

# Mass Dissent

Massachusetts Chapter

National Lawyers Guild

14 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

March 2008

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## ANNUAL MEETING

March 4, 5:30pm

14 Beacon St., 1st Fl.  
Boston

## International Women's Day - Present Day Struggles

On March 8, 2008, we commemorate International Women's Day. This is a day that celebrates and commemorates our solidarity in the fight against gender-based oppression. This is also a day to remember the countless women who have lost their lives to the brutality of war, to domestic violence and sexual assault, to hate crimes and other forms of violence against women.

From solidarity and hope rising from the tragedy of the March 6, 2007, New Bedford immigration raid to women's participation in the political struggles of Oaxaca, to a new legal clinic dedicated to serving the needs of transgendered folks in our community - in this issue of *Mass Dissent*, members and allies of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild share with us examples of organizing happening in our local and global communities.

The first featured piece is my interview with Brittany Lacy, a law student at Northeastern who has been active organizing the Massachusetts Transgender Legal Advocates. Following afterwards, Irene Solomon writes about the courageous efforts of five Guatemalan women who endured the New Bedford immigration raids and joined together to create a sewing collective called Sabiduria Oxlajuj Noj. And lastly, Jessie Hahn, a Northeastern Law student, narrates the increasingly active and influential role that women have in recent political struggles in Oaxaca, Mexico.

May we find hope and courage in these stories for the battles that have yet to be won, and take strength in an awareness that the struggle to end gender-based oppression is very much alive and well.

- Hema Sarangapani -

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## Join a Guild Committee

**Street Law Clinic Project:** The Street Law Clinic project provides workshops for Massachusetts organizations, which address legal needs of various communities. Legal education workshops on 4th Amendment Rights (Stop & Search), Landlord/Tenant Disputes, Workers' Rights, Civil Disobedience Defense, and Immigration Law are held at community organizations, youth centers, labor unions, shelters, and pre-release centers. If you are a Guild attorney, law student, or legal worker interested in leading a workshop, please contact the project at 617-723-4330 or nlgmass-slc@igc.org.

**"No to MBTA Searches":** Works in coalition with the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, American Friends Service Committee and American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts to stop searches on the MBTA. If you would like to be involved in the campaign, either on its political or legal end, please call the office at 617-227-7335.

**Lawyer Referral Service Panel:** Members of the panel provide legal services at reasonable rates. Referral Service Administrative/Oversight Committee members: Neil Burns, Neil Berman, Joshua Goldstein, Jeremy Robin, and Azizah Yasin. For more information, contact the Referral Service Coordinator at 617-227-7008 or nlgmass@igc.org.

**Independent Civilian Review Board:** In coalition with the American Friends Service Committee and Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition, the NLG has been pushing for the creation of an independent civilian board to review complaints against Boston police officers. To get involved in the campaign, please contact the office at 617-227-7335.

**NLG National Immigration Project:** Works to defend and extend the human and civil rights of all immigrants, both documented and undocumented. The Committee works in coalition with community groups to organize support for immigrant rights in the face of right-wing political attacks. Ongoing projects include asylum advocacy and the rights of immigrant minors. For more information contact the NLG National Immigration Project at 617-227-9727.

**NLG Military Law Task Force:** Provides legal advice and assistance to those in the military and to others, especially members of the GIRights Hotline, who are counseling military personnel on their rights. It also provides legal support and helps to find local legal referrals when needed. The MLTF and the Hotline exchange many questions and information through their listserves. Calls to the GIRights Hotline from phones in New England are handled from the AFSC office in Cambridge. To get involved, please contact Neil Berman (njberman2@juno.com) or Marguerite Helen (mugsm@mindspring.com).

#### COALITIONS:

**Jobs with Justice**, a coalition-based organization addressing workers' rights. The NLG is a member of Jobs with Justice; any interested Guild members can attend meetings & events.

# GUILD NEWS

## NLG HAPPY HOUR

The NLG Massachusetts Chapter has launched an **NLG Happy Hour** - for Guild members and non-Guild members - which takes place on the **2nd Wednesday of every month, between 5:30 and 7:30pm, at Felt Billiards Club** (533 Washington St., Downtown Crossing, next to Paramount). We hope you will join us for the next NLG Happy Hour on **March 12** - and bring friends!

## ANNUAL MEETING

Guild members are invited to the Chapter's Annual Meeting on **Tuesday, March 4, 2008, 5:30pm (14 Beacon St., Conference Rm, 1st Fl.)**. At the meeting,

we will hold elections of Chapter officers (please read below) and host **Robert Meeropol**, a long time Guild member, who will speak on "**1/20/2009: Light at the End of the Tunnel?**"

## MENTORSHIP BRUNCH

We hope you will participate in the Chapter's mentorship brunch - **Saturday, March 29, 12:30-3:00pm**, 7 Everett St., Jamaica Plain. The brunch serves as an idea way for Guild students to meet Guild lawyers and establish a mentorship contact, and for Guild lawyers to share their knowledge, experience, and connections with Guild students.

### Street Law Clinic Report

**February 2:** Guild member **Liliana Mangiafico** conducted a clinic on Stop and Search for the youth at Tempo Young Adult Center in Framingham.

**February 8:** Allston Brighton CDC, a community organization that serves Latinos in Brighton/Allston, hosted a clinic on the immigration law. The clinic was conducted by Guild member **Josh Goldstein**.

**February 19:** This month, Allston Brighton CDC hosted also a clinic on Tenant/Landlord Dispute issues. The clinic was done by Guild member **Jeff Feuer**.

### NLG Massachusetts Chapter Elections of Officers

Please consider joining our Board of Directors. The election of Chapter directors and officers will be held at the Annual Meeting on **Tuesday, March 4, 2008**.

#### **Responsibilities of Board members include:**

- current membership in NLG;
- participation in monthly Board meetings (3rd Tuesday, 6:00 – 8:00pm, 14 Beacon St., 1st Fl., Boston);
- participation in defining Chapter's programmatic work;
- participation in July Retreat (half-day, mid-July);
- work on at least one administrative (Membership, Personnel, Finance, Fundraising, Sustainer) or special events committee (Mentorship, Annual Dinner, Happy Hour, Holiday Party);
- work on at least one campaign/project (on-going: Lawyers Referral Service, Street Law Clinic, Mass Defense);
- serve as editor of one issue/year of *Mass Dissent*;
- make phone calls to new and lapsed members.

If you are interested in running, please contact the office at 617-227-7335.

### **ARTICLES FOR MASS DISSENT**

The April issue of *Mass Dissent* will focus on civil and human rights.

If you are interested in submitting an article, essay, analysis, or art work (cartoons, pictures) related to the topic, please e-mail the articles to **nlgmass-director@igc.org**.

**The deadline for articles is March 15th.**

## 2008 Testimonial Dinner

The Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild is proud to announce that this year's Testimonial Dinner honorees are long time Guild members **Sharryn Ross** and **Jeff Feuer** (Attorneys), **Anibal Lucas** (legal worker), and **Tony Naro** (student).

**Sharryn Ross**, the senior partner in Ross Silverman & Levy in Boston, has practiced immigration law for almost 30 years and has been a committed member of the Guild. She was an elected member of the Board of Governors of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) for 12 years and is currently a member of AILA's Department of Labor Liaison Committee. She is a lecturer on issues related to the immigration law and was named by Boston Magazine as a Massachusetts Super Lawyer in 2005 and 2006.

**Jeff Feuer** is a partner in Goldstein & Feuer, a Cambridge law office that represents tenants, workers, and consumers in a variety of legal settings. For over 15 years, he has been active in the Massachusetts Chapter of the Guild, and since 1998 he has served on the Chapter's Board of Directors. As a Guild member, Jeff has worked on a wide

variety of committees, campaigns and issues and has served as legal advisor, legal observer, litigator, legal counsel or legal services coordinator for (among other) anti-war protest campaigns, litigation to protect demonstrators' rights during the 2004 Democratic National Convention, opposition to the MBTA search policy, Justice for Janitors campaign (conducted by SEIU), and development of the Mosque hotline to aid the Muslim communities that were under unwarranted suspicion after 9/11.

**Anibal Lucas**, Director of Organization Maya K'iche USA, Inc. has been on the frontline with the Maya community of New Bedford, Massachusetts since 1996, when he immigrated from Guatemala. His organizing efforts concentrate on building solidarity within the Maya community in the fight for human rights and services provided to the community (language classes, job training, education on workers rights). During the last spring immigration raid of the Michael Bianco, Inc. factory, Anibal was the first on the scene and immediately organized legal and community help for the 361 immigrant workers arrested by the immigration and homeland security agents.

**Tony Naro** will graduate from Suffolk University Law School in May 2008. Since his first year in law school, he has showed a true commitment to the Guild by representing the Suffolk student NLG chapter on the Board of Directors, strategizing Suffolk Guild campaigns, and by organizing various discussion forums - the last one of which was in November 2007 and covered "Life After Death Row", featuring Ronald Keine, a former death row prisoner, and two Guild members - Michael Avery and Stephen Hrones.

We are thrilled to have such accomplished legal professionals among our honorees. Their work has inspired many, and we hope you will be with us on **Friday, May 16, 2008**, at the **Colonnade Hotel** in Boston to celebrate Sharryn, Jeff, Anibal, and Tony. At the Dinner, the Chapter will also pay a special tribute to all past dinner honorees in commemoration of the NLG's 70th Anniversary.

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD  
Massachusetts Chapter

### ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, March 4, 2008  
5:30pm - Reception  
6:00pm - Meeting

- Co-Chairs State of the Guild Report
- Chapter Committee Reports
- Elections of Chapter's Board of Directors
- "1/20/2009: Light at the end of the Tunnel?" by **Robert Meeropol**, Executive Director of the Rosenberg Fund for Children and a Guild member.

*Please call the office if you would like to run  
in the elections.*

**617-227-7335**

## *Massachusetts Transgender Legal Advocates: Bringing Legal Resources to the Trans Community*

*Hema Sarangapani's  
Interview with **Brittney  
Lacy**, second year law  
student at Northeastern  
University School of Law*

### **Background:**

Brittney Lacy, "Bri", is a 2nd year student at Northeastern University School of Law. She attended the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs where she obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and a minor in Women's Studies. At UCCS, she had worked to increase the visibility and safety of queer students on campus. She planned a three-day National Coming-Out Day celebration where she encouraged all folks to come out to people they trust as LGBTIQ, as allies, as friends, and as supporters. She also volunteered with the Inside/Out Youth Services, a non-profit youth organization, and the Southern Colorado AIDS project.

Bri is a law student who has been instrumental in the formation of a new legal clinic for the trans-community in Massachusetts called Massachusetts Transgender Legal Advocates (MTLA)

**Hema Sarangapani:** *What is the Massachusetts Transgender Legal Advocates (MTLA)?*

*Brittney Lacy:* MTLA is a free legal clinic for low-income transgender and gender queer individuals. Many of our clients are confronting multiple forms of oppression including racism, sexism transphobia, and/or heterosex-

ism, and face many barriers to accessing mainstream legal and social services. This clinic is designed to provide access to the complexities of the legal world to folks who are often overlooked or marginalized, and who do not have a safe place to obtain such assistance.

**How did the idea for the clinic emerge, and when did you get involved with the Clinic?**

Lee Thornhill from TransCEND, a program of Cambridge Cares About AIDS and Gunner Scott from Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition said they knew that many low income transgender people in the Boston area lacked legal representation when they needed it. Barusch, another law student advocate, worked to organize a group of law students, while Denise McWilliams of AIDS Action Committee volunteered to serve as a supervising attorney. I am one of the eight law student advocates that run the clinic.

I jumped at the opportunity to work with a free legal clinic specifically designed to help transgender and gender queer communities. I had never thought I would be able to use what I learn in class for a cause near and dear to my heart. The MTLA had its kick off celebration on January 17, 2008 and we had our first clinic on January 18th, 2008.

**What impact do you see the clinic having in the community?**

I see this clinic having a major impact on the community because its a clinic helping a specific group of people that would

not otherwise have access to legal services. There is a major gap in the demographic of folks that are able to access legal services, and this free legal clinic for low-income transgender and gender queer people is just one example of the hard work and determination of activists. This is safe space for clients to share their concerns and legal questions with the advocates and not have to worry about how the information is used or if they are receiving the best legal care the advocate can possibly give. As a member of the queer community I often feel interactions I have at the grocery store, restaurants, on the street, or even at school are shaped by my queer membership and often I question whether I would receive fair and respectable treatment if I were not queer. This is a space that applauds self-identification and personal identity.

**Could you give some examples of legal issues that seem particularly unmet in the community?**

There is a vast array of unmet legal issues concerning the transgender community with regard to low-income individuals. Specifically, there are attorneys addressing important issues such as changing identity documents, litigating personal injury cases concerning access to bathrooms, employment rights, civil rights, etc; however, there is a shortage of trans-friendly attorneys that are taking these cases. The transgender and gender queer community still lacks legal protections in most states (13 states

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## *Massachusetts Transgender Legal Advocates: Bringing Legal Resources to the Trans Community*

*Continued from page 5*

and 81 cities and counties have included Transgender people in non-discrimination statutes), and we need legislation, attorney's, and allies to help implement protections and litigate any subsequent violations. At the clinic we see a plethora of legal issues, just as at any legal services office. We have clients that need assistance with housing, social security, and immigration.

### ***How often does the Clinic meet? How many clients do you typically see?***

The clinic has only met once thus far, but we are open the third Thursday of every month. We also have an email address and a phone line through AIDS Action Committee for folks that cannot make it to the clinic.

We see as many clients as physically possible. At this point, we would like to help as many folks as we can, and it is our goal to take everyone that walks through the door. However, in order to conserve our resources, we have formed relationships with several existing groups who are able to work with our clients in specific areas of law or with concerns law students are not able to address. If after interviewing a client it is determined that we do not have the resources or the capacity to take a case, we look to refer the client to an attorney that would be willing to take the case pro bono. We use the clinics to interview potential new clients and work

on our existing caseload throughout the rest of the month. There are eight advocates that attend the clinic and interview clients. Currently, I would guess that we all have a few cases a piece and I am currently working on four. Denise McWilliams from the AIDS Action Committee supervises and guides our caseload.

### ***Who are your allies/partners?***

Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, TransCEND, a program of Cambridge Cares about AIDS, and AIDS Action Committee are the organizations that came together to make this happen, but all trans-friendly attorneys that believe in what we are doing and would like to support us are our allies. Without our reference attorneys available to answer our questions, we would have a difficult task balancing time and caseload.

### ***What are some issues/legislation/policies (proposed and otherwise) that impact trans community that everyone, especially lawyers, should be aware of?***

Right now HB 1722 is the major legislation concerning transgender and gender queer communities. This bill will add "gender identity or expression" to the Massachusetts non-discrimination statute. While these protections exist on a city level in Cambridge, Boston, and



Northampton, they are not codified in state statutes. The Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition has poured its heart out for this bill, with the help of GLAD and other local organizations, and it would be monumental to see it pass.

### ***Any other words of wisdom?***

To me, being a lawyer consists of representing clients in their legal needs, and I believe strongly that a lawyer must make that client feel as comfortable as possible and really understand where they are coming from before the lawyer will even begin to grasp what steps to take.

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*Hema Sarangapani is a staff attorney with the immigration unit at Greater Boston Legal Services.*

## TRANSGENDER – SOME TERMINOLOGY

**Transgender** is the common umbrella term for people who transgress gender norms or cross society's idea of gender lines.

Transgender folks can identify their sexual orientation as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

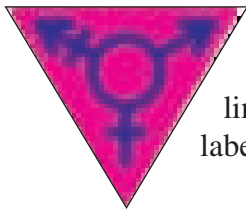
Transgender is about gender identity and gender expression, not sexual orientation.

**Gender** - Self-expression, performance, actions, behavior, dress, grooming of culturally prescribed norms based on binary of male and female.

**Gender Identity** - Inner sense of 'being' male or female, both, or neither, includes sense of self and one's image presented to the world. Self-identification.

**Gender Binary System** - Culturally defined code of acceptable behavior only for 2 gender system of male/female. Men/boys are to exhibit masculine gender presentation, behaviors, and social roles. Women/girls are to exhibit feminine gender presentation, behaviors, and social roles.

**Assigned Sex/Gender** -Based on physical anatomy of genitalia.



The Transgender community includes, but not limited to the following labels and identities:

### TRANSEXUAL

**MTF** (male to female) transsexual woman - person born/ Assigned Gender at birth as male/boy transitions to live and identify full time as female/woman

**FTM** (female to male) transsexual man - person born/ Assigned Gender at birth as female/ girl transitions to live and identify full time as male/man.

**Live Full Time** - to live and identify in the gender they have transitioned to or self identify as, may or may not use medical intervention such as hormones or sex reassignment surgery (SRS) depending on financial ability, health, and access, but does do a social transition and identify and live as the "opposite" the gender they were born. Social transition can include changing name (legally or through common usage), dressing in clothing of gender they identify with and using pronouns of gender they identify with. Sexual orientation may or may not change with the person's transition and transsexuals can be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

### OTHER IDENTITIES UNDER THE TRANSGENDER UMBRELLA:

**Cross Dresser** - person who wears clothing opposite their assigned gender, usually not all the time. Does not identify as the opposite gender identity. Example, men who wear what we consider to be women's clothing and women who wear traditionally male attire.

**Drag Queen** - person, sometimes gay men, impersonating famous females, usually for performance also called female illusionists.

**Drag King** - person, sometimes lesbians, impersonating famous males, usually for performance

(From <http://www.gendercrash.com/101.shtml>)

## *Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj: Out of Hardship Came Strength and Hope*

*by Ilene Solomon*

**O**ut of hardship came strength and hope for a group of ambitious Guatemalan women in New Bedford, Massachusetts. On March 6, 2007, the largest immigration raid in Massachusetts' history sent chaos and confusion throughout the halls of the textile factory in which these women worked. As the ensuing months of fear and uncertainty gripped their community - and the immigrant population as a whole - this group of five women pulled together to form sewing collective called Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj, which translates to the artistic connotation of the thirteenth day of the Mayan calendar. Since its formation, Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj has produced beautiful and intricately detailed children's clothing and women's accessories.

The members of Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj come from the indigenous Maya Quiche community in rural Guatemala. Growing up during the brutal civil war, they watched as their communities were torn apart and their loved ones were murdered. Fleeing the ongoing persecution inflicted on indigenous Mayans, they came to the United States in search of safety and normal life.

Confident in their textile skills, but unsure of the intricacies of entering the American market, the

women of Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj courageously began producing women's bags and children's clothing. Constantly seeking suggestions and input, Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj works tirelessly to understand the American market and how to blend their unique Mayan aesthetic with local tastes and preferences. For months, they honed their already well-developed sewing skills and refined their production processes. Each piece is handmade and often accented with beautiful embroidery, unique buttons, or elegant tassels. Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj's products range from young and funky to chic and sophisticated. The combination of high-

quality fabrics and strong, playful colors into painstakingly intricate patterns gives each piece a unique personality.

Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj represents a courageous female initiative in the face of much adversity. Despite their stressful situation after the raid, the women managed to come together and, with the guidance of nonprofit and pro-bono legal assistance, find a way to participate in the American labor market to provide for themselves and their families.

Determined to remain a female created and governed organization, Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj is run by only women. The

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## Women's Participation in the Political Struggles in Oaxaca, Mexico

by Jessie Hahn

Since June 2006, when a violent attempt by Oaxaca Governor Ulises Ruiz failed to remove striking teachers from an encampment in the center of Oaxaca City, there has been a diverse and vibrant peoples' movement flourishing in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. At the center of this movement, women have opened up new spaces for themselves in a political culture that has traditionally limited their participation. For the last 26 years, teachers have staged sit-ins in Oaxaca City as part of their annual negotiating strategy. But on June 14, 2006, Ulises Ruiz sent in more than 3,000 state riot police with tear gas bombs and helicopters to violently dismantle the striking teachers' camp, injuring hundreds of teachers and children. This disproportionate show of force converted many in Oaxaca who had been indifferent to the annual protests into active sympathizers, and the city exploded. Thousands took to the streets to support the teachers and tend the wounded. Together, the citizens and the teachers counterattacked—retaking the city square and driving the police out of town.

In the aftermath of this spontaneous rejection of police violence, the teachers union came together with local indigenous community organizations, human rights groups, and other independent unions to form the broad-based Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO in Spanish). The APPO rejected traditional party politics and

launched a civil disobedience offensive in late July to pressure Ruiz to leave his post as governor. As part of this offensive, a women-only march was called for August 1, 2006 in which over 5,000 women participated, all banging on pots and pans with soup spoons, ladles and meat tenderizers. The march had so much energy that when the women reached their destination, the protester-occupied city center, they decided to keep going all the way to the state-owned television and radio station on the outskirts of town. This station, Channel 9, was the only statewide local station and had failed to report the police violence of June 14th, instead portraying the protesters as vandals and delinquents.

When the women arrived at Channel 9, they demanded an hour to tell their version of the events of June 14th and why they wanted Ruiz out of office. The station director refused them entrance, so they walked past her and spontaneously took over the station. Within three hours, the women were broadcasting live, pots and pans still in hand. Their message was clear: if the media wouldn't tell the truth about a people's movement, the people would take the media to tell their own story. Thousands of residents from the surrounding neighborhood flooded the streets to guard the station and prevent police from retaking it.

Following the takeover of the radio and TV, the women opened up the airwaves on Radio Cacerola ("Saucepan Radio") to the usually voiceless people in

the poor neighborhoods and nearby indigenous towns surrounding Oaxaca City. The discussion topics, many of which occurred in native languages, ranged from the violent murders of women in Ciudad Juarez and Oaxaca to the need for recognition of indigenous rights and a new constitution for the state of Oaxaca. This popular media became an essential tool for organizing and coordinating the growing social movement of the APPO, alerting the people to marches or police movements, and was the lifeline of information and encouragement on the barricades erected throughout the city to block the entrance of armed forces. The media takeover proliferated, with five additional radio stations being occupied by the end of August. These takeovers generated severe repression, with paramilitary forces shooting up the antennas of Radio Cacerola and state police opening fire on the women and APPO supporters guarding the station, killing one person and injuring dozens more.

As the conflict escalated over the course of the fall, 17 people were killed, 30 people disappeared and hundreds more were detained. During a massive crackdown from November 25th to December 4th, 2006, 192 people were detained—46 of who were women. Most of these women were bussed to a men's prison four states away in Nayarit, Mexico and the police sexually assaulted some during their detention. The threat of rape was consistently used to intimidate the women and deter

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## Women's Participation in the Political Struggles in Oaxaca, Mexico

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their activism throughout the conflict. Patricia Jimenez Aragon, a member of the teacher's union and a founder of the August First Oaxaca Women's Organization (COMO in Spanish), demonstrates the courage of the women on the front lines:

*"They tell us they are going to rape us, that they are going to kill our children, that they are going to rob our houses. We have been living with this fear for five months, that they are going to kill us, thinking about the worst that can happen. We are living a life that is totally different from the life we had before the 14th of June ... We don't live in our houses anymore, we don't go out to have fun and we don't see our children. This social movement has changed our lives."*

While all of these women have since been released from prison, most continue to have charges hanging over them and must

report to prison each month to check in as of February 2008.

Women leaders have also been selectively targeted for repression throughout the APPO conflict. Yesica Sanchez Maya, an attorney with Mexican League for the Defense of Human Rights, and Aline Castellanos, a leading member of the Committee for Parliamentary Dialogue and Equality, are two women who have been documenting and publicizing human rights violations since the beginning of the conflict in June 2006. Both have had warrants issued for their arrest based on fabricated charges. Amnesty International emitted urgent actions for fear of torture on their behalf in December 2006. Although they have not yet been detained, Castellanos's home was burgled in April 2007 and her passport and life savings were stolen. She has since been forced to flee the state.

As recently as December 2007, young women leaders within the APPO were being harassed and threatened so they would desist

from their activism. On December 2, 2007, 23-year-old Nancy Mota Figueroa, a founding member of the COMO and a student representative to the APPO, was picked up off the street in an unmarked car, blindfolded, beaten, ordered at gunpoint to cease participating in the APPO and dumped on the outskirts of Oaxaca City. When she went public with her story, she mentioned that other young women had suffered similar abuses but hadn't come forward out of fear of retaliation against their families.

Women have played an essential role in all the activities of the APPO, leading and participating in hundreds of public actions, forums, and discussion groups. They occupied numerous state buildings, staffed neighborhood barricades, and organized branches of the APPO in other parts of the state of Oaxaca. They have defended the victims of human rights violations and raised their voices against impunity.

Women are becoming important new actors on the local political stage, organizing to construct alternatives to corrupt, traditional party politics. This participation in a popular movement has changed many women's' lives, leaving them with a newfound sense of respect and determined to see their images and ideas move into the mainstream of Oaxaca life.

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*Jessie Hahn is a first year law student at Northeastern School of Law.*



## Massachusetts Chapter Sustainers

In the spring of 2003, the Massachusetts Chapter of the NLG initiated the Chapter Sustainer Program.

Since its inception, the Program has been very successful and has been enthusiastically joined by the following Guild members:

**Adkins, Kelston & Zavez; Jane Alper; Samuel Berk; Neil Berman; Howard Cooper; Melinda Drew & Jeff Feuer; Howard Friedman; Benjie Hiller; David Hoffman; Stephen Hrones; Martin Kantrovitz; David Kelston; Leslee Klein & Mark Stern; William Newman; Petrucelly & Nadler; Allan Rodgers; Martin Rosenthal; Sharryn Ross; Anne Sills & Howard Silverman; Judy Somberg; and Stern, Shapiro, Weissberg & Garin.**

This is one of the most important initiatives the Chapter has undertaken to secure its future existence. Please consider joining the Program. We need you in order to have a strong and active Guild!

### YES, INCLUDE MY NAME AMONG NLG MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER SUSTAINERS

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am making a commitment to support the Massachusetts Chapter of the Guild with an annual contribution of:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500 (not including my membership dues)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Other above \$500)

#### As a Sustainer I will receive:

- Special listing in the Dinner Program;
- 1/8 page ad in the Dinner Program;
- Acknowledgement in every issue of *Mass Dissent*;
- Two free raffle tickets for a December Holiday Party;
- Invitation to a Guild reception.

*Please mail to:* NLG, Massachusetts Chapter  
14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108

## Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj: Out of Hardship Came Strength and Hope

*Continued from page 8*

founding members viewed the collective as a rare and precious opportunity for Guatemalan women to practice a craft in an environment devoid of male domination. While graciously accepting male assistance, the group is determined to remain governed by women.

With minimal initial assistance, the women envisioned and created this opportunity for themselves, proactively seeking help when needed. As a group, they chose a name and designed their logo. Acting as individual artisans selling their creations through a collective Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), the women work together to develop their product lines and share sewing

techniques. It is widely understood that the success of the whole is determined by the success of each person, and the women often take turns attending craft fairs and taking care of each other's children.

In addition to financial benefits, the women of Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj also reap the benefits that come with creative expression. In Guatemala indigenous people are often marginalized for their traditional clothing. Here, the women smile as they sew little pieces of traditional Guatemalan fabric into bags – often as an interior pocket or exterior accent. Though a mere design element to some, for the members of Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj, this patch of fabric represents an opportunity to share and

appreciate who they are and where they come from.

Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj attends craft fairs and fundraising events throughout Massachusetts. In 2008, the collective is seeking to expand its market and obtain retail product placement.

Please visit <http://www.sabiduriaoxlajujnoj.googlepages.com> to view products and get in touch with Sabiduria Oxlajúj Noj. (Comments, collaborators, and business/marketing suggestions are warmly welcomed.)

*Ilene Solomon is a paralegal at Greater Boston Legal Services and will be beginning law school in Fall 2008.*

# Mass Dissent

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## The National Lawyers Guild is...



"... an association dedicated to the need for basic change in the structure of our political and economic system. We seek to unite the lawyers, law students, legal workers and jailhouse lawyers of America in an organization which shall function as an effective political and social force in the service of people, to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests. Our aim is to bring together all those who regard adjustments to new conditions as more important than the veneration of precedent; who recognize the importance of safeguarding and extending the rights of workers, women, farmers, and minority groups upon whom the welfare of the entire nation depends; who seek actively to eliminate racism; who work to maintain and protect our civil rights and liberties in the face of persistent attacks upon them; and who look upon the law as an instrument for the protection of the people, rather than for their repression."

*Preamble to the Constitution of the National Lawyers Guild, originally adopted February 22, 1937, and most recently amended in July 1971.*

## Please Join Us!

Dues are calculated on a calendar year basis (Jan.1-Dec.31) according to your income\*:

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over \$20,000 to \$25,000.....	\$75
over \$25,000 to \$30,000.....	\$100
over \$30,000 to \$40,000.....	\$150
over \$40,000 to \$50,000.....	\$200
over \$50,000 to \$60,000.....	\$250
over \$60,000 to \$70,000.....	\$300
over \$70,000 to \$80,000.....	\$350
over \$80,000 to \$90,000.....	\$400
over \$100,000.....	\$500

\* Any new member who joins after September 1 will be carried over to the following year. Dues may be paid in full or in quarterly installments. Dues of \$80 cover the basic membership costs, which include publication and mailing of *Mass Dissent* (the Chapter's monthly newsletter), national and regional dues, and the office and staff.

*No one will be denied membership because of inability to pay.*

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Street Law Clinic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Civil Disobedience Defense Group
- \_\_\_\_\_ National Immigration Project
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Mass Dissent* (monthly publication)