

East Bay Community Law Center

EBCLC E-Newsletter

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Dear [EBCLC Alums and Friends](#),

I am delighted to send you our [first E-Newsletter of 2005](#) and share developments at EBCLC during the last few months.

I am especially pleased to report that EBCLC has an option to purchase its own home!

We will provide more details over the coming year, but **we are very excited about this incredible opportunity to increase services to clients, train and supervise more students, and enhance EBCLC's long-term security.**

➤ [Program Highlights](#)

Some of the many notable accomplishments at EBCLC during the last few months include:

[COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT](#)

- In December, [EBCLC's CED Director Margaretta Lin and her students](#) – with exceptional *pro bono* assistance from attorneys [Marc Gottschalk](#) and [Jenna Jones](#), of the Palo Alto-based firm of [Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati](#) – filed extensive CEQA comments on behalf of low-income residents challenging the lack of adequate study of environmental harms in the [Central Station](#) development project in West Oakland.
- Through the dedicated *pro bono* efforts of a team of lawyers from the San Francisco firm of [Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal](#) – including [Arnold Schuster](#), [Sanford Kingsley](#), [David Diepenbrock](#), [Mary Kay Lacey](#), and [Matt Marostica](#) – the City of Oakland recently amended its complaint to add causes of action for the recovery of a \$7 million loan in EBCLC's [Oakland Pacific Renaissance Affordable Housing Case](#).

[DECriminalization of Poverty \(Suitcase Clinic\)](#)

- In December, as a result of the efforts of a large group of collaborating agencies that included [EBCLC's Suitcase Clinic](#), [Alameda County's Homeless/Caring Court](#) held its inaugural session. Under the leadership of [Superior Court Judge Gordon S. Baranco](#), the

court is modeled after a successful effort in San Diego (now replicated in several other California cities) to help homeless people clear their records of petty offenses and get off the streets.

- On April 2, 2005, EBCLC is a lead community agency at a first-ever **Criminal Records Expungement Summit** convened by **Congresswoman Barbara Lee**. The goal of the summit is to address obstacles to housing, employment and civic participation faced by the growing number of previously incarcerated people living in Alameda County. EBCLC attorneys and students will provide **community education, individual counseling, information to other providers, and assistance with the mass adjudication of at least 100 mandatory expungements** on the day of the summit.

HOUSING & EVICTION DEFENSE

- In December, with tireless *pro bono* assistance from attorney **Jonathan Eldan** of the San Francisco law firm of **Sonnenschein, Nath and Rosenthal**, the **Housing Practice** collected a \$300,000 judgment on behalf of a monolingual Spanish-speaking client who suffered terrible harm as a result of the illegal actions of her landlord. This is the second-largest judgment on behalf of an individual in EBCLC's history.
- In January, the **Housing Practice** hosted its annual **Legislative Update in California Landlord-Tenant Law**. The MCLE training covered changes to the Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Government Code, and Health & Safety Code; new case law; and updates on local ordinances and regulations.
- In January, the **Alameda County Lead Poisoning and Prevention Program** published a **Guide to Lead-Safe Housing for Tenants and First-Time Home Buyers**. Invaluable assistance on the booklet was provided by **Housing Practice Director Laura Lane** and **EBCLC Deputy Director Deborah Moss-West**.

HIV/AIDS & IMMIGRATION

Students under the supervision of **HIV/AIDS Attorney Linda Tam** recently assisted:

- **a refugee from Vietnam obtain an HIV waiver**, allowing him to get his greencard and join family members who had been granted greencards;
- **an HIV-infected client from Mexico get his green card** through his spouse, after our successful effort to obtain a marriage-based HIV waiver; and
- **an HIV-infected client from Mexico apply for and receive citizenship!**

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

- **IES Director Ed Barnes** and **EBCLC Student Board Member Ann O'Leary** have continued their legislative efforts to extend CalWORKs (state welfare) benefits for families who meet monthly welfare-to-work requirements through employment. **BREAKING NEWS: Representative Sally Lieber** (D – Mountain View) has just introduced **AB 8503**, our **"Work Stops the Clock"** bill.
- EBCLC is a lead advocate in the **Language Access Task Force**, which has compelled the **Social Services (Welfare) Agency** to identify and address serious gaps in the provision of language-appropriate services to limited-English speaking welfare recipients.

➤ Clinic News

- The long-awaited **EBCLC Alumni/ae Directory was mailed out in December!** It is remarkable to see the depth and breadth of professional, personal and geographic diversity among the 700 law students who have participated in EBCLC's clinical program. Please let us know if you have updated contact information.
- This semester, **38 Boalt students are participating as Spring 2005 Clinic Interns. This is the largest single clinical class in EBCLC's history!**
- **EBCLC's Summer Hiring Committee** is actively filling the 18 positions in our Summer Program, which includes law students from around the country.
- **EBCLC's Student Steering Committee** has been more active than ever this year, sponsoring among other things, **a lunchtime series at Boalt on EBCLC's policy work**, and **a day of volunteer work on the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.**

➤ Recent Awards

EBCLC staff, students and board members continue to receive well-deserved recognition for their work. 2004 was a banner year for EBCLC. In addition to many individual awards for staff and board members, EBCLC received the:

- **Berkeley Community Award** from the **Berkeley Community Fund**, which recognizes two organizations annually for their exemplary achievements in improving the quality of life in our community; and
- **Distinguished Award for Community Service** from the **Alameda County Bar Association**, presented to EBCLC staff and students for their "unselfish and dedicated service to the ACBA and the community."

In the December issue of **California Lawyer**, EBCLC board chair **Michael Loeb** of the San Francisco office of **Bingham McCutchen** was a featured expert in a roundtable on employment law.

In January 2005, **EBCLC Deputy Director Deborah Moss-West** and **Director of EBCLC's Decriminalization of Poverty Project Tirien Steinbach** were recipients of the **Shirley Chisholm Award** from **Embracing the Dream** as "strong women building even stronger communities."

These honors come on top of a number of local, state and national awards for EBCLC's teaching and service over the years.

➤ Donor Appreciation

Many thanks to those of you who responded to our fall **Annual Campaign!**

Special thanks to some of our **recent major funding partners**, including:

- **The VanLobenSels/RembeRock Foundation** for a 3-year, general operating support grant in the amount of \$75,000.

- **The California Endowment** for a \$50,000 Local Opportunities Fund grant to support **HOPE Enterprises**, an EBCLC–incubated youth leadership and food justice project in East Oakland.
- **The Partnership Foundation** for a \$10,000 general operating gift.
- **Links, Inc.** for a \$5,000 grant for EBCLC’s HIV/AIDS work.
- The **Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley** for \$2,920 from their monthly collection.

Thanks also to **James Head**, Director of Programs at the **San Francisco Foundation**, for joining us at our annual **EBCLC Staff Retreat** in January. James led an inspiring discussion about the challenges and opportunities for making a difference in the East Bay during the coming years. For the second year in a row, meeting space was graciously provided by the **James Irvine Foundation**.

Our **2003-2004 Annual Report** acknowledges **individual, law firm, foundation, corporate and government gifts** made through June 30, 2004 – **thank you to all of our donors, whose generous support makes our work possible!**

➤ **Keep in Touch**

In order to improve our ability to communicate with EBCLC alums and friends, please send address changes, news or updates to **EBCLC Development Associate Michelle Eddleman Shin**, at shin@ebclc.org.

To **make a gift to EBCLC**, and allow us to continue to provide critical legal services to clients and clinical opportunities to law students, please visit our [website](#).

➤ **EBCLC’s Mission**

A core value of our society must be equal access to justice. The complex nature of the legal system limits equal access, especially for people in poverty and those faced with language and cultural barriers. Well-trained legal advocates should be available to all, regardless of economic status. To that end, EBCLC provides:

- hands-on **clinical education** to law students to make these future lawyers aware of and skilled in addressing the needs of indigent communities; and
- desperately-needed **legal services** to the low-income community in the areas of housing, welfare, HIV/AIDS, homelessness and community economic development.

Since its founding in 1988 by law students at UC Berkeley’s Boalt Hall School of Law, EBCLC has become the **largest provider of free legal services in the East Bay** and **one of the nation’s premier poverty law clinics**.

EBCLC’s work helps to build an East Bay community that is more healthy, secure, productive, and hopeful.