

COMMUNITY LAW CENTER

NEW LEADERSHIP

NEW PROGRAMS

NEW FUNDING

NEW STAFF



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Note from the Executive Director & Board Chair

Acknowledgement: John Nethercut

NEW STAFF

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

NEW FUNDING

FALL FUNDRAISER

NEW WORKSHOPS

NEW PROGRAMS

2023 Financials

2023 Donors

2023 Pro Bono Attorneys & Volunteers

2023 Pro Bono Law Firms

2023 CLC Staff and Board

2023 Photos & Press



A Note from the Executive Director & Board Chair

Dear Supporters,

Thank you for being a part of the Community Law Center's (CLC) Past, Present, and Future.

In 2023, we celebrated our journey to here, and renewed our energy to reengage with neighborhoods, post-pandemic. We began to move ahead with a new leader, additions to our Board of Directors, and programmatic expansion. Our 2023 Annual Report documents and highlights a year of growth, energy, and laying a strong foundation for the future.

A highlight of 2023 was welcoming, Amy Petkovsek and Ijeoma Nwatu to Community Law Center. Amy joined in July 2023 after 17 years in various advocacy and leadership roles at Maryland Legal Aid. She brings creativity, leadership, litigation experience, and years of work in legal support in and around Baltimore City communities. Ijeoma joined in May 2023, and has brought a new level of excellence to CLC's communications, elevating our social media presence, connections with partners, outreach for clients, and relationships with local press. 2023 was just the beginning of Amy and Ijeoma's paths at CLC, and it was a bright beginning for both, with much optimism for what is to come.

Our Annual Report also features additional staff members, Truth Burney and Mikaela Davis, who joined CLC as part of the State of Maryland's Department of Service and Civic Innovation's Maryland Service Corps program. CLC was honored to be selected as an inaugural host site for this innovative program, which aligns deeply with our mission in many ways. Truth and Mikaela brought lived experience, energy, perspective and insights to our staff that will outlast their brief tenure with Community Law Center.

Community Law Center spent 2023 driven to stabilize financially, grow our programs, reenergize, and reconnect in person with our neighborhoods and clients. We are *thrilled* and *honored* by your continued support, and looking forward to continued growth next year.

In Community.



Amy Petkovsek

Amy Petkovsek, Executive Director

Brian D. Meltzer

Brian D. Meltzer, Board Chair



Acknowledgement



John Nethercut served as Executive Director of the Public Justice Center for 20 years until he retired in early 2022. John had prior ties to Community Law Center as both a volunteer and a friend, making him a great choice to guide CLC as interim director from September 2022 to July 2023.



"Community Law Center was the first legal services organization in Baltimore I worked with back in the '90s, and I was honored to be asked to lead them in the interim period between the last great executive directors (Anne Blumenthal and Kristine Dunkerton), and the next great leader of the CLC: Amy Petkovsek.

CLC has a unique mission – representing Baltimore City's neighborhood organizations – and its staff and board are smart and committed and very collaborative. It was a pleasure to help set the stage for the next era of Community Law Center." – *John Nethercut*



In John's 10 months as CLC's interim executive director, he did much more than keep the lights on. John came in and calmed the waters. He set the stage for new growth. Most critically, he showed us that we can keep moving forward in the face of panic. In less than a year, John imparted a new, lasting strength on Community Law Center – thank you, John.

Brian Meltzer, Esq.
CLC Board Chair



John Nethercott was a life saver who was selfless enough to step in during CLC's period of transition...just as he was starting his retirement! His professionalism, understanding and commitment to furthering CLC's mission was always reflected in his work and leadership. I am, and believe all on the board and staff are, deeply appreciative of John.

Janice Bowie, PhD



Meet the NEW Staff

AMY PETKOVSEK



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joined CLC: July 2023

Favorite CLC Memory: Our holiday staff gathering, which included shared homecooked items from each of our own traditions, and a rousing edition of CLC Family Feud! It was a festive way to end the year as a team.

Joined CLC: May 2023

Favorite CLC Memory: The fall fundraiser was a unique opportunity to see CLC's history through its leadership. It was also great to see all the hard work pay off for a great night.

IJEOMA S. NWATU



COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

TRUTH BURNEY



LEGAL ASSISTANT

Joined CLC: October 2023

Favorite CLC Memory: Our holiday potluck, It was so nice tasting everyone's favorite holiday foods and sharing a meal together.

Joined CLC: October 2023

Favorite CLC Memory: When we got to meet with one of our board members, Oprah Keyes, she was so nice and insightful with all of her stories and experiences.

MIKAELA DAVIS



LEGAL ASSISTANT

Meet the **NEW** Board Members



Oprah Keyes, MSW, LCSW-C currently serves as the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Center for Restorative Change, housed within the University of Maryland Baltimore's School of Social Work. Oprah is passionate about fostering collaborative initiatives that support community-centered goals.

A dedicated advocate for equity in communities, and with a background as a licensed clinical social worker, Oprah brings a wealth of experience to the CLC board.



Reginald L. Smallwood, III represents business and corporate clients in mergers and acquisitions, corporate compliance, entity formation, and other commercial and general corporate matters.

Reggie drafts various ancillary documents, including disclosure schedules, board resolutions, and intellectual property assignments. He advises clients on federal and state laws concerning corporate law and general business matters. In addition to his corporate practice, Reggie is a trained family mediator and has completed Maryland's 40-hour mediation training.

NEW Funding



Community Law Center restarted and reimagined its annual fundraiser, held on October 12, at the popular Baltimore restaurant, Gertrude's. Our Past, Present, Future fundraiser, presented by PNC Bank, raised more than \$10,000 and introduced us to new funders and partners.



One of our newest end-of-year giving initiatives was to give away a staff-selected book that reflects the values of CLC. For each \$100 donated during the month of December, donors received a copy of *A Lovely Place, a Fighting Place, a Charmer*. Its editors, Gary M. Almeter and Rafael Alvarez, which is a collection of stories, poems, and short stories about Baltimore City.



We were pleased to engage new funders, including Maryland's Department of Service and Civic Innovation's Service Corps program.

FALL Fundraiser

Our Past, Present, Future fall fundraiser, presented by PNC Bank, was held in Baltimore City at Gertrude’s Restaurant. This event was the first in-person fundraiser for Community Law Center in a number of years. CLC’s staff and board hosted over 50 people for an intimate night of celebration, goodwill and a thrilling silent auction.

This fundraiser honored founder and former executive director, Anne Blumenberg, who was unable to attend. In attendance were Kristine Dunkerton, who served for 20 years, interim executive director, John Nethercut, and newly appointed executive director, Amy Petkovsek.

We also recognized longtime employee, Ingrid Hitchens, who celebrated 25 years with Community Law Center.



NEW Programs

With more new staff came opportunities for in-person outreach. We embarked on a few programs to reach different audiences including:

Summer Meet & Greet: This in-person gathering was the first of its kind at our office in several years. In August, we were joined by former colleagues, community members, and more. A special thanks to Councilmember Odette Ramos for stopping by.

Pro Bono Meet & Greet: To recognize Pro Bono Month, we hosted a few of our volunteer attorneys in October at our office.

Friendsgiving: This new event was held at Guilford Brewery in Baltimore City in November to show our appreciation for our community partners, volunteers and potential funders.



Friendsgiving 2023 @ Guilford Brewery



Meet and Greet @ CLC



Pro Bono Meet & Greet @ CLC

NEW Workshops

Offering educational, low-cost workshops is an important piece of our mission to partner with our communities and client organizations.

CLC is well-positioned to offer a wide variety of trainings, both paid and free throughout the year. In-person workshops are typically held at Community Law Center's office in Baltimore City. To allow for flexibility and to expand our reach, a number of workshops were offered virtually via Zoom.



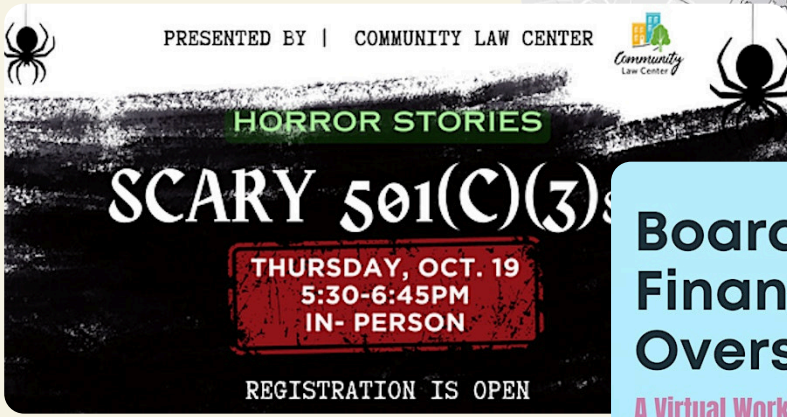
RUNNING YOUR ORGANIZATION WELL
THURSDAY, NOV. 2
6:00-7:15 PM
VIRTUAL

BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHERS INVOLVED IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER

A SPECIAL WORKSHOP FOR BALTIMORE CLEAN CORPS GRANTEES!

LEGAL STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS NEIGHBORHOOD NUISANCE AND VACANT PROPERTIES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2
An Online Workshop

REGISTER HERE



PRESENTED BY | COMMUNITY LAW CENTER

HORROR STORIES
SCARY 501(C)(3)s
THURSDAY, OCT. 19
5:30-6:45PM
IN- PERSON
REGISTRATION IS OPEN



Board Financial Oversight
A Virtual Workshop With Denice Ko, Esq.
THURSDAY MAY 25
6:00-7:15 PM



So You Want to Start a Nonprofit... But Is It the Right Tool?
Presented by Miriam Avins
THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2023
6:00 - 7:30 PM

2023 Financials

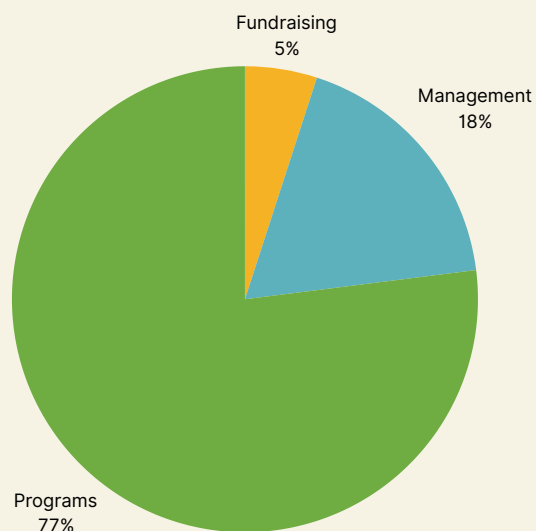
Revenues, gains and other support:

Public support:	
Contributions	\$346,175
Contributed professional fees	\$289,344
	<hr/>
	\$635,519
Special Events	\$ 14,169
Grants from governmental agencies	\$301,647
Other revenue:	
Fees	\$ 15,876
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,953
	<hr/>
	\$ 18,829
Total revenues, gains and other support	\$970,164

Expenses:

Program services –	
Legal assistance to communities & nonprofits	\$810,357
Supporting services:	
Management and General	\$190,088
Fund raising	\$ 48,013
Cost of donor benefits	\$ 5,780
	<hr/>
Total supporting services	\$243,881
Total expenses	\$1,054,238

Extinguishment of debt	-
Change in net assets	(\$84,074)
Net assets – start of year	\$162,093
Net assets – end of year	\$ 78,019



2023 Donors

Aegon Transamerica Foundation
Amazon Smile Foundation
American Charities
America's Charities
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Apter, Marc L.
Avins, Miriam
Bezdek, Barbara
Birenbaum, Robert
Bittle, Beth Anne
Blumenberg, Anne L.
Bogdan, A.
Boitnott, John & Carolyn
Bowie, Janice V.
Butcher's Hill Assoc., Inc.
Butler, James
Byron, Shirley R.
Carney, Gayle
Carter, Jordan
CDBG
Clayton Baker Trust
Coldspring Community Assoc., Inc.
Cole, Jemaledin
Coles, Sandra
Darlington Apple Festival
Davis, Amy
Deckard, D.
Deitzler, Brad
Dickens, Lynn
Diskin, Mark
DLA Piper LLP (US)
Dooley, Brook
Dunkerton, Kristine J., & Lankford, Elsa
Dzierwinski, P.
Edgewood Neighborhood Improvement Assoc.
Ekipowoh, Nse
Eurich, Juliet A.
Evesham Park Neighborhood Association
Feigin, Judy & David
Fishelman, Emmanuel A.
Font, Lucy
Friends of White Oak Inc.
Fund For Change
Furstenberg, Francois
Fusion Partnerships, Inc.
Gilman, Michelle
Gilmore, Dorcas R.
Goldseker Foundation
Gomez, Marisela
Gonter, Matthew
Groomes, Wendy
Harold & Ruth Garber Family Foundation
Harris, Karen
Harris, Lynn
Harvey, Andrea
Heinlein, Emily
Heyman, Anne & Harvey
Huttar, Elizabeth
Intersection of Change, Inc.
J. Noah Skill Academy
Johnson, Robert
Jolles, Beth
K.L. Hoffman & Company, PC
Kandel, David
Karanja, Mary
Keenen, Reeana
Kelly, Jim
Kenney, Gwendolyn
Kirshner, Ingrid L.
Kramon & Graham, P.A.
Kreiger, Zanvyl & Isabelle
Kyle, John
Lankford, Eileen F.
Leal, Dolores
Leidy, John J. Foundation
Leone, Robin
Loch Raven Improvement
Lockhart Vaughan Foundation, Inc.
Louthan, Nancy
Lyon-Collis, Lauren M.
Madsen, Amy
Magruder, William W.
Maria Filardi
Maryland Legal Services Corporation
McNeely, Joseph
McNeil, Jr., Franklin & Paul Fowler, MD
Medfield Community Association
Meltzer, Brian
Merriam, Gail
Miller, Tamara
Minges, Francis & David
Monti, Lindsay
Morrison, Daniel
Moulton, Pearl
Nathans, Eli A. or Caroline F.
Nathans, Jeremy
Nathans, Joanne G.
Nethercut, John
Network for Good
Obaza, Alexander
Obaza, Edward
Oliver Beach Improvement Association
Olsen-Leyden, Andrea
Papa, Nicole
Pay Pal Giving Fund
Payton, Jane
Plantation Park Heights Urban Farm
PLI-Practising Law Institute
PNC Bank
Pollack, Kenneth
Pressley, John
Price, Zachary
Prier, Keondra
Redd, Justin
Reichart, Clayton
Released and Set Free
Reues, Alan
Rhudy, Robert
Rieger, J. Paul
Robb, Inez
Robinson, Harriet M.
Rodini, L.
Rosenberg, LeighAnn
Sacks, Jonathan
Sakamoto-Wengel, Joy
Sarbanes, Michael A.
Scott, Sally
Shaia, Wendy
Shoppert, Christina
Silverman, Nancy & Nathans, Benjamin
Smith, Kirin G.
Steiner, Emily
Swinburne, Mathew
Taylor, Patricia
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
Thompson, Erin
Travelers
Turley, Patrick
United Way of Central Maryland
United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
Urban, David T. & Laura S.
Venable Foundation, Inc.
Viqueira, Rachel
Walker, Charlemayne
Waltherson Improvement Association
Ward, Ernestine
Webber, Renee
Wilson, Rosanne S.
Wilson, Sheridonna
Womble, Bond, Dickinson
Zanvyl & Isabelle Kreiger Fund, Inc.
Zimmerman, Peter
Zipin Amster & Greenberg, LLC


Pro Bono Attorneys & Volunteers

Community Law Center's Pro Bono Program matches volunteer attorneys with neighborhood-based and small nonprofits throughout Maryland. The following attorneys represented clients in 2023. **From January 1-December 31, 2023, volunteer attorneys donated 700 hours, valued at \$291,000.**

Alex Berg, Esq.
Alexander Zajac, Esq.
Amanda Chong, Esq.
Andrea LeWinter, Esq.
Anthony Meahger, Esq.
Arusa Malik
Ashley Rodriguez, Esq.
Becky Witt, Esq.
Bill King, Esq.
Brendan Powell, Esq.
Brent Clemmens, Esq.
Brian Meltzer, Esq.
Bridgett A. Simmons, Esq.
Cecelia Chase Gans, Esq.
Christopher Geissler, Esq.
Cyreka Jacobs, Esq.
Daniel Fitzgerald, Esq.
David Weaver, Esq.
Derek Bushnaq, Esq.

Devin Harvey, Esq.
Douglas Dick, Esq.
Ellen Pruitt, Esq.
Eric Smith, Esq.
Ernestas Pravilionis
Evan Shea, Esq.
G. Bethany Ingle, Esq.
Gary Norman, Esq.
Gilad Berkowitz, Esq.
Howard Schwartz, Esq.
James Doub, Esq.
Justin Redd, Esq.
Khamal Patterson, Esq.
Kimberly Gilreath, Esq.
Kris Rhu, Esq.
Kristopher Madore, Esq.
Laurie Furshman, Esq.
Matthew Barsamian, Esq.
Megan T. Sunderland, Esq.

Meghan Agostinelli, Esq.
Miriam Avins
Monica Patel, Esq.
Morgan Willard, Esq.
Nitya Goyal, Esq.
Nse Ekpewoh
Patrick Turley, Esq.
Reginald Smallwood III, Esq.
Robert M. Johnson, Esq.
Ryan Maher, Esq.
Samuel Weisbaum, Esq.
Sandy Gohn, Esq.
Sheena Hariston, Esq.
Stacey McClurkin Macklin, Esq.
Stephen Cohen, Esq.
Theresa Concepcion, Esq.
Timothy Wagner, Esq.
Troy Walker, Esq.



We are not only grateful for the legal expertise our volunteers contribute to CLC, but for the heart and commitment they bring to their work.”

Amy Yontef-McGrath, Pro Bono Coordinator

2023 Pro Bono Law Firms

Community Law Center is privileged to partner and collaborate with over a dozen law firms and solo practitioners who support our mission in serving neighborhood associations and nonprofits throughout Maryland.

From individual attorneys to small teams, these firms took on a variety of cases from intellectual property (IP) cases to bylaws to negotiations. We appreciate their commitment and expertise and look forward to their continued work and support.

Baker Donelson
Bowie & Jensen, LLC
Concepcion Law Firm
Dechert, LLP
DLA Piper, LLP
Duane Morris, LLP
Hairston Law, LLC
Harrity & Harrity, LLP
Kramon & Graham, P.A.
Law Offices of Robert M. Johnson
Littler Mendelson, P.C.
Madore Law, LLC
Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP
Stinson LLP
Taylor Legal
Venable, LLP
Weaver & Fitzpatrick, P.A.
Womble Bond Dickinson, LLP

2023 Staff

STAFF

John Nethercut, Esq., Interim Exec. Director (through July)
Amy Petkovsek, Exec. Director (July-present)
Pat Dzierwinski, Accountant
Ingrid Hitchens-Hall, Senior Paralegal & Resource Manager
Fatima Jones, Office Manager
Denice Ko, Esq., Deputy Director & Staff Attorney
Ijeoma S. Nwatu, Comms & Development Manager
Shana Roth-Gormley, Esq., Senior Staff Attorney
Amy Yontef-McGrath, Pro Bono Coordinator
Truth Burney, Maryland Corps Legal Assistant
Mikaela Davis, Maryland Corps Legal Assistant

INTERNS

Arusa Malik
Ernestas Pravilionis

Volunteering with the Community Law Center has been a very rewarding experience, particularly as a college student. I've had the chance to research and present on local policies, assist with event planning, design graphics, and engage with the pro-bono community to advance CLC's mission.

—Arusa Malik

2023 Board of Directors



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Brian D. Meltzer, Esq., Chair
Wendy Shaia, EdD, MSW, Vice Chair
Franklin N. McNeil, Jr., Secretary
Justin Redd, Treasurer
John Nethercut, Esq., President & Interim Executive Director (Sept. 2022 - June 2023)
Amy Petkovsek, President & Executive Director (July 2023-present)

DIRECTORS

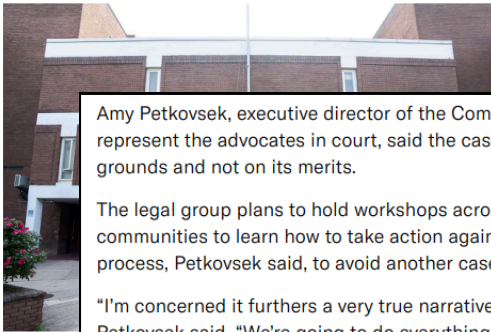
Marc Apter, APR
Janice Bowie, PhD, MPH
Sandra Coles
Emmanuel "Manny" Fishelman, Esq.
Rob Johnson
Oprah Keyes
M. Andrea Olsen-Leyden, Esq.
Inez Robb
Reggie Smallwood, Esq.
Emily Steiner, Esq.
Anthony Vitti, Esq.

Photos and Press



A Southwest Baltimore school had a chance at renewal. Then the copper thieves came.

Hallie Miller
12/15/2023 5:30 a.m. EST



Amy Petkovsek, executive director of the Community Law Center, which helped represent the advocates in court, said the case crumbled on early procedural grounds and not on its merits.

The legal group plans to hold workshops across the city next year for communities to learn how to take action against pending closures early in the process, Petkovsek said, to avoid another case like Stuart Hill from unfolding.

"I'm concerned it furthers a very true narrative that communities are powerless," Petkovsek said. "We're going to do everything we can to change that narrative, to give families and community members the legal tools they need, and the information they need, to fight this in the future."



Meet 3 young people hoping to make Gov. Moore's service program a success

Pamela Wood
10/27/2023 5:48 p.m. EDT



Truth Burney, 23, Community Law Center

Truth Burney studied pre-law, international affairs and political science at Howard University, but struggled to find a job in the legal field after graduation.

"Fresh out of college, I didn't have a work background, especially in legal work," she said. "I believe that with this, this will better prepare me to get those jobs I was applying for."

The Carroll County resident joined the Maryland Corps track of the program and was connected with the Community Law Center in Baltimore, which provides legal representation for nonprofit organizations and community groups. As a legal assistant, she's been combing through documents and doing research to help build clients' cases.



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



www.communitylaw.org

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