



EAST BAY COMMUNITY LAW CENTER

2007 Year-End Report

2007 has been another extraordinary year at EBCLC, during which we served more than 5,000 low-income members of the East Bay community. Following are some of the highlights.

COMMUNITY LEGAL ACCESS SERVICE SITE (CLASS)

In August, we launched the Community Legal Access Service Site at our original office at 3130 Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. Directed by EBCLC attorney Osha Neumann, with assistance from coordinator Jen Neuber and staff attorney Liam Galbreth, CLASS provides essential tools to enable community members to navigate the legal system, including computer stations, self-help materials, referral guides, and legal

forms and instructions. CLASS' daytime self-help center is staffed by Berkeley Law students who are supervised by EBCLC staff and volunteer attorneys and is open several mornings each week. Most evenings, CLASS hosts free legal workshops on topics including: Tenants' Rights, Workers' Rights, Health and Disability Law, and Criminal Citation Defense. If you are interested in volunteering at CLASS, please contact Osha at osha@dsp.com or 510-548-4064.



HEALTH

The Health Practice is now an umbrella for three distinct projects related to law and health:

1. the **HIV/AIDS Law Project** (including the Family Care Network which focuses on HIV+ women and children) delivers holistic services to low-income, HIV-positive clients throughout Alameda County;
2. the **HIV Immigration Project** provides vital legal assistance to immigrants with HIV, allowing them to come out of the shadows and gain access to life-prolonging care and treatment; and
3. the **Medical Legal Partnership with Children's Hospital Oakland** serves children and families at a CHO outpatient clinic.



Through the work of director Sheila Hall, staff attorneys Liam Galbreth, Linda Tam, and Yvonne Troya, and their clinical law students, the Health Practice serves as a model for multidisciplinary advocacy for low-income individuals and families.

INCOME SUPPORT

The Income Support Practice, after 19 years, continues to serve welfare recipients who face reductions in their grants and services from the Social Service agency. The practice maintains a focus on clients with language barriers, particularly



within the Southeast Asian community. Director Ed Barnes, fellow Keo Chea, and clinical students have worked with clients to preserve and increase the

base income provided by welfare. Additionally, they have campaigned for broader policy changes for low-income people, including advocacy to push for a state-wide repeal of the law that excludes children from welfare benefits who are born to families on assistance. Also, Ed is spearheading the effort to block a reduction of General Assistance in Alameda County – a diminution of already meager cash and employment assistance that would be devastating to our client community.

CLEAN SLATE

The Clean Slate Practice provides legal information and assistance to people with prior criminal records who have paid their debt to society and who are now trying to successfully reintegrate into the community. The goal of the program is to reduce recidivism and promote societal reentry by removing civil barriers to jobs, education, housing, and civic participation. This year, practice director Margaret



Richardson, along with staff attorneys Eliza Hersh and River Abeje, intake specialist Serina Rankins and their students served over 1,000 clients at our two court-based clinic sites in Oakland and Hayward. Our Third Annual Clean Slate Summit was co-sponsored by U.S. representative Barbara Lee, All of Us or None, Supervisor Keith Carson, and a number of other local officials. The Summit was held Saturday, November 3, 2007 at Berkeley High School, and provided attorney consultations, social services referrals, and workshops for Alameda County residents.

HOUSING

The Housing Practice, with director Laura Lane, staff attorneys Jaimee Arnone Modica, Sharon Djemal, Luan Huynh, and Marc Janowitz, intake specialist Gracie Jones, and student interns, continues to serve hundreds of clients each month through direct representation at Tenants' Rights workshops throughout the East Bay and at self-help clinics at the Alameda County Courthouse-based Low-

Income Eviction Project. The practice recently co-counseled with tenants' attorneys Robert Salinas and Jorge Aguilar to favorably settle a lawsuit against the Oakland Housing Authority. The settlement preserved housing for 19 families who faced wrongful evictions.



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC JUSTICE (CEJ)

The Community Economic Justice Practice works alongside labor, neighborhood and community groups, organizers, and politicians to bring meaningful, sustainable, and community-centered progressive change to Oakland's diverse working class communities. Practice director Margaretta Lin, fellow Vien Truong, their student interns, and pro bono attorneys have worked on several important collaborative efforts over the course of the year. Notably, after four years of litigation and

negotiation, CEJ recently celebrated the settlement of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza case. On September 18th, the Oakland City Council approved a settlement agreement that preserves and expands low-to-moderate income housing in the heart of Oakland's Chinatown. This victory was driven by a coalition of housing advocates, including EBCLC, who will continue to work together to build on this model agreement. The goal will be to create a community-driven housing plan for Oakland that is responsive to the entire community's needs and will increase affordable rental housing and home ownership in Oakland, while protecting the rights of existing low-income residents.

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