

East Bay Community Law Center

EBCLC E-Newsletter

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Dear EBCLC Alums and Friends,

I am delighted to send you the first **EBCLC E-Newsletter** and share with you some of the exciting developments here during the last few months. With so much activity and so many accomplishments, we hope to provide this information to you on a quarterly basis.

➤ **Program Highlights**

In calendar year 2003, EBCLC served 2,277 clients in the areas of housing, welfare, homelessness, HIV/AIDS and community economic development. Hundreds of other clients were helped by EBCLC subcontractors or received information and referral through EBCLC's outreach programs. Many of these clients were heads of households with children and other dependents; these services often mean the difference between families being housed and being homeless, and having access to income, food and health care.

A sample of program highlights includes:

- In early 2003, EBCLC launched the **HIV Immigration Project** to provide a broad range of legal services to HIV-infected immigrants, a growing population with special needs related to their resident status. Supervising Attorney **Linda Tam** (Boalt '00), who interned in **Boalt Hall's International Human Rights Law Clinic**, directs the project.
- In September 2003, **Equal Justice Works Fellow Jaimee Arnone** joined EBCLC to start a project to enforce the warranty of habitability in Alameda County through lawsuits, code compliance and other strategies. Many of our clients pay high rents yet live in substandard housing, often without recourse to improve these conditions on their

own. Jaimee's fellowship is generously supported by the San Francisco law firm of **Bingham McCutchen**.

- On November 1, 2003, after the culmination of several years of support and fiscal agency under the supervision of Deputy Director **Deborah Moss-West**, EBCLC formally spun-off the **Bay Area Construction Sector Intervention Collaborative** (BACSIC). BACSIC provides critically needed job training and apprenticeship opportunities to women and people of color who traditionally have been excluded from the construction trades.
- As part of EBCLC's assistance to homeless clients through the **Suitcase Clinic Legal Services** (SCLS) project, SCLS Director **Tirien Steinbach** (Boalt '99) and her students have created a **Criminal Record Expungement** curriculum for clients and service providers. These workshops are the latest stage in coordinated efforts led by SCLS to end the criminalization of low-income and homeless men, women and youth and remove obstacles to their employment and housing.
- In a continuing partnership with the law firms of **Paul Hastings, Heller Ehrman, Siegel & Yee**, the **California Affordable Housing Law Project** and community groups including **APEN** and **Just Cause Oakland**, EBCLC has helped to stop the evictions of elderly Asian tenants in **Pacific Renaissance Plaza**. Led by EBCLC CED Director **Margaretta Lin** (Boalt '91), EBCLC has been coordinating a grassroots campaign and impact litigation to preserve affordable housing in Oakland's Chinatown and promote developer accountability to community interests. Margaretta also has been incubating **HOPE Enterprises**, a project of grassroots youth organizers, to promote food justice, youth employment and sustainable community-based economic development in East Oakland.

➤ Clinic News

In the clinic, 2004 has picked up where 2003 left off:

- For the 4th consecutive semester, more than 30 second- and third-year Boalt students are enrolled at EBCLC. Another 50 first-year Boalt students are participating in the **Law Student Outreach** program, providing information and referral services at shelters and clinics to hundreds of low-income, homeless and HIV-infected clients.
- Later this spring, we plan to distribute the first **EBCLC Alumni/ae Directory**, which we hope will serve as a useful resource for current and former students.
- As most of you know, in July Boalt is welcoming a new Dean, **Christopher Edley**. We are looking forward to working with Dean Edley to strengthen and deepen the EBCLC-Boalt relationship, which has been such a win-win-win for the school, the law center and the community.

➤ Recent Awards

EBCLC staff and students continue to receive well-deserved recognition for their work:

- On November 6, 2003, Housing Unit Director **Laura Lane** (Boalt '96) was honored at a reception in San Francisco hosted by **Housing Rights, Inc.** in recognition of her contributions to fair housing in the East Bay. The reception was followed by a theatrical adaptation of Barbara Ehrenreich's acclaimed book "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America."
- On January 7th, 2004, EBCLC Client Liaison **Cseneca Parker** received the **Daniel Keenan Award**, a statewide honor presented by the **Center for Applied Local Research** in recognition of Cseneca's contributions to the field of HIV and human services, noting that "as a Community Advocate for low-income people of color, Cseneca is on the front line of the fight for equal justice for all people."
- On January 9th, during its annual reception, the **Alameda County Bar Association** presented the **Distinguished Award for Community Service** to EBCLC staff and students for their "unselfish and dedicated service to the ACBA and the community."
- On January 19th, the **Alameda County Office of AIDS** and **Embracing the Dream** presented the **Common Unity Award** to EBCLC Supervising Attorney **Manel Kappagoda** for her many years of dedicated service to clients with HIV and her extraordinary work on the AIDS Lanka Project.

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

➤ **Keep in Touch**

In order to improve our ability to communicate with EBCLC alums and friends, we are bringing on-line new development software – please send address changes, news or updates to Development Director **Jon Marley**, at marley@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, at: <http://www.ebclc.org/support.htm>.

➤ **EBCLC's Mission**

A core value of our society is equal access to justice, yet the complex nature of the legal system limits such access, especially for people in poverty. Equal access is further limited by the dearth of lawyers and advocates for poor people. The East Bay Community Law Center addresses these issues by:

- Providing desperately-needed **legal services** to low-income individuals and community groups in the areas of housing, employment and income support, HIV/AIDS, and community economic development; and
- Offering hands-on **clinical education** to law students in the form of training and supervision in the provision of legal services to low-income clients and community groups.

Our goal is to make the lives of East Bay community members more healthy, secure, productive, and hopeful.

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