A YEAR IN REVIEW
Legal Aid Celebrates Award Winners!

Randall L. Hughes
Falcon’s 2011 Community Quarterback

Women’s Cancer Project (Haley Schwartz, director, is pictured with a client) Foundation for Improvement of Justice Award

(Pictured with The Hon. Keli Wolk)
Sarah C. Cipperly Cobb Bar Association
Ross Adams Younger Lawyer Award

Lindsay Verity Georgia Association of Women Lawyers Visionary Award

Jessica Feifeld (2011 Equal Justice Works Fellow) Emory University’s 2011 Humanitarian of the Year Award

Jeffrey J. Nix
(Volunteer, Cancer Legal Project)
Atlanta Bar Association
Celebrating Service Pro Bono Award Recipient

Highlights from a Remarkable Year
This most recent newsletter chronicles an amazing year.

Of course, the highlight has to be the premiere of our historical documentary One Law for All: The Story of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society which was first shown to a sold out house at the Rialto Theater on October 26 and then broadcast on WPBA 60 the next evening. I can’t count the number of staff, board members, volunteers and donors who told me how proud the film made them to be associated with Atlanta Legal Aid.

The newsletter also shows other recognition we got this past year. Our staff and program got numerous awards, our Cobb office celebrated its 40th anniversary and our Run for Justice had close to 1000 participants.

Finally, the newsletter shows the support we get in the metropolitan Atlanta community, in the form of our many volunteers and our amazing financial support.

The newsletter tells a great story; I hope you enjoy it.

Steve Gutlieb
Executive Director

Legal Aid of Cobb County Celebrates 40 Years!
The Legal Aid office in Cobb opened in 1971 in Marietta with one staff attorney. Today, six full-time attorneys, four support staff and over 200 volunteers serve the legal needs of over 4,500 low-income people in Cobb County each year. On November 19th, the Cobb legal community turned out in force to celebrate this occasion with the staff. Dawn Levine presented a check to Cobb Justice Foundation’s Sarah Cipperly for $1,000 from the Solo and Small Firm Section of the Cobb Bar Association in honor of the event.
One Law for All: The Story of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society

Preview Party Highlights

Rep. Kathy and Lawrence Ashe hosted a preview party for endowment donors on October 6th in their home. Filmmakers John and David Duke offered guests a behind the scenes look at making One Law for All: The Story of Atlanta Legal Aid Society and a special preview of the full-length film.

The Premiere

Atlanta Legal Aid Society celebrated the premiere of the documentary One Law for All: The Story of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society with a sold-out screening on October 26th at the Rialto Theater. Over 800 tickets were sold and the event raised around $80,000 for Legal Aid. The film then aired on WPBA on October 27th.

Legal Aid “Celebrates Service” at the Atlanta Bar Association’s Annual Lunch

Michael Rafter, partner at Kilpatrick Townsend and first vice president of Legal Aid’s board, presented awards to deserving volunteers.

Randall L. Hughes Lifetime Commitment to Legal Services Award: Robert N. Dokson

Robbie Dokson was the executive director of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society from 1975 until 1980. While it is not on his resume, he likes to say that he actually served in every position at Legal Aid, except as a receptionist. Although he is not technically correct (he never would have made it as a secretary), in fact Robbie did rise to the ranks at Atlanta Legal Aid from a staff attorney, just out of the University of Chicago law school, to executive director. Robbie has often said that being director at Atlanta Legal Aid was the best job of his life, and he has always remained loyal to the program. Robbie still serves on the board, as a volunteer fundraiser, and as a mentor to younger Legal Aid lawyers. Though he has been gone from the official payroll for 30 years, Robbie Dokson has remained as committed to Legal Aid as a volunteer as he was as an attorney.

Innovations in Pro Bono Service Award:
Cheryl Naja, Alston & Bird
Mary Benton, Alston & Bird
Dena Hong, United Parcel Service
The Hotline Gang (Michelle Ashley not available for the photo), Dalia Selcis and Allison Madonia, Alston & Bird

Nominate by Dina Franch, Georgia Senior Legal Hotline & Haley Schwartz, Cancer Legal Initiative

In a project spearheaded by Mary Bemmon and Dena Hong, attorneys and paralegals from Alston & Bird and the corporate legal department of United Parcel Service (UPS) have recently created an innovative collaboration with the Cancer Legal Initiative and the Senior Citizens Law Project (SCLP) to assist relatives and caregivers in obtaining guardianship and conservatorship over medically feeble incompetent adults as well as assisting adults obtain guardianship over minor children due to the incapacitation or death of a parent due to life-threatening illness. When accepting these adult guardianship and conservatorship cases, Alston & UPS absorb non-waivable fees in amount of $500 per case to pay for assessments on the proposed ward. It is an amazing commitment that gives Legal Aid access to staff and financial resources which the program would not otherwise have. Mary and Dena are the driving force behind this amazing commitment to Legal Aid clients.

Alston & Bird is leading the pack in offering the joy of pro bono service for non-attorney staff — while expanding Legal Aid’s capacity to serve clients. The Georgia Senior Legal Hotline receives an average of 50 calls per day, but has no paid administrative support. When seniors call the Hotline, they must leave a voicemail message; the voicemail message must be retrieved and entered into the Hotline’s on-line case management system — a 3-4 hour a day administrative task that the Hotline’s attorneys used to handle themselves. The firm’s amazing Cheryl Naja developed this program for the Hotline in 2008.

Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year: Dean Russell, Kilpatrick Townsend

Kilpatrick Townsend’s Dean Russell has been a volunteer with the Grandparent/Relative Caregiver Project for several years and just accepted his ninth adoption case. Dean consistently comes forward seeking a new case when one of his has wrapped up and is always available when we need an attorney to handle a case. Kilpatrick Townsend has several attorneys who have each represented multiple clients for the Grandparent/Relative Caregiver Project, and we are lucky to have Dean leading the pack. A busy partner in his firm’s IP practice, Dean also served as board president for Atlanta Legal Aid Society in 2004. “I am a patent attorney. Although patents are vitally important to our country’s economic interests, they are not critical to the fabric of our communities. Helping build families is, though, especially in a time where familial bonds are either broken or non-existent. This is why I participate wholeheartedly in the Grandparent Adoption Project of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society—to help build and strengthen our families and our communities.” — Dean Russell
Atlanta Legal Aid Society’s projects and programs would like to thank the following volunteers for dedicating themselves to pro bono service, allowing us to expand our capacity to serve more clients and provide them with high-quality legal services and representation.

CANCER LEGAL PROJECT

Shirley Jones
Jessica Harper
Sam Levine
Jennifer Lotta
Alicia Lynch
Dorothy Moore
Mary Ann Marchant
Wes McClure
Emily Nally
Jeff Rees
Tanya Saval
Mary Jo Peel
Timothy Phillips
Haley Procter
Elizabeth Quinn
Melissa Reading
Rick Richle
Dele M. Schwartz
Margaret Scott
Valerie Seaver

CLAYTON COUNTY PRO BONO 2011 PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Betty Williams-Kirkby
Susan Kibby
Robert Mask
Shonterra Martin
Pandora E. Palmer
Shalamar J. Parham
Chinah Rayney
Darrell B. Reynolds
William Rountree
Jewell Scott
Keith A. Stodd
Brian Stridland

COBB COUNTY PRO BONO

Lena C. King-Wade
George Keenan
Lula L. Lott
Phyllis A. Layman
Dawn E. Levine
James W. Lewis
Ned Lipsy
Kevin G. Linder
John B. Lyte
Alexandra Manning
Andrew B. Mangolis
T. Wayne Marshall
Roderick H. Martin
Sherron Medlock
Shane Mayes
Dwayne E. May
Michael E. McCuaig
Constance McManus

COBB COUNTY PRO BONO

William B. Turner
William West
Fred Zimmerman

CLAYTON COUNTY PRO BONO 2011 PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Annie Banning

EVICTION DEFENSE PROJECT

Anne Maynard
Brett Mosharova
Megan Pofoosly
Tony Tatum

GRANSPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Alex Manning
Patricia McLevick
Sherry Neal
Mindy Fidow
Nancy Proctor
Michael Rafter
Helen Rice

GWINNETT PRO BONO

Tahfe P. Pinoso
Mary A. Prebula
Robert Matthew Reeves
Thomas J. Reichard
Steven M. Reddy
Dorothy B. Rosenberger
Julie E. Ross
Brett A. Schroyer
Brian A. Shockley
Mack A. Smith
Robert J. Solomon

HEALTH LAW PARTNERSHIP

Kimani Jones
Deanne Jones
Ashley Kent

UNEMPLOYMENT PROJECT

Kelly D’Amico
Kimberly “Clyde” Gosnell
Jerry Mckenzie

ATLANTA LEGAL AID SOCIETY THANKS THE FOLLOWING COURT REPORTERS FOR PROVIDING PRO BONO SERVICES THROUGHOUT 2011

Akron Reporting
Exposure Court Reporting
Hopson & Worley
Huskey, Inc.*
Regency-Brentano, Inc.

Sandy Benson & Associates*

ASSOCIATES

Atlanta Legal Aid Society held the 2011 Run for Justice in Oakhurst on November 12th, 2011. The wonderful generosity of almost a thousand people raised $20,000 for the general operating fund of the Atlanta Legal Aid Society!