OUR MISSION

The Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York is a non-profit law firm that advocates in civil matters for low income people to secure their basic needs, protect and preserve their legal rights and provide equal access to justice.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Lillian M. Moy

Serving the low-income and needy residents of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington, Columbia and Greene Counties

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Albany, NY 12206
(518) 462-6765
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Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
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Board Member Profile —
Paul Callahan

With twenty seven years as a practicing attorney and a wealth of knowledge gained by serving as a board member of various non-profit groups, Paul Callahan is qualified to succeed at many different things. But even this vast experience didn’t prepare him for the challenges of being a Legal Aid Society board member.

While Callahan has ably demonstrated that he’s up to the task, he’ll be the first to admit that working on Legal Aid’s Board of Directors is a great deal different from his other community and legal services.

“You can’t run the Legal Aid Society like a typical law office,” Callahan asserts. “You always have one foot in regulations and the other in the courtroom, and that’s no easy feat.”

Paul Callahan, who has been a board member for more than two years, is a life-long resident of Schenectady County. A 1975 graduate of Western New England School of Law in Springfield, MA, Callahan has a private law practice in Schenectady and Duanesburg. His legal expertise is in criminal and civil litigation, as well as estate and real estate law. Callahan’s other legal work includes serving as Schenectady County Assistant District Attorney; Duanesburg Town Attorney; and Duanesburg Central School District Attorney.

The attorney’s affiliation with Legal Aid began in 1989 through the Society’s PAI program, where he handled many pro-bono cases that he says, “were not glamorous, but ‘lifesavers’ for many indigent clients.” He then joined the Board to increase his participation in the Society’s work and make a contribution in a different but equally meaningful way. “I learned about the Board opening in the Schenectady County Bar Association newsletter and I expressed my interest in the position,” recalls Callahan, who believes that private attorney support of Legal Aid is important.

“Paul Callahan was an active member of our PAI Referral program for years before he joined the Board. It’s been an honor to get to know him better as he extends his support for the Society to new levels,” says Lillian Moy, the Society’s Director.

In his capacity as a board member, Callahan has served on various committees that oversee the fundraising activities for the Society, review its annual budget and spending plan, and work to develop a long-term funding plan to sustain operations.

“This is a big undertaking,” said Callahan. “Just imagine if you had to

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Dear Friends:

Thank you for helping to make our 80th Anniversary Celebration a rousing success. We raised money and the visibility of the Society; we couldn't have asked for more. Whether you served as a Sponsor, Honorary Committee member or attended the event, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

As is often the case, the summer has flown by and here we are in the Fall. Plans proceed smoothly with our upcoming merger with North Country Legal Services. We are taking steps to work out the final details of the merger, notify clients of North Country Legal Services, and otherwise preparing to merge our law practices, offices and staff. As you know, in addition to merging with North Country Legal Services, the Society will also assume responsibility for serving Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties. We will be searching for an attorney Board member and a client Board member from this area; if you know of someone for either position, please let me know.

Unfortunately, we were recently disappointed in some key funding applications, and as a result, face the possible lay off of attorney staff. Only your generous contributions can prevent this turn of events. Even if you have already given, I hope that you will take the time to give again so that Legal Aid can avoid as many layoffs that we can.

In light of recent funding decisions, we will be cutting back on our Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Project. Fortunately, we were able to win some new funding so that we can maintain services to homeless victims of domestic violence in Albany County and basic order of protection representation to our more rural areas in Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties and Columbia and Greene Counties.

Our end of the year fundraising event, our annual Phoneathon and direct mail campaign, have now been scheduled. Our dates for the Phoneathon are Monday and Tuesday, December 2 and 3. If you can help call your colleagues to help the Society to raise money during this incredible period of fiscal uncertainty, we would be extremely grateful. Call my assistant, Mary Maguire, at 689-6307 to let her know when you can participate.

Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

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**CALLAHAN continued from page 1**

rely on government support to keep your business going. Most companies wouldn't see their first anniversary. It's a tough way to do business, and Legal Aid has sustained itself for 80 years, making it possible for the poorest and neediest New Yorkers to receive the legal representation they deserve."

Callahan is on the Board of Directors of the New York State and Capital District YMCA. He is past president and current board member of the Schenectady Kiwanis Club, and plays softball on The Schenectady Justice League. When Paul isn't practicing law or pursuing his many volunteer and civic undertakings, he enjoys spending time at his oceanfront home in Maine.

Paul Callahan and his wife Catherine live in Duanesburg. They have three children: Brian, age 31, an attorney with the NYS Commission on Corrections; Sheila, age 25, a school psychologist in New Hampshire; and Caitlin, age 23, an international editor for the Chicago Tribune.

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**PLEASE SAY YES!!**

Our Annual Phoneathon will be held on Dec. 2, 2003 from 1 to 6 p.m. You may receive a call from one of your colleagues asking you to support the work of the Legal Aid Society. Please say yes when you are called.
80th Anniversary Celebration Highlights

Arthur J. Siegel, President, LASNNY Board of Directors (left) presents Hon. Howard A. Levine (retired) with the Legal Aid Society's Equal Justice Award.

Three Cheers for LASNNY staff! From left to right: Carlos Schmidt, Immigration Paralegal; Brenda Bertram, Accountant; Mary Withington, Supervising Attorney; Joy Smith, Staff Attorney; and Lisa Borthwick, Intake Paralegal.

(from left to right) Thomas Sponslor, Dean of the Albany Law School; Kathe Klare, Albany Law School; and LASNNY Executive Director, Lillian Moy.

Albany County Executive Michael Breslin with Judge Levine.
THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING ATTORNEYS WHO HAVE ACCEPTED CASES

JUNE 2003 — OCTOBER 2003

ALBANY COUNTY
Albany Law School 25
Frederick M. Altman 2
Michael Assaf 1
Brendan F. Baynes 1
Ira Bloom 3
Joseph M. Brennan 1
Daniel J. Centi 2
Richard Cirincione 1
John W. Clark 3
Joseph M. Connors 1
Harold Dubof 1
Jonathan D. Deily 3
E. David Duncan 1
David Ehrlich 3
Martin S. Finn 1
Martin J. Goodman 7
Gayle E. Hartz 2
Daniel Hunteau 5
Dennis Irwin 3
Peter R. Kehoe 3
Kristen King 2
Brian R. Lecours 1
Brian W. Matula 1
Ira Mendleson 1
Mathew R. Mead 1

Martin Mooney 2
Peter J. Moschetti, Jr. 1
J. Michael Naughton 26
Michael J. O'Connor 2
Rafael Olazacasti 2
Stephen C. Prudente 1
Mark Richter 2
David A. Rickard 1
Nancy Sciocechetti 2
James Shannon 1
Arthur Seigel 1
James Towne 1
Edward J. Tomblin 1
John W. Van Denburgh 1
Kenneth G. Varley 1
Richard H. Weiskopf 1
G. Kimball Williams 1
David Wukitsch 1

RENSSELAER
Sharon Couch Debonis 2
John J. Doherty 2
Philip J. Daneker 2
Marc S. Ehrlich 2
Joseph L. Kay 2
Thomas A. Mitchell 2
Marc S. Ehrlich 2

SARATOGA
Brandi Burns 3
Robert J. Chauvin 3
Daniel G. Chertok 1
James Cox 2
Richard F. Devall 2
James Doern 2
Matthew Hogan 2
Elena Jaffe Tastensen 2
Robert L. Katzman 2
Ronald Kim 2
Alan Ro. Lecours 2
Martin W. Pazel斯基 3
Jonathan J. Stone 2
Katherine Suchocki 2
John W. Sutton 2
James P. Trainor 2

COLUMBIA & GREENE
William J. Better 1
Dale Dorner 2
Robert J. Giggen 1
Kevin Thiemann 1

SCHENECTADY
Schenectady County Bar 16
Thomas E. Delorenzo 2
Dennis M. Englert 2
John A. Fantauzzi 2
Kathryn McCarrick 2
Peter B. McHugh 2
Ralph A. Nocera 2
Frank Putorti, Jr. 2
Arthur A. Pasquariello 2
Bryan Simmons 2

WARREN & WASHINGTON
Kara Dopman 2
Kristine K. Flower 2
Elizabeth Franklin 2
Bernadette M. Hollis 2
J. David Little 2
Matthew R. Ludemann 2
Daniel Martindale 2
Rose T. Place 2
Michael R. Stern 2
Dennis Tarantino 2

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, New York State Legislature, New York State Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, Legal Aid Society of Rochester, United Way of Northeastern New York, the City of Saratoga Springs Office of Community Development, Fleet National Bank as trustee for the Frederick McDonald Trust, Albany County Department of the Aging, New York State Office of the Aging, U.S. Department of Justice, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, New York State Bar Foundation, Albany Community Development Agency, Key Bank, FleetBoston Financial Foundation, Community Foundation for the Capital Region, Washington County Office for the Aging and Nutrition Program and private contributors.

LASNY Nominees Receive NYSBA 2003 President’s Pro Bono Awards

(l to r)... Bruce Lawrence, Co-Chair, NYS Bar Association’s President’s Access to Justice Committee, Peter V. Coffey, recipient of the NYSBA’s Pro Bono Award for the 4th Judicial District, and Lorraine P. Tharp, President of the NYS Bar Association.

(l to r)... Bruce Lawrence, Co-Chair, NYS Bar Association’s President’s Access to Justice Committee, Renee Hebert, recipient of the NYS Bar Association President’s Pro Bono Law Student Award, and Lorraine P. Tharp, President of the NYS Bar Association.
Our Alumni, Our History

In 2003, the Legal Aid Society will celebrate its 80th Anniversary of serving the low income and needy of the Capital District. Our story is part of the fabric of this legal community and starts with the many lawyers and law students who have worked at the Society. Our Alumni/Our History, a column profiling Legal Aid Alumni, memorializes the Society's history, via some of our most talented attorneys and law clerks.

Legal Aid Welfare Advocates

It could have been late in 1973 or early in 1974, (the actual date is unimportant to the story), that Lanny Walter, Paul Lichterman, Dave Corbin and Jonathon Brandes, staff attorneys for Albany Legal Aid, began a training program for lay advocates to assist people in the process of obtaining public benefits. Thus, four women came together to be trained and to be of service and their lives became intertwined for the next 30 years. In looking back at their lives and careers, they agree “it was the best work we ever did”. Ellen Breslin, Claire Malone, Marggie Skinner and Joann Smith joined a larger group of volunteers, who, back in 1974, attending weekly training sessions and then began to represent individuals who came to Legal Aid and other community organizations seeking help for the onerous task of applying for public assistance or SSI.

All four women were stay-at-home moms with young children. The work became a challenge and an outlet for their talents. What they did not know at the time was that it would, for each of them, lead to careers in public service.

Reminiscing recently about the beginnings of the Welfare Advocates, the women agreed that the work opened their eyes to the injustices of the system and gave them a clear sense of accomplishment when they were able to help someone obtain much needed benefits. Through the bi-weekly training sessions provided by the staff attorneys and the actual experience of accompanying people who were applying or recertifying for benefits, they became knowledgeable in social service law. They also gained confidence in their ability to deal with a sometimes cruel bureaucracy that seemed more eager to deny people benefits, than to provide them with assistance.

They were placed at various community agencies around the city where people were likely to come for assistance. They worked closely with Roger and Maria Markovitz of United Tenants of Albany to assist people in finding decent housing. As they became more knowledgeable in social service law, they were able to represent clients at fair hearings, at first an intimidating experience, but later as they became more proficient, one in which they were frequently able to achieve victory for their clients. They took turns writing a bi-weekly newsletter, which was sent to other advocates and interested members of the community.

Later on, they incorporated and applied for a grant to fund the work of the organization. Although Welfare Advocates did not receive funding, the volunteer work continued for a few more years. Joann and Ellen then shared a legislative monitoring position with the Greater Upstate Law Project (GULP). Joann stayed with GULP for the next 11 years and eventually ran their legislative office in Albany. In 1989, she accepted a job with State Community Aid Association as director of government affairs. Subsequent to that, she joined Governor Cuomo’s staff as deputy for human services. She is currently the CEO of Family Planning Advocates.

Ellen went on to get a Master’s degree in library science at SUNYA, subsequently joined the Assembly as program staff in the Assembly Library, and is currently director at the New York State Legislative Library. During the 70’s, Ellen was a member of the Board of Directors for Albany Legal Aid. She has also been active as a volunteer over the years for Albany Area Housing opportunities, Senior Citizens of Albany and the Community Loan Fund.

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VOLUNTEERS continued from page 5

Marggie and Claire shared a paid position for a year as client advocate in the Cohoes office of Legal Aid, which no longer had funding for a staff attorney. After the Cohoes office closed, Claire continued working part-time as an advocate in the Albany office. She subsequently joined the State Department of Social Services in the Medicaid Division and retired in 2001 from the Health Department after 20 years of state service. She currently teaches yoga and does some consulting for state and local governments.

Marggie went on to study for a Master’s Degree in accounting at SUNYA and became a CPA. She taught accounting for ten years at SUNY New Paltz and continues to work in private practice. She also currently works at The Book House in Stuyvesant Plaza.

Marggie’s activism has led her to run for public office in the City of Albany and to become president of the Albany Neighborhood Association.

The four women acknowledge that their lives have become closely intertwined over the past 30 years. They have been together through their own and their family’s milestones such as graduations, engagements, marriages and the births of grandchildren. They occasionally come together for a ladies night out or even a weekend away in New York City or New Orleans. Eventually the talk comes around to their days as welfare advocates, a time fondly remembered as work worth doing.

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH
12 & 19, 2004

Free CLE Training: “Family Court Trial Skills Training for the Effective Representation of Battered Women”

More Information to Follow

This training is funded by the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and co-sponsored by the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York and the Albany Law School.