

# Law Services News

This issue is also available online at [www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org)



JUNE 2016

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Law Services Attorneys Team Up to Deal With Illegal Attempts to Collect Debts	2
Emergency Housing ADM Addresses Disabilities	3
Consumer Debt News	7
Surprise Bill for Health Care Services Law	7
DSS Eases Vehicle Resource Exemption	7
Time Limit on Foods Stamps for Able Bodied Adults	7
Victories for Tenants	8
Court Finds Mental Health Housing Protected by Due Process	8

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Congratulations - Law Services Staff Honored*
- *Thank you We Care Fund and NYS Bar Foundation*
- *Volunteer Attorneys of the Month*
- *Access to Justice Pro Bono Reception*
- *NSLS in the Community*
- *Staff Announcements*
- *Message from the Executive Director*
- *SAVE THE DATE—Law Services 50TH Anniversary*

## Access and Independence are EDRP Goals

Our Education and Disability Rights Project (EDRP) is committed to assisting persons with disabilities gain access to services, housing, and programs and to support independent living. In a recent case, a 37-year old male was initially referred to NSLS due to an eviction proceeding from the group home where he had lived for many years. Our Housing Unit successfully handled the eviction but it was clear that the client wanted and needed a new home. He wanted to have his own apartment. As a result of an accident in his teens, the client is a quadriplegic and requires 24-hour nursing care. The use of a wheelchair, his physical limitations, and parking for staff made the search more challenging.

He heard of an apartment complex being built in his community that would be near mass transit, have parking for staff, with an open floor plan to accommodate his wheelchair. The developer of the apartments was required to set aside some apartments for low income families. Our client worked closely with the EDRP advocate, **Marcia Vogel**, to maintain constant communication with the agency that ran the lottery. With persistence and luck, he was able to win a spot for the apartment in that lottery. But there was more work to be done.

The next challenge he encountered was budgeting for the apartment and securing

## Law Services Attorneys Work Together to Insure Client's Safety

Appellate work can be very time consuming and it is often difficult and cost prohibitive for our clients to retain an attorney to assist them. In a recent case, after we assisted a victim of domestic violence in winning an initial order of protection, she thought the matter was closed. But the spouse appealed the case and she was again faced with losing her hard fought battle for an order of protection. She came to us for assistance in the appeal.

NSLS attorney, **Frank Gulas**, of the Domestic Violence Project, was successful in winning a five-year "stay away" order of protection for a client. Though this was an unusually long duration for a protective order, Mr. Gulas worked



hard to advocate for it due to the serious nature of the abuse.

The adversary in the matter was represented by an attorney and appealed the Family Court order and the matter was then taken up by NSLS attorney, **Darlene Rosch** who has had significant appellate experience. The Appellate Division fortunately found for our client in upholding the five year order. The decision commented

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued on page 2)



<https://www.facebook.com/NassauSuffolkLawServices>



(Continued from page 1) **EDRP GOALS**

the staff that would be necessary to remain safely in the apartment. The EDRP advocate again worked closely with our client and The Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities to get Self Direction with Budget and Employer Authority. This planning helped provide the additional money for the rent and some start up money for furniture and household items. It also gave him the ability to hire staff of his choosing to assist him in cleaning, cooking and other necessary activities of daily life.

This journey took well over a year of constant communication and close coordination between service providers and there were recurring obstacles and challenges along the way. Finally the hard work and persistence paid off with our client securing his own apartment and moving toward greater control of his adult life. Now that he is settled, he is considering going back to college to finish his degree. This was a gratifying (if not exhausting) experience for his advocate and led to an impressively positive result.

by *Marcia Vogel*, Paralegal

*The Education and Disability Advocacy Project is supported with funding from the Office of Court Administration and provides legal assistance to individuals and family with disabilities, focusing on access to disability related services and programs, and on the educational rights of children.*



## Law Services' Legal Team Deals with Illegal Attempts to Collect Debts

Our Housing Unit works very hard to ensure that our clients attain the best possible settlement when faced with an eviction in Landlord/Tenant court. When a settlement states that the client owes nothing to the landlord, all parties are pleased (except, of course, the landlords).

Lately however, some landlords, through debt collectors, have been illegally trying to collect monies from tenants who, as per the settlement, owed nothing to the landlord and have since moved from the premises. One collector was trying to collect over \$10,000 on a previously settled debt! The letters threaten to make a report to the credit bureaus. If the letter goes ignored, then the client's credit is ruined by the reporting of a false debt.

Obviously frustrated with this illegal action and threat to the integrity of our settlements, the Housing Unit conferred with attorneys **Jonathan Schwartz** and **Sharon Campo** of the Consumer Debt Legal Assistance Project to see what could be done. It is well settled New York State law that a resolution on the merits of an issue precludes further litigation of the issue. Since these alleged debts were already settled and cannot be legally enforced, the continued attempt to collect on these debts with knowledge of the settlement, would be a violation of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("FDCPA"). The Consumer Debt Project sent letters to the collectors informing them of the relevant law, providing proof of the settlements, and disputing the alleged debt. The letters also requested verification of the debt under the FDCPA and reminded the collectors that Federal Law prohibits the reporting of false information on a consumer's credit report. Within days of sending out these letters, the collection agencies canceled the accounts and sent requests to the credit bureaus to have any detrimental reports removed.

Disputing false claims is important. For more information on debtor's rights go to the NYS Attorney General's website: [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov)

by *Sharon Campo*, Esq. Consumer Debt Legal Assistance Project  
**Sharon Campo will be presenting at an upcoming training!**  
 See p. 11

## EMERGENCY HOUSING DIRECTIVE ADDRESSES DISABILITIES

In November, 2015 the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance issued an administrative directive (15 ADM-06-T), advising local social services districts of changes and clarifications of its temporary housing assistance (THA) policy. This is a must-read for all advocates who are assisting individuals and families with obtaining and retaining emergency housing. A copy of the directive can be located at <http://otda.ny.gov/policy/directives/2015/ADM/15-ADM-06-T.pdf>.

According to the ADM, **mental and physical health assessments** must be conducted whenever an individual or family applies for THA and the results must be recorded in the applicant's case record. Particular attention must be given to addressing impairments that impede the individual or family's ability to obtain or retain housing. Moreover, THA may not be denied or discontinued when noncompliance with THA requirements is due to a **physical or mental impairment**. When such an impairment appears to exist and is interfering with the ability to comply with THA requirements, the district must refer the person for an evaluation by an appropriate professional.

The ADM also clarifies the use of an Independent Living Plan (ILP) which is an individualized and tailored plan developed by DSS with a goal to promote self-sufficiency. While describing the eligibility requirements with which a homeless individual or family must comply in order to receive THA, the ADM also provides guidance on the such issues as the reapplication procedure for those who have been denied THA within 30 days of the current application; how to determine if available housing is available to meet the immediate need and eliminate the need for THA; the effect of various sanctions on the eligibility for THA; and the circumstances under which individuals or families are required to pay a portion of their income or resources for the cost of temporary housing and the ramifications if they fail to make payment.

Finally, the ADM reminds local districts that it must provide adequate and timely notice to recipients of THA when it intends to discontinue assistance. This means that if a fair hearing is requested prior to the effective date of the notice, THA will continue pending the results of the hearing. However, if THA is provided to an individual or family prior to the application for temporary assistance being accepted (as a pre-determination grant), they are considered to be an applicant and are only entitled to adequate notice if the district determines to deny the application and discontinue THA. This means that if a fair hearing is requested to challenge that decision, THA will not continue unchanged pending the results of the hearing. Instead, the individual or family will have to reapply for temporary assistance and THA. *by Douglas Ruff, Sr. Staff Attorney, Welfare Unit*



Maria Dosso on Health Care

On May 4, 2016, Law Services held a special seminar entitled *Using the Law to Help Constituents* for our Nassau elected officials at the Nassau Legislature Building in Mineola. Law Services attorneys, **Maria Dosso**, **Michael Wigutow** and **Daniel Okrent** gave presentations to county, state and federal elected officials on practical legal topics that were relevant to constituent affairs.



Daniel Okrent spoke on Seniors Issues



Michael Wigutow addressed Housing Issues

On May 10, 2016 **Volunteers for Vets** was held at the Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA) to provide a free legal service to veterans of Suffolk County. The Pro Bono Project joined SCBA volunteer attorneys to meet with veterans and their families about their legal issues. Thank you to the pro bono attorneys, veterans legal services groups and veterans agencies who eagerly stepped up to lend a hand.



# ★ CONGRATULATIONS ★

Congratulations to **Jeffrey Seigel**, Executive Director, who was recently recognized by Hofstra Law School's Public Justice Foundation (PJF) as the 2016 PJF Outstanding Alumnus for his extraordinary commitment and dedication to public service. The Foundation sponsored its 27<sup>th</sup> annual Auction on March 9, 2016 to raise funds enabling student fellowships in public service. In accepting the award, Jeff describe his own experience as a Hofstra Law student who was sponsored by the law school in 1978 to participate in an internship at Nassau Suffolk Law Services during its early beginnings. He pointed out that it was this fateful experience that changed his life and he has since devoted himself almost exclusively to public interest law. His speech was well received by a roomful of students, alumni, and Law Services staff and reporters. Congrats again!



Congratulations to **Carrie Vasiluth**, NSLS Staff Attorney, for being honored by the Town of Babylon as they celebrated Women's History Month with the Maxine S. Postal Humanitarian Award. Before her career at Law Services, Carries' service to the community included initiatives as a college undergraduate, where she advocated for the establishment of a sex crimes unit within the town of New Paltz Police Department. There she counseled victims of sexual assault and developed related community education programs. She later managed a 24-hour intervention center for persons in crisis and counseled crime victims and their families, preparing victim impact statements for the courts. After law school, Carrie continued her service to the community and worked for low income families at Nassau County Legal Aid. Since 1989 she began her tenure at Nassau Suffolk Law Services where she has practiced in various Units. Congratulations to Carrie for receiving this prestigious award and for her lifetime commitment to helping people.



## Thank You!

Thanks to the **We Care Fund** of the Nassau County Bar Association for continuing its support to our Volunteer Lawyers Attorney of the Day Project. Thanks to funding such as this, our staff and pro bono attorneys collaborate to provide free legal assistance to low income tenants in eviction matters.

The **New York Bar Foundation** recently awarded NSLS a grant to support our PLAN Project in 2016. PLAN provides critical legal assistance to persons affected by cancer. Thank you to the Foundation for your valued support!

## WE HONOR OUR PRO BONO ATTORNEYS OF THE MONTH



### Francine H. Moss

Francine Moss is receiving this honor for the third time. She began representing the Suffolk Pro Bono Project's matrimonial clients in 1995 and has regularly accepted referrals since then. Her firm

Judd & Moss in Ronkonkoma, focuses on matrimonial and family law cases. Ms. Moss sees pro bono work as an imperative. She states, "When there are people who have a real need and yet no way to protect their rights, we as attorneys should be there for them." Maria Dosso, Nassau Suffolk Law Services Director of Communications and Volunteer Services, is grateful for the many hours of work Ms. Moss has devoted to her Pro Bono Project clients. "Francine has been a consistent contributor through the years and we are fortunate to have such an experienced attorney on the panel."

In her many years with the Project, Ms. Moss has never shied away from challenging cases. This is exemplified in her most recent completed case in which she represented a domestic violence victim who was a non-English speaking Asian immigrant. The client had been exploited by her affluent husband and forced into servitude. When the case began, the client had recently fled from her abusive spouse, was homeless, and temporarily living in a domestic violence shelter with no supports in this country. Ms. Moss communicated with the client by utilizing an interpreter and translation services provided by the Project. She also worked closely with an immigration specialist and a domestic violence agency. In fairly short order, Ms. Moss obtained a substantial lump-sum maintenance concession from the spouse. With her financial recovery, the client was able to move out of the shelter, find employment and begin her life on Long Island. Thank you for your service!

**Stephen R. Hellman** has volunteered with the Suffolk Pro Bono Project for over 15 years and has accepted several complex cases, agreeing to represent the clients in ancillary Family Court or District Court proceedings. "His comprehensive approach to assisting his clients



*(Continued on page 6)*



### Veronica Renta Irwin

Veronica Renta Irwin, a partner at the Manhasset firm of Irwin & Streiner, LLC, has been an enthusiastic and dedicated pro bono attorney since she first volunteered with the Volunteer Lawyers Project in 2013. Ms. Irwin's zealous advocacy assisting indigent clients who have come to the VLP, has been nothing short of remarkable. Over the past two and a half years, she has represented three matrimonial clients, volunteering over 300 hours of legal assistance in 2015 alone. In addition to representing needy matrimonial clients, she feels it is important to dedicate a substantial portion of her time training associates in her firm to do the same.

She states, "I litigate my pro bono matters with the same enthusiasm, utilizing the same creative problem solving skills as I do with my paying clients. Everyone should have access to representation, especially the client in the weaker financial position. Pro Bono work gives me the opportunity to help in a way that can be even more meaningful than with a paying client. It can be liberating to have an additional conversation with a client without the thought of whether the client must be billed for it. This enables me to be a better lawyer and a better person."

Ms. Irwin recalls a particularly meaningful matrimonial case she recently handled for the VLP. The client was a defendant who had suffered traumatic brain damage as a result of a prior accident. The client needed more time to digest and understand the proceedings than most attorneys were able to give her. Ms. Irwin was thankful that the matter was pro bono, since she did not feel comfortable billing the client for all of the extra hours needed. She was inspired by the client's resiliency and perseverance despite her disability, and considers herself lucky to have been able to represent her.

According to Susan Biller, Pro Bono Coordinator of the VLP, "Ms. Irwin is one of those rare volunteers who can be counted on to take the most difficult and contentious matters. She brings her enthusiasm and passion for the practice of law to every case she handles. We are incredibly fortunate to have her assist our most needy clients."

Ms. Renta Irwin was also a special honoree at the Access to Justice Pro Bono Recognition Reception at the NCBA on April 6, 2016 in the Small Firm/Solo category. (see p. 6)

(Continued from page 5)

and his willingness to accept multiple matrimonial matters is very appreciated, especially when there is such a great demand for pro bono attorneys in divorces," notes Maria Dosso. He currently has seven active Pro Bono Project matrimonial cases. When asked why he accepts so many Project referrals, Mr. Hellman responded, "I appreciate how difficult it must be for a person to be dealing with a divorce and not able to afford a lawyer. I feel it's important for attorneys to give back to the community. This is a way I can do that." He added, "And, I like the work. I enjoy being in court, and the Pro Bono Project's cases are always interesting."

The practice of law is Mr. Hellman's second career. After earning his BA at Stony Brook University in 1983, Mr. Hellman worked in law enforcement for ten years as part of SBU's University Police. He joined the Suffolk County 18b and law guardian panels soon after becoming admitted in 1998. We are grateful for his generous contribution in assisting our low income clients.

*The Suffolk Pro Bono Project is a joint effort of Nassau Suffolk Law Services, the Suffolk County Bar Association and the Suffolk Pro Bono Foundation, coordinated by Ellen Krakow, Esq. The Volunteer Lawyers Project is a cooperative pro bono program working with the Nassau County Bar Association, coordinated by Susan Biller, Esq. Pro Bono counsel is most commonly provided in the areas of divorce, bankruptcy, foreclosure, and eviction defense, although other cases are considered. Please call our offices for more information.*



**Congratulations to Cheryl Fratello, Esq.,** NSLS Advisory Council member, on her recent installation as President of the Columbian Lawyers Association of Nassau County. Many of Law Services Advisory Council members were there to help Cheryl celebrate her special night!



Pictured left to right, **Laura Shockley, Esq., Leslie Tayne, Esq., Sheila Johnson,** NSLS Director of Development & Government Affairs, **John Dalli, Esq.** and the guest of honor, **Cheryl Fratello, Esq.**

## Access to Justice Pro Bono Recognition Reception

On April 6, 2016 Law Services joined the Nassau County Bar Association and the SAFE Center at the **Access to Justice Pro Bono Recognition Reception**, recognizing attorneys and firms who have performed distinguished voluntary service

**Rudi DeWinter** was a special honoree in the Small Firm/Solo category for his outstanding pro bono service along with **Veronica Renta Irwin** (see p. 5)



**Petrushka Khiamal**, newly hired staff attorney in the Civil Unit, Islandia, was also recognized for her pro bono service during her years as a law student in the Volunteer Lawyers Project. Congratulations to all the honorees on your well deserved recognition!



**Robert S. Kroll** (pictured center), was recently awarded the **NYSBA President's Pro Bono Service Award for the 10th Judicial District.**

As a loyal volunteer in the VLP's Landlord Tenant Attorney of the Day initiative, he has provided legal support, including full legal representation to over 20 clients in 2015. Mr. Kroll's sense of volunteer duty is expressed in his recent statement, "When all is said and done you look around to see what you have. Giving back is important and meaningful. I firmly believe that being as fortunate as I am, some give back is morally required." The award ceremony featured guest speaker, Janet DiFiore Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, and was held in Albany on May 2, 2016. **Roberta Scoll**, VLP Staff Attorney attended with the honoree.

## Bits and Pieces...

### ...Consumer Debt News:

A groundbreaking \$59 million settlement has been reached in the class action lawsuit, Sykes v Mel S Harris Associates, which included more than 353,000 New Yorkers and 195,000 debt collection default judgments where an alleged debt was owned by LR Credit. The lawsuit charged a network of debt collectors with civil racketeering (RICO), deceptive practices—including “robo-signing” and “sewer service” (filing false affidavits with the court)—and violations of the federal debt collection law. In addition to the money settlement, Defendants Mel Harris and Associates agreed to shut down its firm, LR Credit agreed to stop collecting and to forgive any outstanding alleged debt. Also, Samserv agreed to stop serving process in consumer debt-collection cases and to start paying process servers the same fee for unsuccessful attempts at service as for successful service. The court has not yet approved the settlement, but if approved, persons who either paid monies to LR Credit or whose LR Credit debt was sold, may receive a minimum of \$100. Claim forms were sent out to members of the class action and must be returned in order to receive a check. For more information go to [www.sykesclassaction.com](http://www.sykesclassaction.com) or call 877-868-0034.

### ...Surprise Bills for Health Care Services Law:

Financial Services Law Article 6 and NY Insurance Law 3241c went into effect on 3/31/15. The laws state that a patient is not responsible for bills of non-participating providers while services were performed at a participating hospital or ambulatory surgical center in your HMO or insurer’s network. Patients are also not responsible where referrals are made by a participating doctor to a non participating doctor. The new law also protects all patients from emergency services bills. There is an exception for uninsured and self insured patients who must file a dispute through the independent dispute resolution (IDR) process. For more information go to <http://www.wnylc.com/health/entry/213/>

### DSS Eases Vehicle Resource Exemption

A new General Information Systems memo (GIS) includes a policy which becomes effective May 16, 2016 to allow up to \$10,000 in fair market value FMV for the first vehicle to be exempted from the resource limit when determining Temporary Assistance eligibility. Whether or not the vehicle is used to seek or retain employment, or to travel to and from work activities is no longer a consideration.

In addition, the auto exemption will increase again at the start of the next two State fiscal years. Beginning April 1, 2017, the exemption amount from the TA resource eligibility test for the first automobile will rise to \$11,000 FMV. As of April 1, 2018, and thereafter, the exemption amount from the TA resource eligibility test for the first automobile will rise to \$12,000 FMV.



### TIME LIMIT ON FOOD STAMPS (SNAP) FOR SINGLE ABLE BODIED ADULTS HAS BEGUN

There are significant changes in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp program which began in January 2016. SNAP benefits are now limited to three full months in any three year period for many Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD). An ABAWD is defined as someone between 18 and 50, with no dependent children under the age of 18, unemployed or underemployed (less than 20 hours per week) and not disabled. Individuals who are participating in a work experience program are exempt from this time limit, as are those who are determined to be mentally or physically unable to work. More information is available at: <http://hungersolutionsny.org/abawd>.

Clients can also call our offices for assistance.



## Victories for Tenants!

### VLP Attorney Kalenscher Scores a Win in Landlord Tenant Court

**Evelyn Kalenscher**, pro bono attorney in our Volunteer Lawyer's Project, was recently successful in getting a holdover proceeding dismissed. In this case, the property was owned by a trust. Our client lived with the sole beneficiary of the trust for many years, having two children together and living as a family, but never married. She worked to maintain the household without any support from the children's father. He was incarcerated for one year during which she continued to support the family and even paid the property taxes for the premises. After he was released, she became very ill and was unable to work. At that point, the father of her children informed her that the relationship was over. Things went from bad to worse between them and our client obtained an order of protection against him.

The purported trustees of the trusts, the father's relatives, soon brought a summary proceeding against her and the children in an attempt to evict them.

Ms. Kalenscher picked up this pro bono case and challenged the eviction on several grounds. The court agreed that because our client was a family member, the matter was not subject to an eviction by a summary proceeding. The petitioners also failed to provide sufficient documentation to prove that they were the trustees of the trusts that owned the property in question. The Court held that due to the familial relationship, the confusion as to the ownership of the premises, and the absence of a necessary party, the children's father, "a summary proceeding is not the appropriate forum for this matter to be heard."

Congratulations, Evelyn, on this important win!

*The Attorney of the Day Project is overseen by Roberta Scoll, Staff Attorney.*

### Court Finds Mental Health Housing Protected by Due Process

**Alex Freundlich**, Staff Attorney in the Hempstead Mental Health Law Project, received a favorable decision from the First District Court in Nassau County, directing a mental health housing provider to restore his client to possession of his apartment or, if no longer available, to a comparable suitable apartment, after he was illegally evicted from the housing.

The Court rejected the housing provider's argument that because the living arrangements were just one of many mental health services provided to the petitioner, there was no landlord/tenant relationship. Instead, the Court found that the evidence was clear that it was the intention of the parties to provide the petitioner with safe, habitable housing in good repair. As a result, a landlord/tenant relationship existed and the client was afforded the protections of the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law which require a legal eviction proceeding.

Congratulations, Alex!



*(Continued from page 1)*

### ***Attorneys Work Together***

that the factual issues and credibility of witnesses in a family offense are best resolved in Family Court, thereby deferring to the lower court's decision.

Without legal representation in the underlying abuse case and subsequently in the appeal to support the important initial victory, this domestic violence victim would not have had the means to enforce her rights. We are proud of our attorneys' collaborative efforts to keep this woman and her family safe. Congratulations Frank and Darlene!



## LAW SERVICES IN OUR COMMUNITY



Law Services continues its strong ties within the community in an effort to collaborate with various agencies and ensure that low income Long Islanders receive the services they so desperately need. If you happen to see any of our Law Services' staff at a community event, please stop by to introduce yourself and say hello. We'd love to meet you, and as always we thank you for your support!

On February 9, 2016, **Melissa Greenberger**, Esq., Pro Bono Innovator in the Self Help Child Support Project, attended Touro Law Center's Public Interest Job Fair. She spoke with students about pro bono opportunities and opportunities and employment prospects in the non-profit legal sector.

On January 26, 2016, **Marcia Vogel**, Disability Advocate attended Bellmore-Merrick School District's Transition Fair. She answered many general questions from parents of disabled children and handed out Law Services brochures as well as Education Disability Rights Project (EDRP) brochures. There were many other agencies who work with individuals with disabilities in attendance. See p. 2 for more info on EDRP

On May 11, 2016 Marcia also attended the Moving Forward in Children's Mental Health Symposium held at the Melville Marriot where she distributed informational brochures and discussed the services provided through our Education and Disability Right's Project.

On February 9, 2016, **Carolyn McQuade**, Staff Attorney in the Adult Home Project, gave a training for the residents at the Long Beach Assisted Living Adult Home. She reviewed their rights regarding adult home conditions, benefits, trusts, personal needs allowances and evictions.

On April 14, 2016 Carolyn also gave a Suffolk County Ombuds training on benefits, evictions, personal needs allowances, Medicaid, and other adult home issues.

On March 30, 2016, **Patricia Caruso**, Staff Attorney in Foreclosure Prevention Project participated in a workshop on Foreclosure Prevention at Hofstra's Student Center. The event was sponsored by Senator Gillibrand. Patricia provided counsel and advice to many Long Island residents who are currently facing foreclosure.



On February 28, 2016, **Roberta Scoll**, Staff Attorney in the Nassau Volunteer Lawyers Project participated in the annual Climb to the Top of Rockefeller Center raising \$5,600 for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Roberta climbed a total of 66 flights in under 21 minutes— Way to go Roberta!

**Cathy Lucidi**, Paralegal in the Legal Support Center for Advocates recently attended Sachem's School District's Transitions Fair on March 14, 2016. Cathy staffed a table distributing Law Services brochures as well as brochures for our specialized units.

On March 31, 2016 **Victor Ambrose**, Staff Attorney in the Civil Unit, spoke to law students at Touro Law Center regarding housing discrimination law.

On April 9, 2016, **Blair Hill**, of the Veterans Rights Project, attended the Veterans Legal Assistance Clinic at Hofstra University. Blair handed out brochures and also conducted client intakes with those veterans in need of legal assistance.

In April, 2016, **Eric Richardson**, Staff Attorney of the PLAN Project, attended the Cancer and Wellness Seminar held at Roslyn Sid Jacobson Jewish Community Center. Eric gave an overview of the services we offer through our PLAN Unit and also distributed information regarding Social Security Disability benefits.

Eric also attended the Women's Health Fair sponsored by Legislator William Spencer held on May 12, 2016 at the Harborfields Public Library. Eric staffed an information table and handed out PLAN brochures.

Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee, Inc.  
 1 Helen Keller Way, 5th Fl. Hempstead,  
 N.Y. 11550  
 (516) 292-8100  
 1757 Veterans Memorial Hwy., Suite 50,  
 Islandia, N.Y. 11749  
 (631) 232-2400  
 313 W. Main St., Riverhead, N.Y. 11901  
 (631) 369-1112



## Staff Announcements

***Congratulations to the following staff members celebrating their milestone employment anniversaries:***

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Years of Dedicated Services</b>
★ Hannah Abrams, Staff Attorney	10
★ Jim Denson, Paralegal	25
★ Patricia Dimis, Paralegal	10
★ Margaret Dye, Clerk/Typist	15
★ Donna Famiglietti, Paralegal	10
★ John Ferro, Staff Attorney	10
★ Nora Gonzalez, Paralegal	25
★ Nancy Liou, Assistant Controller	20
★ Caroline McQuade, Staff Attorney	15
★ Robin Sparks, Staff Attorney	30
★ Bill Stuber, Staff Attorney	10
★ Larry Tuthill, Staff Attorney	25

***“Doing What’s Legally Possible to Create a Just World”***

**Make sure to give us your email address by going to [www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org) and look for the “Sign up for our newsletter field”. Tell your friends and colleagues!**



**We’re on the Web**  
[www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org)



Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/NassauSuffolkLawServices>

★ **Welcome to our new staff:**

- Amanda Davis, Law Graduate , ICAN Project
- Michelle Fischetti, Staff Attorney, Civil Unit—Suffolk
- Justin Wax Jacobs, Law Graduate, Welfare Unit—Nassau
- Petrushka Khiamal, Staff Attorney, Civil Unit—Suffolk
- Eric Richardson, Staff Attorney, PLAN Project —Suffolk
- Joanna Smykowski , Law Graduate, Disability Advocacy Project—Nassau
- Daniel Strafer, Staff Attorney, David Project –Hempstead

★ **Congratulations to Rez Islam**, on his recent promotion to Senior Staff Attorney of our Disability Advocacy Project

★ **Wishing them all the best, we say goodbye to our colleagues:**

**Irene Brothers, Sr Staff DAP** After many years of dedicated service, Irene retired to enjoy some time off! We miss her for her compassion and devotion to her DAP clients, her colleagues, and her work. We wish her all the best in this new chapter of her life.

**Melissa Zeidler, Staff Attorney, PLAN**  
**Alex Freundlich, Staff Attorney, Mental Health Law Project**



*Irene Brothers with Jeffrey Seigel, E.D.*

★ **Thank you to our Pro Bono Scholars who worked on the Law Services “team” for several months. Good luck in you future endeavors!**

- Thomas Manzi
- Jeremy Miller
- Beau Taylor
- Lauren Whittlin



## LAW SERVICES SUMMER 2016 TRAINING SCHEDULE



**Trainings will be held at our Islandia office: 1757 Veterans Hwy, Suite 50, Islandia. To pre-register, please call the Training Line at 631 232-2400 x 3357, fax 631 232-2489 or email Cathy Lucidi at [clucidi@wnylc.com](mailto:clucidi@wnylc.com). Fee is \$35 per training. Please make check payable to Nassau Suffolk Law Services and mail your payment in advance to confirm pre-registration.**

**CONSUMER DEBT BASICS:** Sharon Campo (Consumer Debt Legal Assistance Project) and Maria Dosso (Legal Support Center for Advocates) will provide an overview of consumer debt highlights which will include debtor's rights and remedies within the context of hospital/medical bills, student loans, collection harassment and collection practices, income that is exempt from collection, garnishments and liens, bankruptcy, frozen accounts and much more. **Tuesday June 21, 2016 9:30-12:30** Islandia office.

**DISABILITY PROGRAMS AND BENEFITS** Maria Dosso will review the various benefit programs available to persons with disabilities including SSI, SSD, Emergency Assistance to Adults, SSI Guarantee, Medicaid (Buy In, Spenddown, etc) Medicare, Food Stamps. The seminar will describe eligibility criteria for the programs and how the benefit interrelate. Finally we will review advocacy tips to insure clients can access these benefits through the Americans with Disabilities Act, Supplemental Needs Trusts, representative payees, and SSA work incentive programs. **Thursday July 21, 2016 9:30-12:30** Islandia office

**ICAN PROJECT—Free Trainings—**Law Services ICAN (Independent Consumer Advocacy Network) project staff assists with using managed care plans to cover services such as home attendant or nursing home care and will provide information about health insurance options, help with FIDA options, and advocacy in managed care plan disputes. **Free presentations** are available at your site in Nassau and Suffolk to educate consumer groups about Long Term Care and FIDA. Please call 631 822-3290 to schedule this free presentation.

### Training Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Training(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if payment will be sent at a later date or on the date of the Training

*Please return with applicable fee to: Nassau/Suffolk Law Services, 1757 Veterans Highway, Suite 50, Islandia, N.Y. 11749  
Attn: Cathy Lucidi. This form may also be faxed to Cathy at (631) 232-2489*





*Message From the Executive Director*

We are very happy to announce that NSLS is celebrating its 50 year anniversary! The agency has been providing free civil legal assistance to Long Islanders over several decades and has

grown to be the primary legal services agency on Long Island. We receive accolades in recognition of our reputable services from private and public entities and most importantly receive many testimonials from our clients to whom we dedicate our hard work.

Our formal celebration will take place on **October 26, 2016** at the dramatically renovated **Larkfield** in East Northport. Please save the date and join in the festivities! Details will follow.

