

CHILDREN'S champion

Newsletter from Children's Law Center AUGUST 2009



HELPING CHILDREN SOAR

september 30, 2009  celebration & benefit

Kennedy Center Roof Terrace Restaurant
Wednesday, September 30th, 2009
6:00-9:00pm
Cocktails and Hors d'œuvres
Silent auction featuring one-of-a-kind gifts

Click here to learn more

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Award Season for CLC



Mayor's Community Service Award: Children's Law Center received the 2009 Mayor's Community Service Award for "making the Nation's Capital a safer place for children through an extensive network of pro bono attorneys."

Pro bono partner, Covington Burling LLP, was also honored by the Mayor for their pro bono partnership with CLC and the community. *Pictured: (Left to Right) Aisha Williams, Covington and Burling LLP loaned associate; Mayor Adrian Fenty; Judith Sandalow*

CLC Restores Budget Cuts for DC's Children



At a time when DC government was cutting programs, Children's Law Center succeeded in advocat-

ing for increased funding for two important programs that keep children out of foster care. However, just as CLC was celebrating this success, new revenue forecasts forced the government to make additional cuts. CLC went to work again, this time to protect these programs from being cut. We succeeded.

First, to ensure that the community understood the impact of the latest proposed cuts, CLC hosted a budget forum with Directors Roque Gerald, Child and Family Services Agency, CFSA (pictured on the right) and Stephen Baron, Department of Mental Health, DMH (pictured on the left).

Then, through a combination of research, testimony, coalition work and walking the halls of the Wilson Building, Children's Law Center and our allies convinced the DC Council to restore funds to several vital programs. Two of our most significant victories were restoring funds for Rapid Housing and the Grandparent Caregiver Program.

The Rapid Housing program provides financial assistance to keep families together when inadequate housing puts their children at risk of entering foster care and when housing is the only obstacle to children reunifying with their parents. Rapid Housing also helps prevent youth who are aging out of foster care from becoming homeless by providing security deposits and a few months rent in their first apartment. Rapid Housing is both successful and cost

Award Season for CLC (Continued)

Positive Nature's Outstanding Service Award: Executive Director, Judith Sandalow, received the Outstanding Service Award from Positive Nature, Inc. The award was in appreciation of her "tireless efforts, exemplary leadership and amazing dedication in service to the District's most vulnerable children."

Spotlight: Nancy Sidamon-Eristoff

Board Member, Benefit Chair

This year, Nancy Sidamon-Eristoff and her fellow Board members have joined forces to underwrite the entire cost of this year's benefit - ensuring that in this difficult time every gift will *directly support* CLC's work. The Honorable Eric Holder, Jr. will speak at the event as this year's Distinguished Child Advocate. Guests can look forward to an evening among friends and colleagues with music and entertainment, a fabulous buffet and CLC's first-ever silent auction.

Auction items include all inclusive weekend escapes, sports memorabilia for your favorite Nats fan, wine, theatre tickets and unique tours of some of Washington's most exciting attractions. Check back in September to stay tuned for new auction items and updates on the benefit by visiting www.childrenlawcenter.org/benefit.



"As a former benefit committee chair, I am thrilled that Nancy took the lead this year as our benefit committee chair. She brings years of volunteer experience with a number of organizations. CLC will owe Nancy a debt of gratitude for the success of this year's benefit," Wayne Curtis, Children's Law Center Board Chair.

Nancy is a CLC veteran. She has been a member of the Benefit Committee since 2004 and joined the Board of Directors in 2006.

Nancy regularly gives back to her community. She has served as the Vice President at Large and Treasurer for St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School Parents Association. She is a former board member for Discovery Creek and has worked with the New York Zoological Society and was a member of the Junior League.

Nancy is a graduate of Princeton University and serves as Chairman of the Princeton class of 1981 Scholarship Program. She received an MS in Journalism from the Columbia University School of Journalism. In her professional capacity, Nancy acted as an Account Executive in New York for McCann-Erickson and as a Marketing Associate for Christie's, Manson & Woods. Children's Law Center is grateful for her tireless efforts and dedication to our mission and thankful for her commitment to

CLC in the News



Click this image to watch the YouTube video of Judith Sandalow's interview with Donna Richardson on Comcast Local Edition. The segment can also be found on Comcast Local Edition airing now through the end of September.

CLC Restores Budget Cuts for DC's Children (Continued)

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In the original budget, CLC successfully advocated for \$1.2 million for Rapid Housing. After the negative revenue forecasts, the Mayor proposed cutting the program by 40%. This cut would have left approximately 42 families and more than 80 children without assistance and left more than 57 foster youth without homes. Children's Law Center successfully advocated for the Council to restore full funding. CLC also convinced the Council to require the District to track and report the number of families and youth who are turned away from the program due to insufficient funds. This information will help ensure adequate funding for the program in the future.

Back to School: Supplies Needed

The District's children need your donations this fall in order to prepare for the school year. CLC clients desperately need computers to complete their homework assignments, search the internet, write college essays, and simply keep up with their peers - imagine trying to succeed in today's world without a computer. New and gently used computers will be accepted. A team of volunteers will make sure your computer is clean and ready for use. Backpacks, notebooks, calculators and school supplies are also welcome.



To donate computers or school supplies, please contact Jessica Gelin at jgelin@childrenslawcenter.org or (202) 467-4900 Ext. 571.

We hope to see you in September!



Children's Law Center helps DC's at-risk children by providing comprehensive legal services and advocating for change to ensure that the District's children have safe homes, a meaningful education and healthy minds and bodies.

Children's Law Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All gifts are fully tax-deductible.

For more information, please visit www.childrenslawcenter.org

CLC Restores Budget Cuts for DC's Children (Continued)

The Grandparent Caregivers Program helps children remain with their extended families instead of being placed in foster care. The program helps District residents cover the cost of raising their grandchildren and is available to low-income families, two people living on less than \$29,140 and families of four living on \$44,100.

Unfortunately, in March 2009 there were 190 grandparents on the waiting list to join the program. In the original budget, Children's Law Center helped to secure an additional \$1.46 million in funds for this program. The increased funding would have allowed almost all the families on the waiting list to join the program. The Mayor proposed eliminating this increased funding completely. Children's Law Center worked with the Council to restore \$865,000 meaning that approximately 60% of the waiting families will be able to join the program.

Children's Law Center is proud that our persistent advocacy for these programs will allow families to stay together and keep children out of foster care. As the voice for at-risk children and families, CLC will continue to remind the Mayor and the Council that the budget isn't just numbers.

Pro Bono Trainings

Thursday, Sept 17, 2009
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Sidley Austin
1501 K St NW
Washington, DC 20005

Thursday, October 22, 2009
9:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Covington & Burling LLP
1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004-2401

DONATE TODAY

