

Legal Aid *matters*

our mission

The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York provides effective, free civil legal services and education to and advocacy for people with low income or other barriers to accessing the legal system. We secure basic needs, protect and preserve legal rights, provide equal access to justice and seek fairness and dignity for our clients.

Serving the low-income and needy residents of Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Schoharie, Warren and Washington Counties, and the St. Regis Reservation.

executive director

Lillian M. Moy

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Faith
 makes all things possible,
Love
 makes all things easy,
Hope
 makes all things wor.



New Citizen Gives Thanks

Immigration case has a happy ending

When Charles Badu talks about becoming an American citizen, his whole face breaks into a grin. LASNNY and attorney Brian Wang helped build that smile.

A native of Ghana, Charles came to this country when he was 18 in 2001, his heart and mind set on becoming a United States citizen.

“My mom would take us on long vacations to America,” Charles recalls, beaming across the living room of an Albany apartment at his mother, visiting from Ghana.

His uncle, a U.S. citizen, adopted Charles. This allowed him to pursue permanent residence and a green card. After he got these, he needed to wait the standard five years before applying for citizenship.

Charles went about his life, assuming his papers were in order. He went to school and he worked. When his grandmother died in 2009, he went home to Ghana to visit family. Upon his return to the United States, nothing seemed out of the ordinary at

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Energy, skills and talents



There is a lot going on at the Legal Aid Society. With the receipt of a generous Judiciary Civil Legal Services grant, we are recruiting new staff to help us meet our clients' essential legal needs. It has been some time since we were able to hire across the program — it feels good.

In addition, we are beginning to implement our strategic plan by convening board and staff committees to explore generating attorneys' fees in appropriate cases and to consider new ways to develop and fund more systemic advocacy. While these two initiatives are related, there are some differences. Attorneys' fees will generally come from cases brought under fee-shifting statutes, such as Social Security Disability appeals to the United States District Court and consumer law litigation. Our

commitment to increasing our impact will permeate our individual efforts as well as our partnerships with community organizations. With a healthy mix of experienced and newer staff, LASNNY has the energy, skills and talent to maintain our historic commitment to individual clients as well

LASNNY has the energy, skills and talent to maintain our historic commitment to individual clients as well as to help even more people through our legal services.

as to help even more people through our legal services.

I'm pleased to report that Peter Racette, our long-time Deputy Director in Plattsburgh, will become our Deputy Director of Regional Offices and Advocacy. In Albany, Wendy Wahlberg will become our Deputy Director of Strategic Operations. Peter, Wendy and I will continue to work closely to lead the program through this period of change. In addition, we will soon hire Managing Attorneys to enhance our legal work supervision and coordinate advocacy. Our new colleagues will enable us to focus even more on the professional development of staff at every level in every office.

Finally, plans are being launched to celebrate our 90th Anniversary, with a special dinner and awards celebration on May 2, 2013. My thanks to all of you who have once again committed to our Justice For All Campaign. While grant funds come and go, your support provides the stability the Legal Aid Society needs.

I welcome your comments and questions about the changes at the Legal Aid Society

and, as always, look forward to hearing from you. I wish you and your loved ones the best for the Holiday Season and I hope to see you in the next few weeks.

Client Programs:

- Children's Law Project
- Community Legal Education and Training
- Disability Advocacy Project
- Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Project
- Foreclosure Prevention Project
- HIV/AIDS Legal Consortium
- Homelessness Intervention Project
- Legal Aid Society Homelessness Project
- Medical Legal Partnership for Children and Families
- Nutrition Outreach & Education
- Protection & Advocacy for the Developmentally Disabled
- Protection & Advocacy for the Mentally Ill
- Saratoga Springs Homelessness Prevention Program
- Senior Legal Services Program
- Upstate New York Immigration Law Project

Volunteer & Donor Programs:

- Justice for All Campaign, Annual Appeal
- Law Day Celebration
- Legal Aid Endowment Fund
- Private Attorney Involvement Program (PAI)

Donate NOW to the 2012 Justice for All Campaign online at www.lasnnny.org or use the enclosed envelope

Legal Aid matters

December 2012

A regular bulletin published by the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc.

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Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 587-5188, (800) 870-8343

Helping Humans

“I represent humans, I don’t represent companies,” says Ronald J. Kim, Esq. member of the LAS Board of Directors. “In bankruptcy, I represent debtors. In consumer issues I represent consumers. I do a lot of employment discrimination work,

PROFILE: *board member*

and I only represent employees.”

This makes his involvement with LASNNY a logical extension of his law practice, The Law Offices of Ronald J. Kim in Saratoga. In his work, he sees that the legal needs of low income and even middle income people are not being met, which underscores the importance of the agency’s mission.

Recently, during a strategic retreat, board and staff assessed the challenges of trying to fulfill the organization’s mission as governmental support decreases. Kim has been working with staff to see what other opportunities there are to raise money from services that LASNNY provide.

“There are some statutes, mostly on the federal level, that allow consumers to essentially protect their rights

against oppressive debt collection and illegal debt collection,” says Kim.

As the economy has gotten worse that activity has increased, he notes. The Fair Debt Collection Practices Act is a federal law that

allows a lawyer to sue these entities on behalf of his or her client, and retain attorney’s fees. Kim told LAS that there are not a lot of people doing that work in that area and it is now being investigated as a possible revenue source.

A former city council member in Saratoga Springs, Kim is finishing a second three year term, and is looking forward to

serving another three years on the board. In his tenure, he’s been happy to help figure out how the agency can be more self-sustaining, through



Legal Aid Society Board of Directors

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ideas such as utilizing The Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, and also, through securing donations. He expects his volunteering efforts will continue in similar capacities.

“Clearly, there’s always the economic incentive,” Kim says of his paid legal work, “but for me, the psychic benefit of representing people I agree with, or protecting their rights, has been a big part of my job satisfaction. So to be able to do that also with Legal Aid has been gratifying.”

Funding:

The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York is funded by grants from the Legal Services Corporation, the Interest on Lawyer Account Fund of the State of New York, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, United States Department of Justice, New York State Legislature, New York State Office of the Attorney General, NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, NYS Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, Albany County Department for Aging, Fulton County Office for Aging, St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging, Washington County Office for the Aging, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Office for the Aging, City of Saratoga Springs, New York State Bar Foundation, United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Albany Law School, Hunger Solutions New York, NYS Unified Court System Judiciary Civil Legal Services, Warren County, Albany County Department of Social Services, Schenectady Community Action Program, Education and Services, Joseph’s House, City of Schenectady, City of Albany, City of Troy, New York State Attorney General Homeowner Protection Program, law firms, corporations and individuals through the Justice for All Campaign.

Donate through the
SEFA Campaign.

Our SEFA number:
50-00198

12 Angr Law Day M



(left) Senator Tom Duane, Lillian Moy, Laurie Shanks, Al DeSalvo



(right) Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill, Rachael Kretser, Charlotte Buchanon

(right) Tom O'Connor, Michael Whiteman, Tucker Stanclift, Don Boyajian, Amy Klein, E. Stewart Jones, Connie Mayer, Mel MacKenzie



(above) Tucker Stanclift, Don Boyajian, Dan Hurteau, Peter Coffey, Amy Klein, E. Stewart Jones

(below) Senator Breslin, Tom O'Connor, Stu Jones, Tucker Stanclift, Don Boyajian



(below) Connie Mayer, Mel MacKenzie, Amy Klein



y Jurors

May 7, 2012



(left) Mary O. Donohue,
Polly Mason Freihoffer
and Justin Donohue



(right) Leah Threatte
Bonjowski, Patricia
Rodriguez, Rob Colborn

Kimberly Sanger-
Jones, E. Stewart
Jones, James Knox



The Hurteau
Family: Alicia,
Dan, Mary Alice,
Gabrielle

677 Prime Catering
and Jane Scott



Michael Whiteman,
Margery Whiteman,
Phil Gitlen



(left) Leyla Kiosse,
Donald Ferlazzo,
Donna Ferlazzo,
Sal Ferlazzo

(right) Donna
Purnomo, Yono's

Campaign Co-Chairs,
Thomas J. O'Connor,
E. Stewart Jones



(right) Barb Davis,
Debra Collura



(below) Norma
Meacham, Tom
O'Connor, Sal Ferlazzo,
Michael Whiteman



(below) Jason Hughes, Kevin Glasheen,
Ryan Keleher



JUSTICE FOR ALL

Annual Campaign reception, Fort Orange



Eric Tepper,
Phil Gitlen



Sanjeev
DeSoyza,
Amy Klein,
and
colleague

(below)
JFA Leaders



CAMPAIGN

ge Club, September 27, 2012

Tasty Crustaceans



*Thomas Higgs,
Benjamin Hill, James
Knox, Sam Breslin*



*Davia McDonald,
Renee Hariton, Mindy
Derosia, Deb Collura*



*(left) Norma Meacham,
Lillian Moy*

*(right) E. Stewart Jones,
Rhonda Boyajian,
Don Boyajian*



(above) John Allen, Mike Murphy, Ed Laird



*(right) John Criscione, Karen Arndt, Maureen Tighe,
Rebecca Kane, Richard Goldman, Rachael Phelan*

PAI Programs for Volunteers

Attorney-For-The-Day Program

Provides low income clients with advice on a housing matter in Albany City Court. Brief Service.

Bankruptcy Veterans Program:

Provides Veterans with representation in filing a bankruptcy. Extended Service.

General Referrals:

Provides representation or advice to clients in different case types. Varied Service.

IOOV/LGBT Ask-A-Lawyer Clinic:

Offers legal advice to lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered people of color one evening per month. Brief Service.

Pro Se Divorce Program:

Private attorneys instruct clients how to complete divorce papers. Brief Service.

UIB Ask-A-Lawyer Program:

Provides assistance/advice with unemployment matters. Brief Service.

Veterans Legal Project:

Provides advice on a civil legal issue to Veterans. Brief Service.

Save The Date:

Representing Victims of Domestic Violence in Family Court

All day CLE – Albany, NY
Friday, February 1, 2013

New Pro Bono Rules!

- Volunteers will now receive 1 CLE credit for every 2 actual hours of pro bono work.
- In addition, volunteers may report 10 pro bono CLE credits towards the
- Total required 24 CLE credits during an OCA reporting period.
- In addition, if you are a volunteer through the Attorney Emeritus program, you may report up to 15 credits in pro bono service during a report period.

All of these rules effectuated on 2/15/12.

Thanks to the following attorneys who have accepted cases

November 2011 through September 2012

Platinum Members

(20 or more cases):

Albany Law School
Unemployment Project (21)
Janet Axelrod (66)
Andrew Moses (24)
Michael J. O'Connor (27)
Alyssa Talanker (55)

Gold Members

(10 or more cases):

Tony Arcodia and Marc Ehrlich (11)
Jerrold Bartman (18)
Hiscock & Barclay (12)
Lisa Mills (17)
Schenectady County Bar Association (13)
Bethany Schumann-McGhee (14)
Christian Maurice Van Niekerk (9)
Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna (14)

Silver Members

(5 or more cases):

Guy Criscione, Jr. (6)
Englert, Coffey, McHugh & Fantauzzi (5)
Amanda Maleszweski (9)
Joel Peller (5)
Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna

Albany County:

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Melissa Bennett
Frank Bifera
Ira Bloom (2)
Leah Bojnowski
Kathleen Copps DiPaolo
Richard Cirincione (2)
Garrett DeGraff (2)
John Deily
Kathleen Dick
Colleen Dooley
Joseph Dougherty
Charles Feldman (3)
Byrgen Finkelman
Stewart Finton
Kevin Glasheen (2)
Brian Haak
Christopher Hanafin (2)
Daniel Hurteau (3)
Bradford Lachut
Jason Little
Matthew Mann
Mark Meyers
Thomas O'Connor (2)
Frank Pell
Walter Ramos
Cheryl Randall
Robert Randall
Earl Redding
Anne Reynolds-Copps (2)
Michael Rhodes-Devey (4)
Cynthia Stallard (4)
Douglas Shartrand (2)
Richard Weiskopf
Kim Williams (2)
Robert Young
Maz Zacker

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William Favreau
Meredith Neverett (2)

Columbia County:

Douglas Coleman
Janet Kealy
Creston Laager, IV.
Edward McConville
Chris Steadman

Franklin County:

Judith Pareira (2)

Albany & Rensselaer County Assigned Counsel Program

Gloria Arroyo Copland
Robert L. Adams
Ian Arcus
Tammy Arquette
Chad Balzer (2)
Diana Bangert-Drowns
Lisa Brown
Sue Civic
Peter Crumme
Jo Ann Coughtry
Justin Dearmas
Eleanor DeCoursey
Kathryn Dell
Paul Devane
Stewart Finton
Joyce Galante
David Goldin
Lisa Gordon
David L. Gruenberg (2)
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Michelle Haskin
David Kavanaugh (2)
Randall Kehoe (2)

Greene County:

Edward Kaplan
Joseph Warren

Montgomery:

Lisa Lorman

Rensselaer County:

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Jill Nagy
Geri Pomerantz (2)

St. Lawrence:

Neil Bhat
Alice Carrothers
Natasha Hill
Maureen McGaw (2)
Gerry Leek
Charles Nash (3)
Cathleen O'Horo (2)
Daniel Pease

Saratoga:

Linda Berkowitz
James Cox
John Cromie
David Devall (3)
James Doern & Stephen Rodriguez (2)
Robert Katzman
Ronald Kim
Alan LeCours
Stephen Mastaitis
Joseph McPhillips
James Trainor (2)

Schenectady:

Peter Coffey
Teneka Frost-Amusa
Kate McGuirl
Peter McHugh (4)
Kathleem Toombs

Warren:

John Caffry
Karen Judd (3)
Christopher Nenninger
Malcolm O'Hara (2)
Michael Toomey

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A corporate collaboration that counts

Corporate engagement in pro bono legal work requires more than good intentions. Collaborations are sometimes necessary to bridge gaps in skills and services to make this work succeed. The collaboration between General Electric's Global Research Center in Niskayuna, Nixon Peabody, and LASNNY is a strong example of such partnering.

When Buckmaster deWolf became General Counsel at GE's Global Research Center, he wanted to put a formal program in place to ensure in house attorneys could fulfill the company's expectation to do pro bono work.

"This is not something you're expected to do evenings and weekends, it's something that's part of your job," de Wolf says of General Electric's commitment to pro bono work. Establishing a structure to fulfill these expectations was key, so he turned to a law firm that works with the Global Research Center and also has strong pro bono expectations for its employees.

The intersections... strengthen relationships between the individual lawyers and the firms, as well as the people who are represented.

"We talked to Nixon Peabody and came up with an approach that I think benefited everybody," says de Wolf.

The structure pairs coordinators from GE, Nixon Peabody and LASNNY to work on pro bono cases. Kristie Cinelli is the Private Attorney Involvement Director at

LASNNY, and she hands cases to Nixon Peabody's Dan Hurteau, who works with Jenifer Haeckl at GE.

"Dan and I go back and forth as to what cases are available, and I offer that out to our group here," says Haeckl, who also handles international pro bono matters for GE.



Buckmaster DeWolf, Jenifer Haeckl and Dan Hurteau

Dan Hurteau selects lawyers from the Albany office of Nixon Peabody based on their preferences and availability. The assembled teams consist of one or two lawyers from each group. The lawyers complement each other's skills, and share the workload.

"The lawyers here who work in the Global Research Center, by the nature of the kind of work we do, are not litigators," says de Wolf. "They are intellectual property professionals, and they spend most of their careers prosecuting patents and IP counseling."

These lawyers may spend more time researching and writing for a pro bono case than someone from Nixon Peabody, who does have litigation experience. Another plus of the collaboration is that LASNNY provides malpractice insurance, which in house attorneys do not typically purchase.

The intersections between GE and Nixon Peabody strengthen

relationships between the individual lawyers and the firms, as well as the people who are represented. Typical cases include Social Security and disability cases, and legal disputes within families.

Stepping beyond their normal areas of legal expertise broadens lawyers professionally. They benefit personally, as de Wolf, Hurteau, and Haeckl know from their own pro bono involvement, by connecting with the community. "This is a great model for a successful pro bono partnership – we're grateful for this substantial commitment from both GE

Research and Nixon Peabody," said Lillian Moy, the Society's Director.

Welcome new PAI Coordinator

My name is Monica L. Cook and I am the PT Coordinator of Private Attorney Involvement at Legal Aid. I truly enjoy working at Legal Aid because organizations like these are so very important in order to provide legal services for everyone, especially those who cannot afford it.



I am currently enrolled at Maria College in the Paralegal degree program and am scheduled to graduate in May of 2013. I currently live in the Stockade area in Schenectady, NY with my two teenage sons, Kenny (17) and Darnell (16) and our dog Peyton (4).

GUARDIANS OF JUSTICE

Legal Aid Endowment

Anonymous (3)
James B. Ayers
Jeffrey and Martha Baker
Richard J. Bartlett
Charlotte S. Buchanan
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Paul M. Callahan
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The Ruthman Family
Arthur and Ronnie Siegel
Keith C. St. John
Henda and Samuel Strasser
F. Michael Tucker
Wendy L. Wahlberg
G. Kimball Williams & Margaret.
J. Gillis
Mary Withington

Albany County Bar Association and The Legal Aid Society are hosting:

18th Annual Holiday Party

December 13, 2012 6:00- 8:00 pm
The Hampton Inn, Downtown Albany
Catered by Yono's, SANTA will be stopping by!!

The celebration of special occasions, such as major holidays and birthdays are often very difficult for children in residential care. Each child deserves special attention and the number of children continues to rise. Therefore, Proceeds of our Party will benefit St. Catherine's Center for Children.

Admission will be \$25 plus an unwrapped Gift for the children of St. Catherine's. Children under 12 are free. Please be sure that your Gifts are new and unwrapped. St. Catherine's has provided us with a Wish List and we provide this to you only as a guide. Please visit our website, www.albanycountybar.com, for a copy of the St. Catherine's Center for Children Wish List, and to register.

F. Michael Tucker

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during the years that you're working," Tucker says of his own decision to become a Guardian of Justice.

The Guardians of Justice are committed to securing justice for future generations through The Legal Aid Legacy Fund, LASNNY's permanent endowment fund.

donations will...sustain the operations of the organization to insulate them from the highs and lows of government funding

Tucker sees that LASNNY, like all not-for-profits, is competing for dollars to cover its budget. By drawing attention to the necessity and merit of the organization's work through various outreach efforts, he hopes to attract federal, state and voluntary contributions. Raising awareness of the Guardians for Justice helps

ensure a continuous base of support that the organization can use to sustain its long term viability.

"It can tie people in and it also can provide the stability that a nonprofit needs," he says. "As the legacy effort grows, there will be more and more people who participate in it. The benefits of their donations will be realized over time, hopefully in a way that will level out and sustain the operations of the organization to insulate them from the highs and lows of government funding."

Tucker and his wife, Lynette, live in Delmar, where they raised three daughters. The examples of volunteerism and charitable support he saw in his community helped him focus his free time on the Guardians of Justice and other worthwhile causes.

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Giving Thanks

continued from page 1

customs. However, a few weeks later, just months shy of the date he could apply for naturalization, he received a letter requiring him to report for a deportation hearing.

This was not because Charles had done anything wrong. He had applied for permanent residence based on being adopted by his uncle, and immigration overlooked the fact that he had aged out of eligibility.

Charles hired a lawyer to help him unravel the complicated situation, but nothing was resolved. He kept working and attending the Borough of Manhattan Community College. He joined the Air Force Reserve because he wanted to give back to the country that has given him so much. Eventually, early in 2012, he found LASNNY.

“I contacted the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, their trial attorneys, to see if they were willing to work with him on this case,” Brian Wang says.

While researching the situation,

Wang found that Badu would be eligible for naturalization under a special provision of the immigration laws that allow for active duty military or people serving in reserves to naturalize regardless of their status. Outside of military bases, this section of the law does not surface often, making the case more complicated than most immigration issues he handles.

“Brian assured me that America was fair and the law was on my side, and I had faith,” Charles says. “My mother said pray, pray, pray, and I did.”

While he was confident that the immigration law read in Charles’ favor, Brian did have concerns.

“Because it was such an obscure aspect of the law it might be a difficult task to convince the government



LASNNY staff attorney Brian Wang handled the case for Charles Badu.

that’s granting the benefits that this is what the law says,” Brian says.

Thus, he enlisted additional aid, asking the immigration liaison unit of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s office to advocate on behalf of Charles. The

Senator’s office worked with Immigration and Customs Enforcement to ask for their agreement to admin-

With this assistance, and diligent attention to all areas of the case... Charles Badu became a U.S. citizen

istratively close Charles’ deportation proceedings so that he could pursue his naturalization through the military. With this assistance, and diligent attention to all areas of the case, from educating involved parties on the intricacies of this law, to making sure Charles’ paperwork followed him first to Basic Training and then back to Albany, Charles Badu became a U.S. citizen on August 23rd, 2012.

The work was very satisfying, says Brian Wang, and Charles Badu is very grateful for the help. While Charles sent a thank you note to Senator Gillibrand, he wants this story to thank her and her office, as well as the judge, LASNNY, Brian Wang, and the United States.

“America’s the best,” says Charles. “It has a lot of opportunities. This country really cares about the rest of the world, and never stops helping anybody else, no matter if there’s a backlash against them.”

Charles Badu with his proud mother Veronica Yeboah



*18th Annual
Holiday
Party*

**December 13, 2012
6:00- 8:00 pm**

The Hampton Inn
Downtown Albany
Catered by Yono's
SANTA will be stopping by!

See page 10 for information

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Donate to the 2012
Justice for All Campaign
online at www.lasnny.org
or use the enclosed envelope



printed on recycled paper

Building for the future

F. Michael Tucker values volunteering, especially with the Legal Aid Society.

“The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York has been an organization I’ve supported throughout my career as a real estate developer, lawyer and now as a nonprofit executive,” says Tucker, who is President and CEO of the Center for Economic Growth, and also a member of Governor Cuomo’s Capital Region Economic Development Council. The Center for Economic Growth is an economic development organization serving an 11-county Tech Valley region, one of ten Regional Technology Development Centers designated by Empire State Development.

“In light of the fact that my legal background and experience were primarily

in commercial real estate and financing, I wouldn’t have been effective in providing pro bono legal services in practice areas where those services are needed the most.”

Tucker believes strongly in the importance of providing free or low cost civil legal services, education, and other support to help people overcome barriers to accessing aid.

“If someone loses their apartment and is unable to afford legal representation, it’s affecting their families. It’s affecting their ability to perform their job, and it’s affecting the cost to the court system,” he says. If, however,



a person has access to an attorney and some education about the legal system, then they can get their focus

back to their family and their job; this makes good sense to the business of running society. He’s championed the general cause of legal aid for the poor before the New York State Court of Appeals, and he campaigns for The Guardians of Justice to help LASNNY fulfill its mission.

“You get to an age in your own life where you realize that you have the opportunity to do something long term in addition to whatever financial support you’re able to provide

continues on page 10