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LINDSEE P. GRANFIELD, Chair, AMBEF
LINDSEE P. GRANFIELD, Vice Chair, AMBEF

MARK E. SEGALL
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP

2013 was a banner year for support from the private bar for MFY’s clients. Over the past year, the following firms have provided pro bono assistance to MFY clients:

Abbey Sponsor LLP
Bryan Cave LLP and Affiliates
Chadbourne & Parke LLP
Clayton Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Cogentrix & Butler LLP
Davos & Gilbert LLP
Delallo & Partners LLP
Druker & Partick LLP
Falk & Rudolphen P.L.
Greenberg Traurig LLP
Harwood Fellner LLP
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP
James Day LLP
Kaye Scholer LLP
Lee Ann Chung White & Kris LLP
McDermott Will & Emery LLP
Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McClorey LLP
Milberg LLP
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
O’Melveny & Myers LLP
Ovint, Harrington & Sauté LLP
Otten & Koehler LLP
Patterson-Ballenger Weiss & Tyme LLP
Paul Hastings LLP

MFY Legal Services
Mobilizing for Justice

2013 Annual Report
www.mfy.org
Our Clients

2013 Audited Financial Overview

Revenue Sources

- Total Revenue: $7,526,282
  - Public Assistance, SSI, SSD: 41%
  - Government: 19%
  - Foundations & Corporations: 10%
  - Special Event: 5%
  - Special Event expenses: 1%
  - Individuals: 9%
  - Other: 1%

Program Expenses

- Total Program Expenses: $6,880,263
  - Legal programs for seniors: 33%
  - Legal programs for the elderly: 11%
  - Legal programs for low-income consumers: 7%
  - Legal programs for people with mental illness: 9%
  - Legal programs for low-wage workers: 7%
  - Legal programs for kinship caregivers: 2%
  - Legal programs for family: 1%
  - Public Benefits: 1%
  - Employment: 1%
  - Individual Rights: 1%
  - Other: 1%

S.I. Home Saved

When Lisa lost her job in 2009, the family fell behind on mortgage payments. Although they complied with their bank’s requests for documents, their application for a loan modification was denied four times, allegedly due to missing documents. MFY represented the couple at a court mediatated settlement conference and eventually negotiated a loan modification that cut their monthly payments in half and reduced their mortgage loan interest rate from 7.25% to 2.5%.

Benefits to Clients in FY 2013

- MFY handled 8,070 cases benefiting over 16,000 people
- MFY won $1.5 million in affirmative landlord-tenant judgments
- MFY saved distressed homeowners more than $6 million in principal and interest
- MFY secured $1.8 million in affirmative employment judgments
- MFY handled more than 500 cases for Super Storm Sandy victims
- More than 400 pro bono attorneys and other volunteers worked on 1,020 cases

Client Income Sources

- Public Assistance, SSI, SSD: 41%
- Employment: 23%
- Social Security: 13%
- Pension: 11%
- Other: 10%
- Unemployment Ins. & Workers’ Comp: 5%
- No Income: 4%

Client Ethnicity

- White: 28%
- African-American: 25%
- Hispanic: 20%
- Mixed Race: 18%
- Asian: 5%

Surviving Super Storm Sandy

When Super Storm Sandy hit, 857 residents of Belle Harbor Apartments for Adults in Rockaway, many of whom have a mental illness, watched helplessly as seawater surged into the building and the lights went out.

They were evacuated in a haphazard and frantic way the day after the storm, most leaving without clothing, medication, dentures or glasses. They were sent to the armory in Brooklyn, where they slept on cots, not allowed to go out and not knowing what was happening. They were later moved to a hotel in East New York that had no beds, so again they slept on army cots. Finally, they wound up in a building at the Creedmoor Psychiatric Hospital in Queens, where they slept on cots for weeks until beds finally arrived.

Throughout this torturous process, MFY attorneys were their eyes and ears, running interference with staff, getting the heat turned on, dealing with an outbreak of scabies, and working to get residents proper care and medical attention. Three and a half months later, the residents returned to Belle Harbor. Many found that their belongings disappeared in the chaos. MFY then helped residents file FEMA applications for their losses and ensured that the home provided needed care after months of neglect.

Retiree Gets a Fresh Start

Marlena is retired and receives Social Security, but also works part time for a nonprofit organization. When her boss got sick, she ran into financial trouble and was later fired. Instead of using a legal aid bank referral company, that organization instead referred her to MFY. The court disbarred her petition because she was unable to locate and serve Marlena’s mother. MFY represented her at the guardianship hearing, securing the father’s consent and successfully getting services on the mother. With a legal guardianship order, Marlena’s grandmother is now able to access the health services the child needs.

A Permanent Home

When Tammy was two years old, her mother dropped her off at her grandmother’s apartment and disappeared. Eighteen months later, the grandmother found she could not get medical care for Tammy without a legal guardianship. The court dismissed her petition because she was unable to locate and serve Tammy’s mother. MFY represented her at the guardianship hearing, securing the mother’s consent and successfully getting services on the mother. With a legal guardianship order, Tammy’s grandmother is now able to access the health services the child needs.

Mobilizing for Justice: 2013 Highlights

Saving a Senior’s Housing

William is a 68-year-old Vietnam veteran who has lived in his rent-stabilized apartment for more than 30 years. To help him cope with his depression, his doctor recommended he get an emotional support animal. William’s mood and symptoms improved dramatically once Spike, a certified service dog, became part of his household.

During the presence of a dog to protect to avoid William, his landlord filed for evictions, claiming that William violated his lease by having a dog and making alterations to his apartment. MFY took the case and documented Spike’s service dog status and requested a reasonable accommodation for William’s ability from the landlord. MFY also showed that the landlord’s allegations about alterations were unfounded.

After many months of litigation, the improper violations were removed and the case was discontinued. William was granted the reasonable accommodation to have a service dog for the duration of his tenancy. William and Spike now have a secure home and William’s health continues to be stable.

African Workers Settle Unlawful Discrimination Suit

After years of routinely made discriminatory comments about Africans, their boss fired them because her manager did not want to work with Africans. Two hair salon workers filed an unlawful discrimination claim with the State Division of Human Rights. MFY negotiated a highly favorable settlement the night before a full-blown evidentiary hearing was scheduled.

Recycling and setting aside the employees’ wages, the company ended up paying back wages plus interest. MFY negotiated a $75,000 settlement to end the lawsuit.

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