

# Mass Dissent

Massachusetts Chapter

National Lawyers Guild

14 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

December 2008

www.nlgmass.org

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## BOARD MEETING

**December 9, 6:00pm**

14 Beacon St., 1st Fl.  
Boston

## *That was the year that was 2008*

2008 was a year in which national and worldwide events affected our work at the NLG Massachusetts Chapter. As the year began, the presidential primaries were upon us. The globalized economy was beginning to fall apart, increasing pressures on already stressed people and communities, many of whom rely on the Guild. The failing economy also created dropping housing values and defaults on mortgages and the resulting increase in foreclosures. Addressing this crisis, in particular, became a priority of the work of the Guild.

The Massachusetts Chapter Board of Directors began the year at the January meeting with a reassessment of our ongoing projects and discussion of our direction for 2008. Ongoing projects included the **Street Law Clinics**, the **Lawyers Referral Service**, **fundraising**, the **Speakers series**, a **delegation recently returned from Venezuela** and another planned to go to **Palestine**, the **Happy Hour** events begun in the Fall of 2007, the **Civilian Review Board** concerning the Boston police, and **Mass Defense** work training and representing protesters and others. The Board assessed the need for the

Chapter to respond to the foreclosure crises in Massachusetts (and around the country), by creating a **Foreclosure Prevention Task Force (FPTF)**; we have also added to the Street Law Clinics a **new clinic in bankruptcy & debt management** as well as a new component of a **pro bono advice service**.

The damage from the financial crises, for the Chapter, was addressed by the Foreclosure Prevention Task Force spearheaded by **Nadine Cohen**, **Jeff Feuer**, and **Lee Goldstein**. After the usual hard work of beginning such a large project, there were significant events throughout the year, including a court decision defining predatory lending, which affected the Task Force's direction. There was a 90-day moratorium on foreclosures and the Attorney General's office began putting pressure on lenders to temper their rapacious actions. During this time the FPTF and other activists in the city met and began to work out their strategy for helping the victims of the last 15 years of predatory lending. These efforts included training lawyers in foreclosure and landlord-tenant law (foreclosures almost always result in eviction of all residents of the foreclosed property).

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**NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD  
Massachusetts Chapter, Inc.**

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**Join a Guild Committee**

**Street Law Clinic Project:** The Street Law Clinic project provides workshops for Massachusetts organizations that address legal needs of various communities. Legal education workshops on 4th Amendment Rights (Stop & Search), Landlord/Tenant Disputes, Workers' Rights, Civil Disobedience Defense, Bankruptcy Law, Foreclosure Prevention Law, 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.

**Lawyer Referral Service Panel (LRS):** 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.

**Foreclosure Prevention Task Force:** Created in June 2008, the Task Force's goal is threefold: (1) to draft and introduce policies that address issues that homeowners and tenants of foreclosed on houses face, (2) to provide legal assistance to these homeowners and tenants, *and* (3) to conduct legal clinics for them. If you are interested in working with the Task Force, please call the office at 617-227-7335.

**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. 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.

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# GUILD NEWS

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## NLG HAPPY HOUR

The NLG Massachusetts Chapter's Happy Hour - for Guild members and non-Guild members - takes place on the **2nd Wednesday of every month, 5:30 - 7:30pm, at Kennedy's Mid-Town Pub** (44 Province St., 2nd Fl., Boston, close to Suffolk Law School). We hope you will join us for the next NLG Happy Hour on **January 14** (we are skipping December) - and bring friends!

## HOLIDAY PARTY

This year's NLG Holiday Party will be held on **Friday, December 5, 5:30pm**. We will again be hosted by **Stern Shapiro Weissberg and Garin** at 90 Canal St., 5th Fl., in Boston. Among the attractions are fantastic snacks and wine, and you will have a chance to win exciting prizes at the raffle drawing. Please join us. (If you have questions, please call the office at 617-227-7335.)

## Street Law Clinic Report

*The following Guild members conducted trainings for law students and/or clinics for members of Boston area community organizations and agencies:*

**September 22:** *Legal Observer* training at Northeastern School of Law by **Melinda Drew**.

**September 24:** *Legal Observer* training at Northeastern School of Law by **Melinda Drew**.

**October 22:** *Legal Observer* training at Northeastern School of Law by **Melinda Drew**.

**November 3:** *Tenants' Rights* clinic at Allston CDC, by law students **Grant Rizi & Liza Hirsch**.

**November 12:** *Workers' Rights* clinic at St. Ambrose Shelter in Dorchester, by **Deborah Roher**.

**November 19:** *Foreclosure Prevention* clinic at Four Corners in Dorchester, by **Nadine Cohen, Jeff Feuer, Lee Goldstein**.

**November 21:** *Tenants' Rights* clinic at Cambridge Cares About AIDS, by **Melinda Drew & Jeff Feuer**.

**November 24:** *Immigration Law* clinic at Boston Early Intervention in Brookline, by **Robert Warren**.

## GUILD MEMBERS IN ACTION

This year, **Steve Hrones** has taught general American Law and criminal law in Rostov-on-Don, Russia, at Southern Federal University Law School, and in Olomouc, Czech Republic at Palacky Law School.

After being elected an Obama delegate to the national convention in Denver, **Steve Linsky** travelled to Sweden to meet with Democrats Abroad.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Guild member **Sarah Wunsch** is among 40 women from various fields who, on December 5, will receive "Women of Justice" Awards from *Lawyers Weekly*. The Awards are given to celebrate "women who have made great strides in the fields of law, justice and advocacy."

*Way to go, Sarah!*

## Mass Dissent - an electronic option

A number of Guild members have approached the office with a request to receive ONLY an electronic version of *Mass Dissent*. The idea is very appealing as the cost of monthly printing and mailing of the newsletter is quite high and ever growing.

Please e-mail ([nlgmass-director@igc.org](mailto:nlgmass-director@igc.org)) or call us (617-227-7335) and let us know if you would like to receive *Mass Dissent* in a **electronic version**.

## ARTICLES FOR MASS DISSENT

The February issue of *Mass Dissent* will look at the economic crisis from the left perspective.

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](mailto:nlgmass-director@igc.org).

**The deadline for articles is January 15th, 2009.**

## 2008 IN REVIEW

Continued from page 1

When the 90-day moratorium ended during the summer, the foreclosures rapidly increased in number and effect. Eviction blockades at first stopped evictions and promoted negotiated settlements, but at the end of the summer, arrests and forced move-outs began. The Guild provided legal observers to eviction blockings and represented those arrested. We've also developed a legal clinic that explains what rights people have while facing or undergoing a foreclosure and/or eviction. This is an ongoing crisis which will be a Mass Chapter priority for the foreseeable future.

The **2008 Annual Dinner** coincided with the 70th anniversary of the formation of the Guild. The event was emceed by **Hank Phillippi Ryan** and we honored **Sharryn Ross** and **Jeffrey Feuer** as well as legal worker **Anibal Lucas** and student **Anthony Naro**. The dinner was a success on many levels, however, when the Board evaluated the dinner, it was felt that a new direction would be appreciated. To create a more informal award ceremony, **Jeffrey Feuer** and **Steve Linsky** volunteered to look for a location such as a union hall or other non-hotel setting, and to consider changes to the format. This was an ongoing effort throughout the last year, and continues as we all await this year's model.

Highlights of the year for the Chapter included the **Annual Meeting** in March when **Robert**

**Meeropol** spoke on the "1/20/2009: Light at the End of the Tunnel?" looking at the possibilities for social improvement as the Bush administration ended its disastrous reign. There was a spirited discussion with much hope for the future expressed by the numerous members who attended.

In March, the annual **Mentorship Brunch** was graciously hosted at the Jamaica Plain home of **Nancy Kelly** and **John Willshire-Carrera**. It was attended by about 30 people, evenly divided between law students and lawyers. The



Tracie Burns, Neil Burns, David Kelston, and Laura Alfring at the November NLG Happy Hour enjoying a nice conversation.

event was, as always, a wonderful conversation about the trials of working within the legal system while committed to using the system to promote social needs instead of individual property rights.

At the **Membership Meeting** in October, the election theme was the focus of a presentation by **Cynthia Mark** about "Asian American Voting Rights in Boston," leading to a discussion of the importance of well-regulated non-discriminatory elections.

The **Annual Retreat**, this year June 26th, was a time to step back

and rethink the Chapter, emphasizing how to make the Chapter more relevant to our members and their law work. There was much discussion about the Chapter better using technology to increase our efficiency and relevance. This has already resulted in our website being refurbished and *Mass Dissent*, the Chapter newsletter, being distributed electronically (and being posted to our website). We are also about to begin the "**Guild Circle**" program, making it easier to pay dues and contribute to the Chapter in automatic monthly installments.

Much more is to come as we jump into the new year in our work and communications.

Our monthly **Happy Hour** has become a fun time for those who attend. We recently moved from FELT to Kennedy's, and have had increased attendance and hilarity at this new location.

We begin 2009 with renewed excitement and energy to improve the results of all our current projects, as well as being prepared for the new challenges, and there will be many, in the year (and years) ahead.

In this issue, you will find reports on several of these projects, including the Street Law Clinics, the Lawyer Referral Service, Mass Defense, the Civilian Review Board, and the Foreclosure Prevention Task Force.

- Neil Berman -  
Chapter Co-Chair

## Foreclosure Prevention Task Force Update

by Lori B. Hill & Jeff Feuer

This past summer, Guild attorneys **Jeff Feuer** and **Lee Goldstein**, with the invaluable aid of full-time law student volunteers **Meg Schroeder** (BC) and **Lori B. Hill** (Suffolk), launched the Chapter's new Foreclosure Clinic and Task Force. The Foreclosure Clinic is part of the Chapter's dynamic and successful Street Law Clinic project. It is designed to provide homeowners and tenants whose residences have been foreclosed on with the knowledge and practical tools to fight eviction proceedings against them on a pro se basis and to hook them into the powerful network of community activists, led by groups such as City Life/Vida Urbana and ACORN, who will support them in their struggles.

The Foreclosure Prevention Task Force is made up of volunteer law students and attorneys who have been trained with mate-

rials, including a new Street Law Foreclosure Clinic booklet addressing different aspects of foreclosure and pro se eviction defense issues. The Task Force was established to conduct clinics and participate in community-based foreclosure prevention meetings, and to represent people who have been arrested in eviction blocking actions done by community activists like City Life.

There have already been several training sessions held to prepare volunteer law students and attorneys to conduct Street Law clinics and to participate in community foreclosure prevention forums. The Task Force has been working closely with Guild attorney **Nadine Cohen** of Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston City Councilors Charles Yancey and Chuck Turner and various community advocacy organizations to plan and conduct community-based foreclosure prevention forums. This series of forums will be held in Roxbury, Dorchester,

Mattapan, Hyde Park, and Roslindale in the coming months for homeowners and tenants in danger of being evicted from their homes by banks and other mortgage lenders that have foreclosed on their property. At these meetings community residents have an opportunity to receive up to date information regarding how to obtain relief from threatened foreclosures, how to try to re-negotiate their mortgages with predatory lenders, what their legal rights are, and a chance to meet with a community-based foreclosure counselor, a lawyer or a law student who will assist them in getting connected with the financial counseling and legal help they may need.

The first Foreclosure Prevention Forum was held on October 15th at the Prince Hall in Dorchester. It was attended by over 100 community members who heard speakers from different agencies (including Guild attorneys Nadine Cohen, Jeff Feuer

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Boston City Counselor Chuck Turner (*first left*) is joined by volunteering Guild attorneys and law students at the Community Foreclosure Meeting in October, held in Roxbury. Among Guild members, there were attorneys Neil Berman, Nadine Cohen, Dan Factor, Jeff Feuer, Betsy Ehrenberg, Lee Goldstein, Jonathan Messinger; and law students Margaret Alyward (Suffolk), Makis Antzoulatos (Northeastern), Harris Cooksey (Northeastern), Lori Hill (Suffolk), Eric Kuzma (Northeastern), Shirley Michel (Suffolk), Josh Raisler-Cohn (Northeastern), Linda Rigas (New England), Nicole St. Pierre (Suffolk), Courtney Tallman (Suffolk), and Tom Zito (Northeastern). *Photo by KC Bailey*

## Foreclosure Prevention Task Force

Continued from page 5

and Lee Goldstein) provide them with critical information about foreclosures and evictions. In addition, 15 law student volunteers and volunteer Guild attorneys conducted 42 intakes with attendees, who were later referred to the appropriate community based counseling, advocacy or legal service agency for services, based on their intake information. Due to the overwhelming demand, the Guild still needs more volunteer attorneys to join the Task Force and provide pro bono representation to at least one client facing foreclosure or eviction. Please contact the Guild office if you are interested in joining the Task Force, participating in the community-based forums or are able to take on one pro bono case arising from the forums (please note that this is not a requirement for participating in the Task Force), or have any questions or concerns. Another Foreclosure Prevention Forum was held at the Great Hall in Dorchester on

November 19th, and will be followed by other forums in January and February.

Another area that the Foreclosure Task Force has been focusing on is our ongoing relationship with City Life/Vida Urbana. At the request of families losing their homes through foreclosure and then eviction, City Life has conducted several eviction blockings and the Guild has been there every step of the way. There has been an outpouring of community support for these families, with 50-100 local residents and activists turning up to protest the eviction and to try to force the foreclosing bank to negotiate the sale of the property to the family, or at least to allow them to remain in their home as rent-paying tenants. In some instances, community activists have been willing to risk arrest to try to prevent the eviction. Guild attorneys and law students have been present at every one of these protests, providing legal observers and pro bono representation for those who get arrested.

So far, in every case where there have been arrests, Guild attorneys have succeeded in having the charges dismissed. These eviction blockades have been a great tool in publicizing the terrible effects of foreclosures on both the families losing their homes and the community that is having an owner-occupied home replaced by a vacant building. Guild attorneys **Neil Berman**, **Lee Goldstein**, **Benjie Hiller** and **Jeff Feuer** have been active in these protests, but more law students (as legal observers) and lawyers are needed.

Please contact Jeff Feuer directly at [feuer.gandf@verizon.net](mailto:feuer.gandf@verizon.net) if you are interested.

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*Lori B. Hill is a third year student at Suffolk Law School and a co-coordinator of the NLG Street Law Clinic project.*

*Jeff Feuer is a partner at Goldstein & Feuer in Cambridge, and a member of the Chapter Board of Directors.*

### NLG MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER SUSTAINERS



NLG Massachusetts Chapter sustainers who attended a "Sustainer Appreciation Party" on November 19, 2008, at Deborah Kuhn and David Kelston's home. (l.-r. 1st row) Andrew Cornell, Benjie Hiller, Howard Cooper, Margaret Burnham; (l.-r. 2nd row) Urszula Masny-Latos (Chapter Director), Neil Berman, Martin Kantrovitz, Stephen Hrones, Ken Quat (newly recruited sustainer), Jeff Feuer, Michael Avery, David Kelston, Hank Phillippi Ryan, Jonathan Shapiro, and Max Stern. *Photo by Deborah Kuhn*

## *Boston's Civilian Review Board in 2008*

by Barb Dougan

What a difference a year makes. At the end of 2007, we reported on the slow progress being made by the civilian review board appointed to oversee the handling of complaints against Boston police officers ("Boston's Civilian Review Board: Open for Business but No Customers," *Mass Dissent*, Nov. 2007). By October, we were able to report on the release of the board's first annual report ("Civilian Review Board Issues First Annual Report," *Mass Dissent*, Oct. 2008).

Community activism and the Guild's leadership drove the creation of the board as well as its current status as a functioning entity. With our efforts, it should continue to evolve. These were the main developments in 2008:

- In March, the **NLG** and **American Friends Service Committee** co-sponsored a **Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition** program, featuring the three members of the board. A large group of advocates and activists turned out to discuss the board's procedures, role and issues it needs to address.
- In April, our coalition joined forces with the community advisory board of Northeastern University's Institute on Race & Justice and several other organizations. We sent a list of recommendations to the board concerning the annual report it was drafting, requesting that the report include more statistics, recommendations as to operation and structure, and a discussion of police practices that may lead to the violations that generate complaints.
- In August, the board issued its first annual report, finding that over one-fourth of the cases it reviewed needed to be reinvestigated by the Internal Affairs Division (IAD). We learned that the police department sustained only 13% of the 114 civilian complaints filed, compared to 84% of departmental complaints. The most common civilian complaints were lack of respectful treatment and excessive force. People of color filed 64% of complainants. The board recommended an independent study to determine why so few (only two) civilian complainants choose to appeal, more detailed descriptions of complaints received, availability of complaint forms at locations outside police stations and complaint forms in languages other than English.

*Barb Dougan is a NLG board member and Co-Chair of the Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition.*

December 2008

## *NLG Mass Defense*

by Ryan Schiff

This has been yet another busy year for the Mass Defense Committee. As the nation's problems have intensified so has opposition to the policies that have gotten us into this mess. Our work has focused on defending and supporting activists resisting home foreclosures and protesting the war in Iraq.

Over the last year, Boston housing activists have stood up to the banks by resisting foreclosures and evictions. When the banks have tried to drag people from their homes, activists have blocked their way and refused to let the banks put people on the street without a fight. The Guild has supported these efforts by providing legal observers and, when needed, representation. Long-time Guild lawyers **Lee Goldstein** and **Jeff Feuer** are doing their part by representing a group of housing activists arrested in Dorchester while bravely blocking a foreclosure. And tireless Mass Defense Committee member **Dan Beck** is representing activists arrested while protesting Bank of America's foreclosure and lending policies.

I had the honor of representing five anti-war activists arrested in front of a Boston military recruitment office on the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war. Not only did I become friends with five great people, but I also learned a few things from representing them.

Early in my representation, we went to court, and a judge with a good reputation among defense lawyers started putting pressure on the prosecution to settle the case. The assistant district attorney spoke with his boss and came back offering pretrial probation, usually a great resolution of a case that results in a dismissal so long as you don't get arrested within the probationary period. I passed this offer on to my clients and figured they would quickly jump at the offer. But they were not eager to give in and had a wonderful discussion in the hall about whether to take the offer. Ultimately, they told me they didn't want to give in without a fight. I, with the straightest face I could muster, told the prosecutor that we weren't going to accept what he saw as an extremely generous offer. The judge was shocked and probably a bit outraged, but my clients stood firm.

In the end, the clients were vindicated. We filed a motion to dismiss, and a different judge held a hearing and then dismissed all of the charges in a very thoughtful six-page decision. Although the prosecution initially filed a notice of appeal, it later backed down. The case was over, and there was no probation hanging over the clients' heads that might discourage them from participating in future protests.

The Mass Defense Committee offers some of the most rewarding work we can do as progressive lawyers. If you are interested in getting involved, please give Urszula a call at 617-227-7335.

*Ryan Schiff is a member of the NLG Mass Defense Committee and an attorney at Salsberg & Schneider.*

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# Lawyer Referral Service

by *Caroline Lorenz*

**M**any callers to the Massachusetts Chapter's Lawyer Referral Service (LRS) express their dismay at having been told, often for the first time in their lives, that they "make too much money." In other words, their income is too great to qualify for free legal services. Still lacking the funds necessary to obtain full priced legal representation, low-income people come to the LRS to find a lawyer who will offer them representation at a rate they can afford. The LRS provides a valuable service to those caught between poverty and affluence by matching potential clients with lawyers willing to offer reduced fees. After a phone consultation, the attorney determines whether they can handle the caller's case, and if so, at what rate.

There are currently 62 attorneys on the LRS panel, making this year's panel by far the largest in the service's recent history. The LRS has gained 15 new members this year, the majority of which are also joining the Guild for the first time. Many of the new members have recently graduated from law school and are looking to build their practices. Some new members learned about the LRS from existing Guild members, while many found the LRS on the Internet and decided to join. Panel members practice virtually all types of law: domestic relations, landlord/tenant, civil rights, police misconduct, employment law, criminal defense, personal injury, consumer protection, bankruptcy, malpractice, immi-

gration, real estate, and environmental law, among others.

The LRS receives approximately 300 calls each month. Typically, the greatest number of calls is for domestic relations, civil litigation, and criminal matters. However, recently we have begun to see the country's troubling economic situation reflected in LRS referrals. There has been an alarming surge in the number of callers requesting bankruptcy lawyers. From January to August of 2008, bankruptcy referrals represented an average of 4.2% of LRS calls each month. However, that number more than doubled during September and October, when the average suddenly jumped to 9.4% of monthly referrals. There is a similar spike in the number of calls regarding foreclosures and landlord/tenant issues. Several of these callers learned about the LRS from attending the Community Foreclosure

to say that cases from the LRS cannot turn a profit. Member attorneys remit to the LRS 10% of fees collected on a case from the LRS, or 15% if the total amount is \$3,000 or greater. In 2007, the LRS received a remittance of \$10,000 from a single case. In 2008, the greatest remittance was around \$7,000. After years of operating in the red, the LRS has become financially self-sustaining under the leadership of the LRS Board and with the hard work of previous coordinators. The LRS will always be non-profit, but the service's financial stability ensures its continued existence and allows it to be a solid supporter of the Massachusetts Chapter.

Every six weeks, LRS Board members **Neil Berman, Neil Burns, Joshua Goldstein, Jeremy Robin** and **Azizah Yasin** meet with the coordinator to review financial data and referral statistics, and discuss the direction of the service. This year, the Board has worked to better incorporate technology in the functions of the LRS. In July, the majority of LRS attorneys began receiving their quarterly reports electronically, as a PDF file, rather than through regular mail. Electronic delivery of reports is easier on the environment as well as the LRS budget, and allows reports to be delivered and returned almost instantaneously. Dollars previously spent on paper, envelopes and stamps can now be put towards more constructive endeavors, such as advertising.

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Members of the LRS who attended the November Happy Hour (l.-r.): Doug Babcock, Neil Burns, Caroline Lorenz (coordinator), Ku Yoo, Chris Early, Jeff Chang, and Neil Burns.

Prevention Meetings facilitated by the Guild's Foreclosure and Evictions Task Force.

While LRS attorneys do a great service by representing low-income clients at reduced rates, that is not

## Street Law Clinic

by Lori B. Hill & Kate Watkins

As you know, our Street Law Clinic project, established in 1989, offers workshops on a wide range of legal topics that affect many people. Our clinics are conducted by trained law students, with assistance from lawyers, in community centers, churches, high schools, homeless shelters, union halls, and pre-release centers. The goal of the clinics is to empower participants from the community by teaching them how to assert their legal rights in their relationships with their landlords, their employers, and law enforcement. We also offer clinics that provide the participants with information about immigration law, bankruptcy, and fore-



Photo by Kate Watkins

Deborah Roher conducts a workshop on workers rights at St. Ambrose Family Shelter in Dorchester.

closure and eviction. The Street Law Clinic Program also trains legal observers to monitor police conduct at demonstrations, and to advise advocacy groups who are planning civil disobedience actions.

The workshops are interactive, with participants dealing with real-life situations, and usually last about two hours. More than 350 participants learned about their legal rights at these clinics.

This year we are happy to have added two new clinics: Bankruptcy Law *and* Foreclosure & Eviction Prevention. The Bankruptcy clinic was designed in response to the growing number of individuals who face consumer debt and credit issues, especially in the face of the foreclosure crisis. The clinic focuses on helping

consumers manage their debt, increase their access to credit, and deal with the process of bankruptcy. The Foreclosure and Eviction Prevention clinic helps tenants who face eviction by a bank, mortgage company, or other lender as a result of a foreclosure. It empowers and encourages tenants by advising them of their legal rights and giving them the capability to represent themselves at

trial. Additionally, participants are encouraged to attend tenants' association meetings with City Life and other organizations to develop a collective and unified front. The goal is to put pressure on the banks and other mortgage lenders to stop evicting innocent tenants after a foreclosure.

Since the start of the new school year, we have conducted several trainings at area law schools, drawing close to 100 new students into the program. We have also scheduled clinics at community agencies we have not worked with before, and we hope to keep expanding our reach throughout the coming year. We at the Street Law Clinic program would like to thank all the attorneys who have devoted their time and energy this year to meeting the need for legal information among those who have the most need for it but often the least access to it. If you have not yet signed on to do trainings or clinics, please drop us a line at [nlgmass-slc@igc.org](mailto:nlgmass-slc@igc.org) or call us at 617-723-4330 to get involved!

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*Lori B. Hill is a 3rd year student at Suffolk Law School and Kate Watkins is a 1st year student at Northeastern School of Law. They both coordinate the project this year.*

## LRS

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This year the LRS has focused on increasing its online presence. At the close of 2007, a system was implemented to allow users to request referrals online, and the LRS website was revamped. With this in place, the Board is now steering advertising efforts away from print advertising and towards the Internet. The LRS recent-

ly began advertising with Google, and has since seen a significant increase in online requests and callers who found the service online. Currently, the majority of callers learn of the LRS from legal services organizations, but through online advertising, the LRS hopes to reach a broader range of potential clients. Online advertising is still a young project for the LRS, but it will be monitored closely.

The LRS is always accepting attorneys who wish to join. There is cur-

rently a need for Spanish-speaking attorneys and attorneys who practice in other parts of the state. While the majority of the panel is in the Boston area, the LRS also receives many calls from residents in the Worcester and Springfield areas. Attorneys interested in joining or learning more about the LRS should contact the coordinator.

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*Caroline Lorenz is the Lawyer Referral Service Coordinator.*

## NLG STUDENT REPORTS

### New England School of Law

This past year, the New England School of Law chapter of NLG has been focused on getting as many students as possible trained to get out there and help teach Street Law Clinics. We have hosted several trainings on Stop & Search law, and hope to hold a training in Tenants' Rights early next semester. We have had some impressive turn-outs at our trainings, and many of our students have gone on to assist at Clinics.

In addition to organizing trainings, last spring we co-hosted, along with the NESL Center for Law & Social Responsibility, a panel discussion entitled: "Safety Takes a Back Seat: How the Current Immigration Climate Affects Domestic Violence Victims." Widely attended by NESL students, professors, and local members of the legal community, this panel addressed the many controversial viewpoints regarding these important issues and sparked a lively debate among audience members and panelists. The panel featured several prominent legal figures, including the Honorable Sydney Hanlon, First Justice of the Dorchester Court, Kelly Leighton, Esq. and Manisha Bhatt, Esq., Senior Attorneys for the Family Law Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services, Calvin Heinle, Esq., a leading attorney for DiPiano Godson LLP, Gregory Hession, Esq., a prominent solo practitioner, and Stephen K. Baskerville, PhD, Associate Professor of Government for Patrick Henry College. In addition, NESL Professor of Law and Director of Clinical Programs Russell Engler also generously donated his time and expertise to serve as moderator of the panel.

Most recently, the NESL NLG chapter co-hosted, along with the Immigration Law Society and the Federalist Society, a panel discussion entitled "Immigration 360: Degrees of Revolution," featuring Guild members **Harvey Kaplan** and **Maureen O'Sullivan** who were debating Mark Krikorian, Executive Director of the Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, DC.

- Laura Mannion, 3rd year law student -

### Northeastern School of Law

This fall, Northeastern chapter of NLG has split into subcommittees to address students' agreed upon priorities. We look forward to making progress on each of these campaigns in the coming year!

Justice for Janitors: Northeastern law students continue to collaborate with undergraduate students, janitors and their union to advocate for improved wages and benefits for janitorial staff at the university. This semester, we've continued to promote visibility and place pressure on the administration through petitioning and letter writing. At the law school's 40th anniversary events in October, we gained considerable alumni support through signed letters to President Aoun. The campaign is committed to continue meeting with the janitors and union members to plan next steps of action.

Our Street Law campaign focuses this year on extending educational efforts into Boston communities. The group organized a successful Stop & Search training at the law school in October to start momentum on the issue. The campaign plans to collaborate with schools and community youth groups to organize future educational events.

Our Immigration campaign has been active this semester, organizing film screenings and regular brown bag breakfasts to discuss current immigration issues. We recently held a screening of the film, "Made in L.A./Hecho en Los Angeles" and in early January will show the documentary, "Dos Americas" on labor issues affecting the Latino population in New Orleans. Finally, students have been actively involved in the process of hiring a new Immigration professor at the law school.

Students in our Housing campaign have joined the MA NLG Foreclosure/eviction Task Force and have been involved in street law clinics on Tenant Rights. Moving forward the campaign will focus on affordable housing in Boston and the impact of Northeastern development into surrounding low-income communities, including the recent purchase of local Section 8 housing.

Our Internal Affairs committee has worked on creating a forum for students to voice ideas and concerns about the law school culture and community, with the goal of staying true to public interest at Northeastern. As a first step, students created a blogspace for students to post thoughts and initiate dialogue.

Finally: "New Election, New President, What's Next?" NLG students join with other student groups to plan a panel event challenging the social justice movement to think beyond the positive presidential outcome and asking tough questions raised by ballot decisions made across the country on election day.

- Liza Hirsch, 1st year law student -

## NLG 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 • Michael Avery • Samuel Berk • Howard Cooper • Andrew Cornell & Shelley Kroll • Melinda Drew & Jeff Feuer • Howard Friedman • Benjie Hiller • David Hoffman • Stephen Hrones • Martin Kantrovitz • David Kelston • Leslee Klein & Mark Stern • William Newman • Petrucelly, Nadler & Norris • Allan Rodgers • Martin Rosenthal • Sharryn Ross • Anne Sills & Howard Silverman • Ira Sills • Judy Somberg • Stern, Shapiro, Weissberg & Garin**

The Sustainer Program is one of the most important initiatives the Chapter has undertaken to secure its future existence. Please consider joining the Program and strengthen the 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 (2) free raffle tickets for a Holiday Party raffle;
- invitation to a Guild reception.

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

## NLG LETTER TO LAWYERS WEEKLY

*On October 13, 2008, Lawyers Weekly printed a letter the NLG Massachusetts Chapter sent to the publication in protest of its plans to create a calendar of "Beautiful Lawyers."*

October 1, 2008

To the Editor:

We write in response to the September 15 front-page plug for the 2009 Beautiful Lawyers Calendar, a project co-sponsored by *Lawyers Weekly*. But allow us to get a few things out of the way. First, we believe that the intangible chemistry that attracts people to one another is among life's wonderful mysteries. Second, we also believe that the young attorney pictured has the right to expose her cleavage to the public. Third, our comments are not motivated by sour grapes because we are, in fact, totally hot.

But we are bewildered by *Lawyers Weekly's* involvement. Yes, we're sure that each month's featured lawyer will be an interesting person. After all,

most beauty pageants have a talent competition. But what does this calendar possibly have to do with the legal profession? Perhaps it shows that we spend so much time on the job that the lines between our professional and social lives (or law office and meat market) have been erased? Pretty faces, maybe, but not a pretty picture.

If *Lawyers Weekly* has regressed to officially celebrating the physical appearance of our colleagues, can we at least keep in mind the egregious harms done to people when they are judged by their looks instead of their abilities? We can only hope that the event held for the calendar's release featured (as a speaker, not a model) an employment discrimination attorney. He or she could describe for the celebrants the emotional and economic devastation that result when employers refuse to hire, or harass or abuse, or pay less to people based on how they look.

*Barb "Miss Congeniality" Dougan  
David Milton, Swimsuit Runner-up*

(The writers are board members of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild.

# 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\*:

Jailhouse Lawyers. . . . .	Free
Law Students . . . . .	\$25
up to \$15,000. . . . .	\$40
over \$15,000 to \$20,000. . . . .	\$50
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.*

*Fill out and send to:*  
**National Lawyers Guild, Massachusetts Chapter**  
 14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108

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Alumna/Alumnus of \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

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**I am interested in working on the following projects:**  
 Lawyer Referral Service  
 Street Law Clinic  
 Mass Defense Committee  
 *Mass Dissent* (monthly publication)  
 National Immigration Project