



40 Years of Impact!



Thank you for coming!

Thanks to you, MWLS celebrated its 40th Anniversary surrounded by friends, supporters, and clients.

Over 100 of you gathered in the grand ballroom—and on the outside deck—of the Hopkinton Country Club and you raised over \$30,000. In addition, many of you were honored as our “Forty Stars for Forty Years” because of your contributions to the success of MWLS. Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy III delivered a moving keynote address about the struggles your neighbors face each day.

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fought day and night to ensure our justice system works for the people who need it most,” said Kennedy. “As we advocate for increased funding for civil legal aid in Washington, it is an honor to stand with the staff members, volunteers, and supporters who give MWLS the strength needed to succeed in its mission.”

The Nancy King Award was given to Paul T. Dacier, Esq., the Community Partner Award was given to Bob Brack, of the Brack Family Fund and the Joan H. Brack Foundation, and the Pro Bono Excellence Award was given to the Boston law firm Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP. Their contributions alone have helped hundreds of clients obtain legal, social and economic justice.



Above: MWLS ED Elizabeth Soulé addresses the attendees. Below: James D. Hanrahan, Robert



Above: Paul T. Dacier, MWLS Client Philip Connors, and Rep. David Linsky

Left: Forty Stars for Forty Years Honorees



Meet your neighbor, Rick

Let us introduce you to one of your neighbors, Rick. You may not know Rick, but you have a lot in common. Like you, Rick takes pride in his ability to take care of himself and his family without relying on others. Like you, Rick is concerned about how a sudden illness could turn his life upside-down.



Rick holds his son, with his wife, Fiona, holding his daughter.

When Rick and Fiona immigrated to the U.S. and started a family, they thought they had a bright future and their whole lives ahead of them. Rick was a devoted father to their two young children and a loving husband to Fiona. He was also the sole wage earner in his family. However, everything changed in November 2013 when Rick, who was only 33 years old, was hospitalized and diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia.

In March 2014, after Rick showed very little response to four different lines of multi-agent chemotherapy, his doctors determined that an allogeneic bone marrow transplant was the only way for Rick to achieve long-term remission. After discovering that two of Rick's brothers were an identical transplant match, Rick's doctors submitted a prior authorization request for an allogeneic bone marrow transplant to MassHealth.

Unfortunately, MassHealth denied the request because Rick only had MassHealth Limited and the requested services did not qualify as "emergency care" that was covered by MassHealth Limited. The denial also stated that MassHealth would not pay for any procedure that was experimental.

Not knowing where else to turn, Rick's wife Fiona sought help from the Community Health Workers (CHWs) at the Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center. The CHWs referred Fiona to the MWLS Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) and Attorney Kathryn Condon Grace.

Based on the work done by Attorney Grace, MassHealth reversed its decision before

the hearing and approved the prior authorization request for Rick's bone marrow transplant. Attorney Grace has since followed up with Rick and Fiona. Rick is doing great, working full time and he and his wife have just had a new baby!

Why do we do this work?

Your support makes this work possible. You know the clients and the stories are compelling; the needs are real and acute; the cases are challenging. Do you ever

Helping a domestic violence victim divorce her abusive husband allows her to move forward and succeed in other areas of her life.- Atty. Jennifer Hatch

As the first lawyer in my family, I promised myself that if I ever had the opportunity to go to law school, I would use my education to help other people.- Atty. Michael Moloney

Helping people get what they are owed so they are able to live their lives. - Atty. Pablo Carrasco

Wanting to ensure that people who are in the most desperate situations are able to meet their basic needs like housing and putting food on the table. -Americorps Atty. Leah Porter

I learn from my clients and their parents. - Atty. Evan Benz

Do you own a business?

Imagine you are trying to start a new business, but don't have the resources large companies have to ensure your business is set up properly. You want to make a positive impact in the community you live in. Who could help you make the right choices so you would be successful?

Community Enterprise Project

In 2016, MWLS received a grant from the Massachusetts Bar Foundation to focus on community development. With that in mind, Attorney Jordan Engelhart joined MWLS and started the Community Enterprise Project.

Attorney Engelhart provides direct legal representation to low- and moderate-income small businesses and entrepreneurs. The program is able to provide representation covering a broad range of transactional (i.e. non-litigation) business legal needs. During the first seven months of the grant, the Project has provided full representation to 17 small businesses and entrepreneurs. Attorney Engelhart also partnered with the South Middlesex Opportunity Council and the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice to put on an intensive eight-week workshop series entitled "Business Legal Fundamentals" for local entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Do you get paid?

What if you worked hard all day on a roof cleaning gutters or cleaning windows, but at the end of the day your employer decides not to pay. What do you do? Who do you turn to?

The Worker's Rights/Wage and Hour Project

The MetroWest region is home to thousands of low-wage workers including large numbers of undocumented workers from Latin America. Attorney Pablo Carrasco joined MWLS in April 2016 to start our first Worker's Rights/Wage and Hour Project. Until this project started there was no free legal assistance available to these workers in the MetroWest area. In the coming year, Attorney Carrasco plans to aggressively litigate on behalf of his clients, where the employers refuse to pay the wages owed voluntarily.



Attorney Carrasco, along with the MetroWest Worker Center and the New England Regional Council of Carpenters (NERCC), successfully negotiated a settlement with a contractor over unpaid wages. His clients hold their checks for retroactive pay for labor they performed but were not compensated for.

Protecting Access to SNAP Benefits

On October 26, 2016, MWLS with its partners, Mass. Law Reform Institute, and pro bono counsel Sugarman, Rogers, Barshak & Cohen P.C., settled a class action lawsuit against the Mass. Department of Transitional Assistance for erroneously denying and terminating SNAP (food stamp) benefits for thousands of low-income households across the state.



Approximately
\$9 million
in lost SNAP benefits
expected to be restored.

28,000 SNAP
households affected
by the settlement.



17,000 class members
will automatically
receive retroactive
SNAP benefits.

LAWYERS GIVING BACK

175

PANEL MEMBERS TAKING
PRO BONO CASES



1,916 HOURS
DONATED.



\$513,712
IN DONATED
SERVICES



METROWEST
Legal Services

40
years of
IMPACT

How can you get involved?

Donate online or by check;
Learn more at www.mwlegal.org; or
Contact us at 800-696-1501



Save the Date

20th Annual MWLS
Nancy King Memorial
Golf Tournament
June 5, 2017
Framingham Country Club



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