Celebrate National Pro Bono Week

National Pro Bono Week recognizes lawyers who provide free legal services to low-income people and focuses attention on the pressing need to more effectively provide access to justice for all.

Inner City Law Center is a member of the SoCal Pro Bono Managers Consortium. We invite you to join us at the following events during National Pro Bono Week, October 21-26, 2013 including:

- **To Remake Justice in 2013: Responding to the Growing Justice Gap**, Thursday, October 24, 4-5:30 p.m., at the Downtown L.A. Law Library, with a reception to follow. A panel of judges, private bar leaders and law school deans and professors will discuss how LA's legal community can respond to the growing challenge of ensuring that low-income people can access justice. Among the panelists is ICLC Board Member Gary Blasi.

- **The Public Legal Services Fair**, Saturday, October 26, 9-4 p.m., at the Downtown L.A. Law Library. The Fair will provide organizations an opportunity to share information, referrals and advice with the community. ICLC staff will be on hand to share information on safe and healthy housing, eviction prevention and other important issues.

"Suite Night of Baseball" A Home Run

On September 4, [Judicate West](http://www.judicate-west.com) provided Inner City Law Center with their Luxury Suite at Angels Stadium of Anaheim for our second "Suite Night of Baseball." This year's event was sold out and raised over $7,000 to support our Homeless Veterans Project.

Many thanks to our sponsors for making this a fun, exciting and inspirational event:
ICLC Hosts Los Angeles Youth through High School Internship Program

In August, ICLC welcomed to our offices four high school students from Verbum Dei, a preparatory school for students in Watts and the surrounding communities. Each student will be in the office once a week throughout the school year, gaining work experience and skills. ICLC is participating in the program to expose these students to the possibility of a legal service career while helping serve ICLC clients.

"This program is great because of the opportunities that it gives students," says Cristina Cuellar-Villanueva, Verbum Dei's director of the program. "It gives them an opportunity to be in an academic setting and yet experience a real-world job setting and get this experience first-hand."

Military Sexual Trauma Victory

While serving in the Navy, Marina Damon (not her real name) was sexually harassed by her superior officer on a regular basis over a three-year period. Ms. Damon was terrified of reporting the harassment because she feared no one would believe her. She lost a significant amount of
weight, began drinking heavily to numb her feelings, withdrew from everyone around her, and dreaded going into work.

After four years in the service, Ms. Damon was honorably discharged from the Navy. She supported herself by working odd jobs, but continued to struggle with the symptoms of PTSD that she had developed in response to the sexual harassment by her superior officer. Feeling deeply ashamed about what had happened to her and guilty for not reporting it, she developed unremitting anxiety, lost the ability to sleep for more than a few hours at a time, and developed strained relationships with her children.

Eventually Ms. Damon became homeless. She lived in her car for a year before moving into the New Directions women’s shelter for veterans. Inner City Law Center helped Ms. Damon submit a claim for mental health benefits based on her PTSD secondary to military sexual trauma.

In August 2013, Ms. Damon received surprising news: she had been granted a 70% disability rating from the VA, not for military sexual trauma, but for depression. Ms. Damon is pleased that the VA has finally acknowledged what she went through in the Navy. She recently got a part-time job at a fast food restaurant and is working on her relationship with her children. Ms. Damon hopes that she will be part of a larger trend of service members and veterans continuing to speak out about sexual harassment in the military and is proud that she had the courage to come forward.

**About Inner City Law Center**

Inner City Law Center is the preeminent housing and homelessness legal-services organization working on behalf of poor people in Southern California. As the only provider of legal services located on Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles, ICLC combats slum housing throughout Los Angeles and develops strategies to end homelessness.

Each year, ICLC’s staff of 40 (including 20 attorneys) provides free, high-quality legal representation to thousands of low-income tenants, working-poor families, immigrants, people who are homeless or disabled, and veterans. Driven by the fundamental principle that every person should always be treated with dignity and respect, ICLC works for long-term, positive, and meaningful change.