2008 Highlights

MFY’s Expands Scope of Services & Caseload
In January, MFY launched the Lower Manhattan Justice Project to help preserve economic diversity in neighborhoods impacted by 9/11 by increasing legal services in the areas of housing, employment and consumer. In September 2008, we initiated a new foreclosure prevention project to address the growing crisis faced by homeowners with sub-prime mortgages and victims of rescue scams. Overall, MFY’s caseload increased by 36%, benefiting some 12,000 people.

MFY Recovers Unpaid Wages
Natalie Elias, pictured with MFY Attorney Carolyn Coffey, recovered $5,000 in back pay and fees from an employer who had underpaid her. Over the past year, MFY has recovered $2,000,000 in unpaid wages, benefits, and other awards, a 16% increase over the previous year. Employment cases increased 64% since 2007.

Victories for Adult Home Residents
MFY’s Adult Home Advocacy Project scored an important victory for 20 Staten Island adult home residents who had been living in unsafe housing conditions. The group, represented by MFY Attorney Maria Luisa Ramirez, won a motion for summary judgment, which preserved all of the units, even those of the tenants we did not represent.

Consumer Cases Up 75%
Mr. Zhang, pictured with MFY attorney Anamaria Segura, was one of hundreds of victims of identity theft and unfair debt collection practices who recovered $3,715 with MFY’s assistance. MFY also provided leadership in a statewide effort to win passage of the Exempt Income Protection Act in the state legislature, which closes a loophole that had allowed the bank accounts of poor, disabled and elderly New Yorkers to be restrained by creditors even when all of the money in the account was exempt from collection.

MFY Saves Affordable Housing in Chinatown
Among the thousands of low-income tenants who benefited from MFY representation in housing matters were 30 low-income Chinatown workers who faced illegal eviction from their lodging house. MFY represented 19 tenants and won a motion for summary judgment, which preserved all of the units, even those of the tenants we did not represent.

Pro Bono Lawyers Help Kin Families
Twenty-three new firms joined MFY’s Kinship Caregiver Law Project, which has trained 200 attorneys to handle custody, guardianship and adoption proceedings for grandparents and others raising related children. Over 100 families have been represented in court cases and hundreds of caregivers receive advice and counsel at court-based clinics.

Advocacy

MFY Testifies to Stop Tenant Harassment
MFY attorneys Donna Chiu and Jonathan Burke testified at the NY City Council on tenant harassment. The Council later approved new protections for tenants. MFY regularly testifies on the problems faced by the city’s low-income residents.

MFY Guides Help Tenants
MFY’s new guide helps tenants with pets understand their rights and prevent eviction and loss of emotional support animals. The pet guide is one of 75 guides on a wide range of legal issues of concern to tenants, seniors, workers, consumers and immigrants.

MFY Report Exposes Sham Process Servers
MFY’s investigation of process serving in debt collection cases revealed flawed service in over 90% of cases studied, and added fuel to demands for greater oversight by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs.
Scales of Justice Donors

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MFY’s audited financial statements are available on request.

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MFY's audited financial statements are available on request.