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DEAR FRIENDS:

2012 was a record year for Community Law Center! In 2012, Community Law Center saw a dramatic increase in cases, in volunteers, and in volunteer hours. Thank you very much for the support you have offered us, whether through financial gifts or donations of professional time and service. Your support has helped us continue the Community Law Center's important mission.

Community Law Center has become an institution critical to community-based revitalization efforts. Community Law Center works with hundreds of groups each year. Some of these organizations are just getting started, while others have been operating for decades. Many have no staff, accomplishing amazing work with very small budgets and extraordinary volunteers. Despite their incredible diversity in size, geography, mission, and budget, all of Community Law Center's clients have at least one thing in common – they care deeply and passionately about their communities.

In 2012, we had 3,117 volunteer attorney hours valued at \$684,826.30. That is an increase of 1,317 hours over last year! Community Law Center's Pro Bono Program also gained an additional 58 volunteers for a roster of 407 volunteer attorneys. In addition, Pro Bono Program cases covered a wide array of issues, including corporate formation, litigation, nuisances, representation before the Baltimore City Liquor Board, property negotiations, and zoning issues.

Furthermore, Community Law Center handled 177 *more* cases in 2012 than in 2011. Much of this activity is attributable to the newly revised nuisance abatement law. Passed in 2012 and effective as of October 1, 2012, this law, known as "The Community Bill of Rights," allows community associations to bring code enforcement actions against the worst privately owned vacant properties.

Community Law Center is also out in the neighborhoods! Community Law Center's staff attorneys conducted significant outreach to both clients and attorneys. They attended community meetings and offered presentations throughout Baltimore City. We are always looking for opportunities to let people know that we are here to help.

On behalf of our board, staff, and clients, we thank you for the role you have played, whether as a client, a funder, a pro bono attorney or a friend, over the past year.

Sincerely,



Kristine Dunkerton, Esq.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Danielle Howarth, Esq.
CHAIR,
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Lawyers for Neighborhoods & Nonprofits

Community Law Center's mission grows out of the conviction that providing legal tools for organized groups will strengthen the nonprofit sector and make neighborhoods more vibrant while improving everyone's quality of life and access to justice. Community Law Center's staff and volunteer attorneys create and utilize innovative legal solutions that continually prove to be effective tools for the betterment of Maryland's communities. *Below are four examples of our work in 2012.*

1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Banner Neighborhoods approached Community Law Center, Inc. seeking representation to attain zoning approval to turn a vacant building in Southeast Baltimore City into a neighborhood multi-purpose center. Gregory E. Rapisarda, Esq., an attorney from Saul Ewing, volunteered to help the group navigate the zoning appeals process, donating thousands of dollars in free legal services.

Banner Neighborhoods' story is emblematic of the cases handled by Community Law Center. Rather than spending substantial resources on legal representation, nonprofits represented through Community Law Center's Pro Bono Program can use more of their donations to carry out their good works in the community.

"We are delighted with the outcome of the zoning hearing, and we could not have done it without the help of our pro bono attorney," said Jolyn Rademacher Tracy, Executive Director of Banner Neighborhoods. "We look forward to the next steps in creating a community space to continue our work promoting resident-based leadership, neighborhood pride and stability, and providing direct services that contribute to the overall viability throughout 10 communities in southeast Baltimore."

"Community Law Center's Pro Bono Program provided me a wonderful opportunity to apply my land use and zoning skills to improve the community," stated Gregory E. Rapisarda, Esq. of Saul Ewing LLP. "It is rewarding to be a part of Banner Neighborhoods' great work in southeast Baltimore, and Community Law Center made it possible."

2 URBAN AGRICULTURE

In 2012, Community Law Center added Becky Lundberg Witt, Esq. to the staff to run the Pro Bono Program and to launch Community Law Center's Urban Agriculture Law Project. The Urban Agriculture Law Project has made Community Law Center a leading resource on the legal issues facing urban farming endeavors.

This year, Becky Lundberg Witt represented the Farm Alliance of Baltimore City, a new network of urban food producers. Says Farm Alliance founder and President

Maya Kosok, “the Community Law Center was invaluable in helping the Farm Alliance develop thorough, functional, and legal bylaws. The process really helped us build a strong organization, which will ultimately enable us to grow more farms and more food in Baltimore City.” Witt worked with Farm Alliance board members in a collaborative process to create a set of bylaws that are custom-tailored to the needs of this unique organization. With the organization’s corporate structure in place, board members can focus on their strengths: helping each other grow healthy, delicious food for Baltimore City residents.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Maryland Ornithological Society came to Community Law Center because the county where the land was located refused to waive property taxes on 82 acres of bird sanctuary that had been donated to them. The county justified this by saying Maryland Ornithological Society did not meet the county’s definition of an educational and charitable organization. Community Law Center assigned Patrick Turley, of Dechert, LLP to the case.

The county had an obligation to respond to the appeal within 90 days, but no response ever came. Months and years dragged on, with new property tax bills being issued, fines accumulating, and finally a threat of tax sale by the county. Mr. Turley went back to the county in March 2011 to resolve the matter once and for all. In April, the County Supervisor of Assessments recognized Maryland Ornithological Society as a charitable organization retroactive to 2009, clearing all liens, fines and claims.

Dr. Wayne H. Bell, Past-president of the Maryland Ornithological Society says, “Mr. Turley’s prompt responses to materials forwarded to him with my inquiries were instrumental in seeing our case through to its favorable conclusion. We are most indebted to the Community Law Center for locating him and arranging for his pro bono services.”

4 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

Brooke Lierman, an attorney with Brown, Goldstein & Levy, LLP, successfully represented Lombard Court Homeowners Association, Inc. in obtaining a 60-day suspension of the liquor license at a Lombard Street establishment that was believed to attract violent crime, prostitution, and trash.

Lombard Court Homeowners Association, located in Upper Fells Point, approached Community Law Center, Inc. for help. Ms. Lierman volunteered to represent the group in their fight to bring peace to the neighborhood, donating thousands of dollars in free legal services. Ms. Lierman successfully represented the community in a lengthy hearing before the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City.

“The 60-day suspension will provide a peaceful respite from this problem bar in our community,” said E. Andrew Garner, President of Lombard Court Homeowners Association, Inc.

“I am delighted to be able to help my neighbors abate a nuisance,” stated Ms. Lierman. “Having a liquor license is a privilege, not a right. It is the legal responsibility of every bar owner to be a good member of the community, and the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City enforced that responsibility in its decision in this case. It has made clear that if the establishment does not clean up its act, the Board will revoke its license.”

FINANCIAL STATEMENT + DONORS



90 cents of every \$1 goes directly to programming
 A: 90% Program / B: 10% Management & Fundraising

2012 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Public support received directly: | |
| Contributions | \$ 453,524 |
| Contributed professional fees | 684,826 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 1,138,350 |
| Grants from governmental agencies: | 81,372 |
| Other revenue: | |
| Fees | 50,916 |
| Miscellaneous | 2,833 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 53,749 |
| Total revenues, gains and other support | \$1,273,471 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Program services: | |
| Legal assistance to communities & nonprofits | \$ 1,149,398 |
| Supporting services: | |
| Management and General Fund Raising | 88,864 |
| | <hr/> |
| Total supporting services | 131,284 |
| Total expenses | 1,280,682 |
| Change in net assets | (7,211) |
| Change in net assets - beginning of year | 383,120 |
| Change in net assets - end of year | \$ 375,909 |

DONORS

| | | |
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Active Cases January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012

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Chijioke Akamigbo
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Susan Baker
Shannon Beamer
Barbara Bezdek
Darcy Bisset
James Bragdon
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Francis King Carey School of
Law's Community Justice Clinic
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Francis King Carey School of
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