

# COMMUNITY HEALTH LAW PROJECT



Newsletter 2021

# The Independent

## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

For up-to-date COVID-19 information, please visit

[WWW.CHLP.ORG](http://WWW.CHLP.ORG)

## ANN KLEIN ADVOCATE AWARDS RECEPTION



After two postponements due to Covid, CHLP hosted the 33<sup>rd</sup> *Ann Klein Advocate Awards* Reception on Wednesday, September 22 at The Wilshire Grand in West Orange. CHLP honored the following individuals and programs with an *Ann Klein Advocate Award*, which was named in memory of Ann Klein, a former Commissioner of the NJ Department of Human Services and recognizes those who have shown exemplary work as advocates for people living with disabilities and/or vulnerable populations.

**Megan MacMullin, Esq.**, Chief Executive Officer SCARC Guardianship Services; **Tom Abode**, President, North Brunswick Soccer Club; **Mark Duffy**, Chief Operating Officer (Retired), Collaborative Support

Programs of New Jersey; **Trish Colucci Barbosa, RN-BC**, Certified Geriatric Care Manager, Aging Life Care Professional, President and Principal Care Manager, Peace Aging Care Experts, LLC; **Joanne Green, L.S.W.**, Executive Director (Retired), Mental Health Association in Passaic County; and **Sound Start Babies Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children** headquartered in Mountain Lakes.

CHLP also recognized **Edward Lefty Grimes**, Board Member of Sativa Cross, with the *Mike D. Lione Accessibility Award*. This award was named in honor of Michael D. Lione, a long-time member of CHLP's Board of Trustees, and executive with New Jersey Bell and Verizon and strong advocate of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is given to an individual or organization that performed exemplary work as an advocate for accessibility on behalf of persons living with disabilities.



Awards for Honorees, "Lady With Flowers" (right) by artist Ruth Rivera & "Champion" (left) by Tom Wade.

Learn more at  
[WWW.CHLP.ORG](http://WWW.CHLP.ORG)

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**Protecting and promoting the rights of individuals with disabilities and chronic illnesses**

## A TRIBUTE



Mark Miller was a long-time senior staff attorney in the Collingswood office of the Community Health Law Project where he worked tirelessly, providing legal services to persons living with disabilities, especially those in the developmentally disabled community. He passed away quite suddenly over the Thanksgiving holiday

in 2019 at the age of 65, and is missed by many cousins, friends, and colleagues. Mark graduated from Moorestown Friends School, Franklin and Marshall College, and received his Juris Doctor degree from Tulane University School of Law. Prior to his 35-year career at the Law Project, Mark served as staff counsel on projects for the ACLU. Known as an extremely conscientious professional, Mark was totally dedicated to his work and held in high regard by his colleagues. The Law Project has asked Janet Greenlee, Esq., the former managing attorney of the Collingswood office, to put together a few words so we can honor this kind and gentle soul.

*I first met Mark in the mid-eighties when he was interviewed in the Camden CHLP office for the DDD Attorney position. He was very quiet, avoided eye contact and seemed uncomfortable. I could not foresee at the time the dedicated attorney, patient teacher and mentor, or the beloved friend he would become.*

*Mark had previously worked as an attorney for the Legal Services Migrant Farm Worker's Project and had traveled extensively throughout South Jersey. As a result, he spoke some Spanish, though his pronunciation was painfully Anglo! At CHLP he put those skills to good use. When visiting his clients throughout the southern counties Mark was understanding of his clients' limitations and took being stood-up from time to time in stride. He also understood their frequent inability to appreciate the seriousness of their legal situations. In the latter part of his career at CHLP he took over the selection and monitoring of student legal interns.*

*Over the years I would frequently meet other attorneys who had worked with him, and their comments were invariably "good man, good attorney."*

*Mark grew up in Pennsauken, NJ. His mom was a public school teacher and his father was a writer/editor of a labor-union newspaper. These two influences were reflected in his appreciation of the challenges faced by our disadvantaged clients and his patience and willingness to instruct others in learning new skills (half of what I know about computers I learned under Mark's patient tutelage!). Mark was always a dutiful son to his surviving mother and as she aged and became infirm, he added to caring for her and meeting her needs to his list of duties. She lived to age 96 no doubt due in large part to his devotion.*

*Mark attended Friends High School in Moorestown and attended the class re-unions, even though their numbers were small. He graduated from Franklin and Marshall College undergrad and then traveled to Louisiana to earn his JD from Tulane Law School. He returned to NJ with a fondness for beignets and Po'boys.*

*Mark was not just hardworking, he also had a droll sense of humor and delighted in telling the corniest of jokes. I learned over time we shared some of the same interests: trains, tennis, and old black-and-white movies. He had a noticeable "startle" reflex that was known to all staff who accidentally came up on him unawares. I have to admit to a perverse pleasure in surprising him-just to see him jump.*

*When I learned he was "into" horse racing I was delighted and hoped I had found a new track buddy. Over the years we visited Philadelphia Park (now Parx), Pimlico (Baltimore) and of course the lovely Garden State Track, where we attended the track's final day (when cleaning out Mark's office Brian Smith found the little jar of track soil I had from in front of the grandstand and had given Mark as a souvenir). Needless to say, our favorite CHLP picnics were always the few at Monmouth Park. I had also managed to cajole him to come down to the Atlantic City Racetrack for one of its only 6 days a year of live racing.*

## A TRIBUTE...CONTINUED

*The deterioration of this former grand lady saddened us both, but Mark's real attraction to horse racing was to challenge and refine the personal "system" he had developed for increasing his odds at the betting window. And I will always appreciate his teaching me how to read the Daily Racing Form!*

*Mark also enjoyed theater and frequently attended with John Agner, a former legal intern. John, in turn, would occasionally do a pro bono case for an indigent client not otherwise eligible for CHLP representation. After Mark's passing John voiced*

*his frustration that Covid was preventing us from publicly honoring Mark's lifetime work of advocating for the voiceless.*

*When not wearing his court suit, Mark wore the same "uniform" to the office most days: long sleeved oxford shirt (all seasons); tie; slacks; tweedy jacket; and brown Dockers. Outside he always had a lit cigarette in his hand. Now, when I pull into our adjacent parking lot, I find myself looking for him at the front or back doorway, enjoying a smoke...as I had so often found him. I continue to miss him. Still waters...*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is now over one-and-a-half years since the pandemic began. Thankfully, things are looking brighter as many adults and adolescents have been vaccinated, and workplaces have reopened.

The staff of the Community Health Law Project have continued to work throughout this time and have assisted many individuals and families living with disabilities and chronic health problems. Staff have worked remotely and have voluntarily returned to our offices periodically under strict safety protocols. They have also assisted clients with virtual hearings in special locations in our offices.

The Board of Trustees is pleased to say that plans were established to have all staff return to work on a rotating basis in July. In October, we returned to our offices fulltime, five days a week.

In spite of the many difficulties and obstacles facing our organization, we are pleased and honored to have been chosen to participate in two special efforts by the State of New Jersey to assist residents who are facing loss of housing and related issues due to the pandemic.

The Department of Community Affairs has contracted with the CHLP to provide representation to individuals with disabilities and chronic health problems facing eviction due to the pandemic in

three cities: East Orange, Trenton, and Atlantic City. In addition, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services has expanded our services to provide specific representation to their consumers statewide who are facing housing loss due to the pandemic.

We appreciate this enhanced opportunity to serve many more individuals and families living with very difficult obstacles that have been severely increased by the pandemic and its resulting loss of employment, loss of interpersonal support, reduced access to health care, and heightened stress on mental illness and addiction.

With counsel and representation, CHLP's clients in general, and in these special programs, will have a better chance of averting the tsunami of evictions that could result in homelessness.

Please stay safe and healthy,



*Harold B. Garwin*  
HAROLD B. GARWIN, ESQ.  
President/Executive Director



## **CHLP ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIPS**

CHLP has partnered with the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The purpose of this partnership is to increase access to legal services, with appropriate communication accessibility services, for deaf and hard of hearing individuals with lower incomes.

CHLP is a partner in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Right to Counsel Pilot Project. The project provides legal and social services assistance to low-income tenants at three pilot sites: Atlantic City, Trenton, and East Orange. CHLP will provide legal assistance to tenants with disabilities at all three sites.

Horizon and CHLP are collaborating in Horizon's Neighbors in Health Program. Neighbors in Health aims to address the Social Determinants of Health of high-risk Horizon members by pairing them with Community Health Workers who provide support and linkages to services. In this collaboration CHLP

will be providing legal services to low-income participants of the Neighbors in Health Program in Essex County.

CHLP will be the legal partner at the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey's DULCE site in Freehold Borough. DULCE, or Developmental Understanding and Legal Collaboration for Everyone, is a research backed, innovative approach to pediatric care developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. The Freehold site is one of 13 DULCE sites nationwide.

The New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction services has granted CHLP expansion funds to aid low-income New Jersey residents living with mental health conditions in housing related matters statewide. These additional funds will allow CHLP to aide more consumers to avert housing crises and potential homelessness.

## **IMAGES FROM THE ANN KLEIN RECEPTION**



*Kayley Mayer, Mark Duffy, Joanne Green, Trish Colucci Barbosa, Hal Garwin, Pete Clark, Tom Johnson, Megan MacMullin, Edward Lefty Grimes*



*Awards were given in the ballroom.*



*Guests enjoyed dinner outside under the stars.*



*CHLP Board of Trustees : Ryan Carlson, Antonia Pancel-Cipric, Paula Franzese, Thomas Jardim, Lawrence Meyerson , Louis Franzese & Ann Burke with (front) Erika Kerber & Hal Garwin*

## Did You Know...

CHLP offers a wide range of workshops for consumers and professionals.  
Learn more at [CHLP.org](http://CHLP.org)

## OFFICE UPDATES

### CHLP Elizabeth Office:

In March 2020, the Elizabeth Office staff transitioned to working remotely. Our office has continued to reach out to local agencies to make our services available to the community. We utilize Google Voice so phone calls are answered live and we use zoom software for staff meetings and presentations. Our office also uses an electronic facsimile service. Our office has continued to represent clients in all court and administrative proceedings and has continued to conduct outdoor home visits to obtain signatures and to complete notarization.

### CHLP Bloomfield Office:

Presently the Bloomfield office staff are in the office, assisting our clients in a variety of legal issues. We now have video hearings before Social Security Administration's administrative law judges. For some of these hearings, clients who lack smart phone or computer capability, have come to our office where we have a "technology room" which allows these clients to appear at hearings by video. In addition, we have had numerous hearings through "Zoom" or by telephone, on issues including termination of Section 8 benefits, child support and evictions.

### CHLP Trenton Office:

After the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency shut down in-person landlord/tenant court in mid-March 2020, the Mercer and Burlington courts were the first in the State to conduct online settlement conferences for filed eviction complaints. Attorneys from the CHLP Trenton office worked closely with the Judiciary at the inception of the settlement conference program and advocated for a fair process for tenants. As a result of our advocacy, tenants are now informed of their rights and provided with referral information (including how to reach CHLP) prior to participating in these conferences. CHLP attorneys have successfully represented a number of clients in these conferences and continue to monitor the program to ensure tenants are treated fairly.

### CHLP Collingswood Office:

The Collingswood office has been running successfully during the pandemic. The staff work on a rotating in-person schedule in the office and the rest of the time, work remotely. We have revised our intake process so that service to our clients is not interrupted. The staff has demonstrated flexibility and determination so that our vulnerable clients continue to receive quality legal services.

### CHLP Eatontown Office:

We are happy to announce that our Eatontown office has relocated to Route 66 in Neptune! Our new address is 3301 Route 66, Building C, Suite 130, Neptune, NJ 07753. Our phone and fax numbers remain the same, and our general email is now [Neptune@chlp.org](mailto:Neptune@chlp.org). Both our Monmouth and Ocean County offices are closed to the public yet remain fully operational. The Monmouth office has been staffed daily since the pandemic began by one or more staff members per day going in on a volunteer basis. The Toms River satellite office has been manned two to three days per week. Despite the pandemic, we have had an active presence in both offices and in the communities we serve. We continue to meet with clients via phone and virtual appointments, as well as the occasional brief outside meeting when necessary to obtain signatures or documents. Clients also have the option to drop off documents in our mail slot at both offices.

## FIND CHLP ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Stay current with CHLP's latest news, events and information...

**Facebook**

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# SUPPORT CHLP

Consider Making a Donation Today!

Your contribution will go a long way toward helping us better serve those who seek our assistance.

As a nonprofit organization, CHLP provides services to people with disabilities of limited means. Many of the services CHLP offers are free of charge.

To learn more about how you  
can help make a difference,  
visit the *Support Our Work* page:

**[WWW.CHLP.ORG](http://WWW.CHLP.ORG)**

## COMMUNITY HEALTH LAW PROJECT

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