

## Mark Your Calendars Now!



**5/21**

GAL for Minors  
Training  
CVLS Offices  
12:00 PM

**5/29**

Seminar:  
General Foreclosure  
Defense Overview  
CVLS Offices  
12:15 PM

**6/06**

Seminar:  
Foreclosure  
Mediation Training  
CVLS Offices  
1:00 PM

**6/19**

Seminar:  
General Loss  
Mitigation Concepts  
and Analyzing  
Dignified Exit  
Options  
CVLS Offices  
12:15 PM



Upcoming Events - Upcoming Events - Upcoming Events - Upcoming Events - Upcoming Events

## First Time's a Charm! Client Recovers His Security Deposit

Troubles were piling up for Haywood. First, he suffered a stroke that impaired his speech and forced him into a wheelchair. Next, his landlord terminated his lease. Haywood tried to use his security deposit to cover another month's rent, but his landlord denied ever getting one and accused Haywood of owing money. The short termination notice forced Haywood to move into a hotel for a bit before he finally found an apartment. Then his wheelchair was stolen! With problems compounding and his financial situation in dire straits, Haywood turned to CVLS for help.



Naureen Choudhury

Volunteer attorney **Naureen Choudhury** stepped up. Documents proved that Haywood was current on his rent and had paid a security deposit. However, it turned out that the landlord was a wiggly fellow with a history of mistreating tenants and dodging service.

**"He was someone who didn't have a lot of hope ... so it was great to get [him] exactly what he deserved."  
- CVLS Volunteer Naureen**

Naureen and CVLS Deputy Director **Phil Mohr** scoured Cook County's Tax Assessor's and Treasurer's websites until they located the landlord's actual address. Naureen wrote a strong demand letter threatening legal action and setting out, in detail, potential penalties. The wiggly landlord was hooked, and finally returned Haywood's security deposit, in full.

Naureen was thrilled at the win because it was her first time handling a security deposit dispute. However, her greatest joy came from helping Haywood in his time of need. "He was someone who didn't have a lot of hope ... so it was great to get [him] exactly what he deserved," she said.

For his part, Haywood was ecstatic. "I give them a thumbs-up, they don't mess around," Haywood said of Naureen and CVLS. Great job Naureen!

## Building Management Pays for Damages to Apartment

Shenitha, a single mother of three young children, the oldest with serious health issues, had to vacate her apartment after an upstairs fire caused significant water damage and the city declared it "dangerous and uninhabitable." When the management company didn't respond to her request to either fix her place or move her to another apartment, she notified it that she was moving. On moving day, the management company sent her a letter advising her that it was going to repair her apartment.

Naturally, using the late notice as an excuse, the management company refused to return Shenitha's security deposit and demanded that she pay her final three month's rent. When she refused, it hired a collection agency and the claim appeared on Shenitha's credit report.

CVLS volunteer **David Lafferty** eagerly agreed to represent Shenitha. Recently retired after 31 years in the Chicago Transit Authority's finance department, David was ready to dust off his 18-year-old law degree and put it to good use. He demanded that the management company drop the unpaid rent claim and pay damages in the amount of two times the security deposit.

Opposing counsel offered \$500 but David would not budge. Restating his demand, he included the complaint he intended to file if the parties did not come to terms.

Success! Thanks to David, the management company dropped its attempts to collect the unpaid rent and, instead, paid Shenitha two times the security deposit it owed her -- \$1,450.

## Volunteer Honor Roll



**Timothy Storm**, principal at Storm Law Offices, is our go-to volunteer for Chancery Court Access to Justice appellate work. He's always there for CVLS, even on appeals that aren't very glamorous.

This past year, Tim filed and briefed an appeal that, while mundane, was important and impactful for CVLS' clients. A trial court judge had entered an "agreed" order dismissing a foreclosure case that did not conform with the settlement agreement and without notice to counsel for the homeowners. The trial judge's decision was readily reversed.

The decision not only helped these specific clients, it helped all of our clients facing aggressive lenders before passive judges. Thanks for everything you do, Tim!

### **Elizabeth Thompson**

began her own law practice volunteering in CVLS' Minor and Adult GAL programs in October 2011, years after she'd passed the bar and raised her family. A glutton for punishment, Liz not only keeps coming back for more cases, she quickly graduated to tougher cases with angry parties and aggressive attorneys.



Liz works hard to ensure that the children and disabled adults she represents and their caretakers have what they need to be healthy and safe. She learns quickly and is a delight to work with on tough cases.

We are so glad that Liz decided to restart her legal career at CVLS!

## Volunteer Keeps Mom and Disabled Son Safely Housed

Kinya worked hard to raise her three children, one severely disabled. Although she was disappointed when her oldest son dropped out of high school at age 18 and moved in with his girlfriend, she was really upset when she discovered that he'd been arrested for possession of a small amount of marijuana.

Especially because she found out when her Chicago Housing Authority housing voucher was terminated.

The Chancery Court appointed CVLS under the Access to Justice Program, and volunteers **Steven Hamilton** and **Timothy Hoppe** of McDermott, Will and Emery took Kinya's case.

They deftly argued that the CHA had failed to consider Kinya's disabled son who would be severely impacted and, possibly homeless, if Kinya's housing voucher were terminated. The argument was successful and the court remanded the case to the CHA for a new hearing. Steve and Tim pressed on.

Thanks to superb representation at the second hearing, the CHA changed its mind and allowed Kinya to keep her voucher. She and her disabled son remain safely housed.

## Congratulations to Volunteer Karen on her Associate Judgeship!

We'd like to congratulate CVLS volunteer attorney Karen J. Bowes on being selected as a Cook County Associate Judge!

Karen was one of 26 finalists, selected from 277 candidates. She has been volunteering with us since 2003, taking on Minor GAL cases.

Way to go, Karen!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Jean Adams



Congratulations to CVLS volunteer **Jean A. Adams** on receiving DePaul University College of Law's Alumni Pro Bono Award!

Each year the College of Law's Pro Bono & Community Service Initiative recognizes a distinguished alum at its Service Awards Reception, which also honors DePaul law students who have completed at least 50 hours of pro bono and community service.

Jean began volunteering with CVLS in 1982, and has been active in taking cases ever since. She works chiefly with our Adult GAL program, but also has extensive experience with estate planning issues.

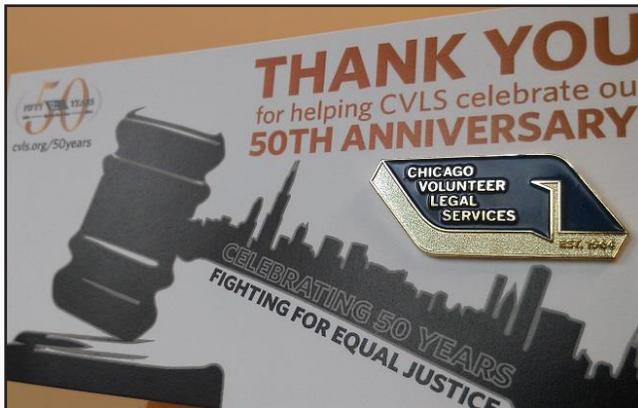
Nominating Jean, CVLS Adult GAL Program Director Peter M. Ashmore wrote, "In a world of worthy, smart, active and generous attorneys, Jean stands head and shoulders above them all. Jean's tenacious commitment to pro bono and community service work and her determination to make the organized bar a force for improving the legal profession and the community make her a superb choice for this award."

Recently, Jean also spoke on adult guardianship at Bremen High School, to parents of disabled children in the school's special education program. She told them about the application process, how to obtain legal help and the importance of legal guardianship.

Thank you, Jean, for all your amazing work with and on behalf of CVLS!

# 50 YEARS OF FIGHTING FOR EQUAL JUSTICE

## Join the 50/50 Volunteers!



### SHOW YOUR CVLS PRIDE!

As a part of our 50/50 VOLUNTEERS initiative, every volunteer who donates \$50 will receive a commemorative CVLS 50th Anniversary pin. Wear it to our Anniversary Gala to show you're one of our proud volunteers! And, really, why stop there? Show it off when you're in court for a CVLS case, use it as a conversation starter at events, decorate your office with it, or bring it out at our next anniversary and prove you were a CVLS volunteer way back in 2014!

### SEE YOUR NAME IN PRINT!

In addition to our 50th Anniversary pin, volunteers who donate \$150 will be immortalized in Chicago history with their names on our 50th Birthday Card! We're taking out a full-page birthday card in the Chicago Lawyer, and we want to take the opportunity to showcase some of our amazing supporters. Sign our card and show you're part of our nearly 3,000-strong organization of volunteer attorneys who provide pro bono legal services to the poor and working poor of Chicago.

**If you're not a volunteer** but would like to participate in our 50th anniversary, set up a recurring donation at [cvls.org/donate](http://cvls.org/donate) to receive a pin and include your name on our birthday card!

## Support our 50th Anniversary Gala!

We're holding our 50th Anniversary Gala event in October and we'd love to have your organization celebrate with us as a sponsor!

Sponsoring the gala is a great opportunity for your company to receive exposure and help to support a worthy cause.

We have multiple options to choose from. Each package comes with a different set of benefits tiered to fit both your budget and your needs.

### Sample benefits include:

- Guest tickets and preferred tables
- Company logo on communication materials
- Inclusion in Chicago Daily Law Bulletin marketing campaign
- Ad space in our Anniversary Tribute Book
- Website listings

Sponsoring CVLS' 50th Anniversary Gala will send a message that your brand is strongly aligned with the industry's mission of providing justice for low-income Chicagoans.

All proceeds of our 50th Anniversary Gala go to support Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS). Thank you in advance for your support and helping us continue to fight for equal access to justice!

Contact **Phil Mohr** at [philmoor@cvls.org](mailto:philmoor@cvls.org) if you're interested in becoming a sponsor of CVLS' 50th Anniversary Gala.

For more information on CVLS' 50th anniversary, visit:  
**[cvls.org/50years](http://cvls.org/50years)**

## Don't Rear-End a Police Car Unless You Have CVLS in Your Corner

Lakisha ran into some bad luck while driving to work. Not only was she rear-ended into a four car accident, but the car in front of her belonged to the police department. The Secretary of State held a hearing to suspend her license and Lakisha represented herself . . . and lost. Unwilling to accept the suspension of her driver's license, Lakisha looked for an attorney.

CVLS accepted Lakisha's case through the Circuit Court of Cook County Access to Justice program, and volunteer attorney **Cantrell Jones** of Dentons jumped in to help. He appealed her suspension to the Chancery Court, focusing on the absence of evidence showing that she was negligent. In fact, the hearing officer had stated, on the record, that Lakisha had done everything she could to avoid the accident.

Thanks to Cantrell, the court overturned the administrative decision and reinstated Lakisha's license. Having learned the hard way, she now stays far away from police cars anywhere on the road.

## Whirly Ball!

There's nothing like some healthy competition with bumper cars and a whiffle ball to boost morale ...

So naturally, for our staff event this month, we held a CVLS Whirly Ball Tournament! Despite Phil's team winning (due in no small part to undisputed Whirly Ball MVP Susan DeCostanza), the afternoon was a success!



## Volunteer Takes on the Chicago Housing Authority

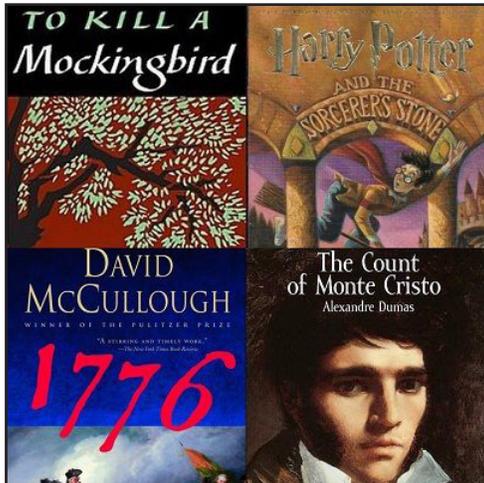
When Ms. Young's grown sons were arrested for marijuana possession, the CHA terminated her housing voucher. Ms. Young had not reported the arrests when she reapplied for her voucher because she never knew about them. She contested the voucher termination at an administrative hearing, but lost. She appealed the decision to the Chancery Court.

CVLS volunteer attorney and board member attorney **Kristi Nelson** of Chen Nelson Roberts, was sitting in the courtroom when Ms Young was before Judge Flynn. When Judge Flynn asked Kristi if she could possibly represent this woman, Kristi agreed to take the case through CVLS, aided by fellow volunteer **Martin O'Hara** of Much Shelist.

Kristi and Marty argued that the CHA had violated Ms. Young's procedural due process rights at the initial administrative hearing. The CHA attorney agreed to remand the case for a new administrative hearing. Kristi and Marty represented Ms. Young at that hearing, arguing that a termination would cause Ms. Young and her four school-aged children to become homeless.

After the hearing, the CHA reinstated Ms. Young's housing voucher. Thanks to Kristi and Marty, Ms. Young and her family are safe and sound in their home.

## CVLS Starts Using Amazon Smile, Unabashedly Uses It as an Excuse to Make a List of Our Favorite Books



Did you know that you can now support CVLS by shopping at Amazon? We recently began participating in the Amazon Smile initiative, which allows shoppers to donate 0.5% of any purchase to the charity of your choice. To get started, visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

At CVLS, we love to read - fiction and nonfiction, legal and otherwise, books we find helpful for work - so we compiled a list of a few favorites from our staff. Can you guess who at CVLS reads Kierkegaard? Who prefers Harry Potter? Which favorites do we like to share? What are we reading now?

See which books Executive Director Meg Benson, Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Hollibaugh, Staff Attorney Matthew Hulstein, Development Associate Adel Johnson and Director of Communications Matt Pollock shared by reading our complete lists [HERE](#).

We'd also love to know - what do you like to read? If you'd like to share your own book picks, email them to [ajohnson@cvls.org](mailto:ajohnson@cvls.org) and we'll feature them!

## Why Do We Volunteer?

By volunteering your time, effort and legal skills, you are creating a significant positive change in the lives of those less fortunate. But beyond the amazing feeling that comes from fulfilling the inner sense of justice, why is volunteering so important? Read on for a few extra benefits we've found for volunteering and taking pro bono cases - then share your own!

- There are currently just over 1.2 million lawyers practicing in the US, according to the ABA. This translates to about one lawyer per 300 people, or 0.36% of the total population. By comparison, the National Poverty Center reported that in 2010 about 15.1% of the population was living in poverty. **You can use your skills to help those in need.**

- In a tough job market - according to the ABA, only 57% of spring 2013 graduates hold long-term, full-time positions that required passing the bar - **volunteering provides an opportunity to gain experience in the legal field.**

- **You can make an immeasurable impact with as little as two hours of your time**, depending on the type of case. From executing wills or fighting evictions, to acting as a Minor GAL or handling a divorce, no time commitment is too insignificant to help a low-income client realize equal access to justice. Learn more at [cvls.org/volunteer-attorney](http://cvls.org/volunteer-attorney)

### YOUR TURN!

Why do you volunteer? Why is pro bono important to you? Send your answers or comments to [ajohnson@cvls.org](mailto:ajohnson@cvls.org), and we'll feature your response!

For more information on volunteering at CVLS, visit:

[cvls.org/volunteer](http://cvls.org/volunteer)

# Upcoming CVLS Events

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**Wednesday, May 21**

**GAL for Minors Training**

**CVLS Offices, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM**

Learn to represent the best interests of society's most vulnerable citizens in Probate Court! GAL for Minors Program Director **Rebekah Rashidfarokhi** will cover the skills required to be a successful GAL for a minor as well as the issues that may come up during the case. This training is for new GALs working with CVLS.

**Thursday, May 29**

**Seminar: General Foreclosure Defense Overview**

**by Patricia Nelson, CVLS Director, Chancery Court Access to Justice Program**

**CVLS Offices, 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM**

Foreclosure Defense has changed tremendously over the last couple of years as the government and banks respond to the foreclosure crisis.

Access to Justice and Foreclosure Mediation Director **Patty Nelson** will get you started with a brief overview of the foreclosure process and how defense fits in. This is your chance to get a bare bones explanation of the law and how things work in foreclosure. Whether you've practiced in this area or not, this will be a beneficial synopsis to get you started or to let you know where you need to concentrate your current practice.

**Friday, June 6**

**Seminar: Foreclosure Mediation Training**

**by CVLS Staff**

**CVLS Offices, 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM**

The news of the day is no longer about foreclosures, but how the foreclosure crisis is still hitting low-income Chicagoans at a staggering rate. Your help is still needed, desperately. Homeowners who have lost their jobs or are getting back on their feet after disability need an attorney to represent them in foreclosure mediations. The banks have attorneys, and the borrowers need them too.

This training will take you from the basics of foreclosure and loan modifications to advocacy skills in mediations. When you are done, you will be fully prepared to do a mediation and will have all the tools that CVLS has developed to analyze these cases at your fingertips.

Please visit [www.cvls.org/seminars](http://www.cvls.org/seminars) to register

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