



PRO BONO PUBLICO

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July 2011

LETTER FROM PRO BONO COUNSEL, HARLENE KATZMAN: STB'S PRO BONO PROGRAM HIRES NEW COORDINATOR



*Hilary Chadwick proudly stands by her work at
New York Cares Day.*

The Pro Bono Program welcomed Hilary Chadwick as its new Coordinator in May. A graduate of Lehigh University in 2009, Hilary comes to us from her position as the International Programs Officer of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women in Mexico City where she was responsible for grant-writing and project design in areas of gender-based violence and trafficking prevention. Before that,

Hilary had a post-graduate internship at the United Nations where she helped coordinate and write parts of the final report for a Conference on Disarmament, Peace and Development. Hilary will be handling, among other things, the majority of the administrative work for the Pro Bono Committee and the Program. A fluent Spanish speaker, Hilary will also provide interpretation assistance to many of our pro bono clients from our immigration, housing and family law practices. I am thrilled to have Hilary join us and hope you will also welcome her to the Firm.

BUSHWICK HIGH SCHOOL LEGAL CLINIC: A LIFELINE FOR BROOKLYN FAMILIES

Every morning, before the first bell rings, students spill through the front door of Bushwick High School to wait in line for the metal detector. Every second Tuesday of the month, a team of STB attorneys take out their blackberries and follow suit.

In recognition of the fact that a family's legal problems can impact a child's

ability to stay or thrive in school, STB partnered with Volunteers of Legal Service to launch an innovative *pro bono* program to provide legal services to families of high school students in Bushwick, Brooklyn. For the past five years the Firm has staffed monthly clinics to work with students' families to address civil legal problems such as immigration, housing and public benefits disputes.

The situations that many Bushwick families find themselves in are often urgent, and if unanswered can adversely affect the student's education and the family's basic needs. **Bryan McClosky**, a Bushwick volunteer, highlights the impact of the program. "If it were not for the pro bono representation, [my client] could be homeless with a one year old child as well as a teenager attending Bushwick."

In addition to helping the community, STB lawyers gain personal satisfaction and professional skills through participation. "It helps develop interview skills, which is an important corporate and litigation skill," says **Hema Sheno**i, Bushwick Clinic co-leader. **Joia Lee**, who recently helped her Bushwick client get a Canadian passport, says she "learned to organize an argument and process legal issues on the spot." **Michera Brooks** describes her Bushwick matter as a "tangible and rewarding" experience.

The clinic provides STB volunteers with an opportunity to assist low-income clients in their own environment. "The commitment is low and the value and benefit are great. It is rejuvenating to get out of the office and apply your legal skills to individuals who need life-altering support," **Hema Sheno**i.

The next Bushwick Clinic will be held on September 13th. For more information, contact Bushwick Clinic co-chairs **Hema Sheno**i and **Chris Lee**.



Brian McCloskey assists a clinic participant with a housing issue.



L to R: STB associates Amanda Wetzel, Chris Caputo, Hema Sheno, Chris Lee, Zara Ohiorhenuan, and VOLs' staff attorney Liz Markuci at the June clinic.

BUSHWICK SUCCESS STORIES

New York associate **Craig Katerberg** and paralegal **Elizabeth Pantaleon** successfully assisted Mr. V with his I-130 petition to bring his wife and youngest son to the United States. Mr. V emigrated from the Dominican Republic with his children, one of whom attends Bushwick High School.

STB represented the Taveras family in an action seeking compensation for damages to personal property caused by a fire in the family's apartment. The apartment and its belongings were completely destroyed, and the family was forced to live in a Red Cross shelter while they looked for another affordable apartment. The landlord refused to

return the security deposit or compensate the family for any of its lost property. With the help of STB associate **Michera Brooks** and STB paralegal **Elizabeth Pantaleon**, the family collected a monetary judgment from the landlord that enabled them to move into a permanent home. Partners **Bill Russell** and **Bryce Friedman** advised on the matter.

STB represented Ms. Guide, whose daughter Nicole, a disabled Bushwick student, was unable to obtain government-issued photo identification because of an incorrectly registered birth certificate. Ms. Guide had attempted to correct the error for more than a year, and after filing a *pro se* Article 78 proceeding in New York State Supreme Court, associates **Brandon Mason** and **Dan Shin** stepped in to represent her. The STB team successfully argued the case before a Supreme Court Justice, and an order was issued to correct the birth certificate. Nicole can now obtain essential identification which will allow her to apply for scholarship programs for college.

STB'S 2011 PUBLIC SERVICE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Now in its third year, STB's Public Service Fellowship Program continues to offer associates the opportunity to spend one year working on a public service project of their choice, with a stipend and benefits provided by the Firm, and the ability to return to the Firm at the Fellowship's conclusion. The Public Service Fellowship Program was launched in 2009 as a way for Simpson Thacher lawyers to make a sustained commitment to public interest work. We congratulate our 2011 Fellows:

Nermeen Arastu '08 will be working with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund representing South Asian, Arab and Muslim immigrants who have faced bias and discrimination.

Aby Castro '08 will work for Coastal Enterprises, Inc., a nonprofit community development corporation in Portland, Maine, on programs relating to tax credits, health-care and other economic development issues in the area.

SUMMER PUBLIC INTEREST FELLOWS

STB welcomed four law students to its Summer Public Interest Fellowship Program in 2011. After working at STB for the first part of the summer, they will each embark on a self-designed public interest project.

Palo Alto summer associate, **Karen Reyes** of Santa Clara University School of Law will work with immigration attorneys at Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto. She expects to assist clients with obtaining a variety of immigration remedies, including U-visas.

Amanda Sen's fellowship with the Brooklyn Family Defense Project will involve representing parents in family court appeals with the goal of unifying families, an issue she became interested in while participating in NYU Law School's Family Defense Clinic.

Dave Rochelson, also at NYU Law School, will be a summer legal fellow at the Office of the General Counsel at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Dave previously helped develop Change.gov and WhiteHouse.gov to be more accessible to citizens, and looks forward to exploring legal issues that arise from the use of technology to make democracy more participatory and the government more responsive.

Duke University School of Law student, **Karen Porter Gift**, a summer associate in the Washington D.C. office, has a passion for combating trafficking after working as an intern last summer in India for the International Justice Mission. Karen will spend her fellowship with the University of Michigan Law School's Human Trafficking Project to expand their trafficking database, and assist with trafficking cases.

PRO-BONO VICTORIES!

The Asylum Office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services granted asylum to a Colombian client who had been the victim of persecution at the hands of a paramilitary group. Our client is a human rights defender who

was the target of anonymous threatening phone calls provoked by his advocacy for internally displaced persons in Colombia. The matter was referred to the Firm by the Refugee Assistance Program of the City Bar Justice Center. The STB team included associates **Sara Colón** and **Zara Ohiorhenuan**, and partner **Linda Martin**. **Oscar Orellana**, financial coordinator and paralegals **Nicole Annunziato**, **Maria Gonzalez**, **Elizabeth Herrera**, and **Ricardo Rosario** provided assistance with translation.

The Asylum Office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services granted asylum to a Guinean client who had been the victim of female genital mutilation (FGM), as well as kidnapping and rape by the Guinean military. If deported, the client faced the difficult choice of either being separated from her young U.S. citizen daughter, or taking the child with her to Guinea, where she feared the daughter would also be subjected to FGM. The matter was referred to the Firm by Sanctuary for Families. The STB team included associates **Anne Knight** and **Minta Nester**, partner **Linda Martin** and paralegal **Chris Shields**.

The Immigration Court granted cancellation of removal to STB client, Mr. R, after a full hearing which included expert testimony showing that he would face extreme hardship if he were deported and could not continue receiving his treatment for severe medical problems in the United States. The matter was part of the Firm's Immigration Removal Defense Program with the Legal Aid Society of New York. The STB team included associates **Alora Thomas** and **Michael Silver** and paralegal **Maria Gonzalez**. Associate **Juan Arteaga** and partner **Paul Gluckow** provided supervision.

The Immigration Court granted asylum to a Gambian client of the Firm who had been a victim of persecution by internal security and paramilitary forces. The client is a political activist who was repeatedly detained and tortured in Gambia by government forces and ruling party supporters as a result of her involvement with a leading opposition party. The matter was referred to the Firm by Human Rights First, and the STB team included partner

Todd Crider, associates **Valentina Casella** and **Isaac Rethy**, summer associate **Amanda Sen**, and paralegal **Jeff Jelineo**.

STB WRITES LETTERS TO UNITED NATIONS ON BEHALF OF INTERNATIONAL NGO

STB attorneys **Sabrina Lee**, **Jeemin Chung** and **Jordan Botjer** assisted the Center for Reproductive Rights' Europe Program (CRR) by drafting two letters for submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Committee) addressing the current state of reproductive health issues in Moldova and the Russian Federation. The team researched existing problems regarding access to abortion and contraception and sex education in schools, and detailed certain failures by those signatories to implement international human rights standards relating to these issues.

STB HELPS STUDENTS EXCEL AT SHEEPSHEAD BAY HIGH SCHOOL

STB associates from the New York office continued the Firm's ongoing commitment to prepare students from Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay High School to compete in statewide moot court and mock trial competitions. Attorneys assisted students in drafting motions and rehearsing arguments for the competitions. Out of more than 100 schools competing in both competitions, the teams from Sheepshead Bay finished third in the moot court competition and made it to the elite eighth quarter finals round in the mock trial competition. This year's program was coordinated by paralegal **Garrett James**, overseen by STB associates **Evan Cohen** and **Omari Mason**, and included associates **Chad Atlas**, **Rachel Dominique**, **Alice Goldman**, **Catherine Grealis**, **Michael Vernace**, **Matthew Levy**, **Matthew Reichstein**, **Dan Shin**, **Noah Stern**, **Stephanie Inks**, **Jeannie Chung** and **Rita Maxwell**.

STB ADVISES ON CASES BEFORE THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

As part of its international human rights pro bono practice, STB provides advice to non-governmental organizations (NGO's) bringing cases before the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of individuals claiming human rights violations. Led by associate **Emma Lindsay**, STB teams have advised on litigation strategy and legal claims in cases before the Court for organizations including the Open Society Justice Initiative. The STB advisory teams have spanned the New York, Washington and Los Angeles offices and include associates **Jodie Sopher Pimental**, **Ekwutozia Nwabuzor**, **Kassie Helm**, **Sarah Luppen**, **David Shogren**, **Amanda Wetzel** and **Alora Thomas**. The matters have been overseen by partner **Todd Crider** and retired partner **Jack Kerr**.

The most recent case, *Basok v. Russia*, was brought to STB by Russian NGO, Sutyajnik, on behalf of a journalist who allegedly was assaulted by a government official while trying to cover a peaceful protest in Yekaterinburg in 2009 for an online news agency. The journalist challenges the conduct of subsequent court proceedings in Russia and seeks redress for the failure of the Russian courts to provide redress for the violation of his rights

PA SUMMER ASSOCIATES RIDE THE JUSTICE BUS!

On June 30, 2011, STB associates and summer associates in the Palo Alto office rode the Justice Bus, a pro bono program coordinated by OneJustice and the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County. The Justice Bus provides legal services to low-income seniors. After a legal training session, the STB summer associates traveled to a low-income senior center and housing complex in Pacifica, California to help 17 people create healthcare directives and/or simple wills. **Dena Acevedo**, **Brendan Baker**, **Alex Coffin**, **Valerie Dutton**, **Kevin Hill**, **Chris James**, **Robert Keele**, **Susanna Kim**, **Sema Krikunova**, **Tim Lau**, **Michelle Lyon**, **David Ray**, **Karen Reyes**, **Calvin Winder**, and **Paloma Wu** participated in the project.



The Justice Bus

COMMUNITY SERVICE

SADIE NASH LEADERSHIP PROJECT

Women partners associated with the Kate Stoneman Project took on a new collaboration with the Sadie Nash Leadership Project, a non-profit educational program in leadership and activism for young women, who are also known as the "Nashers." This ten part series on the law, designed and taught in part by **Andrea Wahlquist** and **Marisa Stavenas**, included a mock trial and mentorship by women lawyers from ten of the city's top law firms.

URBAN ASSEMBLY SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

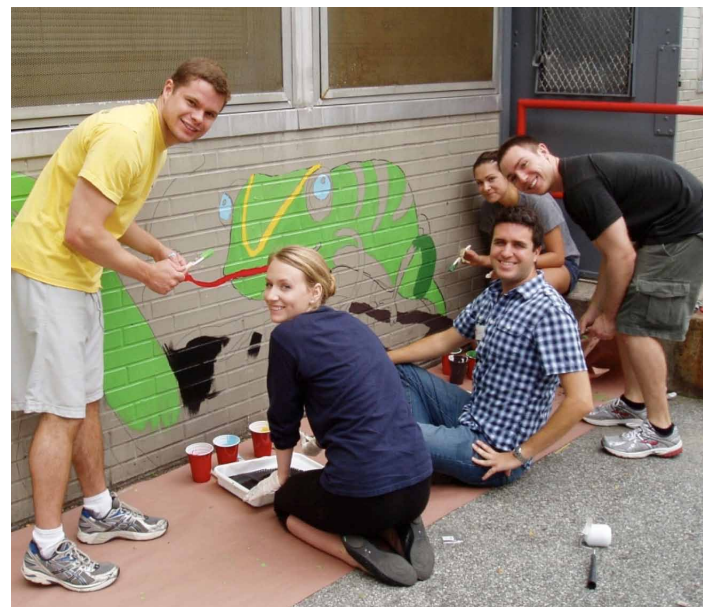
STB lawyers served as mentors to ninth grade girls at the Urban Assembly School of Criminal Justice, a non-profit organization that has created and manages small NYC public schools dedicated to preparing students from under-resourced neighborhoods for success in college. The STB mentors focused on empowering the mentees and preparing them for the college process. Recently, STB mentors took their mentees to a benefit for the organization held at the William Bennett Gallery in SoHo. The program was coordinated by **Jayma Meyer** and included attorneys, **Kellin Chatfield**, **Kate Dominguez**, **Jennifer Maimone-Medwick**, **Kathryn McCarthy**, **Sarah Phillips**, **Jennifer Rie**, **Meryl Rosen**, **Hema Sheno**i and **Rachel Weiss**.



STB Volunteers prepare to start painting!

NEW YORK CARES DAY OF VOLUNTEERING

STB summer associates and administrative staff went to CS 21K School in Brooklyn on June 22nd with New York Cares to participate in a day of community service. The STB team revitalized a dilapidated courtyard by painting a bright mural, and planted perennials in a school garden. "I had a great time participating... What a great way to spend the day getting to know colleagues in a relaxed environment while doing something productive for the community," said summer associate **Tiffany Threadcraft**.



Summer Associates Chris Dass, Abby Noebels, Randy Benjenk, Rachel Farnsworth and Kevin Elliot paint an iguana.



The finished mural brings new life to the courtyard.

INMOTION STAIR CLIMB 2010

In November 2010, a team of STB attorneys, paralegals, and administrative staff took part in the first annual *Story by Story – Climbing to End Domestic Violence* stair climb in an effort to raise awareness and funding for inMotion, a long-time pro bono partner of the Firm. STB joined more than 900 inMotion supporters at 1411 Broadway, a 42-story skyscraper in Times Square, and every member of the STB team made it up all 756 steps to the top, a major accomplishment! The event raised more than \$480,000 for the organization, which provides free legal assistance to low-income, underserved and abused women in New York City. This year, the *Story by Story – Climb to End Domestic Violence* will take place on **Thursday, October 6th**. Once again, the Firm will sponsor a team, coordinated by **Courtney Hall**. Look forward to an invitation in August to join the team!



STB Stair Climbers, L to R: John Bennett, Makiko Harunari, Ariana Cooper, Amy Claydon, Ekwi Nwabuzor, Stephanie Crosskey, Sally Barker, Cyrena Terricone, Lauren Colasacco, Marian Wasserman and Jordan Botjer.

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