

LEGAL AID WORKS®

LEGAL AID WORKS® (formerly *Rappahannock Legal Services*) Newsletter

We envision a just world without barriers to justice.

Justice in Action

Jenny (name changed to protect anonymity) walked into our office just over a year after she separated with her husband, Ryan (name changed to protect anonymity). Prior to their separation, **Jenny had been experiencing incidents of domestic violence over her 5 year marriage to Ryan.** On the night that instigated her leaving their marital home, Ryan was high on prescription pain killers. He violently took Jenny's phone and twisted her arm. **He began asking where his gun was in a threatening manner** which really scared Jenny. After receiving aid from a police officer, she was able to obtain a protective order against her husband.

Jenny spent the year following this incident getting her life back. She and her two children moved into a new apartment. Jenny and Ryan were able to agree to a custody, visitation, and support order through the Spotsylvania County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. However, something always felt unresolved to Jenny. What she really desired and needed was a divorce from her husband so she could truly take back her life and start over.

Since the couple had no unresolved marital issues – no shared debt, no shared property, and a custody, visitation, and support order in place – they were great candidates for an uncontested divorce. Our attorney contacted Ryan and ascertained that he was in agreement with a divorce and would cooperate. Paperwork was filed with the Spotsylvania County Circuit Court. A month after the process began, the court clerk mailed a Final Divorce Decree to all parties involved and the divorce was finalized. Jenny would finally have the fresh start she needed.

If Jenny tried to navigate the system on her own, it would have been very difficult for her to figure out how to draft and submit all of the required paperwork the correct way. The process is very complicated and not user friendly. It took several divorce complaint templates, obtained from law books and from other attorneys, to draft one tailored to their exact situation. The complaint had to be filed with two important and specific court documents. Next, Ryan had to come to the LAW office to receive a copy of the complaint and sign another court document in front of a notary. This step cannot be completed before the complaint is filed or you have to start over.

Once Ryan "waived" his service of the complaint, a plaintiff affidavit for Jenny was drafted and one for her third party witness (a neighbor). Jenny and her neighbor had to come to the LAW office, review the affidavits, and sign them in front of a notary. The affidavits were filed with the final divorce decree, which were also drafted using several templates. This process is often done wrong and the paperwork is not accepted by the court when people try to do this without legal help. Luckily for Jenny, the final divorce decree was timely entered without having to start the process over. **Without a Legal Aid attorney, Jenny may have never obtained a divorce from her abuser.** With new funding from a Victims of Crime Act grant, Legal Aid Works hired new staff to handle divorces for Domestic Violence victims like Jenny.



2017 Give Local Piedmont check ceremony! Thank you to our supporters; we are grateful!

Record breaking 24-hour fundraising event!

Thanks to the generosity of our many donors, Legal Aid Works surpassed our \$5,000 fundraising goal by raising a total of

\$7,600.00

through Give Local Piedmont.





Legal Aid Works' VOCA Project staff receiving training from Legal Aid Work's Executive Director, Ann Kloeckner, Esq.

Legal Term "Collateral Estoppel"

The California Supreme Court says that "Collateral estoppel precludes relitigation of issues argued and decided in prior proceedings." The constitutional ban on double jeopardy includes the right to plead collateral estoppel. Why is Collateral Estoppel important? Because it promotes the speedy administration of justice by preventing the continuous, duplicative litigation of fruitless claims.

Profiles in Service VOCA Project Teams HIRED!

Legal Aid Works® (LAW) accepts clients who are seeking contested or uncontested divorces. This new service is funded by the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Potential clients must be a victim of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. In addition to giving advice and possible representation concerning DV contested divorces, our VOCA project staff will also set up office hours at area DV/SA shelters to conduct intake or make presentations on general legal topics.

Our VOCA project staff consists of one attorney and one bilingual paralegal in each of our three offices.

Fredericksburg: Attorney **Eileen Waters, Esq.** Bilingual Paralegal **Ana Llanos**

Culpeper: Attorney **Jessika Morris, Esq.** Bilingual Paralegal **Stephanie Loya**

Tappahannock: Attorney **Shannon Clark, Esq.** Bilingual Paralegal **Jauneth Cisneros**

Meet our Summer Law Clerks!

Caroline Grossweiler, a rising 2L at the Appalachian School of Law

Zach McDonnell, a rising 2L at William and Mary School of Law

Breck Hosford, a rising 3L at the University of Richmond School of Law.

Matthew Snarr, a rising 2L at William and Mary School of Law.

Pro Bono Honor Roll

Legal Aid Works® relies on a cadre of compassionate attorneys who volunteer their time to assist clients LAW would otherwise have to turn away.

EMILY E. GOLD

Kurylo, Gold & Josey PLC

Emily has been practicing criminal and traffic defense and family law in the Fredericksburg region since 2004.

Emily focuses on matters of criminal and traffic defense, as well as family law, including divorce and child issues such as custody and visitation. She endeavors to work as hard as possible and advocating for each client.

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Kurylo, Gold & Josey, PLC

Shelia J. Weimer, Esq.

*Spotsylvania County Attorney's
Office*

2017 Champion of Justice Recipients

On Thursday, June 8th, Legal Aid Works® (LAW) held a reception at **Mount Airy Plantation** in Warsaw, VA to recognize **The Honorable Harry T. Taliaferro, III** and his commitment to justice throughout the years. Recently retired as a judge with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, Judge Taliaferro was an early member of the Board of Directors for LAW.



The Honorable Harry T. Taliaferro, III.



Supporters came to honor Judge Taliaferro and hear about LAW's impact in the

On Wednesday, June 28th, Legal Aid Works® held a reception to honor **Virginia Supreme Court Justice Stephen R. McCullough** and his commitment to justice throughout the years. Having interned at the Virginia Poverty Law Center and served on the Access to Justice Commission, Justice McCullough has championed the issue of representation of indigents at the appellate level.



Justice Stephen R. McCullough with LAW's Executive Director, Ann Kloeckner, Esq.

LEGAL AID WORKS®

IN THE COMMUNITY

Serving 17 counties from offices in Fredericksburg, Tappahannock and Culpeper, our attorneys welcome the chance to mentor law students and undergrads interested in legal careers.

Community Event Dates:

- Jazz4Justice, November 4, 2017**

Interested in attending or sponsoring this event?

Email Bri at bvanaudenhove@legalaidworks.org

Help us put justice to work!

Ways to Give:

- Donate**

- ◇ **Make a gift or pledge today! Go to www.LegalAidWorks.org/donate or contact Bri in the Development Office at (540)371.1105.x122.**

- Gift-in-Kind**

- ◇ **Our current wish list includes: office equipment and office supplies.**

- Volunteer**

- ◇ **Pro-bono attorneys, filing, Spanish interpreting/translations, research, fundraising, community outreach, and other important tasks**

Our Culpeper office has moved!

New address: 1200 Sunset Lane, Suite 2122 Culpeper, VA 22701.

Stop by and see us!

Because justice really should be for all.



"...WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL."

Yet there is no right to counsel in civil disputes in the U.S., unlike the promise of a lawyer for people in criminal cases.

Did you know in Virginia there is:

- **1 Private Attorney** for every 364 individuals
- **1 Legal Aid Attorney** for every 7,000 low-income individuals.

Did you know Legal Aid Works has:

- **9 Attorneys** to cover 17 counties with 51 courts
- To turn away 2 out of 3 low-income applicants due to low staffing
- **CLOSED 892 cases**, helping 2,025 people in 2016

Applicants who are turned away have no where else to turn for free legal support.

www.LegalAidWorks.org/donate

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www.LegalAidWorks.org

