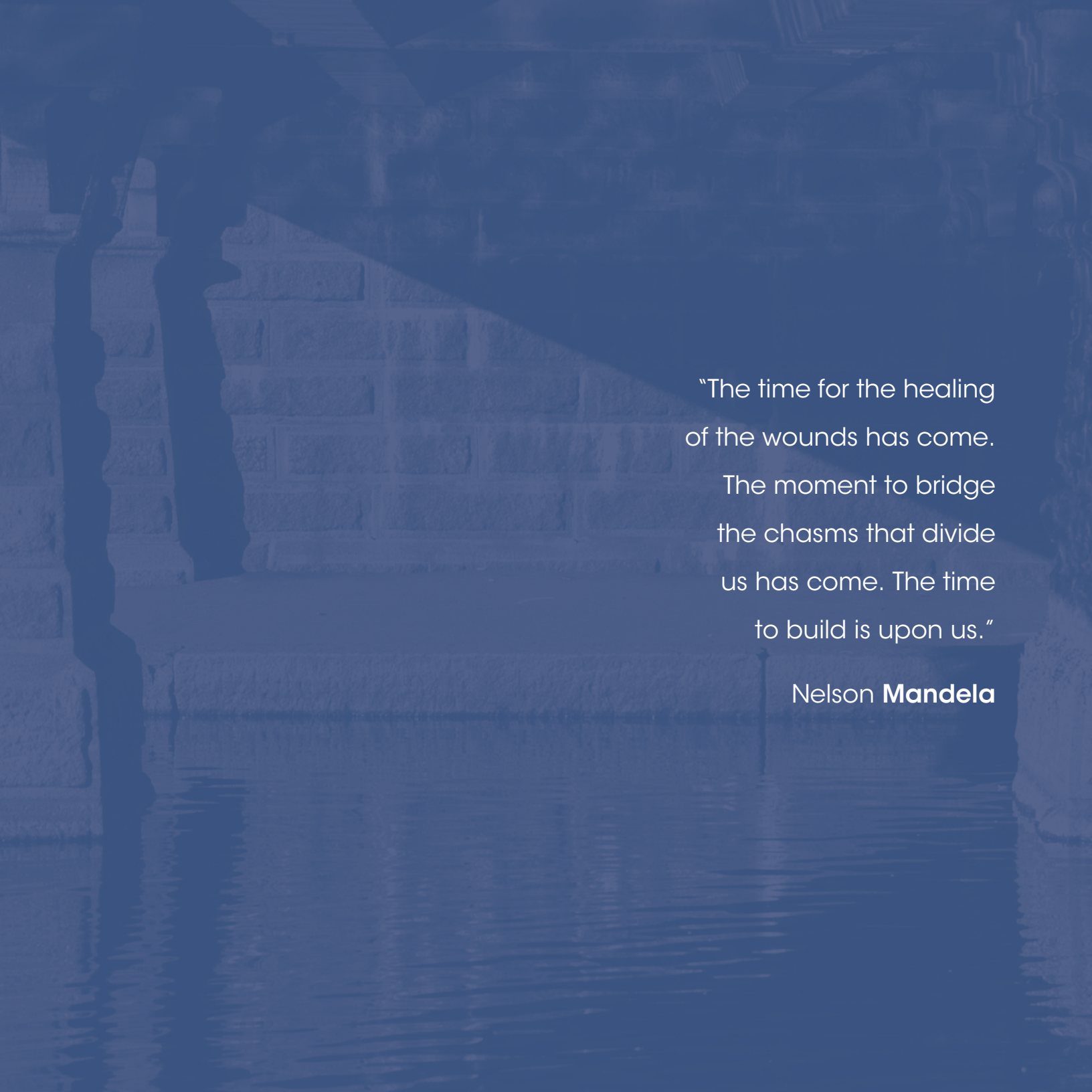
A Lifeline to a **Better Future** *(continued)*

overwhelmed,” he said. Mintz Levin agreed to represent Cheryl in an open criminal matter in Massachusetts and to assist her in finding counsel for open and closed criminal matters in other states.

“We needed to put together as much evidence as we could to show the District Attorney’s Office that Cheryl was a sex trafficking victim,” Alec said. Painstakingly, Alec and Lavinia, with the unwavering assistance of Mintz Levin senior research analyst Jessica Bumpous, gathered information from eight states where Cheryl had been trafficked—with many of the records dating back close to 20 years. With this information, they assembled a compelling story. Ultimately, the District

Attorney’s Office agreed to dismiss the charge against Cheryl, and the Court sealed the record of her arrest. This open case in Massachusetts was only the first step. The team continues to advise Cheryl and help connect her with attorneys across the country to do the same in every other state where she was trafficked.

Cheryl has, for the first time, experienced a criminal justice system that recognizes her status as a survivor, not a criminal. “Cheryl’s strength in overcoming all that she has suffered is remarkable, and I am honored to have been able to assist her with this piece of the puzzle as she works so hard to rebuild her life,” Lavinia said.



“The time for the healing
of the wounds has come.
The moment to bridge
the chasms that divide
us has come. The time
to build is upon us.”

Nelson **Mandela**



Safeguarding a Special Space

Ever since Deaf Community Services of San Diego, Inc. established its Clubhouse in 2012, the organization's deaf and hard-of-hearing members have enjoyed using the welcoming space to socialize, explore their interests, and pursue educational and vocational goals. When a member violated Clubhouse rules and misused the safe learning environment by brandishing a knife and threatening to stab fellow members and staff, the organization reached out to the Legal Aid Society of San Diego for help. Legal Aid in turn contacted Mintz Levin attorney Antony Nash, and the firm soon agreed to work with Deaf Community Services on a pro bono basis to seek a temporary restraining order against the violent man so that their members could attend the Clubhouse safely.

Over the years, the firm has helped many victims of domestic violence to secure restraining orders against their abusers, but the procedure for obtaining a workplace restraining order is a bit different. With assistance from former Mintz Levin attorney James Taylor-Copeland, Antony researched the legal requirements and began to collect evidence to establish that the knife-wielding man had made credible threats of violence and should therefore be barred from the Clubhouse.

In the months leading up to the court date, the two attorneys worked to assemble the facts of the case. James had a number of meetings with employees and prepared the key witnesses, who communicate using American Sign

Language, to testify in court with the help of a translator.

Before Antony and James could serve the violent individual with a court order to attend the hearing, they had to find him. Since he was homeless, that task required some legwork. After making inquiries throughout the San Diego community, the team discovered that he was serving time in jail.

At the hearing, the witnesses' testimony, along with the attorneys' written documentation, persuaded the judge that the Mintz Levin legal team had met the evidentiary burden of establishing that the defendant posed an imminent risk in the Clubhouse workplace. Learning that the three-year temporary restraining order was granted on the spot, "the client was over the moon," Antony said. The defendant, for his part, indicated that he understood what he had done and agreed to comply with the terms of the order.

"This was a wonderful opportunity to utilize the time and skill of Mintz Levin's litigation attorneys to make a real difference for a worthwhile community organization," Antony said.

"Legal Aid really appreciates Mintz Levin stepping in to handle a very dangerous situation. Mintz Levin's litigation experience made a big difference in rapidly solving the problem for the client."

Sara Raffer-Lee

Director of Pro Bono Services
Legal Aid Society
of San Diego



The Needle and the Damage Done

Opioid addiction is ravaging towns and cities throughout the United States, and nowhere is this epidemic felt more sharply than in Cape Cod's Barnstable County, labeled one of America's "hot spots" for opioid-related deaths and overdoses.

As most people know, the grip of opioids is so powerful that addicts will go to great extremes to avoid getting help and to keep feeding the habit. One of the few places an injection drug user in Barnstable County will turn to is the clean needle program at the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod (ASGCC). The clean needle program reduces the transmission of blood-borne diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis C that comes from sharing dirty needles, and each contact is an opportunity for a counselor to connect with an addict.

"In addition to the obvious benefit of reducing the spread of blood-borne diseases, the needle exchange program serves as a lifeline and a bridge to treatment. It can keep people alive and disease-free until they are ready to get clean," said Mintz Levin attorney Kate Stewart, who in addition to being an attorney holds a masters degree in Public Health. Prior to joining the firm, Kate did considerable work in the area of pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV/AIDS.

If not for the ruling of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in June 2017, this critical lifeline to the addicted community would have been in danger of being cut. Ostensibly in an effort to clean up the used syringes and hypodermic needles strewn about the parks and playgrounds, the town of Barnstable told ASGCC that it had to stop its clean needle exchange program. ASGCC then

sought a court order to allow the program to continue as well as have the court find that such a program was legal. The case was taken up by the Supreme Judicial Court to resolve this legal question of first impression.

In support of the program, Kate, along with Mintz Levin attorneys Drew DeVoogd and Tiffany Knapp, worked with AIDS Action Committee, GLAD, and 32 respected health care and social service institutions throughout the state to prepare a comprehensive amicus brief on behalf of the 32 amici.

Citing dozens of articles and studies from news and health authorities around the world, including recent findings by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the brief brought to light some critical but not so obvious insights. First, in 2015 the ASGCC collected 2,605 more syringes than it distributed at the Hyannis location. Contrary to the centerpiece of the town's argument, ASGCC's program is reducing—not adding to—the pile of improperly discarded needles. Hospitals, pharmacies, police stations, and fire departments offer receptacles for used needles, but not surprisingly, people who inject

"The Supreme Judicial Court's decision in this case will mean the difference between life and death for people struggling with addiction across the Commonwealth. The public health amicus brief authored by Mintz Levin was critical to providing the Court with an understanding that needle access programs are the most fundamental tool in our arsenal for fighting the HIV, Hepatitis C, and opioid epidemics."

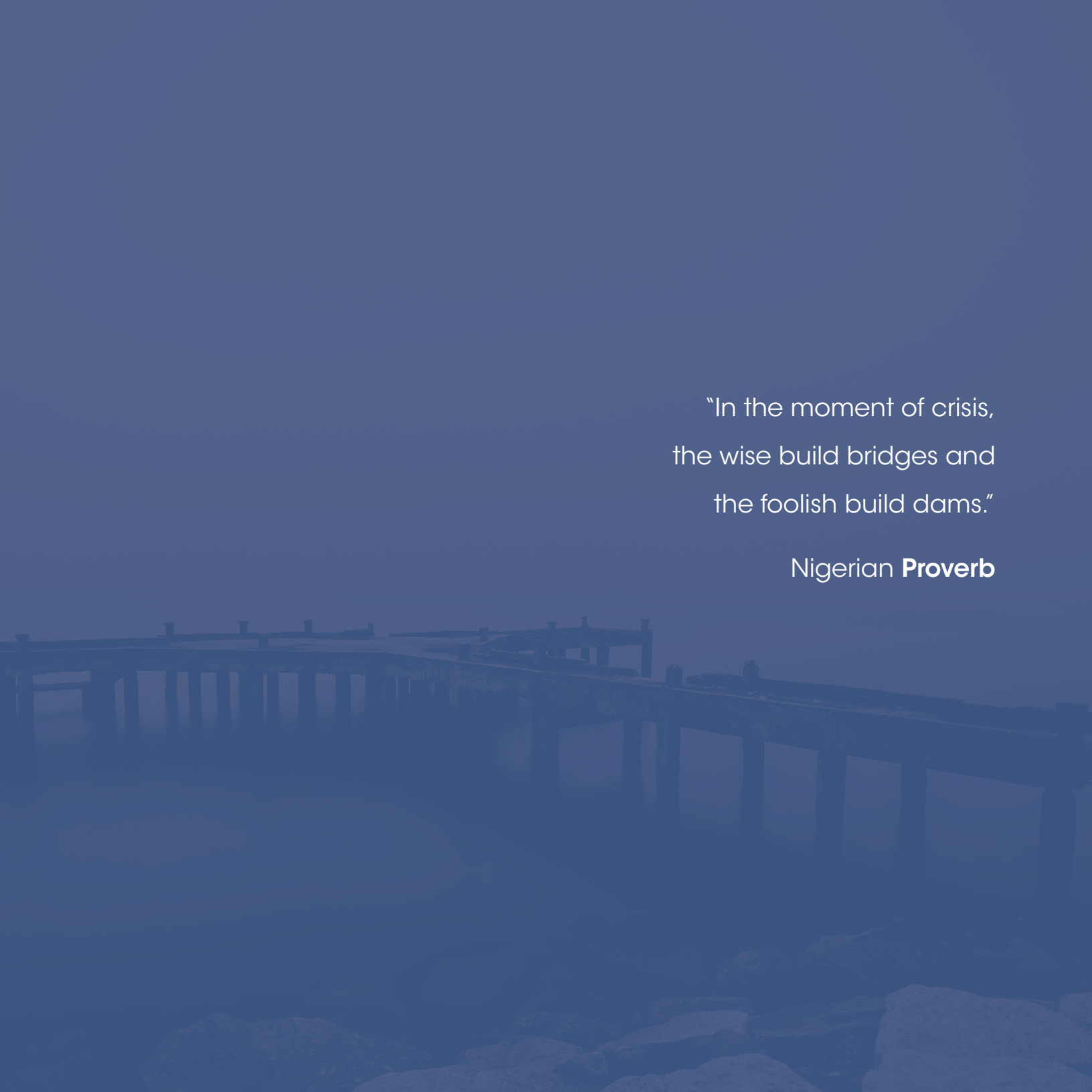
Ben Klein
Project Director
GLAD AIDS Law

(continued)

The Needle and the **Damage Done** *(continued)*

drugs do not feel comfortable using these locations. Instead, they return to ASGCC with needles obtained from other sources as well as the ones obtained from ASGCC. Second, as Kate noted, clean needle exchange programs keep health providers and support groups in contact with users, thus increasing the chances to provide education, counseling, and life-saving medication such as narcan, which can reverse an overdose.

“Our clients were thrilled with the SJC’s landmark decision. We felt confident that we effectively demonstrated to the court that there is a compelling public health interest in allowing the non-sale distribution of clean needles by qualified private entities. We are very pleased that the court reached a favorable decision. This is a serious epidemic and there was no time to waste,” Drew said.



“In the moment of crisis,
the wise build bridges and
the foolish build dams.”

Nigerian **Proverb**



Pro Bono Honors

Mintz Levin was honored by the **Political Asylum/Immigration Representation (PAIR) Project** with the **Pro Bono Law Firm Award** at the annual PAIR Gala. Commending the firm on its nearly three decades of support for asylum seekers, PAIR honored Mintz Levin “for its work which includes representing the first PAIR asylum client in 1990, fighting for a U visa win for a transgender client who was detained by ICE, representing Oscar Alfredo Ramírez Castañeda, its federal litigation work to protect immigrant rights in the wake of the

travel ban, and above all, the firm’s steadfast commitment to those who were targeted in the wake of the attempted coup during the summer of 2016.”

AILA New England recognized **Sue Finegan, Susan Cohen**, and the **Mintz Levin Litigation Team** for their effort in addressing the Trump administration’s travel ban and working with detainees at Logan airport.

Boston Business Journal recognized former Mintz Levin attorney **Senator Mo Cowan** on its annual list of the **Power 50: Game Changers**.

The **Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce** honored Mintz Levin Pro Bono Chair **Sue Finegan** with its **2017 Pinnacle Award** (for Achievement in the Professions), honoring leading women for outstanding achievement in the workplace, demonstrated leadership that has made a difference, and a commitment to enhance the quality of life in the region. In addition to her extensive pro bono experience, Sue was recognized for her roles as the co-chair of the Access to Justice Commission, as a member and former chair of the Supreme Judicial Court's Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services, and as the chair of the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

The **Justice and Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco** honored Mintz Levin attorney **Matt Show** as the **Outstanding Pro Bono Volunteer**. Matt was recognized for his pro bono work with the Housing Negotiation Project in San Francisco.

The **Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice** honored **Erica Coray** with the **Pro Bono Recognition Award** for her leadership and public service, including her work on the ongoing racial profiling matter against the Walpole Police Department in Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly recognized Mintz Levin attorneys **Elissa Flynn-Poppey** and **Adrienne Walker** as **Top Women of Law**, commending them on their success as attorneys in the community, for carving out "special paths worth noticing" through their careers, and for being involved in the Greater Boston community, reflecting the intense, wholehearted commitment to legal service central to this honor.

The **Women's Law Center at Boston College Law School** awarded **Sue Finegan** with the **Women of the Year Award**, as one who has "made a significant contribution to the legal profession through her practice, community involvement, and scholarship in the field." In addition to Sue's career achievements, dedication to pro bono service, and impact on the legal field, the Women's Law Center highlighted Sue's work in challenging President Trump's executive order.

The **YW Boston** recognized **Rebecca Lee** as an Academy of **Women Achievers Awardee** at its annual luncheon honoring Boston's brightest, boldest, bravest, and most influential women. Rebecca was honored for her continued commitment to developing affordable housing projects. In addition, she serves on the Steering Committee for Ricesticks and Tea, the Finance Committee of WGBH, the Board of Directors for Asian Community Development Corporation, and the Advisory Board of Boston Harbor Now.

Mintz Levin bestowed the **2017 Richard Mintz Pro Bono Award** to associate **Kerime Akoglu** at its annual pro bono reception. Kerime was recognized for her tireless advocacy on behalf of numerous political asylum clients, abandoned juveniles fleeing gang violence in Central America, and bankruptcy clients seeking new lives.



Additional Pro Bono Highlights

BEAT THE STREETS PROVIDENCE

Based in Providence, Rhode Island, Beat the Streets is a nonprofit committed to inspiring urban youth for success in school and life through coeducational wrestling. The organization utilizes its sports program to draw at-risk students into a positive after-school environment where they receive mandatory academic support, connect to strong mentors, engage in healthy physical activity, learn about nutrition and general health, and benefit from incentives to attend and succeed in school. Over the past three years, Beat the Streets has brought wrestling, athletic

and academic opportunity, and change to 13 Providence schools and over 700 students.

Attorneys Kate Georgen, Matthew Simpson, Greg Fine, and Stephen Weiner, as well as former Mintz Levin attorney Anthony Hubbard, have been providing strategic planning assistance for Beat the Streets to help evaluate a potential merger with Boston Youth Wrestling, a well-established nonprofit wrestling program also working to bring the sport to urban public schools. The end goal of this project is to combine these two like-minded organizations, allowing both to operate more efficiently, benefit

from each other's resources and expertise, and leave a greater lasting impact in the lives of children growing up in urban areas across the Northeast.

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, Lance Kurata, and Tali Tuchin, and legal specialist Jacobo Dib, he worked on a variety of matters for the organization. With Mintz Levin's help, the foundation has funded more than \$100,000 in scholarships and has fought to change the law in a number of states, with the goal of enacting legislation that will protect children across the country. Mintz Levin has helped protect the foundation's trademarks, continued to handle further agreements related to the annual Finish Chelsea's Run 5K, and reviewed employment agreements. The team has also continued to review agreements related to a documentary created by Chelsea's brother, Tyler King. "Chelsea's Light: A Brother's

Journey," which premiered at the San Diego Film Festival, 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. The full documentary can be viewed online at: <https://chelseaslight.org/about-us/>

CIVIL APPELLATE PRO BONO PROGRAM

The right to appeal is fundamental to our judicial system. However, 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 relatively 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 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 Supreme Justice Court Clerk Fran Kenneally, and they were joined on the committee by former Mintz Levin attorney Kim Parr, among others. 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.

(continued)

Additional Pro Bono Highlights *(continued)*

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 legal 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. In December 2015, at the urging of Massachusetts Appeals Court Chief Justice Scott Kafker (now a justice of the Supreme Judicial 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 or not.

The program has steadily built 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. As of September 2017, the civil appeals pro bono program has served 283 individuals with the help of 22 different law firms and in-house legal departments since its inception in May 2015. 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 current project analysts Sarah Engell and Morgan Sandhu, former project analysts Conlan Orino, Emma Nitzberg Follansbee, Warren Crandall, and Parnia Zahedi, and former legal assistant Dan Goodrich, along with numerous attorney and summer associate volunteers.

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 children 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, Mike Katz, Kate Stewart, and Steve Weiner have provided CLF with guidance and advice on a range of matters, including health law, corporate, contract, and intellectual property issues.

CONSUMER DEBT COLLECTION CLINIC

Facilitated by Matt Brooks, a Greater Boston Legal Services staff attorney and Mintz Levin's Equal Justice Works Fellow with Fidelity Investments, the newly created Consumer Debt Collection Clinic invites volunteer attorneys, paralegals, and staff to assist individual defendants at debt collection proceedings at the Roxbury Municipal Court. This new clinic is a collaboration with Mintz Levin and Fidelity, and the clinic is staffed with

pro bono volunteers from each sponsor. Interested volunteers assist with intake interviews and documents, client counseling, settlement negotiation, and preparation for hearings. Clients' debt is often in dispute, and debt collection agencies which have bought and sold the debt several times over are often unable to establish a chain of title. With debt collection proceedings involving unrepresented defendants in nearly 99% of cases, the ultimate goal of the clinic is to offset the information gap between debt collection agency attorneys and individual litigants, assisting clients in financial need by securing favorable settlements and avoiding default judgments on indigent defendants' credit reports.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT

Mintz Levin's Domestic Violence Project was founded in Boston in 1989 and is now active in several Mintz Levin offices. In the years since, hundreds of the firm's attorneys, paraprofessionals, and staff members have worked on behalf of individual survivors. Beyond helping victims directly, attorneys have served as legal counsel for more than 25 nonprofits dedicated to combating domestic violence and sexual assault, and have partnered with these organizations to advocate for legislative reform and to write amicus and appellate briefs at the state and federal levels.

This past year, one of the many domestic violence cases with which Mintz Levin offered assistance involved "Vanessa," a mother who separated from her husband in 2014, fearing for her safety and the safety of her four young children. Since 2011, Vanessa's husband had abused her verbally and physically, repeatedly threatening to kill her and their four children. After first securing a restraining order against her husband in 2014, Vanessa remained fearful each year when confronting her husband in court, both at multiple extension hearings for the order of

protection and during hearings in their contentious divorce litigation. These recurring court contests forced Vanessa to relive the trauma of her past abuse despite the protection order.

In October of 2016, in the most recent extension hearing, attorneys Drew DeVoogd and Kristina Cary argued that the existing restraining order should be extended permanently. Despite the court's initial reluctance, Drew successfully argued that the nature and extent of the abuse suffered by Vanessa and her children warranted the extraordinary remedy requested. Thanks to the efforts of Drew and Kristina, with assistance from former project analyst Zach Fields and the expert guidance of Vanessa's first Mintz Levin attorney, Cassie Ramos, Mintz Levin not only secured a permanent extension of the 209A abuse prevention order for Vanessa and her children against their abuser, but spared her the trauma of additional renewal hearings.

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 House's residences. While everyone made it out safely, the building became uninhabitable. Since then, the program has been crowded into the one remaining building. After four years of searching for a new site, an

(continued)

Additional Pro Bono Highlights *(continued)*

abandoned auto body shop became available within only a few blocks of the agency's transitional 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 2016, the firm has performed significant legal work to prepare for the acquisition and construction of a brand new shelter for victims of domestic violence. This has involved obtaining approval from the community and the Boston Redevelopment Authority as well as a \$200,000 grant from the EPA to complete the new site's environmental remediation. At a ceremony in August 2017, Governor Baker and Mayor Walsh announced that the Elizabeth Stone House would be one of 25 Boston-area construction projects to receive a \$10 million grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. This covered a significant portion of the project's \$16 million budget.

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, and create a gym and outdoor play space so their children, for the first time, can 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, Susan Phillips, and Elissa Flynn-Poppey, along with former Mintz Levin attorney Ray Estes, with support from the firm's Pro Bono Committee.

FREEDOM FOR ALL

Mintz Levin has been advising a coalition of LGBTQ organizations regarding the formation of a ballot question committee to oppose the repeal of the transgender accommodation law passed by the Massachusetts legislature in 2016. Mintz Levin worked with the coalition to create a Massachusetts nonprofit called Freedom for All Massachusetts, Inc. that will run the ballot question committee. The Mintz Levin team, led by attorneys Erica Coray and Elissa Flynn-Poppey, has also assisted with filing for tax exemption status with the IRS, and has advised Freedom for All Massachusetts about compliance with laws and regulations governing political organizations in Massachusetts.

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 2016, the Mintz Levin team included attorneys Julie Korostoff, Drew Matzkin, Poonam Patidar, Gauri Punjabi, Daniel Wilcox, Natalie Young, and Alec Zadek, as well as legal specialist Brenda Meyette and former Mintz Levin attorneys Anthony Hubbard and Kahlil Mitchell.

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, paramedics, physician assistants, and MDs, and more than 60 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 Alyssia Bryant, with assistance from others, have continued to work on communications regulatory issues for Hatzalah. In 2015, the team obtained a landmark ruling from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) allowing Hatzalah to be the first nongovernmental entity authorized by the FCC to receive caller ID information for blocked land lines, and the team is now working on a similar application for cell phones. The attorneys then successfully sought a similar ruling from the New York Public Service Commission and are working to implement it. In addition, they have handled various other FCC permitting applications for Hatzalah's private radio broadcast antenna network.

Jeff and attorney Amy Lu regularly handle antenna lease negotiations for Hatzalah's antenna network, including a critical lease for the relocation of one of Hatzalah's Manhattan-covering antennas, one of two principal antennas, this year. Attorney Steve Friedberg also handled construction issues on that antenna lease. Amy worked on various government grant applications for Hatzalah in addition to the lease negotiations.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) represents more than 1.5 million members and supporters nationwide. As the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer civil rights organization, HRC envisions a world where LGBTQ people are ensured of their basic equal rights, and can be open, honest, and safe at home, at work, and in the community. The HRC logo—a bold,

yellow equal sign on a dark blue background—is one of the most recognizable symbols of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. It has become synonymous with the fight for equal rights for LGBTQ Americans. In 2016, the Mintz Levin team assisted HRC with general trademark matters, and offered guidance on a number of projects and campaigns including Love Conquers Hate, Chefs for Equality, and Make America Gay Again. This dedicated team included attorneys Christine Baker, Timur Slonim, and Elissa Flynn-Poppey, as well as legal specialist Sarah Sherman and our manager of research and reference, Susan Cleary.

KISORO CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

Mintz Levin 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. Although there is universal elementary education in Uganda, the teachers are paid very poorly, especially in more rural areas such as Kisoro. The universal curriculum is largely ineffective because it is based on rote learning. Class sizes are typically in the 40–50 student range, and teachers oftentimes do not show up for work. The Uganda nonprofit and school hope to alleviate this problem by reducing class sizes, charging a comparable amount of tuition, increasing teacher salaries, and providing a better educational program for students. The school is looking to construct a new permanent building, due to an increase in demand for its services. Currently, the school caters to elementary school children living in Kisoro and aims to expand by adding more grades and students. Mintz Levin continues to collaborate with the newly formed organization and is working with the foundation to obtain federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

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Additional Pro Bono Highlights *(continued)*

LAWYERS CLEARINGHOUSE

Lawyers Clearinghouse is an organization dedicated to providing pro bono legal services to residents of homeless shelters and others in need in the Boston area. Mintz Levin has been a partner of the Lawyers Clearinghouse for more than 20 years. Recently our work has been coordinated at the firm by attorney Samantha Kingsbury. Over the past year, attorneys Matthew Karambelas and Angela DiIenno worked on a highly successful Social Security insurance case through the Lawyer’s Clearinghouse. Matt’s client Eddie had been disabled and dependent on Social Security since 2014, and desperately needed help navigating the SSI appeal process when his benefits were cut. Thanks to Matt’s dedication, diligence, and ongoing encouragement—from the initial interview with Eddie to the final hearing—the appeal received a fully favorable decision and Eddie can continue receiving the support he depends on every day.

MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP/DANA FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE & CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

When cases are referred to Mintz Levin from the Medical Legal Partnership, including the collaborations with the Dana Farber Cancer Institute and Boston Children’s Hospital, the prospective clients either face severe medical challenges themselves or have children with medical complexities. The legal difficulties which often accompany a serious medical diagnosis—such as complications with housing and government benefits programs—often can 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 our clients can focus on their own and their families’ health.

Mintz Levin worked with “Fae,” a mother who came to the United States over 10 years ago with her twin sons, who were then conjoined, and without her husband. After undergoing a number of medical procedures over the years, the sons, now teenagers, suffer from many medical complications that require Fae’s constant care and attention. Fae and her sons were evicted from their apartment because they could no longer pay rent after Fae’s husband lost his job overseas. Attorneys Hillary Borcharding and Hannah Chapel worked with Fae, her case workers, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Transitional Assistance to relocate the family to ADA-accommodated housing and to secure the maximum amount of Emergency Assistance to Elderly, Disabled and Children emergency aid (EAEDC) and food stamps for Fae and her sons. Hillary and Hannah also collaborated with the sons’ new school after their relocation to ensure that they were able to get themselves to and from school and had the necessary support in place, and helped their hospital case worker arrange for continued health care coverage.

Mintz Levin also worked with a young woman named “Ashley” who became completely dependent on her family during the aggressive progression of her Multi-centric Castleman disease (MCD), a rare condition of the lymphatic system treated through chemotherapy. There was a time when Ashley was able to manage both her disease and her day-to-day responsibilities, but her MCD and treatment have made daily responsibilities unmanageable. Without additional assistance, the family’s reliance on Ashley’s husband for personal and financial security has put their well-being in jeopardy. Due to the challenge of proving the existence of this rare and complex disease, Ashley received two devastating denials for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits, at

which point attorney Brian Shea stepped in to help with her appeal. Ashley has been unable to work for over five years due to the debilitating pain and fatigue associated with MCD. After compiling and reviewing hundreds of pages of Ashley's health records and the limited medical research available for her disease, Brian, with the help of summer associate Elizabeth Kelly, assembled evidence to demonstrate that Ashley is entitled to the SSDI benefits for which she originally applied. Brian and Elizabeth's representation of Ashley is ongoing, and Mintz Levin remains hopeful that the assistance of counsel will make a meaningful difference for Ashley and her family.

In addition to Brian, Elizabeth, Hillary, and Hannah, the attorneys involved with our Medical Legal Partnership programs during the year included Nishant Dharia, Mike Katz, Elissa Flynn-Poppey, Sue Finegan, and Adrienne Walker

MILLENNIUM CAMPUS NETWORK

The Millennium Campus Network (MCN) is a Boston-based, global nonprofit training the next generation of social impact leaders. Through an innovative year-long experience, the MCN is training a new generation of leaders on university campuses across the globe. MCN recently received an offer to host a global conference this year in Rabat, Morocco, along with financial backing from the government of the Kingdom of Morocco. Over the course of four days, participants from more than 40 nations would have the opportunity to create innovative partnerships and solutions to improve their communities and learn from world-class practitioners and advocates. Attorneys Kristin Gerber and Nishant Dharia helped to draft a memorandum of understanding between MCN and a Moroccan-governmental organization that establishes the terms of the collaboration.

MITTENS FOR DETROIT

While its economy is in recovery, Detroit, Michigan, continues to struggle in terms of meeting the basic human needs of thousands of its citizens, young and old; the state ranks fifth in the United States and first in the Midwest for its number of homeless residents, and limited resources mean many are forced to stay out on the streets year-round. For homeless people in Detroit, the issue of frostbite is a reality in terms of safety and health. The winters are harsh in Detroit, with freezing weather starting each year as early as October and sometimes running as late as May. Mittens for Detroit (MFD) was founded to address the cold weather concerns of children and adults in need in Detroit and its surrounding areas. Every year, MFD directs the collection, purchase, and distribution of new mittens and gloves to people in and around Detroit through a network of nearly 100 partner schools, agencies, and organizations. Even though MFD is less than a year old, it has already established 200 collection sites around Detroit, and gathered and distributed 70,000 pairs of new mittens and gloves in its last collection season (October 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017). In this capacity, MFD serves as a change agent that addresses the needs of impoverished communities and their residents' ability to cope with cold weather by recognizing both the physical and emotional needs of people who would otherwise endure freezing cold temperatures without appropriate winter gear. This past year, attorney Natalie Young and former Mintz Levin attorney Anthony Hubbard secured status for Mittens for Detroit as a 501(c)(3) to help the organization continue and expand its important work supporting communities in need around Detroit.

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Additional Pro Bono Highlights *(continued)*

NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Founded in 1990, the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), a longtime pro bono client, is a national nonprofit membership and advocacy organization comprising a network of dozens of state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence. NNEDV represents over 2,000 local organizations dedicated to ending domestic violence through legal, legislative, and policy initiatives, as well as providing shelter, counseling, and legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence and their families. Mintz Levin attorneys regularly provide counsel on corporate governance, real estate, and employment matters, as well as significant work on legislative and amicus matters.

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

NEW YORK CITY 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. Mintz Levin attorneys Todd Rosenbaum, Stephanie Leopold, Yilei He, David Barres, and Rachel Gholston, along with former Mintz Levin attorneys Lauren Luptak and Elizabeth Kurpis, have also participated in the program in recent years.

POLITICAL ASYLUM/IMMIGRATION REPRESENTATION PROJECT (PAIR)

The Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project (PAIR), a nonprofit organization, is the core provider of pro bono legal services to indigent political asylum-seekers in Massachusetts. In 1989, a coalition of legal services agencies, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, and bar associations formed PAIR to meet an emergency need for the legal representation of 83 workers, mostly from El Salvador, whom the INS arrested at the Suffolk Downs racetrack in Revere, Massachusetts. The PAIR Project, led by Mintz Levin attorney Martha Koster, is committed to providing legal services to secure the safety and freedom of asylum seekers and to promoting the rights of immigrant detainees. Numerous Mintz Levin attorneys have worked on PAIR cases this past year.

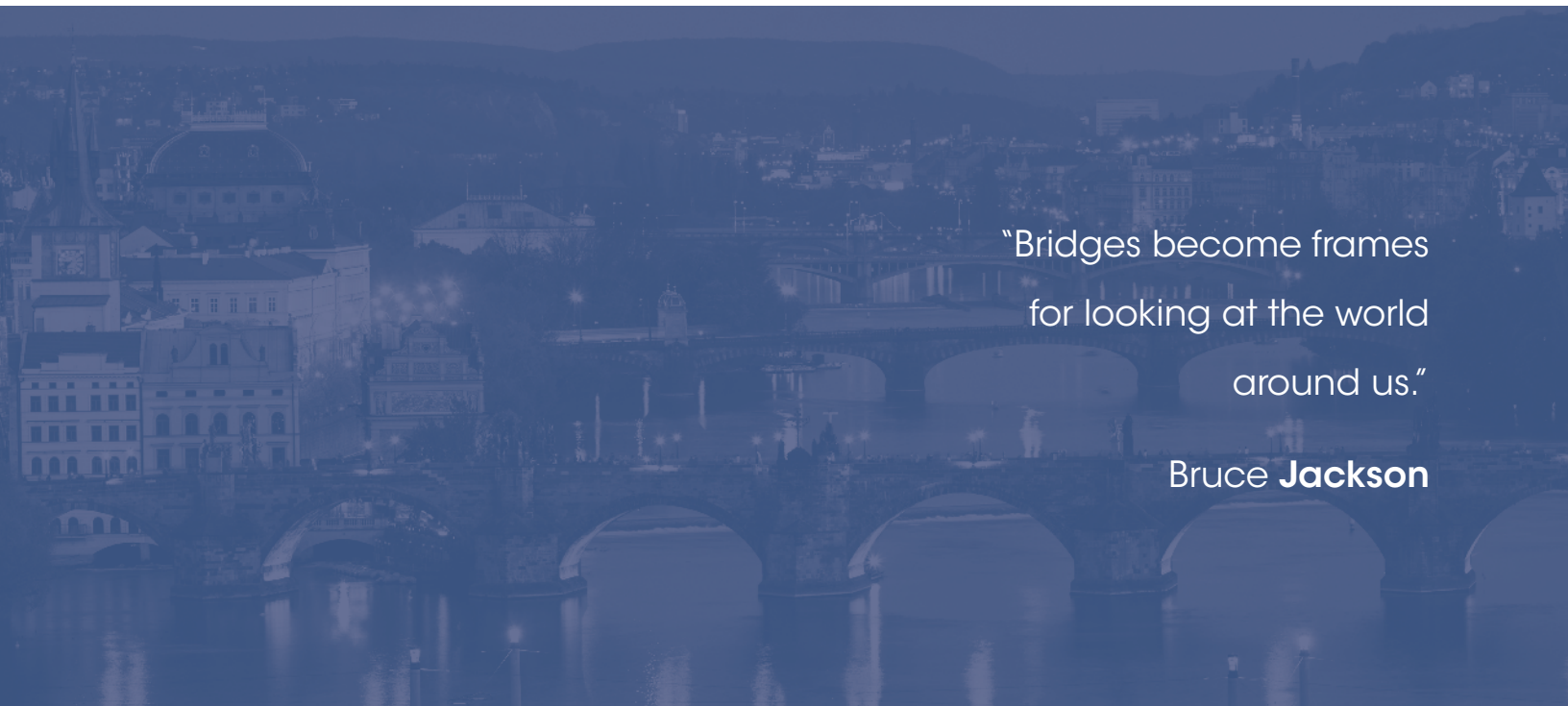
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR COMPASSIONATE HEALTHCARE

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.

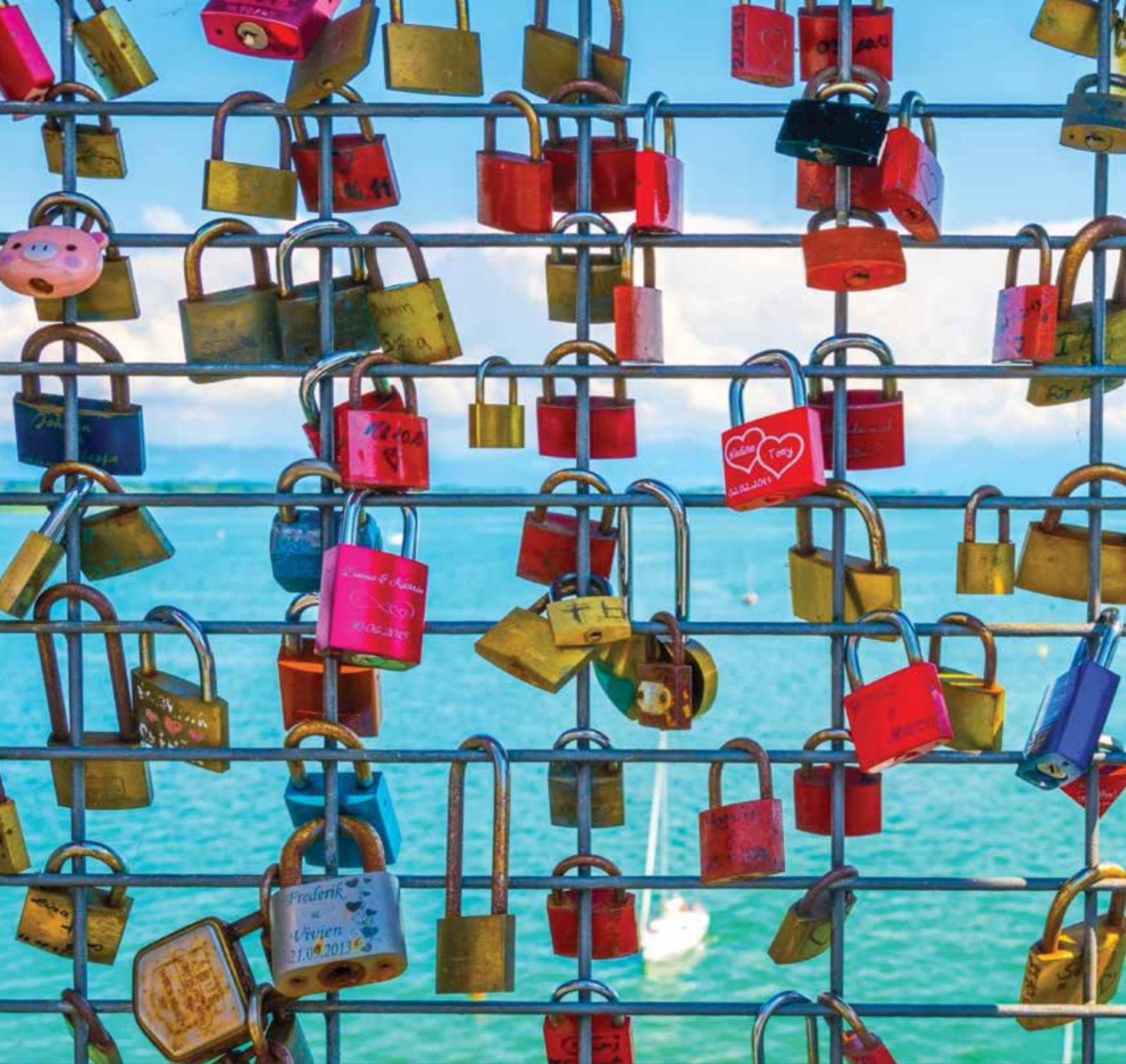
Since helping to start the organization many years ago, Mintz Levin has played a major role in the success of the Schwartz Center. Attorney Steve Weiner serves as the organization's general counsel, and attorneys Peter Biagetti and Tony Starr serve on the board. In addition, over the past three years, 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. 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.



“Bridges become frames
for looking at the world
around us.”

Bruce **Jackson**



Pro Bono Committee

AS OF JULY 1, 2017

Peter Biagetti	Justin Nahama
Susan Cohen	Antony Nash
John Delehanty	Todd Rosenbaum
Sue Finegan (<i>Chair</i>)	Gabe Schnitzler
Megan Gates	Nada Shamonki
Narges Kakalia	Steve Weiner
Samantha Kingsbury	Natalie Young
Dionne Lomax	Alec Zadek

We also want to recognize former Mintz Levin attorneys Anthony Hubbard, John Regier (Chair Emeritus Member), Colin Van Dyke, and Katy Ward, 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 Joanne Dynak, Sarah Engell, and Katie Walsh, and former Mintz Levin project analysts Sasha Dudding, Zach Fields, and Haejin Hwang for their assistance with the Pro Bono Program.

Thank You to Our Contributors

We are very grateful to the **359 attorneys and staff members** across the firm who generously contributed their time, energy, and passion to the work of the Pro Bono Program in 2016. The stories captured in this journal represent only a fraction of the hundreds of pro bono cases we could highlight, just as the attorneys and staff

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 do this important work, and extend our heartfelt thanks on behalf of the firm and our pro bono clients.



Crossing Our Bridges **Together**

It is a long-standing tradition at the firm to lend a hand to those who need it most. Far from being an arm's length business, this effort centers on relationships—between legal counsel and their pro bono clients, between our firm and our pro bono partners, and between our attorneys and others in the legal community.

We are proud of the attorneys and professionals at Mintz Levin and throughout the greater pro bono network who step forward to support those in greatest need—filling a gap in legal resources to help clients reach their goals and improve their lives.

For more information about our pro bono efforts, please contact

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