



EBCLC News

September

2016 Edition





Associates Give Back

This summer, EBCLC launched its first-ever Associates' Giving Campaign--led by Honorary Chair Maureen Sheehy of Kilpatrick Townsend, our four co-chairs, and an extraordinary team of associate coordinators from eight law firms in the Bay Area. The campaign chairs and coordinators raised just over \$14,000 from 80 of their colleagues, all benefiting EBCLC's work to provide stellar legal services and clinical legal education. After six grueling weeks of fierce (yet friendly) competition, we are thrilled to recognize the winning firms in four categories:

200+ Bay Area Lawyers

**LATHAM &
WATKINS^{LLP}**

100 - 199 Bay Area Lawyers



50-99 Bay Area Lawyers

Coblentz
Patch Duffy
& Bass LLP

Highest Associate Participation



For full campaign results, [click here](#)

EBCLC would like to extend a special thanks to the campaign's "All Star Associates" (non-partner donors who made a gift of \$250 or more):

Byron Chin, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

Margaret Fish, *Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP*

Daniel Mandel, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Maryann Tarantino, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

Jenna Yott, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

Robert Cortez Webb, Morrison & Foerster LLP



Staff Spotlight

Theo Cuison



Tell us about yourself.

I am the son of Filipino immigrants and was raised as a military kid in Hawai'i and Southern California, primarily in San Diego. A few weeks into my freshman year at Cal, 9/11 happened and put the country on a completely different trajectory than what I hoped for growing up. The ease and frequency of going back and forth to Mexico with just my high school ID (or military dependent ID when the border official questioned only me and not my fellow travelers) disappeared almost overnight. Overnight, borders, hearts, and minds hardened, and all the nuanced and intertwined beauty of what it meant to grow up in a border community got shouted down by the refrain of "you're either with us or against us." I decided to become a public interest attorney after working as a legal aid paralegal down in San Diego and returned to northern California for law school. I finished up at King Hall in 2011 and entered the profession in the hope that one day attorneys like me are no longer needed because our immigration laws become less punitive and more just and humane

Who has inspired you in your life and why?

I would say my maternal grandparents and my paternal grandmother, whom I lived with while growing up. My maternal grandparents' stories about how as farmers they were completely dependent on the weather for their survival, and my paternal grandmother's life as a widow and single mother, really put into perspective just why the act of my going to college and then on to law school was a redemption of all their struggle. One story that I hold dear to my heart is that of my maternal grandfather who told me that an attorney once helped save his farm in a kind of *proto-pro bono* case. It's entirely possible that I wouldn't be where I am now were it not for that kindness shown to him. I try to see in all of my clients someone like my grandfather who is trying with all their heart to give a better future to the generations coming after them.

One of my favorite places in the Bay Area is...

Sitting at the I-House café on a clear day at sunset with a panoramic view of the bridges and the bay

"Phil's Bill" Heads to the Governor's Desk!



As a law student in EBCLC's Housing Practice, Phil Hernandez (Berkeley '16) saw first-hand how a flaw in landlord-tenant law could have far reaching consequences for tenants' credit and future. Under existing rules, a tenant must win an eviction suit within 60 days or the court records become public and end up on the tenant's credit report. (Even if the tenant ultimately prevailed in the eviction lawsuit, the unlawful detainer would still show up). The problem is, many unlawful detainers--especially if they are challenged--are not settled within 60 days, leaving tenants susceptible to having inaccurate information appear on credit reports and ending up on landlords' blacklists for up to seven years. For a paper in Ted Mermin's Consumer Protection Law course, Phil argued for a change to the law and, with Ted's encouragement and the help of statewide partners, Phil found sponsors for a bill: AB 2819 (or as we call it, Phil's Bill).

AB2819 addresses this issue by making eviction lawsuits public only if the landlord prevails in the lawsuit. On August 15, the California Senate passed AB 2819. Now, it heads to the governor's desk and, hopefully, will soon be signed into law! More about Phil's Bill here: <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/article/student-leads-effort-protect-tenants-involved-eviction-lawsuits/>.

Alumni Alley
Where Are They Now?



Derik Hilliard

USF School of Law '13

Associate, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

Prior to attending law school, Derik Hilliard worked with EBCLC's Neighborhood Justice Clinic (NJC), assisting clients with discrimination claims, personal injury, criminal law, and debt collection matters. Today, he is an associate at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, a member of the San Francisco and Charles Huston Bar Associations, and helped lead EBCLC's Associates Giving Campaign as an associate coordinator at his firm.

How did your work at the Neighborhood Justice Clinic impact the work you do now at Morgan Lewis?

At NJC, I learned that building a relationship with clients and EBCLC team-members is just as, if not more, important than writing legal briefs and memos. For many of the clients I worked with, the legal system is intimidating and frustrating, and I was grateful for the opportunity to help so many people understand their legal rights and their potential avenues for relief. After working at NJC, I became determined to provide comfort and high-level legal services to my clients, no matter their economic or educational background. In my current practice, I strive to connect with my clients so that they can feel respected and know that I am working hard to protect their interests.

Why did you choose to help lead EBCLC's Associates Giving Campaign at your firm?

EBCLC is one of the most important legal services organizations in the Bay Area. Without it, far too many people would not have access to quality pro bono legal assistance. Knowing that I would not be in my current practice without the wisdom and support of EBCLC, I

would like to do my part to increase underrepresented communities access to legal services. The Associates Giving Campaign is a great program that allows alumni like me to utilize their professional connections to provide much needed financial support to EBCLC.

What's one thing you know now that you wish you knew while you were still in law school?

I wish I knew more about pre-trial litigation and the importance of engaging in alternative dispute resolution and mediation to resolve disputes. Having a better understanding of the mediation process would have given me better insight into analyzing a case and looking for ways to efficiently resolve disputes without utilizing judicial machinery.

**Lieff
Cabrer
Heimann &
Bernstein**
Attorneys at Law



GIRARD GIBBS
— L L P —

**\$800,000 Cy Pres Award Bolsters
EBCLC's Consumer Protection Efforts**

Earlier this year, EBCLC received a significant cy pres award, designated by the law offices of Lieff, Cabrer, Heimann & Bernstein LLP and Girard Gibbs LLP, to support providing free legal services to low-income residents in the East Bay.

The award comes as the result of a settlement in the Providian Credit Card Case. Following the settlement and payout to the class, the remaining, unclaimed settlement funds of \$3.2 million were designated to EBCLC, the California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc., the Justice and Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco- Consumer Project, and the National Consumer Law

Center.

We are extremely grateful to EBCLC alum, Kelly Dermody (Berkeley '94) from Lieff Cabraser and Eric H. Gibbs from Girard Gibbs LLP for supporting our work to increase equity and justice. The cy pres funds come at an opportune time as EBCLC continues to work diligently to scale up the number of people who are able to gain access to consumer education, reduce the ancillary costs of poverty, and improve financial health and opportunity for families throughout the East Bay.

Board Member Corner



Maureen Sheehy

Partner, *Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP*

Maureen brings nearly 30 years of experience in complex commercial and intellectual property litigation experience to her litigation practice at Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP. She has been an active supporter of EBCLC for more than 10 years, most recently as Secretary on the Board of Directors. As pro bono counsel, she's partnered with EBCLC, representing homeless residents in Albany and immigrant clients seeking legal status.

Are you a native Bay Area resident? If not, what brought you to the Bay Area?

I grew up in Toledo, Ohio and first came to the Bay Area for college. Arriving here, I pretty much thought I had died and gone to heaven. I went back to Chicago for law school, but decided I really wanted to plant myself in the Bay Area. So I turned down my job offer at Legal Assistance Foundation in Chicago and went on a job hunt here in San Francisco. I never looked back.

What motivated you to join EBCLC's Board of Directors, and why have you continued to stay involved?

When I was in law school, I worked for two years at the Legal Assistance Foundation in Chicago, which was the city's largest legal aid provider. I worked both in the downtown office on impact litigation and in one of the neighborhood offices doing direct service. I saw what a difference LAF made in people's lives. EBCLC, likewise, has much the same mission and impact. I have been impressed by how the organization has adapted as the needs of the community change, growing resources and training lawyers to meet the community's needs. And I love that EBCLC has trained a workforce of law students to be front-line advocates for justice, just as the Legal Assistance Foundation did for me when I was in law school.

What do you hope to accomplish by serving as an EBCLC board member?

Primarily to spread the word about the huge need for legal advocacy that EBCLC meets. I am constantly learning about the battles EBCLC lawyers are taking on for individual clients; and on a policy level, it is humbling to see how much good EBCLC does with so little. I am a strong believer in every lawyer's obligation to give back and provide representation to those who otherwise wouldn't have access to the justice system. Getting fellow lawyers involved in pro bono projects with EBCLC has been a terrific partnership for my firm. We have built relationships with EBCLC's attorneys and have been able to leverage the work they do even farther.



Advance Justice Today!

Your investment helps EBCLC advance justice and expand opportunity to low-income community members in the areas of housing, health, income support, civic participation and economic development.

