

*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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**A Matter of Trust**

*LAS advocate earns trust and bolsters resolve of domestic violence victim*

Lori talks about her Domestic Violence Advocate and her Legal Aid Society attorney like they saved her life.

They just might have.

Not only was Lori being threatened by her husband with a gun but she was also considering taking her own life.

She says, "It's very hard. You feel like you're all alone. You're scared to death, and there's no where to turn."

Law enforcement was limited in its ability to protect Lori because her husband had the right to be wherever he wanted to be, and Lori's previous attorney failed to address her abuser's access to a gun.

She felt hopeless, was skeptical that anyone would help her.

But Catholic Charities domestic violence advocate Barbara Russell introduced Lori to the Legal Aid Society's Carlotta Palmer, and according to Lori, Carlotta established trust from the very first meeting.

On the spot, she began making phone calls to remove the gun. Lori says, "[Carlotta] was looking out for my safety immediately. I knew this lawyer's different. This person means what [she] says."

Still, Lori was in danger. One night Carlotta says, "[Lori's husband] was yelling at her and pushing her around, hitting her. In the kitchen, he stepped on her feet to hold her [against the wall], took a shotgun and started ramming it into her shoulders, threaten-

ing that he was going to kill her."

Carlotta calls this "a day in the life of Lori" and says it is one of the worst domestic violence cases she's seen.

Carlotta says, initially, "[Lori] was very quiet and just relayed facts, like she was in a state of shock." That changed over time. Lori gained strength as she worked with Barbara and Carlotta, a team relationship built not only on thorough preparation for court but also on answering questions and calls reliably and respectfully, providing consistent—and persistent—reassurance and achieving a victory early-on. At the very first hearing, Carlotta successfully petitioned

*continues on page 7*



The Legal Aid Society's 85th Anniversary celebration was an incredible night! The Fort Orange Club was filled to capacity. Our timeline traced our highlights from our founding as the Legal Aid Society of Albany in 1923 to our 85th Anniversary in 2008. I was reminded that we were born of Albany's finest. Our founding fathers included the Hon. William Hackett, Mayor of Albany, Rev. Joseph Scully, and Times Union columnist, Leo Doody. Reading our Annual Reports from the 1930s and 1940s, the roots of our current day operations are easily seen: a commitment to helping women and children and other vulnerable members of our society; the need to tell the story of Legal Aid so that everyone would know how our services enhance our clients' self-sufficiency; the desire to connect to others around the nation who were also working to gain justice for poor people. From our earliest days, we met head-on the new challenges each decade brought: handling our first domestic relations cases; the initiation of an unemploy-

ment insurance appeals program; referrals to the Albany County Bar Association; providing training opportunities for Albany Law School students; responding to the urgent needs of World War II by representing active military and veterans; ensuring activist Paul Robeson's right to perform in Albany; establishing through litigation the first warranty of habitability; responding to the needs of rural domestic violence victims who would otherwise go without legal representation.

The premiere of the rough cut of Legal Aid Matters also made our celebration special—it brings to the screen why and how Legal Aid protects and defends the neediest among us. I hope you will invite me to screen Legal Aid Matters at your law firm, bar association, community agency, house party or town hall.

My thanks to all of the members of the Honorary Committee and our sponsors, and in particular, our Gold Sponsors, Bond, Schoeneck & King, LLP and the Jones Law Firm. E. Stewart Jones has once again demonstrated his incredible generosity to the Legal Aid Society. Read his profile in this issue of *Legal Aid Matters*.

Our continued best wishes to our awardees, G. Kimball Williams, who received the Distinguished Service Award and Miriam Netter who received the Inaugural Ruth M. Miner Award. If you missed our celebration, please see the photos at [www.lasnny.org](http://www.lasnny.org), and in this newsletter.

June has also brought the end of the legislative season, and good news from several of our oldest friends. The Society is grateful to the Assembly Majority, and in particularly, Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein. Assemblymembers Ron Canestrari, Jack McEneny and Bob Reilly, for ensuring restoration of core funding for civil legal services. In addition, we are grateful to the following legislators for continuing their individ-

ual support for the work of the Society: Senator Neil Breslin, Senator Joseph Bruno, Senator Hugh Farley, Senator Stephen Saland and Assemblywoman Dede Scozzafava.

We were recently handed a challenge with respect to maintaining the Albany Law School's Litigation Clinic, a clinic through which law students have represented Legal Aid Society clients with unemployment insurance claims. New funding is needed to support the continued existence of this clinic. If you have a suggestion for fundraising for this important project, I would appreciate your thoughts. Please email me at [Imoy@lasnny.org](mailto:Imoy@lasnny.org).

Finally I would like to offer my sincere thanks to departing Justice for All Campaign co-chair Kim Williams under whose leadership our annual

fundraising campaign thrived throughout the past two years. This year Stu Jones is joined as co-chair by Tom O'Connor of Hiscock Barclay. We

hope that you will give generously to the campaign at a time when many people in our region are facing an increased need for legal services.

## Legal Aid matters

### September 2008

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

### 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)



# Thomas J. O'Connor: New Justice for All Co-Chair

*Managing Director of Hiscock Barclay joins E. Stewart Jones as Campaign Co-Chair.*



*Tom graduated from Albany Law School in 1974, and upon leaving the Schenectady DA's office in 1978, joined Bouck Holloway Kiernan & Casey where he worked on insurance related litigation. The firm joined with Hiscock & Barclay in January 2004 and he became Managing Director of Hiscock & Barclay's Albany office in January 2006.*

“My first contact with the Justice for All Campaign came from my association with Hiscock & Barclay since the firm had participated in the Justice for All Campaign (JFA) from its beginning in 2004.

“I found the concept to be very compelling. The idea of the private bar raising funds to provide an annual supplement to Legal Aid’s budget resonated with me for a number of reasons. First, the need was very obvious since LASNNY was unable to meet the demands of even 50% of its target client base. Second, although the involvement of attorneys in pro bono work was growing, it was falling far short of meeting the need for a variety of reasons. While not a substitute for pro bono work, I believe that the JFA campaign is a way for every attorney to help alleviate this problem. Third, LASNNY is a great investment. LASNNY’s fine lawyers and professional staff are both ef-

fective and efficient in carrying out their mission of providing free legal services to those that often cannot even afford to consult with an attorney. In 2007 LASNNY’s average cost to close a case was \$650.

“Although Kim Williams will be a hard act to follow, I am looking forward to working with Stu Jones and the other members of the Campaign leadership to continue to grow the Campaign and increase the number of people LASNNY can assist in our community.”



## Were You There?

Over 175 prominent community leaders attended the June 5 celebration of LASNNY’s 85th Anniversary. View our slide show at [www.lasnny.org](http://www.lasnny.org).

## LASNNY Unveils New Video

### Legal Aid Matters

View it on our website and youtube. A powerful look at the work and history of Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York. Approx. 11 minutes.

To request a presentation and viewing contact 689-6336 or [dgrimaldi@lasnny.org](mailto:dgrimaldi@lasnny.org).

## Leave a Legacy of Justice

### The Legal Aid Endowment Fund

Housed at the Community Foundation for the Capital Region

### Sample Bequest Available

Sample language to use when designating your bequest is available on the “Legacy Partnership Endowment” page on our website: [www.lasnny.org](http://www.lasnny.org).

## 2008 JUSTICE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN Donation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Firm: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daytime Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

- Please **do not** acknowledge my gift publicly
- Please sign me up to volunteer to take a case
- Please send me information on the Legal Aid Legacy Endowment

- Yes, our firm wants to be **Campaign Leadership**: \_\_\_\_\_ attorneys at \$200 each
  - Yes, we want to be a **Corporate Leader**: minimum \$5,000
- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Pacesetter: \$5,000 | <input type="radio"/> Help 1 Family: \$650 | <input type="radio"/> Supporter: \$125 |
| <input type="radio"/> Sustainer: \$1,000  | <input type="radio"/> Advocate: \$250      | <input type="radio"/> Other: \$ _____  |

Please charge to:  Visa  Mastercard Acct # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_  
 Security Code (last 3 digits in signature box on back of card) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York**

# PAI program prevents Greene County woman from becoming homeless

You are a fighter. You have to be. You are legally blind and a physical handicap restricts you to a wheel chair.

And then your husband of 28 years steals your disability checks and stops paying the mortgage. You realize he has both a gambling problem and a mistress, but your disability prevents you from securing spousal support because you are unable to file the necessary paperwork and visit the proper court.

Enter Michael Friedman, a lawyer with the Legal Aid Society's Private Attorney Involvement program.

"Thank God for Mike," says Joann Rassier. The story you just experienced is hers.

"To me it was rather astounding that you had a person who had been married to a woman for a long period of time who was dependent upon him and did not want to even pay the mortgage so that she wouldn't be put on the street," says Mike about Joann's husband.

"[My husband] left me with nothing," says Joann. She was at risk of being thrown out of her own home and having to struggle to find a new place that could meet her special requirements. She calls the task "an impossibility."

Disgusted by her husband's negligence and frustrated by the rural court's failure to be truly handicap accessible, Mike was motivated to fight hard for Joann.

He made trips to Joann's home in Greene County to process paperwork, and he convinced the court to accommodate her by allowing her to testify over the phone. For her part, Joann diligently gathered evidence of gambling and adultery and passed documentation along to Mike.

All of Joann and Mike's hard work resulted in a court order for Joann's husband to pay her spousal support.



## PROFILE: PAI volunteer

But if there weren't enough complicating factors in this case, Joann's husband retired from his job in an attempt to avoid paying. One of his mistresses whom he called his wife

was from another country, and he had threatened to disappear with her in the past. There was a possibility that if he received a retirement payout, he would flee.

In the end, the judge threatened Joann's husband with incarceration if he failed to pay. He now has a second job so that he can meet his legal obligation to his wife.

Mike says, "I was happy we were able to enforce a petition against retirement funds. [It's] a unique kind of challenge because generally you're only able to enforce against regular income."

"Mike did a fantastic job. I can stay at the house. I can pay the mortgage," says Joann, who continues to work hard on her own behalf. She has experience in transcription and recently took a refresher course so she can take jobs and do transcription at home.

Mike says Joann's also a wonderful artist who uses her computer to create paintings she has exhibited in the community. He says, "She's quite an interesting person, very intelligent. She's just been dealt a bad hand."

Michael Friedman has been involved with the Legal Aid Society since the 1970s when he was still a student at Albany Law School. His volunteer work for the organization is part of Mike's larger commitment to donate his services to people in need in the community. He says, "Pro bono legal services should always be an important part of the practice of law, and I've committed myself personally to that to a rather unusual degree."

His personal life (Mike is a father and a husband who makes his home in Voorheesville) is calm by comparison. He says simply, "I have a fairly normal life. That's all."

## Trainings:

### Debt Collection and Consumer Rights

#### CLE Training

September 19, 2008

11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

At Angelo's 677 Prime, Albany

Looking for an opportunity to make a difference without spending a lot of time doing it? Prepare yourself to assist seniors (and others) in an informal seminar setting. We provide the prospective clients and the coffee!

Sponsored by the Albany County Bar Association and LASNNY. Funded by the Robert Reilly Salary Fund as part of the Java for Justice Project.

### Representing Victims of Domestic Violence in Family Court

December 2008



## Springing into Fall

Wasn't it just yesterday that I was shoveling snow out of my driveway? We are already three-quarters of the way through 2008.

The PAI Program has grown in many ways. As most of you know, in 2008 we expanded our PAI staff to three. Cheers to Tiffani Thomas and thanks to Linda LaRue for being here so long! In addition, we have a strong and steadfast volunteer base that keeps replenishing. And, of course, the need for good legal assistance keeps growing. I am just as energized and committed to my work as I was when I first started at Legal Aid. This is the only job where I am not looking at the clock and wondering when five o'clock will get here.

In 2008, we were faced with some challenges, including the temporary closure of one of our most needed PAI programs. This resulted in our inability to assist numerous clients with their unemployment matters. Luckily, the Albany Law School's Litigation Clinic reopens in September and our clients will have access to representation in unemployment cases. It is amazing how much we rely on each other to do what we do and I hope we can get support to maintain this program in the future. Even with this setback, we were still able to place over 200 cases so far this year. Of course, this does not count the volunteers who take cases through our Assigned Counsel program, via appointment by the Court in Albany and Rensselaer Counties. Great Job!

On the "News" front, we are in the process of implementing our newest PAI project affectionately called, "Java and Justice" and plan to have a training to recruit volunteers on September 19, 2008. The training is focusing on consumer law issues, such as clients' rights in debt collection matters and the Fair Debt Collections Act (FDCPA). Our bankruptcy training last year was a wonderful success and we are hoping for the same with this one. The program will allow clients to be educated by an attorney in a group setting at a comfortable location, such as a senior center, while enjoying a nice cup of java. It will also give them the opportunity to talk to an attorney one on one. We are

very excited about this. If you would like more information, contact me directly at 518-689-6322 or [kcinelli@lasnny.org](mailto:kcinelli@lasnny.org).

Here's to the start of the final stretch of 2008... I am looking forward to it!

Thankfully,

Kristie M. Cinelli  
PAI Paralegal

*Thank you to Realty Trac for providing foreclosure filings data to LASNNY.*



## Thanks to the following attorneys who have accepted cases

*From March 1, 2008 through July 31, 2008:*

### **Albany:**

Linn Baker (2)  
Richard Croak  
Jerrold Bartman (5)  
Sarah Lewis Belcher  
Diane Bresee  
Christopher Buckey  
Elizabeth Byrne-Chartrand  
Erin Kate Calicchia  
Guy Criscione Jr (2)  
Christian Dribush  
Charles Z. Feldman  
Michael Figgsganter  
Martin S. Finn  
Nathan Goldberg  
Laura Hoffman (2)  
Gayle E. Hartz  
Daniel Hurteau  
Jim Kelly  
Amy Klein  
John Loughlin  
John F. Maxwell  
Michael J. O'Connor (7)

Carrie Smith  
Kenneth G. Varley

### **Clinton:**

Cheryl Maxwell (6)

### **Columbia:**

Douglas Coleman  
Kevin Thiemann

### **Franklin:**

Judith Pareira

### **Greene:**

Edward Kaplan

### **Montgomery:**

Bethany Schumann-McGhee  
Sherri Vertucci "Pro Se Divorce Clinic"

### **Rensselaer:**

Carolyn D'Agostino  
Tony Arcodia & Marc Ehrlich (5)  
Joyce M. Galante

Robert William Johnson III  
Joseph Kay  
Geri Pomerantz (7)  
"Pro Se Divorce Clinic" & "Ask-A-Lawyer Clinic"  
Elizabeth M. Walsh

### **St. Lawrence:**

Gary Alford  
Genelle Bayer  
Alice Carrothers  
Gerald Ducharme  
Richard Gardner (23) - "Pro Se Divorce Clinic"  
Natasha Hill  
Verner Ingram  
Maureen McGraw  
Charles Nash  
Cathleen O'Horo (3)  
Thomas Wheeler (3)

### **Saratoga:**

Catherine A. Burkly

Richard Cox  
Richard F. Devall (3) "Ask-A-Lawyer Clinic"  
Kimberly Hunt  
Ronald Kim  
Alan R. LeCours (2)  
Eleanor K. Mullaney (3) - "Ask-A-Lawyer Clinic"  
Jim Doern & Stephen Rodriguez  
James P. Trainor  
Brendan Wolf

### **Schenectady:**

Schenectady Bar Association (8)  
- "Pro Se Divorce Clinic" & Referrals  
Peter Coffey  
Barbara Guzman  
Kathryn McCary  
Peter B. McHugh (3)  
Gary J. O'Connor  
Stephen Rockmacher

# Board member honors family tradition of service to the law

We've all heard the phrase: think outside of the box. As familiar as it is, it remains the best way to talk about attempts to discover new tools for addressing challenges within our communities.

Apply this to the legal profession—think outside of the courtroom—and we stumble upon the struggles of those without the means to pursue justice on their own. We also meet some people finding solutions.

## Legal Aid Society Board of Directors

Jeffrey Baker, Esq.	Cathy Lawrence
John Caffry, Esq.	Ann Leigh
Gene Chatterton	Michael Levato, Esq.
Eleanor DeCoursey, Esq.	Timothy Morrison, Esq.
Richard Gardner, Esq.	Sandra Robinson
Stephen Johnston, Esq.	Keith St. John, Esq.
Donna Jones	Andrew Schrader, Esq.
E. Stewart Jones Jr., Esq.	Paula Slater-Hurd
Karen Kenison	Sherri L. Vertucci, Esq.
Ronald J. Kim, Esq.	Joyce R. Zeitler, Esq.
Amelia M. Klein, Esq.	

Like Legal Aid Society Board Member E. Stewart Jones, Jr. whose work outside the courtroom provides resources for the individuals attorneys like himself would not be able to help without broad collaboration within the legal profession.

He says, "We've got to give [the poor] the same rights [as others] to access the civil justice system, competent representation and the opportunity to be heard. That does not happen without the Legal Aid Society and the people who work there. They can't do it by themselves. They need to be funded. Our first philanthropy as professionals should be Legal Aid Society."

Although Jones' participation in the community is diverse—he serves on a dozen boards and says he "works hard for causes related to cancer and medicine"—he believes members of the legal profession have a "moral obligation to do what we can to advance the objectives of our profession."

While attorneys can accomplish this partially through courtroom litigation, they do even more by helping organizations like the Legal Aid Society, whose work, he says, is not so different from their own.

"The lawyers such as my father, my grandfather and me and many others give people who otherwise could not compete against the corporations and the hospitals the ability to compete. We create a level playing field. We rebalance the scale. We put people back on their feet. There's no dissimilarity between what we do on behalf of our clients and what the Legal Aid Society is doing on behalf of the poor."

With clarity and passion like this, it makes sense that Jones has chaired the Legal Aid Society's Justice For All campaign since its inception in 2004. Even though his inspiration for leadership in the effort is very practical—expanding access to the courts—he is guided also by powerful emotion.

He says, "I like to think that at the end of the day I've done the right thing, that I've shared my success in a meaningful way. I've certainly had

## PROFILE: *board member*



*E. Stewart Jones, Jr. joined the firm immediately after graduating from Albany Law School in 1963. He has earned a reputation as a tireless advocate for the rights of those who have been injured, and those who have been accused of significant crimes. His firm, which is nationally known for the settlements and verdicts it has achieved for its clients, is located in Troy. It represents the third generation in a family of talented litigators with a strong tradition of community philanthropy.*

sorrow and tragedy in my life. I lost my wife far too early to cancer and my mother died much sooner than she should have, but in far measure I've been blessed and privileged. I have three wonderful children and a grand child. I've remarried. All are tremendous gifts to my life. I feel an obligation to pay back and I enjoy doing what I'm doing or else I wouldn't do it."

"I'm so grateful that Stu has joined our Board of Directors. His leadership in organizations like the Legal Aid Society and many others ensures that Capital Region residents have access to legal services, the arts, cancer support services and much more," says Lillian M. Moy, the Society's Executive Director.

## *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, Bank of America, 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, Law Firms and private contributors through the Justice for All Campaign.

## 85 Years of Justice

continued from back page

al and state grants, as well as private foundation support, individual, corporate and law firm donations and other resources. Grants have enabled LASNNY to expand the types of cases attorneys can handle, including those for victims of domestic violence, the disabled, low income children, immigrants, the homeless as well as those at risk of homelessness, to name a few.

Today's LASNNY is a far cry from the days when client files were on the floor, when clients were asked to contribute 25 cents to help pay their costs, when the executive director had to fire himself to ensure that clients would have attorneys. Today's LASNNY uses real filing cabinets and current technology. The Society is purchasing its own fully accessible

**The Society brings helpful results in cases in which its clients' property, character, happiness and even liberty are involved. It is bound to grow in good works. The years may pass, but it will keep carrying on."**

—Harold D. Alexander  
Dean, Albany Law School  
From the 1939 LAS Annual Report

buildings in Albany and Plattsburgh to house a total of 32 attorneys and 15 paralegals to provide life-changing legal assistance to their clients..

While the accoutrements may be different, the mission remains the same: *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.*

Wendy Wahlberg, who started her career at LASNNY as a VISTA volunteer attorney in 1980, says, "It's all about justice, to assist people who have been victims of economic



Awardees G. Kimball Williams and Miriam M. Netter with LASNNY Executive Director Lillian Moy. Both attorneys were honored at LASNNY's 85th Anniversary Celebration on June 5th.

injustices. We can't call ourselves lawyers if everyone doesn't have access to justice."

Eighty-five years later, helping those who seek justice may be "just an ordinary day" at the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York. However, while Ruth Miner and the 16 directors who signed the first charter forming the original organization might find today's technology to be a bit daunting, they would most certainly be proud to see that their vision lives on today.

## A Matter of Trust

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the judge for removal of the gun.

The battle for an order of protection commenced. Lori's husband wanted a one-year order without having to admit to the abuse. If she accepted the deal, Lori would not have to testify. However, based on the nature of the abuse and her husband's violent record (he had been convicted of killing other people, a fact he used to intimidate Lori and her family), Carlotta encouraged Lori to fight for a stronger order.

Lori's faith in her lawyer and advocate gave her courage. She says, "Carlotta sat on one side [of me] and Barbara sat on the other side, and I couldn't look his way. I was scared even hearing his voice, yet there was comfort because they were there. I realized

these people are fighting for my life, fighting for what had been done to me, and I need to do my part."

"In spite of the fact that her knees were wobbly, and she was shaking, she wanted to have a trial. She wanted to have the court hear what he did to her," says Carlotta.

In the end Lori never had to face cross-examination in court because her husband's defense folded. The judge "found aggravating circumstances and gave her an order of protection with a finding for three years," says Carlotta. Lori's husband had to admit what he had done.

Lori still fights tears when she recalls the incident with the gun in the kitchen. "I didn't know that day if I was going to live or die," she says.

But now, it is strength, not fear, that guides her. She has greater confidence walking down the street and going to stores, places where her husband used to corner her, and she has removed the coverings from her windows. She is telling her story and remarks on how she's noticed that talking about it has made the nightmares go away.

**...there was comfort because they were there. I realized these people are fighting for my life**

Lori says, "I need to keep moving forward trying to help myself and maybe somewhere along the line it'll help other women to realize that protecting someone that's hurting you is wrong. You don't have to live like that."

**2008**  
**JUSTICE FOR ALL**  
CAMPAIGN  
See Donation Form  
on page 3  
or donate online at  
[WWW.LASNNY.ORG](http://WWW.LASNNY.ORG)  
...also view the slide show  
from our 85th Anniversary  
Event online.



# Justice for All:

## *LASNNY's 85 Year History—concluded from last issue*

**D**enison Ray, who had gained fame for his direction of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Law, a group that won the first jury verdict in Mississippi for black plaintiffs in civil rights cases and prevailed in 10 out of 12 cases before the Mississippi Supreme Court, became executive director and chief counsel of LASNNY in 1984.

He was devoted to the concept of complete legal services for the poor. One of his goals was to re-create the 1960s movement for social justice where attorneys would become a co-equal arm in the struggle for social justice.

When Ray died unexpectedly in 1994, Wendy Wahlberg,

LASNNY's Supervising Attorney, was named interim director for a year while the organization undertook a national search for a permanent replacement. Lillian M. Moy took over the helm in 1995 and remains in that post to this day. Under her leadership LASNNY's budget has grown from under 1.3 million to 5 million dollars in 2008. In 2004, the Society merged with North Country Legal Services which had served the low income residents of the North Country since 1978.

During its 85-year existence, the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York has expanded to serve Columbia and Greene Counties, as well as five North Country counties—Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton and



*LASNNY's Deputy Director, Wendy Wahlberg, began her career in 1980 as a young VISTA Volunteer. Now, among other things, she continues the circle by training many young attorneys at the Society.*

St. Lawrence—and three counties in the Mohawk Valley—Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie—to its current service area, a total of 16 counties.

Funding sources have also become more diversified, encompassing feder-  
*continues on page 7*