

CHICAGO
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Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

Because equal access to justice is everyone's fight.

Upcoming Events

- **February 8** - New Volunteer Orientation, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
- **February 9** - Seminar: Spotting Inadmissibility Issues in Immigration Cases, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- **February 13** - Lincoln's Birthday, CVLS offices closed
- **February 20** - Washington's Birthday, CVLS offices closed
- **February 16** - Seminar: Preparing 2016 Income Taxes, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.
- **February 22** - GAL for Minors Training, 12 p.m. - 2 p.m., CVLS offices
- **March 6** - Casimir Pulaski Day, CVLS offices closed
- **March 30** - Seminar: What You Need to Know: Highlights of the 2017 Income Shares Act.



Immigration training available for new or experienced attorneys

Attorneys who want to volunteer to take an immigration case, or strengthen their knowledge of immigration law, are welcome to attend parts 3 and 4 of our CLE immigration series. Parts 1 and 2 took place in early January. Part three "Spotting Inadmissibility Issues in Immigration Cases" will be presented on February 9, and part four will be held at a later date. All seminars will be available online and eligible for CLE credit.

The series is intended to cover the fundamentals of immigration law practice. Attorneys who complete the training, and volunteer at the American Immigration Lawyers Association-Chicago Volunteer Legal Services clinic,

will be provided with mentorship and one-on-one support throughout the life of the case.

Parts one and two were hosted by AILA-CLVS Clinic co-chairs Renae M. Yoo, of The Law Offices of Renae M. Yoo, P.C. and Ann R. Peters, of The Law Offices of Ann R. Peters. Parts three and four will be presented by Lara Wagner and Kruti Patel, immigration attorneys with the Justice Entrepreneurs project, and focus on inadmissibility issues.

Renae said the AILA-CLVS has been increasing the number of appointments available for clients and is looking for experienced immigration attorneys to help meet those needs.

New immigration attorneys will be able to rely on mentorship opportunities from experienced immigration attorneys through the life of the case.

"Immigration law is probably one of the most complex areas of law. Our goal is to help volunteers work with CVLS on these cases, rather than work on their own, because an inexperienced attorney can mean very well but do some real damage and we're here to make sure that doesn't happen. That's our goal," Renae said.

The CLE seminars are available online. Each seminar is worth 1.5 hours of CLE credit.

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We love highlighting the excellent work our volunteers do. If you've successfully handled a difficult case, came up with a creative solution, or heard some nice words from a grateful client, please let Development Associate Lindsay Welbers know by sending an email to lwelbers@cvls.org to be highlighted in a future newsletter.

CVLS' GAL for Adults Highlighted by ISBA

Susan DeCostanza, Director of CVLS' Guardian ad litem for Adults Program, was featured in the Illinois State Bar Association's publication, *Illinois Lawyer*. Susan wrote that volunteer attorneys who take an adult GAL case with CVLS are rewarded not only for helping provide much-needed legal services to someone who could not otherwise afford it, but also because they frequently have the honor of learning a small snippet of that client's life and relaying it back to the court with the dignity it deserves.

CVLS volunteers GALs do not need professional Probate experience and are given one-on-one support throughout the life of a case by staff attorneys. While GALs represent the best interest of the alleged or adjudicated disabled adults in guardianship cases, GALs also benefit the courts and provide comfort to family members by explaining procedural steps and what they can expect in court.

Read Susan's piece for *Illinois Lawyer* at <http://bit.ly/2hplspr>, or for more information about taking an Adult GAL case, email sdecostanza@cvls.org.

Case Notes

When Ms. R and her former-husband divorced in 2009, she worked with CVLS and a volunteer attorney from Schiff Hardin to work out a child support and custody agreements for their son. The two co-parents worked well together until recently when her ex-husband began to violate the agreement, communicating with Ms. R at unpredictable intervals, or returning the child late from visits.

She contacted the attorneys who handled her divorce when her ex-husband began taking their son outside of Chicago without notice, leaving the 9-year-old with friends or acquaintances while he was at work, and asking her to sign immigration-related paperwork for their son,

Volunteer **Molly L. Wiltshire**, an associate at Schiff Hardin, picked up the case. Ms. R wanted the marital agreement amended to create stricter rules about visitation schedules and communication. After an evidentiary hearing that resulted in the judge giving the ex-husband a stern talking-to, the court gave Ms. R. everything she requested, including specified hours for visitation, restrictions on who he can leave their son with and preventing him from taking their son out of the city without her consent.

"She was just thinking about preserving their relationship, even though his dad was being a jerk about it, and then, after all that, we had total victory and the client was really happy," Molly said.

After two rounds in court, Ms. R got everything she wanted to keep her son safe, while maintaining the relationship between father and son. "I think she's happy she has it in a court order. If it's not coming from the court he's not going to listen, so it was important to her to get something in writing."

Volunteer Spotlight

In December, Chicago Volunteer Legal Services' Past President **Kristen Hudson** received the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) Distinguished Alumni Award. Kristen, Principal and General Counsel at Chuhak & Tecson, P.C., was a PILI Graduate Fellow at CVLS in 2003. Since then, she has remained involved as a volunteer, board member and board president. Congratulations to Kristen on all her good works.



Meg Benson, Kristen Hudson and Phil Mohr celebrate as Kristen accepts

Upcoming Events

•**February 8** - New Volunteer Orientation, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

A CVLS staff attorney will take you through the ins and outs of being a Chicago Volunteer Legal Services volunteer. Please note, you must be an attorney to sign up for one of our new volunteer orientations.

•**February 9** -Seminar: Spotting Inadmissibility Issues in Immigrant Cases, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

New to immigration law and unsure if your client is admissible or don't even know what that means? Come learn about common inadmissibility issues, how to spot them, and when waivers apply.

•**February 13** – Lincoln's Birthday, CVLS offices closed

•**February 16** -Preparing 2016 Income Taxes, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Larry Krupp will interpret and explain the latest version of the tax code. He will discuss changes and concerns that can affect your business, your personal finances or those of your clients.

•**February 20** – Washington's Birthday, CVLS offices closed

•**February 22** - GAL for Minors Training, 12 p.m- 2 p.m., CVLS offices

Rebekah Rashidfarokhi, CVLS staff attorney working in the Minor GAL program, 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 licensed attorneys interested in working as pro bono Guardians ad Litem for

children through CVLS. No prior experience is necessary.

•**March 6**– Casimir Pulaski Day, CVLS offices closed

•**March 14** - New Volunteer Orientation, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

A CVLS staff attorney will take you through the ins and outs of being a Chicago Volunteer Legal Services volunteer. Please note, you must be an attorney to sign up for one of our new volunteer orientations.

•**March 14** - Seminar: What You Need to Know: Highlights of the 2017 Income Shares Act, 12:15 p.m.-1:15 p.m.

This year, Illinois will adopt the "income shares" model for calculating child support.

Staff Spotlight

Staff Attorney Gabriel Borges came to CVLS in August 2016 and began work with the Chancery and Access to Justice programs. When he was a law student at DePaul University, where he graduated in 2013, he volunteered at the Chancery Advice Desk at the Chicago Legal Clinic, helping pro se clients with foreclosure documents.

Initially, Gabriel planned to study immigration law. He studied abroad in China, where he took a financial transactions course and studied the damage done to the American economy after the housing bubble burst in 2008. After graduation Gabriel took an internship with a judge in the mortgage foreclosure division, and again volunteered at the chancery desk until he accepted a position with Prairie State Legal Services in Wheaton, where he did mortgage and foreclosure defense.

Gabriel's position at CVLS gives him the opportunity to provide legal

help for homeowners, finding alternatives to foreclosure, and guiding them through what can be a lengthy and fraught process. Gabriel said CVLS offers him support and flexibility so he can meet with clients and provide practical help to them face-to-face.

Gabriel sincerely appreciates that volunteers are taking time out from what can be extremely busy schedules, often dictated by billable hours, and that taking a pro bono case can put a real strain on an attorney. "It's very important because a lot of people don't have the resources to resolve a situation that can be easily solved with the presence or involvement of an attorney. Pro bono is an extremely effective tool to solve their problem as quickly as possible."



Changes to Domestic Relations Division

On February 6, the Parentage and Child Support Court of the Domestic Relations Division will be merged. All merged into a singular Domestic Relations Division and all judges will hear both types of cases. In order to divide up the two types of existing cases between judges, many pending cases will be transferred from your current parentage judge to another domestic relations judge or your current divorce judge to a new domestic relations judge coming from parentage.

The court is sending out post-cards for all pending cases that are, or have been, transferred for this reason. All new filings will simply be randomly assigned to any of the judges. See <http://bit.ly/1enzji0> for more information.

The logo for Chicago Volunteer Legal Services is a black, stylized speech bubble or arrow shape pointing to the right. The text "CHICAGO VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters inside the shape.

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