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CLC honors Eric Holder



The 2009 Helping Children Soar benefit was a great success! Many thanks to all of our generous supporters and friends who helped us surpass our fundraising goal for the event - offsetting our overall budget shortfall and ensuring we can help 1,200 children in 2010.

The sold out crowd of 450 attendees enjoyed a beautiful sunset at the Kennedy Center's Roof Terrace Restaurant. Guests had the opportunity to meet the Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr who received Children's Law Center's 2009 Distinguished Child Advocate award.

"I'm really humbled by this award because I'm so committed to CLC's vision of a future where every child has a safe home, a meaningful education and a healthy mind and body," said Mr. Holder in his acceptance speech. "As a prosecutor and a judge, I have seen the importance of high-quality legal services. When children have high-quality representation, their outcomes are much better," he continued.

Miss out on the event this year? [View pictures here.](#)

Holiday Gift Drive is here



It's that time of year again. Children's Law Center has kicked off the annual Holiday Gift Drive. More than 700 of the District's underprivileged children will celebrate the holidays smiling with new toys, clothes and groceries donated through the gift drive.

Our gift-drive stands out from the rest. Volunteer "Santas" are matched with actual CLC clients. Each "Santa" receives the genuine story of the child they adopt for the holidays along with that child's detailed wish list.

Become a volunteer "Santa" and adopt a child this holiday season. "Santas" purchase one full outfit of clothes (including shoes) a gift card for groceries, two items from the child's wish list and if possible, a donation to CLC so we can help the child all year long.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Spotlight: Guy Collier Board of Directors, Chair



Guy Collier, dedicated supporter of CLC, has been elected the new Chair of the Board of Directors. Guy is a partner at McDermott Will & Emery LLP, where he specializes in health law. He also serves on a number of community and legal services boards and committees.

Guy has made great strides for children in the District. He was instrumental in starting a pilot program for pro bono attorneys from his firm to work on the Health Access Project with Children's Law Center attorneys. He is also the worldwide pro bono partner for McDermott Will & Emery.

Grandparents receive vital help



In these difficult economic times, there are a few bright spots. While many important programs have been threatened or cut, the District's Grandparent Caregiver Program has been expanded and in October began to

help more families and children thanks to advocacy from Children's Law Center and one of our grandparent clients.

Children's Law Center worked hard during the cycles of budget cuts to protect several programs vital to DC's children, including the Grandparent Caregiver Program. The Program provides essential financial assistance to low-income grandparents raising their grandchildren. This assistance keeps children living with family and out of foster care. Not only is staying out of foster care good for children, but it also saves tax payers dollars as foster care is more than three times as expensive.

More than 90 families were on the waiting list to join the Program in 2009. Kelly Vonhoupe and her 10 year old grandson Matias, whom Ms. Vonhoupe has been caring for since 2001 when her son was killed, were among them. With CLC's help, Ms. Vonhoupe testified in support of the Program before the DC Council.

"As a single grandparent in today's economy, it has been an extreme financial strain to care for my grandson without assistance . . . I love my grandson so much, and it hurts me that I cannot even give him the basic things that every child needs. Without help, I do not know how I will continue to make it. The subsidy would help me to give him food and clothes, and to support his daily needs," Ms. Vonhoupe testified before the DC Council.

Spotlight: Guy Collier (Continued)

Guy has been ranked in The Best Lawyers in America (2006-09), Washington, DC Super Lawyers (2008-09), and Chambers USA: Leading Lawyers for Business (2009). It is no doubt that Children's Law Center is lucky to have his expertise leading the Board of Directors and supporting the organization.

"Guy will be a great Chair. He is a strong leader who is beneficial to the organization and the Board. He is a true advocate for CLC's mission and has great admiration for the staff. We're thrilled to have him as our new Chair," said Wayne Curtis, who chaired the board from 2005 to 2009.

The Board welcomed four new members this year: Evan Farber of The Advisory Board Company, Joe Figini of CGI Technologies and Solutions, Inc., Anthony Herman of Covington & Burling LLP and Carmen G. McLean of Jones Day.

[Click here](#) to learn about our Board of Directors!

National Adoption Day is November 21



Adoption Day is part of a national campaign to highlight the importance of adoption and raise awareness about the 129,000 children in foster care waiting for adoption. It is celebrated by publicly finalizing adoptions of children in foster care in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Since 2000, more than 25,000 children have

had their adoptions finalized on National Adoption Day.

This year, thanks to the dedication and commitment of Children's Law Center pro bono partners, a number of CLC's clients will publicly adopt their children, creating forever families.

Dozens of families, lawyers and social workers will join together November 21 at the DC Superior Court to witness the signing of their final adoption decrees.

[Click here](#) for Adoption Day details.

Children's Law Center is grateful for our pro bono partners who worked so tirelessly during the past year to create permanent families for the District's most vulnerable children. Working through Children's Law Center's Family Permanency Project, dozens of local law firms have generously donated millions of dollars worth of legal services to caregivers seeking to provide safe and loving homes for foster children in the District of Columbia. Thank you!

[Click here](#) for a list of our pro bono firms who partnered with our Family Permanency Project this year.

CLC pro bono client featured on Wednesday's Child



NBC4's Wednesday's Child program featured a heart-warming adoption story. Although the story only hints that lawyers were involved, we know better.

The happy ending was brought about by a McDermott Will & Emery partner and Children's Law Center pro bono lawyer. My client still refers to me as her "Law Angel," said Joanne Ludovici-Lint, a partner in McDermott's Washington, D.C. office who led the pro bono team.

Although confidentiality prevents us from sharing all the details, we know that it was Ms. Ludovici-Lint's tenacious advocacy and, in particular, her thorough investigation, overcame barriers which threatened to prevent the adoption.

"McDermott shares the Children's Law Center's vision of a future in which every child has a safe home, a meaningful education and a healthy mind and body. This is a fine example of the wonderful things that come from our partnership," said, Guy Collier, Chair of McDermott's Pro Bono and Community Service Committee and Children's Law Center. Board Chair

[Click here](#) to watch the uplifting story of the Wednesday's Child adopted by her mentor.

CLC Launches new website

Visit our new and improved website at
www.childrenslawcenter.org

Designate CLC

Support CLC through your workplace giving campaign. Your contribution can make sure we continue the important programs that are vital to the District's children and families. Your support is needed now more than ever.

United Way #8070

CFC #43333

Many thanks to those of you who already support us through workplace giving campaigns. Your continued partnership is greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

Special thanks to our 2009 Helping Children Soar sponsors:

Champion

Covington & Burling, LLP

Guardian

Knock Out Abuse

On behalf of the children we serve, thank you!

DONATE TODAY

Don't forget to sign up to adopt a child for the Holiday Gift Drive by **December 4th!**

[Click here](#) to become a volunteer "Santa" today!