



OUR MISSION:

To provide high quality civil legal advice, representation and education to the disadvantaged of Palm Beach County so as to protect their personal safety, enhance their opportunities and living conditions and promote self-sufficiency.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

SPRING 2012

Legal Aid Welcomes New Board Members



Rebecca Mercier Vargas, Esq. is a partner at Kreisler-Walsh, Compiani & Vargas, P.A., a preeminent boutique appellate law firm with a long commitment to the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County. Ms. Vargas focuses her practice on appeals and litigation support. She has been certified as a specialist in appellate law by the Florida Bar Board of Governors

and received an AV-rating from Martindale-Hubbell. Ms. Vargas has also been recognized as an Up and Coming Attorney in Florida Appellate Litigation by the Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for business since 2010. Ms. Vargas has served on the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases since 2003, acting as the reporter for the first three years. She is a past member of the Florida Supreme Court Committee on District Court of Appeal Workload and Jurisdiction (2004-2005), serving as Secretary for two years. She is also a current member of the Palm Beach County Bar and its Appellate Practice Committee, the American Inns of Court and the Florida Association of Women Lawyers. Ms. Vargas started her legal career at the Florida Supreme Court as a law clerk for Justice Barbara J. Pariente. She is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of both Florida State University College of Law in Tallahassee, Florida and the University of Rochester in New York. Over the years, Ms. Vargas has handled several appeals for Legal Aid's Foster Children's Project and, together with her husband, Rob Vargas, has been a consistent contributor to all of Legal Aid's annual events and campaigns.



Devin Radkay, Esq. a native of Palm Beach County, did his undergraduate studies at the University of Miami and obtained his law degree from the University of Florida College of Law, where he graduated Order of the Coif. Mr. Radkay has been an associate of the Gunster Law Firm in West Palm Beach since 2007 and specializes in

complex business litigation. In his free time, he enjoys history, economics, pizza and college football. After growing up as a passionate musician (trombone), his pursuit of the law began in college after discovering economics. The idea that one could attempt to explain, and possibly predict, human behavior based on certain quantifiable inputs drove him to commercial litigation. As he explains best, "I love the endless possibilities that exist in each and every case, and how the lawyer's decisions, on any given day, can change the case forever." He came to realize that his passion for law was not much different than his passion for music, "it's merely a different way of expressing oneself, and channeling one's creativity to enrich the human spirit of another, the client." Devin hopes to use his creativity to help Legal Aid continue to provide much needed services for our community.

Board Member News

Miriam Acosta-Castriz, Esq. has recently been sworn in as a Traffic Hearing Officer for the 15th Judicial Circuit of Palm Beach County.

Richard Benrubi, Esq. was recently elected to serve as Vice President of the Palm Beach Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) for 2012. Also, Mr. Benrubi was honored as a Top Lawyer by the Super Lawyers publication for the 7th consecutive year and the South Florida Legal Guide for the 6th consecutive year.

Robert Friedman, Esq. formed his own law firm, Friedman P.A. in Palm Beach, where he continues to advise corporate policyholders and litigate disputed insurance claims.

Mariano Garcia, Esq. has joined the firm of Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart and Shipley, P.A.

Jane Kreisler-Walsh, Esq. was honored by Super Lawyers publication for the 6th consecutive year and was named to its "Top 50 Women" List. Jane was recognized on the cover of the Super Lawyers Florida 2011 publication.

New Slate of Officers Fiscal Year 2011-2012

President - Jeffrey Devore

First Vice President - Miriam Acosta-Castriz

Second Vice President - Matthew Triggs

Secretary - Michelle Suskauer

Treasurer - Jerry Beer

Immediate Past President - Mariano Garcia

Grasford Smith, Esq. was honored by Legacy Magazine as one of the 40 Black Leaders under 40 of Today and Tomorrow in South Florida and was named one of the 40 best advocates under 40 by the National Bar Association.

Michelle Suskauer, Esq. was emcee for the 3rd consecutive year of the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Lawyers' Variety Show at the Eissey Theater. This wonderful show benefits the Legal Aid Society.

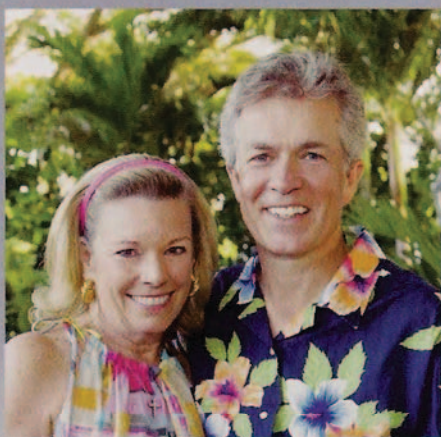
Victoria Vilchez, Esq. was appointed by the Florida Supreme Court to the Florida Board of Bar Examiners for a five year term, beginning November 1, 2011.

"Celebrating Justice"

3 Wonderful GIFT GATHERING GALAS



Doreen & Jeffrey Wilson



Jane & Michael Walsh

Three wonderful Gift Gathering Galas, which were hosted by Doreen Yaffa- Wilson & Jeffrey Wilson, Jane & Michael Walsh, and Christine and Michael Hanley provided over 300 gifts for Legal Aid's 23rd Annual Pro Bono Recognition Evening & Auction.



Christine & Michael Hanley