United Way Supports ICLC

ICLC would like to thank the United Way of Greater Los Angeles for supporting our homelessness policy work. On July 29, the United Way awarded ICLC a two-year $100,000 grant to advocate for permanent support housing for homeless veterans and people who are chronically homeless. Under the grant, ICLC will promote the goals of the Home for Good partnership between United Way and the L.A. Chamber of Commerce, specifically working to lower eligibility barriers so that Los Angeles' 12,000 chronically homeless people, including about 3,000 veterans can access permanent supportive housing.

Expanding our Board

Inner City Law Center is proud to announce the addition of two new members to our Board of Directors. Each brings a valuable array of experiences and talents to Inner City Law Center that will allow us to better serve our clients. The new Board members are:

David M. Walsh is a litigation partner at Paul Hastings. He focuses his practice on class action and other complex business and commercial litigation matters as well as environmental litigation. Mr. Walsh is active in a wide variety of bar and community organizations. In the past he has served as a Board Member and Chair of Chrysalis, a Board Member and Vice Chair of the Santa Marta Hospital Foundation, and on the Boards of Directors of My Friends’ Place, the Serra Ancillary Care Corporation (“The Serra Project”), the America Lung Association of Los Angeles County and the Western Center on Law and Poverty.

Eric P. Enson is a partner at Jones Day LLP. His practice focuses on criminal and civil antitrust and unfair competition litigation. Eric maintains an active pro bono practice, representing underprivileged clients in consumer protection, unlawful detainer, and immigration-services fraud cases.

Gibson Dunn recognizes Lora Cicconi for her work with ICLC's Homeless Veterans Project

Last month at the Gibson Dunn Pro Bono Recognition party, Gibson Dunn attorney Lora Cicconi received an award for her dedication helping Purple Heart recipient and Homeless Veterans Project client Matthew Sanders change his discharge status to honorable and increase his access to benefits.

The case was featured in the April 2011 issue of the Cal Bar Journal. (click here to read the article)
Hope Row Resource Center

Earlier this year, the Weingart Access Center moved a few blocks north to 501 East Sixth Street and changed its name to the Hope Row Resource Center. Our walk-in clinic there is open three days a week. We serve about 40 clients each month. ICLC’s Advocates work with homeless and low-income people on a variety of issues including access to government benefits, landlord-tenant disputes, eviction defense, and consumer issues. Here is an example of a case that came to us through the Weingart Access Center:

Four families came to ICLC in October of 2009 because they wanted information about their rights. They lived in a 4-unit apartment building that had just been foreclosed upon. All the units had serious electric, plumbing and structural problems, as well as cockroach, rat and bedbug infestations. The tenants included:

- A single mother who works as a street vendor and has three young children. (pictured at right)
- A couple with four young children. The husband works in construction, but work has been slow for the past two years because of the economic downturn.
- A couple with three young children. The husband works as a day laborer, which has also been slow of late. (pictured below)
- An elderly couple with severe health issues living with their adult children.

ICLC Advocate Aura Yuson helped these clients to file complaints with the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) to repair the building and negotiated with the management company’s attorney to waive collection of rent until the building was repaired. During the time that the rent was waived, the clients deposited their rent into ICLC’s client trust account. Under pressure from ICLC and LAHD, the property manager began to make improvements to the property. After more than a year and a half, the habitability issues are almost entirely resolved and the tenants living conditions have improved dramatically. Since the landlord repaired the units, our clients have resumed paying rent. As a result of our advocacy, each family saved approximately $16,000 in rent payments and they are now living in habitable conditions.

Goodbye and Thanks to our Summer Clerks

This summer, ICLC was fortunate to have 6 law clerks. Three were from Loyola, one from UC Irvine, one from UCLA and one from University of San Diego. They have done excellent work, and set ICLC’s bar for future law clerks to a new high. Jawana McFadden, shares her experience as a clerk with our Homeless Veterans Project.

"The great gift of family life is to be intimately acquainted with people you might never even introduce yourself to, had life not done it for you." Kendall Hailey

As a 13-year veteran of the United States Army these words echo true whenever I encounter a veteran. To some they are “clients” but to me they are brothers and sisters.

As a soldier I’ve served my country in places like Iraq and Kuwait, and despite my experiences there, the most challenging part of my tours was returning home. But I am the fortunate one. Many soldiers return home with conditions such as: Traumatic Brain Injury, Depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or Military Sexual Trauma. These conditions are invisible injuries - not as evident as a bandaged limb, and often masked under the relief of drugs or alcohol.

As a clerk in Inner City Law Center’s Homeless Veterans Project, I’ve advocated for veteran’s rights to access benefits and healthcare they are rightfully entitled to receive. I’ve also worked to upgrade discharge statuses to accurately reflect the honorable service that they’ve given to their country.
I HAVE LOVED THIS JOB and this office. I was motivated to work here because it's a place that makes a difference and asks for nothing in return. My advocacy is strengthened by my ability to understand each veteran. And although I may never serve alongside many of them, I learned how to serve them better at ICLC.

I am Jawana McFadden, and I am a Veteran.

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**About Inner City Law Center**

Inner City Law Center has been serving the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and families in Los Angeles County since 1980. Founded on the basic principle that every human being should be treated with dignity and respect at all times, ICLC, through its staff of more than 30 attorneys, advocates, tenant organizers, social workers, and other professionals, provides free legal representation and social service advocacy to over 2,000 homeless and working poor clients each year.

As the only full-time provider of legal services headquartered on Skid Row, ICLC is widely recognized for its expertise in housing issues, as well as government and veterans benefits.

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