



THE REACH OF
EBCLC

Dear Friends of EBCLC,

For more than a quarter century, the East Bay Community Law Center's lawyers and law students have fought for social justice by providing free legal services to our low-income neighbors and building alliances to ensure everyone has access to housing, health care, jobs, and education.

As law students, EBCLC interns work collaboratively with clients, helping them advocate for their own rights, to voice their concerns, and to build stability for their families. They work closely with community partners and other stakeholders to deliver services holistically, recognizing that the challenges their clients face are not just legal in nature, and that an interdisciplinary, client-centered approach multiplies efficacy and improves outcomes. And where service delivery cannot do enough, they develop novel policy solutions based on their clients' experiences, amplifying the impact of the work.

As lawyers, EBCLC alums continue to share the EBCLC model with clients and communities throughout the East Bay and all over the country. This year's impact report focuses on "The Reach of EBCLC," highlighting the successes of some EBCLC alums who have contributed to the expansion of EBCLC's work by taking what they learned in clinic and using it to effect change at the local, state, and national levels.

But even as we celebrate EBCLC's reach, we must also recommit ourselves to the protection of the rights of low-income people right here in our own backyard, where dramatic economic changes bring new challenges and threaten displacement. We also have the opportunity for our community to serve as a model for the rest of the state and even the nation. We invite you to support EBCLC's important work of continuing to train the next generation of advocates, and our continued efforts to bring justice home.

In gratitude,

Michael Ng
Chair, Board of Directors

Tirien Angela Steinbach
Executive Director

EBCLC Alums Improve State Laws



Phil Hernandez (Berkeley Law '16) As a law student in EBCLC's Housing Clinic, Phil Hernandez noticed a flaw in landlord-tenant law that was having long term consequences for tenants' credit and futures. With the support of EBCLC's Consumer Justice and Housing Clinics, Phil drafted a bill to remedy the issue. In September 2016, AB 2819—or Phil's Bill, as we call it—was signed into law. The new law, sponsored by Assembly Member David Chiu, stands to protect thousands of California tenants from wrongfully having an eviction appear on their records.

“Before starting as an intern in the Housing and Consumer Justice Clinics at EBCLC, I had an understanding of the housing crisis in California from a policy perspective, but as soon as I started to meet with the clients, I got a sense of the personal impact on people. You can feel it. If someone is at risk of losing the roof over their head because of an eviction suit, they are also worried about their ability to maintain employment, keep their kids in the same school, and preserve the health and safety of their family. The stakes are enormous.

“What's frustrating is when there are rules in place that inflame the state's housing problems. I came across the '60-day rule' during my time in the Housing Clinic. The rule required a tenant to win an eviction suit within 60 days or else the court records become public and end up on the tenant's record,

even if the tenant wins or settles the case thereafter. The result is that each year, thousands of *innocent* tenants, through no fault of their own, may end up with an eviction on their records, making it nightmarishly difficult to secure safe and affordable housing in the future.

“That rule struck me as so fundamentally unfair that I wrote a paper about it in my Consumer Protection Class taught by Professor Ted Mermin. With his guidance, and assistance from EBCLC's housing team, that paper ultimately became AB 2819.

“As I reflect back on the process of marshalling the bill through Sacramento, I am reminded to never underestimate the power of a good story. During the legislative hearings on our bill, the most powerful and persuasive moments were when an EBCLC client—Ms. Cleveland—told the story of how she and her six-year old-daughter became homeless for absolutely no reason because of the current law. She was able to articulate the injustice of the 60-day rule in a way none of us could. And on several occasions when AB 2819 was on the ropes, she changed minds and got the votes we needed to carry on.”

— PHIL HERNANDEZ

EBCLC Alums Pay It Forward

Fanna Gamal (Berkeley Law '16) At a young age, Fanna Gamal moved with her family from Khartoum, Sudan to the East Bay, where she learned early on the impact that lawyers can make in people's lives. As a law student, Fanna was active in EBCLC's Youth Defender Clinic, representing young people at the intersections of the juvenile justice and education systems. This year, Fanna joined EBCLC as an Equal Justice Works (EJW) Fellow in our Education Defense & Justice for Youth (EDJY) Program. Her project works to protect the education rights of students referred for expulsion in Berkeley and Oakland public schools.

“My own experience with a legal advocate actually drew me to law school. When I was in elementary school, my parents applied for political asylum and a recent Berkeley Law graduate prepared our documents. Her work stabilized our family in countless ways. I didn't know any other lawyers, but I started to understand the importance of passionate, effective legal advocacy. I remember watching her work and thinking, ‘I want the ability to help people like that.’

“Working at EBCLC kept me grounded in law school because it kept me connected to my goals. My clinical experience shaped my post-graduate aspirations and revealed the areas of the law and society that I need to understand to be an effective lawyer. Schools are a microcosm of society—they reflect and reproduce many social inequalities. Working with students

and families struggling against these inequalities deepened my understanding of my community and our obstacles.

“Every year, hundreds of youth in Alameda County are referred for expulsion. When this happens, a student can spend months out of school without instruction. They miss out on school activities because they are banned from campus, they stop receiving special education, they have to experience a traumatic hearing, and sometimes they are even arrested at school. The entire process is highly punitive, developmentally inappropriate, and racially biased.

“I feel honored to work with these students and I care deeply about what happens in our schools. My siblings, my friends, and my family were educated in Berkeley and Oakland public schools and I know how great they can be for *some* students. **What we are dealing with in these districts is the same thing we are dealing with in the larger Bay Area: it is a question of equity. There is so much prosperity here that is not shared equally. This area and these schools belong to all of us. How is it that, in the same building, some students go to Yale and others go to jail? What I love about EDJY and my work at EBCLC is that we ask that question here, because the institutions that serve our community should be accountable to our community.”**

—FANNA GAMAL



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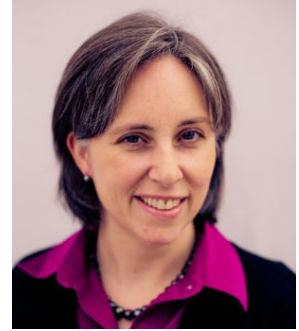
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EBCLC Alums Shape National Policies

Ann O’Leary (Berkeley Law ’05) At every juncture in her life, Ann O’Leary has seen what a difference legal, political, and policy advocacy can mean to children and families. Growing up, she saw her father, a labor union leader, fight for fair wages and health care for paper mill workers. She saw her mother, a social worker, fight for the social and education services that her sister—a teenage Mom—and her children so desperately needed. As a law student in EBCLC’s Welfare Unit, she saw firsthand the unintended consequences of welfare reform in her clients’ lives as she fought for them to get the aid they needed to get back on their feet. Today, as Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton’s Senior Policy Advisor, Ann plays a critical role in advancing a policy agenda aimed at leveling the playing field for our nation’s most vulnerable children and families.

“When I came to EBCLC, I had worked on the frontlines of public policy in Washington, DC for nearly 10 years, but I had never worked in direct legal services. My clients taught me so much – about the impact of welfare reform on real lives, about trying to maintain a job with a living wage in the unforgiving economy, about trying to remain employed while struggling with mental health or addiction, about a system that punished poor families for having additional children. These are lessons I might have learned from reading academic books or policy reports, but I certainly would not have had the visceral feel for the

impact of social policy on real lives without my experience at EBCLC.



“In addition to being a student at EBCLC, I have been a board member for nearly 10 years. So often, the issues we confront in EBCLC’s legal practice are issues that have not yet hit the national scene, but soon will. I have been so struck by the forward looking work of our Clean Slate project, whose lawyers were working on re-entry before anyone on the national-level fully understood the importance of this work to the lives of individuals who had contact with the criminal justice system or to a full-participation economy. And I first learned about the school-to-prison pipeline from EBCLC’s lawyers who were serving in Oakland’s public schools and saw that our students were being put into criminal proceedings when they should have been addressed as part of standard and fair school discipline proceedings.

“Reflecting on my career, I am incredibly proud of the work I have done to put forward policy or legal advocacy that has touched real lives. I am also proud of the work I have done to reflect on how we will pass national paid family leave, or dramatically increase access to affordable child care, or crack down on abusive student debt practices in higher education – all of which became part of the national conversation in our country during the presidential campaign.”

— ANN O’LEARY

EBCLC Alums Keep Families Together



Saba Ahmed (Berkeley Law '14) Prior to attending Berkeley Law, Saba Ahmed spent a significant amount of time working with immigrant communities, but often found herself limited in the advocacy she could do. As a law student in EBCLC's Immigration Program, Saba gained hands-on experience working with clients facing deportation. Today, as a staff attorney with CAIR Coalition in Washington D.C., Saba continues to provide indispensable legal services to immigrant men, women, and children at risk of detention and deportation in the DC metropolitan area.

"For me, [working with EBCLC's Immigration Program] was a breath of fresh air! After core 1L classes, it was nice to get my hands on some cases and actually learn what it means to practice as an immigration attorney. The pace of the work allowed me to not only represent individual clients, but also delve into the complexities of immigration law and learn and reflect on broader policy issues and their impact on individuals who came to EBCLC for services. I felt fully engaged with my work and inspired by other students who were coming up with creative strategies and arguments to fight for their clients.

"Working with immigrant clients at EBCLC was my first insight into what it meant to represent a person in all their human complexities. It allowed me to see that work as an immigration lawyer is intellectually

challenging, factually messy, and requires a lawyer to put *heart* into their work.

"More often than not, immigrants represent themselves in court, doing their best to navigate an incredibly complex area of law. As an immigration defense attorney in the Washington, DC area, I regularly visit immigration detention centers (which are actually county jails) and provide legal services to indigent immigrants in deportation proceedings. I work within an environment that is highly politicized, and where advocates for immigrants are grossly underfunded and subject to numerous constraints. The work is simultaneously challenging, infuriating, and motivating. In best case scenarios, we help immigrants to secure pro bono attorneys and win their cases and release from jail. With every success and every person who leaves detention, I'm inspired to continue this work, but it is also the painful losses and deportations that keep me fighting.

"More than anything, I am grateful that EBCLC showed me, by example, that zealous advocates can maintain balance in their professional and personal lives, enabling them to do good, sustainable work."

— SABA AHMED

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EBCLC Alums Give Back

Pivotal to our mission is a commitment to training future lawyers to become skilled and principled advocates who understand the complexities and consequences of poverty, and feel called to effect change in their communities. In so many ways—through donations of time, money, and intellect; in their careers and in their personal lives—EBCLC alums give back.

This past summer, EBCLC alums did just that when they helped us to launch our first-ever Associates' Giving Campaign—a six week fundraising competition led by associates at eight Bay Area law firms, benefiting EBCLC's work to provide stellar legal services and clinical legal education. Nine EBCLC alums joined the campaign team—which was led by EBCLC board member, Maureen Sheehy, and an enthusiastic group of campaign chairs and associate coordinators—to help raise just over \$14,000 from over 80 of their colleagues.

We would like to thank the following EBCLC alums for their help in making this year's Associates Giving Campaign a success:

Venessa Henlon (Berkeley Law '95)

Derik Hilliard (USF Law '13) *"Without EBCLC, 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 increasing underrepresented communities' access to legal services."*



Michael Kwun (Berkeley Law '98)

Daniel Mandel (Berkeley Law '13) *"As a law student, EBCLC offered me the unparalleled chance to jump right in to direct legal services and consider topics and problems that would not come up in a normal law school curriculum. But it is the dedication of the EBCLC staff, in particular, that I really want to support—each cohort of law students may come and go, but the community's legal problems and the staff's passion for helping them persevere."*

Jacob Mayers (Berkeley Law '13)

Amy Talarico (William Mitchell Law '98)

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Jenna Yott (Berkeley Law '07)

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The Impact of Your Donation



Secure

\$1.5 million (and counting!) of debt discharged and returned to the pockets of low-income consumer clients.



Productive

100+ law students received hands-on, clinical legal training to become skilled, principled advocates who are attune to the complex causes and conditions of poverty.



Hopeful

2,900 youth and families stand to benefit from our Youth Defender Clinic's successful advocacy making Alameda County the first in California to repeal juvenile justice fees.



Just

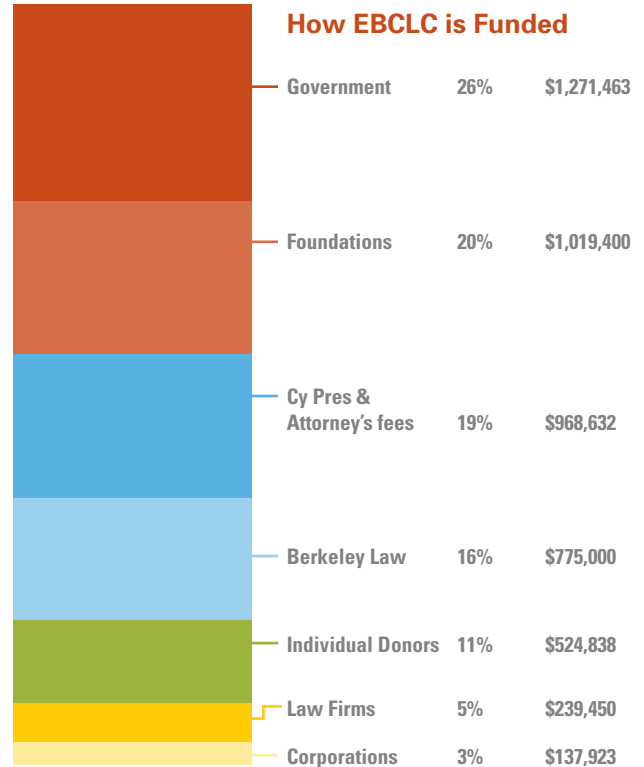
5,000+ individuals and families received legal services on a range of issues, including housing accessibility and eviction defense, immigration, homelessness, reentry, juvenile defense and education advocacy, consumer protection, access to health care and public benefits, and cooperative housing and business development.



EBCLC provides legal services to thousands of East Bay residents each year, completely free of charge.

Thank you for your support!

How EBCLC is Funded



The San Francisco Foundation Champions EBCLC's Work to Disrupt Displacement in the East Bay

THE
SAN
FRANCISCO
FOUNDATION

The San Francisco Foundation (TSFF) is one of the East Bay Community Law Center's oldest and most consistent financial supporters. Beginning with a grant of \$10,000 in 1987 – a year before we opened our doors! – TSFF has contributed more than \$887,000 towards EBCLC's efforts to achieve justice for low-income individuals, families, and neighborhoods, and make the lives of our clients healthier and more secure, productive, and hopeful.

This past year has been an especially impactful one for EBCLC's relationship with TSFF. Under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer Fred Blackwell, and with the crucial guidance of TSFF's Senior Director of Anchoring Communities, Landon Williams, the foundation has made EBCLC one of the many organizations supported through a \$34 million large-scale investment creating pathways of opportunity in the City of Oakland.

TSFF's investment in Oakland has included a grant to provide legal services in support of grassroots efforts to prevent the displacement of low-income people of color from East Bay communities. EBCLC's Housing Program and Community Economic Justice Practice have expanded their work together to engage in community legal education, direct legal services, and policy advocacy to combat displacement and create cooperative ownership opportunities for tenants and small businesses in low-income Oakland neighborhoods.

This year, EBCLC is thrilled to recognize TSFF as a Champion donor. We thank the foundation for the impact we have been able to make in the lives of low-income East Bay residents as a result of this partnership.



*Fred Blackwell, CEO of
The San Francisco Foundation.*

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