

*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

*inside:*

**Justice Served**  
 Albany Law Clinic succeeds in unemployment claim . . . . .4

**Tom O'Connor**  
 If it's not a challenge, it's not Tom . . . . .6

**A Family Affair**  
 A family commits to supporting LAS . . . . .8



*Patricia Miller (center) with her son and LAS attorney Susan Griskonis.*

**Ready to Act  
 Ready to Help**

It may seem trivial: A family court petition that would require a mother to instruct her children to draw pictures for their father, not merely to send on to him any pictures they might draw for him on their own.

For Patricia Miller, it was anything but trivial. It was part of an ongoing pattern of harassment, a campaign of fear, being waged by her ex-husband from his prison cell. For years she had endured his stalking, abuse, rape, kidnapping of their children, threats. She feared she would be the victim of the even more violent crimes he committed against others when he disappeared. Even when he was in prison, he kept hauling her into court over custody issues.

When Patricia came to Legal Aid, she was afraid, but ready to act.

Legal Aid attorney Susan Griskonis was ready to help. "She knew every part of what was going on and what to do," says Patricia. "She actually

listened to me...I was scared of everything before I went to Susan. She made me feel like everything wasn't my fault."

Patricia first sought out Legal Aid for help getting a divorce. After shepherding the divorce through (he was fighting it), Susan spoke with the DA's office and secured an order of protection by compiling a package of evidence that included blood-soaked letters he had sent from prison. As his parole date approached, Susan advocated with the prison system to alert Patricia and her local law enforcement if he cut his GPS monitoring bracelet.

The flexibility to make a case like this a priority and do such advocacy is a key benefit of working under the domestic

*continues on page 5*

# Legal Aid's Legacy



I recently had the opportunity to meet Jonathan Harvey, the son of one of my forbears, Arthur Harvey. As many of you may know, Arthur Harvey was the long time Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society; he personally represented thousands of low income people during his tenure.

Arthur Harvey was never afraid to fight for the underdog. He readily represented hunger marchers and took on the Corning machine when he represented Paul Robeson, guar-

## client victories that I think would have made Arthur Harvey proud of Legal Aid today

anteeing his right to perform in the City of Albany. He led the Legal Aid Society as it embraced new areas of law—representing in matrimonials, introducing local legislation to protect debtors, handling the first bankruptcies. The first infusion of federal

funds to support free civil legal services was presided over by Arthur Harvey as part of Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. More than anything though, Jonathan remembers that his father was always available to clients facing emergencies, whether it be physical safety due to domestic violence or eviction from a home—at all hours, day or night his dad was at his client's side.

Given this modeling, it isn't surprising to find that Mr. Harvey's sons also became lawyers and it didn't take long for Jonathan to inquire about our work today. Jonathan wanted to know if Legal Aid lawyers still leave the courtroom and take their client's hand, showing respect, support and appreciation; he wanted to know if we work late, into the night, to better serve our clients; and he wanted to hear a client's story, to hear what a Legal Aid lawyer does today to improve their client's life.

I went home that night with a new appreciation for the history of this great organization. And, as I spent the next few nights preparing our annual report to the Interest on Lawyer Account (IOLA) Fund, I found myself immersed in the client victories that I think would have made Arthur Harvey proud of Legal Aid today. A few of our recent victories include:

- The homeless man with severe mental illness—it was Legal Aid that invested the time to work with his case managers to get him medical care and then represented him and won SSI benefits.
- Stopping a foreclosure for a woman whose lender—without explanation—stopped taking our client's mortgage payments.

- The victim of domestic violence who won not only an order of protection and custody of her children, but also increased child support when her Legal Aid lawyer was able to prove that her husband had hidden income.

I too am proud of the repeated and often unrecognized examples of expert representation, persistence and tremendous empathy for our clients. In this we honor Arthur Harvey and all those who continue to fight for the underdog!

We've just closed out our JFA Campaign for 2008. My deepest thanks to the law firm and corporate leaders who understand the importance of ensuring that there will always be smart and passionate lawyers at Legal Aid to provide justice for all. To all our friends and supporters, Namaste—I honor the light within you.

### 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  
 Nutrition Outreach & Education  
 Owning is Power  
 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:

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

## Legal Aid matters

### June 2009

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

#### Offices:

55 Colvin Avenue, Albany, NY 12206  
 (518) 462-6765, (800) 462-2922

1 Kimball St., Amsterdam, NY 12010  
 (518) 842-9466, (800) 821-8347

17 Hodskin St., Canton, NY 13617  
 (315) 386-4586, (800) 822-8283

100 Court St., P.O. Box 989  
 Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
 (518) 563-4022, (800) 722-7380

112 Spring St., Suite 109  
 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
 (518) 587-5188, (800) 870-8343

# JUSTICE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN

## 2008 Campaign Co-Chairs

E. Stewart Jones Jr. and Thomas J. O'Connor

### Campaign Leadership \$225 or more per firm attorney

Anderson, Moschetti & Taffany  
Arroyo Copland & Associates  
Assaf & Mackenzie  
Balzer & Leary  
Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes  
Bond, Schoeneck & King  
Buckley, Mendleson & Criscione  
Cannon Heyman & Weiss  
Capasso & Massaroni  
Carlisle Carrothers & Clough  
Carter, Conboy, Case, Blackmore, Maloney & Laird  
Dreyer Boyajian  
E. Stewart Jones Law Firm \*  
Englert, Coffey, McHugh & Fantuzzi  
Friedman, Hirschen & Miller  
Girvin & Ferlazzo  
Goldberg and Gottheim  
Gordon Tepper & DeCoursey  
Greenberg Traurig\* †  
Hacker & Murphy  
Harris & Conway  
Heslin Rothenberg Farley & Mesiti  
Hinman Straub  
Hiscock & Barclay\*

Iseman, Cunningham, Riester & Hyde  
Kindlon Shanks & Associates  
Law Office of Elizabeth M. Walsh  
Law Office of Geri Pomerantz  
Law Office of Patricia Rodriguez  
Law Office of Stephen Johnston  
Law Offices of Jean Mahserjian  
Law Office of Sherri L. Vertucci  
Martin, Harding & Mazzotti  
McNamee, Lochner, Titus & Williams  
Nixon Peabody  
O'Connell & Aronowitz  
Rapport, Meyers, Whitbeck, Shaw & Rodenhausen  
Reed & Vella  
Rosenblum, Ronan, Kessler & Sarachan  
Sneeringer, Monahan, Provost, & Redgrave  
St Lawrence County Bar Association  
Thuillez, Ford, Gold, Johnson & Butler  
Tully Rinckey  
Whiteman Osterman & Hanna\*  
Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker  
Young Sommer Ward  
Ritzenberg Baker & Moore

### Firms under \$225 per attorney

Boies, Schiller and Flexner  
Couch White  
Harris Beach  
Hodgson Russ  
Lavelle & Finn  
Law Office of Mark Schneider  
Nolan & Heller  
Roemer, Wallens & Mineaux

### Corporate Leaders

General Electric Foundation \*  
Nigro Companies  
Pfizer, Inc.

### Advocates

#### Individual Gifts Over \$250

John L. Allen and Mary D. Allen  
David Blabey  
Ira M. Bloom  
John B. Casey  
Eleanor DeCoursey  
Garrett DeGraff  
George H. Kleinberger  
Timothy P. Morrison  
Julie Novkov  
Thomas J. O'Connor  
Susan C. Picotte  
Geri Pomerantz  
James R. Sandner  
Ken Larsen & Leslie Thiele  
Lawrence A. Zimmerman

### Individual Gifts of \$250

James B. Ayers  
Jeffrey S. Baker  
Joseph S. Basloe  
Frank Bifera  
David A. Brusio  
Robert Colborn  
Deane M. Cooke  
Thomas K. Duane  
Stephen Easter  
Ronald Kim  
Dawnald R. Henderson  
Leonard Herman  
Katheryn D. Katz  
George H. Kleinberger  
Mark Lansing  
John J. McGrath  
Lillian M. Moy  
Miriam Netter  
Alexander Powhida  
James R. Sandner  
James Sevinsky  
Peter Schiff  
Wendy L. Wahlberg  
Jerry Weiss  
G. Kimball Williams  
William & Mary Yates

\* designates gift of \$10,000 or more

† sponsor of Equal Justice Works Fellow

## NY Bar Foundation gives \$10,000 to Foreclosure Prevention Project



New York Bar Foundation Board Director Chris Cioffi presents the check to Tim Morrison, President of LASNNY Board of Directors, and Lillian Moy.

## St Lawrence County law firm first in county to become Justice for All Campaign Leader.



Preston Carlisle presents \$1,000 check on behalf of Carlisle, Carrothers and Clough. Left to Right: Molly Clough, Alice Carrothers, Preston Carlisle, Lillian Moy and Mindy McDermott.

## Justice Served



PROFILE: *PAI volunteer*

Imagine a coworker unfairly charging you with misusing vacation time, with stealing and eventually with sexual harassment. You protest and, although you are cleared of each charge, the poisonous climate takes its toll. After two years of injustice, you resign.

Then you file for unemployment benefits and enter another maze when your claim is denied.

This was the situation for Tolga Morawski before he was referred to the Albany Law School Clinic and Justice Center by the Legal Aid Society.

Navigating the legal system was frustrating—he had researched case law, found corroboration with his former supervisor and represented himself at an unemployment hearing that lasted only ten minutes. He needed a lawyer for the final appeal; private attorneys did not want his case even though he risked a significant amount of money.

“I was unemployed; \$10,500 was on the line and I was pretty nervous. Employers try to drag it out, wear you out. But on principle I really wanted to win. My good name was at stake,” he said.

So seven months after he filed for unemployment, Tolga met with Professor Benjie Louis, director of the Introduction to Litigation Clinic at Albany Law School. “I felt my

chances were dwindling. It’s very infrequent that they take an appeal case, but Benjie chose to take this one. She’s wonderful. And she’s very pragmatic.”

Paul Pavelock, then a law student enrolled in the Clinic, represented Tolga, filing a brief to the Unemployment Appeal Board.

**“..it was such a harrowing experience. I definitely would have lost without them.”**

“Paul’s letter and his presentation were really wonderful, said Tolga. “He was very thorough; Benjie kept an eye on everything. It resulted in an appeal.”

The Appeal Board reopened the claim, allowed a witness to testify,” said Benjie. “It was a great victory.”

At the final appeal hearing, Tolga heard testimony from the individual responsible for the smear campaign against him. “He admitted under oath that I had been cleared of sexual harassment charges, yet he continued to tell people I was a rapist. I almost broke down in the courtroom. It’s one thing to hear innuendo, something else to get this confirmed.

*Paul Pavelock (left) helped Tolga Morawski (right) successfully resolve his unemployment claim.*

He admitted he was trying to get me fired.”

“My former boss confirmed that I had tried at every stage. I’d gotten to the end of my rope.”

This time the judge found in Tolga’s favor. “It was really a great moment,” he said.

“When benefits were finally released, I had been unemployed for 9–10 months, living with my mom, watching every penny,” Tolga said.

“Representation in this case was important because he’d already gone through the process on his own,” said Benjie. Paul helped him to get the case reopened. It’s what we are trained to do. Having counsel at an administrative hearing is a great thing.”

“Tolga was a very good advocate for himself,” said Paul. “That was a key factor in winning his case.”

“My role was to research the law and apply it,” said Paul. “Employees are often awarded unemployment benefits if they resign due to health reasons. We convinced the judge that Tolga’s stress was a medical condition, significant in his decision leave his employment.” Paul also arranged for Tolga’s supervisor to testify, a key factor in the judge’s decision.

“Having Benjie and Paul was a game changer,” said Tolga. “Looking back, it was such a harrowing experience. I definitely would have lost without them.”

“It’s a great, great thing that the clinic exists. I donated to Legal Aid Society for this reason. I want the next person to have this opportunity.”



*Albany Law’s Prof. Benjie Louis*

## PAI News and Notes

May is here and the flowers are starting to blossom, just like the needs of the people we serve every day. Like our economy, we function based on supply and demand. Ironically, the economy is what seems to drive the demand of legal services for the needy. This requires us to supply excellent legal services to represent those facing foreclosure or financial dilemma, in need of unemployment benefits or too disabled to work.

The Legal Aid Society, with the help of the Albany County Bar Association and The Legal Project want to make sure that you, our dedicated volunteers, have the training needed to serve our clients with these pressing legal needs.

With the gracious support of the Honorable George Ceresia, the Third Judicial District Administrative Judge, we will be holding multiple trainings this year. The trainings started to take place in May. We had them in the areas of unemployment, family court and foreclosure. Trainings will continue as follows:

- June 23, 2009: “*Representing Home owners at Mandatory Settlement Conferences*” (Albany)

- June 2009: *Training on Wills, Health Care Proxies & Power of Attorneys* (Albany)

In the Fall, we are hoping to have trainings in the areas of Bankruptcy and Landlord Tenant Law.

- December 5, 2009: “*Representing Victims of Domestic Violence in Family Court*” (Albany)

As a valued member of the PAI Program, you may come to these trainings and earn CLE at no cost. We simply ask that you take a pro bono case or two in the area that you are trained in. Of course, there are mentors available to you for any questions that you may have, and, we are always here to assist you in any way we can! Please check out our website at [www.lasny.org](http://www.lasny.org) for any updates. Or give Tiffani or me a call at any time.

Now more than ever we need and cherish your support. Remember, together we make a BIG difference!

Thankfully,

Kristie M. Cinelli, PAI Paralegal  
518-589-6322, [kcinelli@lasny.org](mailto:kcinelli@lasny.org)  
Tiffani Thomas, PAI Paralegal  
518-589-6344, [tthomas@lasny.org](mailto:tthomas@lasny.org)  
Linda LaRue, PAI Paralegal  
315-386-4586, [llarue@lasny.org](mailto:llarue@lasny.org)

## Ready

*continued from page 1*

violence grant at Legal Aid, says Susan. It proved important. Patricia's ex-husband did cut his bracelet, two weeks after release. The plan worked: Patricia was moved to safe housing immediately, and he was captured and returned to prison.

But it wasn't over. He filed new family court petitions, including the item about the drawings. Because this was an ongoing pattern, Susan went beyond preparing arguments to get the frivolous charges of the moment dismissed. Though family court testimony is usually restricted to the time frame of the alleged violation, she prepared to use any chance to educate the judge about the real context of the case. “It was important to get the evidence relating to abuse, stalking, and his threats of violence on the record,” she explains. When an opening arose in court, she was ready with prepared questions and evidence to submit.

Although she and Susan had practiced, this was terrifying for Patricia, but in the end it was also empowering. “She testified about things over the course of years,” says Susan. “Things he didn't know—times she lied and hid from him, sought safety. She was amazing.”

“Susan gave me the confidence I needed to stand up to him,” says Patricia. The judge ruled quickly and firmly in Patricia's favor, but more importantly, says Susan, “Now the court knows. At the end there was a sympathy for her that will be helpful in the future. And there will be a future.”

Patricia is thinking about the future too. “Now instead of just being scared, I've been thinking of ways to protect ourselves,” she says. “I know now there are people out there who are helping us, who understand.”

## Thanks to the following attorneys who have accepted cases

*From January 1 through March 31, 2009:*

### Albany County:

Richard Abbott  
Albany Law School  
(25)  
David Blabey  
Guy Criscione (2)  
Michael Figgsganter  
Daniel Hurteau  
Richard Kohn  
Kathy McCullough  
Day  
Michael J. O'Connor  
(3)  
Thomas Welsh

### Clinton:

Donald Biggs  
Cheryl Maxwell (4)

### Columbia:

John Connor

### Greene:

Veronica Kosich

### Montgomery:

Sherri Vertucci

### Rensselaer:

Tony Arcodia &  
Marc Ehrlich (1)

### St. Lawrence:

Ramona Breen  
Molly Clough  
Jerry Leek  
Peter Lekki  
Charles Nash  
Thomas Wheeler

### Saratoga:

David Devall  
James Doern  
Ronald Kim  
Emily Mueller

### Schenectady:

Eleanor Decoursey  
Peter McHugh  
Schenectady County  
Bar Association

### Warren:

John Caffry

### Pro Se Divorce Clinic

Richard Gardner (28)  
Geri Pomerantz (4)

### Albany & Rensselaer County Assigned Counsel Program

\*\**(R)*=Rensselaer

Michael Assaf  
Chad Balzer (R)  
Michael Biscone  
Murray Carr  
Susan Civic

Gloria Copland  
Nicole Helmer

Melody Mackenzie  
Maney, McConville  
& Liccardi

Maynard, O'Connor,  
Smith & Catalinatto

Philip C. Miller  
Nestler & Gibson

Louis Jack Pozner  
Florence Richardson (R)

Kathleen Robichaud  
(R)

Justine Spada  
Michael R. Traynor

Paul VanRyn  
Bruce Wagner

# Tom O'Connor thrives on challenges

He challenges himself as an athlete, beginning most of his days with a run and, three days a week, playing intensely competitive racquetball. “We’re both kind of fanatical,” he said of his regular racquetball partner. “He’s always been a better player. If I win, it’s a huge victory. I like the challenge.”



PROFILE: *board member*

## Legal Aid Society Board of Directors

John Caffry, Esq.	Michael J. Levato, Esq.
Gene Chatterton	Timothy P. Morrison, Esq.
Eleanor DeCoursey, Esq.	Thomas J. O'Connor, Esq.
Stephen Johnston, Esq.	Nicholas Pignone, Esq.
Donna Jones	Sandra Robinson
E. Stewart Jones, Jr., Esq.	Keith C. St. John, Esq.
Karen Kenison	Andrew Schrader, Esq.
Ronald J. Kim, Esq.	Paula Slater-Hurd
Amelia M. Klein, Esq.	Sherri L. Vertucci, Esq.
Cathy Lawrence	Joyce M. Zeitler, Esq.
Ann Leigh	

“JFA is just a fantastic idea. It gives us a vehicle for lawyers in general to participate in the Legal Aid Society, and it’s something everyone can do. Sometimes individuals hesitate to do *pro bono* work. They might feel that their skills don’t transfer. While the campaign isn’t a substitute for *pro bono* work, it’s an adjunct. It’s a very well received program. Most firms we approach realize how sensible it is. We’d like to see 100% of firms contributing. Eighty percent is attainable, starting with the largest firms.” “It’s great to have Tom on our Board of Directors. He can now bring the enormous energy he brings to our Justice for All campaign to our governing Board as well,” says Lillian M. Moy, the Society’s Director.

it’s possible, but I’ve skied and played golf on the same weekend. It’s not only in California that that’s possible.”

He has two sons and a granddaughter. One son works as a middle school teacher in Schenectady and the other lives in Denver and works as an IT consultant. “I don’t have unusual hobbies, he said, “I’m plain vanilla.” As co-chair of JFA and a board member since January, Tom names the Legal Aid Society as his main involvement.

“I have done *pro bono* work over the years, but I haven’t done enough to satisfy my own standards. It’s a professional obligation to ensure that no one is denied access [to the courts]. How one reacts to this obligation, to what extent one reacts, that’s when the rubber meets the road.”

He’s also taken on the challenge of “doubling, tripling, quadrupling” the number of law firms that participate in the Justice for All campaign, which he co-chairs.

Justice for those who are denied access to legal services is one of his passions. And it’s the Legal Aid Society that provides this access most effectively, he says. “Now it’s often the working poor who are affected. A family can have income well over the poverty level and yet not afford legal services. Our system is too expensive. The Legal Aid Society is able to reach less than half of those who need legal services. It’s scandalous.”

Currently the program generates 4 – 5% of LASNNY income, the start of a steady financial base for the organization.

Tom came to Albany as a college student from Westchester County in 1968 and never left. “I love the area,” he said. “I love the outdoors—skiing, kayaking, boating, climbing, backpacking. I’ve climbed only 11 of the 46 peaks, and I want to climb them all. I pray for snow! No one thinks

## Funding:

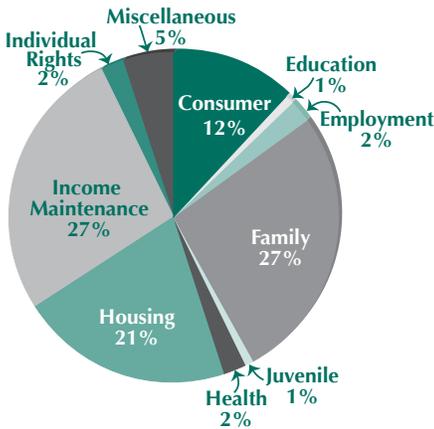
The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York is funded by grants from the Legal Services Corporation, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Interest on Lawyer Account Fund of the State of New York, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, New York State Legislature, NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, NYS Department of Health, 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, City of Albany, Bank of America as trustee for the Frederick McDonald Trust, New York State Bar Foundation, United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Legal Aid Society of Rochester, Albany Law School, Nutrition Consortium of the State of New York, The Community Foundation for the Capital Region’s Sara Huntington Catlin Memorial Fund, Greenberg Traurig Fellowship Foundation, Assemblyman Robert Reilly Salary Fund, Equal Justice Works, NYS Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal, NYS Division of Banking, Law Firms and private contributors through the Justice for All Campaign.

*Legal Aid matters because...*

Legal Aid is crucial in providing equal access to justice—an essential component of liberty

—Lisa J. Nigro,  
Nigro Companies

**TYPES OF CASES**

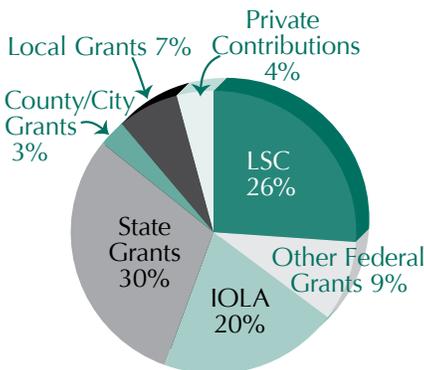


In 2008, 90% of Legal Aid’s expenditures provided direct program services to clients, and 55,709 people benefitted from our information and referral, advice, brief service, extended representation and community legal education — in print, in person and on line.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008**

- ✓ LASNNY staff increased services by 19%: closed 7,329 cases and had 2,749 cases pending at the end of 2008, at an average cost of \$632 per case.
- ✓ Continued to deliver high quality advice and brief service through our telephone intake system; closed 3,205 cases in 2008.
- ✓ Closed 395 pro bono cases and referred 406 new cases to private attorneys on our Private Attorney Involvement panel, and to volunteer and assigned counsel in our Pro Bono Divorce Projects.
- ✓ Won 262 SSI/SSD cases: clients received \$4,229,522 in retroactive recovery; an additional \$731,762 was recovered in interim public assistance benefits—saving NYS taxpayers \$1,391,490.
- ✓ Handled 926 cases through domestic violence programs.
- ✓ Prevented homelessness for 333 households benefitting 909 low income people.
- ✓ Launched collaborative Foreclosure Prevention Project designed to assist low and moderate income homeowners threatened with foreclosure.

**REVENUE**



Legal Services Corporation.....	\$1,302,034.00
Other Federal Grants.....	452,384.00
Interest on Lawyer Account.....	1,024,577.00
State Grants .....	1,534,547.67
County/City Grants .....	161,313.92
Local Grants.....	365,628.98
Private Contributions.....	213,771.60
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$5,054,257.17</b>

**EXPENSES**

<b>Personnel:</b>	
Lawyers .....	\$1,756,812
Non Lawyers.....	1,105,910
Fringe Benefits .....	779,761
<b>Operating:</b>	
Space & Utilities .....	141,013
Office & Related Expenses.....	183,584
Contract Services.....	233,457
Library .....	54,650
Client Litigation Expenses.....	6,173
Travel & Training .....	121,975
Miscellaneous .....	246,186
Subtotal.....	4,629,520.00
Fund Balance .....	424,737.17
<b>Total Expenses and Fund Balance .....</b>	<b>\$5,054,257.17</b>

See the 2008  
**JUSTICE  
FOR ALL**  
CAMPAIGN  
LEADERSHIP  
on page 3



## A Family Commitment

Alex and Morgan Ruthman grew up steeped in the idea that equal access to justice is an important value. To their father, Rex Ruthman, a Capital Region attorney who practices construction law, “The idea of equal access to justice was just critical,” says Alex, who works in his father’s office. “He saw inequality, privilege, and money skewing outcomes unfairly.” “We got a lot of speeches from my father,” he adds.

They also saw a lot of leading by example. Rex served on the board of Legal Aid from 1979 to 1984 and he and his wife Elisabeth have been active in giving back to the community in many ways, from participating in leadership mentoring with SUNY Albany students to supporting the arts. So it only made sense that the Ruthmans, as a family, would choose to support LASNNY’s Legacy Fund



*Elisabeth and Rex Ruthman with sons Alex (left) and Morgan.*

with a generous gift that will be dedicated to helping repay the school loans of young lawyers who choose to work for LASNNY. “I am so grateful for the support of the entire Ruthman family. A commitment to equal justice is exactly the kind of value we all hope we teach our children,” says Lillian M. Moy, the Society’s Director.

The Legacy Fund allows supporters to make a contribution that will become part of a permanent endowment, which was important to the Ruthmans. “We’re glad this is not a one-time gesture, but part of a longer term investment,” says Alex. As part of the endowment fund, income from the Ruthman Family gift will be used to support loan repayment.

Allowing talented young lawyers burdened with school debt the chance to work for LASNNY has a double benefit, explains Morgan, who himself is about to graduate from Albany Law School. “Obviously it will benefit those who might not have the financial luxury to take a job with Legal Aid, especially in the current economic climate. But it will also will help the clients who rely on them for services and for access to justice.”