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***Newsletter***

***December 2017***

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\*\*\*\*\* With THANKS for your support, warm wishes for the holidays! \*\*\*\*\*



## Thank You & Happy Holidays!

During 2017, your help and support changed lives. Thanks to you – LASP's donors, pro bono volunteers, community partner agencies and friends – many families are finishing 2017 in better situations.



Ms. W was one of the many helped this year. A mom of 6, she challenged her landlord over an unsafe home. When she withheld rent in an effort to force him to make repairs, he filed to evict her. In court, she explained her case, but lost anyway.

She paid her rent, to avoid becoming homeless. And she came to LASP. The LASP attorney negotiated with her landlord and ensured repairs were made. **Ms. W and her children will spend the holidays in a safe home.**

[Your donation changes lives.](#)

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Thank you!

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2018 Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network Awards

### **LASP's Randi Riefner wins state legal aid Excellence Award**

In late November, the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN) announced that LASP's **Randi Riefner** is one of the 2018 Excellence Award winners. Randi works out of LASP's Bucks County office in Bristol.

Since starting at LASP in May 1993, Randi has worn many hats, including pro bono coordinator for 17+ years. "For the past 20 or so years I have had the task of scheduling pro bono attorneys for PFA (Protection from Abuse) hearings every Wednesday in Bucks County," she said. "I also schedule pro bono attorneys to represent clients at custody conferences and hearings."



Randi Riefner

Randi noted, "I treat clients with the same respect that I'd like to be treated with," adding that the realization at the end of each day that "I helped someone today" has been her inspiration all these years. "I've always loved my job," she said. "I am most proud of being a part of the relationship that has developed between the Bench, the Bar Association and Legal Aid since I first

started." Born in Vermont, Randi lived in Manhattan before moving to Pennsylvania with her husband in 1974. Her four grandchildren "are the light of my life."

Randi is among the individuals and groups who "have demonstrated excellence in their efforts to increase the availability of legal aid and raise the quality of civil legal services for low income people and victims of domestic violence in Pennsylvania," according to PLAN's announcement. Honorees were selected by criteria assessing impact on increased access to civil legal aid, excellence in advocacy, leadership, and/or innovation in service delivery.

LASP also congratulates other Excellence Award honorees in our region: **Mary Pugh, Esq.**, Executive Director of the [Montgomery Child Advocacy Project](#) in Norristown, and **Rachel Blake, Esq.**, Associate Director of [Regional Housing Legal Services](#) in Glenside. Congratulations also to **State Sen. Stewart J. Greenleaf**, who won an Outstanding Leadership in Support of Legal Services Award from PLAN. Sen. Greenleaf has been a strong advocate for access to justice.

Recipients will be formally honored at the PLAN Excellence Award Banquet in March 2018 in Harrisburg. For the full list of honorees, visit <http://bit.ly/PLAN2018ExcellenceAwards>.

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## Highlights from the Counties

### Preventing Eviction & Homelessness | Montgomery County



LASP housing attorneys Eileen Carroll (left), Don Cheetham and Susan Strong, and Emma Hertz, administrator at Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Development, presented a CLE in advance of the January 2018 implementation of Eviction Prevention & Intervention Coalition (EPIC).

Photo courtesy of Montgomery Bar Association.

### **LASP attorneys present CLE to help launch Eviction Prevention & Intervention Coalition (EPIC)**

To prepare for the January 2018 launch of the Eviction Prevention & Intervention Coalition (EPIC), LASP attorneys presented a CLE Nov. 30 at the Montgomery Bar Association. Susan Strong, Don Cheetham and Eileen Carroll, along with Emma Hertz of Montco Housing and Community Development, outlined procedures, claims, and defenses in landlord-tenant matters to prepare pro bono attorneys to represent tenants in District Justice Court. EPIC aims to prevent evictions and homelessness by providing both legal representation from volunteer attorneys and the social services available through Your Way Home.

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## **Bucks County**

### **Celebrating Pro Bono Week**



Bucks County attorney Kimberly Litzke (second from right) received a 2017 Pennsylvania Bar Association Pro Bono Award for her efforts to improve and increase pro bono participation in family law matters in Bucks County. Pictured (from left): David Trevaskis, PBA pro bono coordinator; Maria Rodriguez-Martyak, Esq.; Elizabeth Fritsch, LASP executive director; Stacey Mulholland, executive director of Bucks County Bar Association; Kimberly Litzke; and Judge C. Theodore Fritsch, Jr., Bucks County Court of Common Pleas. Photo courtesy of Pennsylvania Bar Association.



LASP executive director Elizabeth Fritsch and LASP attorney Jennifer Pierce present pro bono awards to attorneys who donated their time on behalf of LASP clients and across Bucks County. Photo courtesy of Bucks County Bar Association.

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## **Chester County**

**Thanks to Chester County Paralegal Association!**



Chester County Paralegal Association presents LASP with a donation from its successful October event. Pictured (from left) are LASP attorney Brian Doyle; Elizabeth Fritsch, LASP executive director; Barbara Butler, CCPA president and pro bono chair; Tracy Dussell and Karen Carter, CCPA fundraising chairs; and Rachel Houseman, LASP managing attorney for Chester County. **Thank you to the CCPA for their hard work and for their generous donation.**

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## Chester County

### Pro Bono Week thank you reception



Judge Royer (left), Marc Lieberman.

Photos by Brian Doyle.



Bill Wilson (left), Ed Sweeney, John McKenna.



Laura Baker, Wesley Legg, Phil Simon, Judge Bortner.



Emily Donnon (left), Jean Speiser.



President Judge Cody, Doug Olshin, Judge Carmody.



Kristin Molavoque (left), Chris Zaccarelli.



Doug Olshin, Cathie Voit, Dave Melchiorre.

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