

**THE  
PUBLIC  
INTEREST  
LAW CENTER**

# 50 YEARS OF JUSTICE

**1969 — 2019**

**2018 ANNUAL REPORT & 2019 STRATEGY**





Ned Wolf,  
who founded  
the Law  
Center in  
1969.

As we immerse ourselves in today's challenges, we sometimes neglect to pause and truly appreciate all that came before us: the hundreds of people who did the work and the thousands whose lives are better as a result. A 50 year anniversary is a time to do just that.

I'll start with my deep appreciation for the dozens of former Law Center lawyers and other staff who gave their hearts and souls to our clients and work. Even today, we receive contributions from clients and friends in their honor. I'm thinking, for example, of Barbara Ransom, who successfully challenged discrimination against methadone treatment centers and filed lawsuits that changed police department practice with respect to people with disabilities. I'm thinking of my immediate predecessors: Tom Gilhool, whose case secured the right to education for children with disabilities; and Michael Churchill, still a hard-working staff member today, who helped win the first housing discrimination case under the then-brand new Fair Housing Act, and today keeps alive the fight for adequate school funding.

There is no more important group of people in the life of an organization than the men and women who served on its board. Each one of them grappled with the serious social and economic issues of the day; and they worked to keep this precious organization not just alive, but thriving. One tangible piece of organizational history is the 1987 Long Range Planning Committee report, led by now-deceased former board chair Robert W. Sayre. That committee developed conclusions and recommendations that resonate today, affirming "its conviction that there is a continuing need for public interest law practice in the Philadelphia area that it is important not only to the clients represented but also to the welfare of the community as a whole."

And I remember our clients. I think of Charlie Major—who led a group of African American tour bus operators who stepped forward after New Jersey transportation officials singled them out for stops on the way to Atlantic City. I think of Zulene Mayfield—who led a group of African American residents of Chester in the fight to keep their community from being overwhelmed with infectious waste and trash trucks from all over the East Coast, without regard to the health of local residents.

And finally, there are our most generous donors, whom we can never thank enough. Here I think of William Copeland, whose philanthropy literally kept us alive through the mid-2000s as we encountered a particularly rough financial stretch. With one of his gifts in 2003, Mr. Copeland cited our work in creating quality community-based services for people with disabilities, advancing environmental justice, and increasing access to children's health care. "I hope this gift will be a challenge and inspiration to others to similarly help the Law Center to continue its important work which has improved the lives of so many people," he wrote.

It is, of course, hard to name individuals, because this leaves out hundreds of other people who also built this magnificent organization. Every one of them inspires those of us who work here today. Their work stands as a challenge: it is not enough to bask in the successes of yesterday. Poverty and discrimination still pervade our community. What they have passed along to the staff, board, donors, and clients of today is a responsibility. It is a charge never to give up, never accept the injustice we see, but instead to use all the tools we have to keep the fight going.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer R. Clarke*

Jennifer R. Clarke  
Executive Director



# 2018 BY THE NUMBERS

**8,400,000**  
registered voters in  
Pennsylvania benefited from  
a new, fair congressional  
district map in 2018 after  
our successful challenge to  
partisan gerrymandering

**394,717**  
people served by  
37 other cases

**4,686**  
people engaged  
through community  
education and  
presentations

**46**  
elementary school classrooms in  
William Penn School District with  
more than 30 students. The District  
is the named petitioner in our lawsuit  
challenging Pennsylvania's school  
funding system, set for trial in 2020

**7**  
plots of land secured  
for New Jerusalem, a  
community garden and  
residential addiction  
recovery center in  
Philadelphia, run by nuns  
who have been tending the  
land for decades

**32**  
volunteers  
and interns

**548**  
individual  
donors

**116**  
pro bono  
attorneys

**299**  
press hits

**2,371**  
followers on  
Twitter

The Public Interest Law Center uses high-impact legal strategies to advance the civil, social, and economic rights of communities in the Philadelphia region facing discrimination, inequality, and poverty. We use litigation, community education, advocacy, and organizing to secure their access to fundamental resources and services.





50 YEARS  
OF HOUSING  
JUSTICE

# HOMES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND EXPLOITATION

PAST

## 1969: Fighting Economic and Racial Segregation

In our first case, we challenged a HUD-funded development project planned for Philadelphia's East Poplar neighborhood, which would have furthered racial and economic segregation in what was then an integrated neighborhood. Representing residents of all backgrounds, including people already living in public housing, we alleged that the development would increase economic and racial concentration by concentrating low-income housing in a specific neighborhood.

The newly adopted Fair Housing Act mandated that HUD must take affirmative steps to fight segregation, or "affirmatively further fair housing." The case, *Shannon v. HUD*, compelled HUD to begin assessing the racial impact of its projects – establishing that fair housing laws protect against discriminatory effects of housing policy as well as intentional discrimination.



Independence Fellow  
George Donnelly testifies  
before Philadelphia City  
Council in favor of Good  
Cause eviction protections



A view from the top of the stairs in  
Brenda Harrison's building.

A Philadelphia  
Inquirer headline after  
the conclusion of  
*Shannon v. HUD*.

PRESENT

## Standing Up for Tenants with Disabilities

We continue to fight housing discrimination today. In 2018, we represented Brenda Harrison, a 62-year-old Philadelphia woman with multiple physical disabilities, in a suit under the Fair Housing Act against her landlord.

As a result of her disabilities, Ms. Harrison could not use the stairs. Making matters worse, the elevator in her building would go down, sometimes for weeks at a time, effectively trapping her in her apartment. When the elevators went down, Ms. Harrison exercised her rights under Pennsylvania law to withhold a portion of her rent.

Her landlord threatened to evict her and, in November 2017, added a term in her lease renewal that would bar her from deducting rent when the elevators were down. When she refused to accept this discriminatory term, her landlord terminated her lease and threatened her with eviction again.

Ms. Harrison, with the help of the Law Center, filed suit, hoping to send a message to landlords across Philadelphia: "I want them to know that they can't bully people with disabilities." In February 2019, Ms. Harrison and her landlord settled the case, with an agreement that, among other things, required the landlord to adopt written policies for all of its properties on compliance with fair housing laws.



Brenda Harrison and  
George Donnelly, an  
Independence Foundation  
Fellow at the Law Center.

FUTURE

## Power to Tenants

In Philadelphia, 1 in 14 renters face eviction each year, and many more are forced out of their homes by illegal lockouts or unsafe conditions. But very few have lawyers to help them.

In 2019, we will expand our housing work by helping tenants organize to fight the housing issues that most profoundly harm them. Working with leaders within several particularly vulnerable neighborhoods, we will help with strategy, build capacity and, where appropriate, file impact litigation. A newly hired community-based housing lawyer and a community organizer will lead this work.



Our staff attorney Dan Urevick-Ackelsberg (center)  
with tenant clients Yazmin Vasquez (left) and Gerrell  
Sampson (right).

This work is made possible by support from the Oak Foundation. The Oak Foundation is an international foundation that commits its resources to address issues of global, social and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of people who face discrimination and poverty.

OAK  
FOUNDATION



# QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL PENNSYLVANIA CHILDREN

PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

## 1971: Leading the Movement for Students with Disabilities

In 1971, thousands of Pennsylvania students with intellectual disabilities were deemed “uneducable” and turned away from public schools. Many were instead warehoused in institutions that did not provide any education at all. We sought to change this, filing a complaint against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on behalf of the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC).

In 1972, a federal judge ruled that Pennsylvania was responsible for providing free public education to all children, regardless of disability. Our case, the first of its kind, helped spark a nationwide movement.

With advocates filing a flurry of twenty-seven federal court cases challenging similar laws across the country, Congress responded in 1975 with the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IDEA establishes that students with disabilities have the right to receive a free appropriate public education. We have continued to file cases and amicus briefs seeking to protect student rights under the IDEA.



Thomas Gilhool (center), the Law Center attorney who brought the PARC case, visiting a classroom.



At Meyers High School in Wilkes-Barre, the facade and bricks are crumbling, creating a danger of falling debris. Students and staff enter underneath protective sheds.

## An Inadequate and Unequal System

Elementary school children in the William Penn School District face severe barriers: 46 elementary school classrooms in the District have more than 30 students, and some classrooms use instructional materials that are more than twenty years old. According to Jane Harbert, the William Penn superintendent: “I believe that our students have normalized their deprivation...That should not continue.”

Ms. Harbert wrote these words in a 2018 affidavit submitted in our lawsuit challenging Pennsylvania’s inequitable school funding system. With the Education Law Center of PA and O’Melveny & Myers, we filed the case in 2014 on behalf of six school districts, the NAACP of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools (PARSS). The disparities and deprivations we saw when we filed the case are still present. In July 2018, we found that state funding available for classroom expenses had actually decreased since we filed the lawsuit, and the gap in funding between low and high-wealth districts had grown.

Pennsylvania has the widest funding gap between wealthy and poor school districts in the nation. Because such a low share of education funding in Pennsylvania comes from the state—just 38 percent, 46<sup>th</sup> in the country—districts are heavily reliant on local wealth and property taxes to fund schools. Students in low-wealth districts are left to learn with outdated materials in overcrowded classrooms.

Throughout the year, we successfully battled attempts by legislative leaders to dismiss or slow down the lawsuit. By the end of the year, the Court had rejected all of these motions and, years after we filed the case, set a timeline for discovery and tentatively scheduled a trial for summer 2020.

## Fair School Funding in Pennsylvania

Our efforts to secure a fair school funding system in Pennsylvania will reach a peak in 2019 and 2020 as we prepare for a day that has been long in coming: a trial. We look forward to demonstrating in court what thousands of parents, teachers and students across the state know to be true: children in low-wealth communities are being denied the education they deserve.

***“We have long since cut any fat from our district budget. For many years now, we have been cutting through bone.”***

– Brian K. Waite, Shenandoah Valley School District Superintendent



The school funding lawsuit legal team, plaintiffs and supporters after oral argument at the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court in March 2018.

Students protest for fair school funding at a 2016 rally.







50 YEARS  
OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE

# HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMUNITIES RISING UP

PRESENT

FUTURE

## Taking on Climate Change in Philadelphia

Without local, national and worldwide intervention, the same historically disenfranchised communities that have borne the direct effects of polluting industries will have the least protection from extreme weather events and other coming climate disasters.

Right here in Philadelphia, the Southwest neighborhood of Eastwick knows the reality of climate change. Over the years, we have worked with residents to make sure that their voices are heard during a long-running redevelopment process. Community members are particularly concerned about flooding. With climate change fueling extreme weather events, this concern is more urgent than ever. Undoubtedly, climate change will play a greater and greater role over the next 50 years of our environmental justice work.



Clients from the  
Eastwick Friends  
and Neighbors  
Coalition.

**“This is only the beginning,  
because now the community  
has been given a voice to  
plan for the future.”**

– JoAnne Graham, EFNC member



Eastwick is surrounded by farms and marshes

## Protecting Stewards of Vacant Land

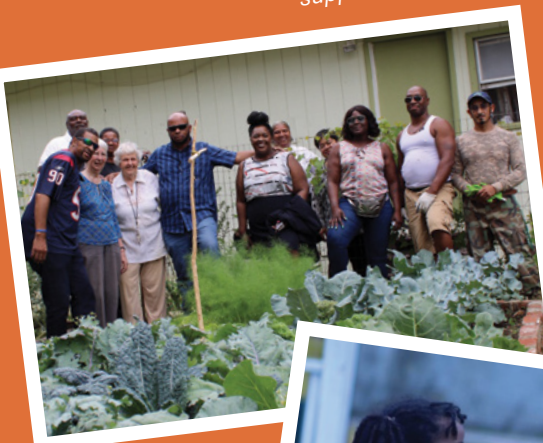
Set on vacant lots in North Philadelphia, New Jerusalem is a residential addiction recovery community run by the non-denominational nuns of the Medical Mission Sisters, with gardens that provide fresh produce to the neighborhood children and center residents.

Community spaces in Philadelphia like New Jerusalem are at risk of being lost, because the people who tend them often do not hold legal title to the land. We established the Garden Justice Legal Initiative to help these community gardeners. In March 2018, we, along with pro bono counsel at Morgan Lewis, helped New Jerusalem gain ownership of two privately owned lots through adverse possession, an ancient legal doctrine that confers ownership to those who tend to abandoned land for many years—21 in Pennsylvania. Other parcels were owned by city agencies. In May 2018, after several months of our advocacy, Philadelphia’s Vacant Properties Review Committee recommended that the city transfer to New Jerusalem the ownership of five additional parcels.

Ebony Griffin (middle) and  
gardeners, residents, and  
supporters of New Jerusalem.



Staff attorney Ebony Griffin, speaking at a  
September 2018 Vacant Land 215 training,  
leads our Garden Justice Legal Initiative.



Guests at our party  
launching Grounded  
in Philly, a new online  
tool for gardeners, at  
One Art Community  
Center.

## 1984: Forcing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Regulate Auto Emissions

In the 1970s, Pennsylvanians dealt with some of the worst smog in the country. We sued the state government under the Clean Air Act, and then entered into a consent decree with Pennsylvania state officials, who agreed to establish an emissions inspections program.

Then, violating the consent decree, Governor Dick Thornburg and the Pennsylvania legislature slammed on the brakes, shutting down the program before it began. Our environmental director Jerry Balter—who spent his career helping communities stand up to polluters—sued to enforce the agreement. The Court agreed to enforce the consent decree with a powerful tool at its disposal: it ordered the federal government to withhold federal highway funds. After a long legal battle, including appeals to the Supreme Court, Pennsylvania agreed in 1984 to implement an emissions inspection program. All of us breathe cleaner air because of this work.



Pittsburgh smog  
in the 1970s.



Jerry Balter with client  
Shannon Doyle.





50 YEARS  
OF VOTING  
RIGHTS

# OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE

PAST

## 2012: Stopping Voter ID in Pennsylvania

Viviette Applewhite, a 92-year-old African American woman, had voted in nearly every election since 1960. But a Pennsylvania law passed in 2012 could have prevented her from exercising her rights—had we not joined with other organizations to challenge this attempt at voter suppression in court.

The law required voters to present certain types of photo ID at their polling places. This requirement would have disenfranchised hundreds of thousands of people who cannot obtain ID, specifically targeting low-income, minority, elderly, and disabled voters. We challenged law as a violation of the Pennsylvania Constitution's election clause shortly after it went into effect, collaborating with the ACLU of Pennsylvania, Advancement Project, and Arnold & Porter.

At trial, the Commonwealth admitted that up to 400,000 registered voters lacked photo ID needed to comply with the proposed law. We secured a preliminary injunction that prevented the law from taking effect in 2012, and in 2014, Commonwealth Court permanently struck down the law.



Named plaintiff Viviette Applewhite and the Applewhite v. Commonwealth legal team.



Our voter plaintiffs and representatives of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania receive Thaddeus Stevens Awards at our 2018 Annual Celebration.

**"The Public Interest Law Center represents the very best qualities and ideals of a law firm devoted to the public good. One could not ask for more wonderful colleagues, professionally and personally."**

— David P. Gersch, Senior Counsel, Arnold & Porter. David was instrumental in our cases taking on Voter ID and partisan gerrymandering.

PRESENT

## A Blow to Partisan Gerrymandering

For three straight elections, Pennsylvanians voted for their Congressional representatives in blatantly gerrymandered districts drawn by the state legislature. The maps were intended to, and did, bake in a persistent 13-5 split in Pennsylvania's congressional delegation in favor of the ruling political party. This lopsided advantage continued even though Democratic and Republican voters consistently cast roughly even number of votes statewide.

In 2017, with co-counsel Arnold & Porter, we sued on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania and 18 voters representing each district in the state. In January 2018, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the map "plainly and palpably" violated the state constitution. After the legislature declined the opportunity to adopt a new map, the Court implemented its own fair map for the 2018 primary and general elections. The case was the nation's first successful challenge to partisan gerrymandering resulting in a redrawn statewide congressional map. "For the first time in over a decade, we'll have the right to vote in districts that have not been rigged," voter petitioner Thomas Rentschler said at our Annual Celebration in October 2018.



Staff attorney Ben Geffen (left) and client Thomas Rentschler, a voter petitioner in our case against partisan gerrymandering.

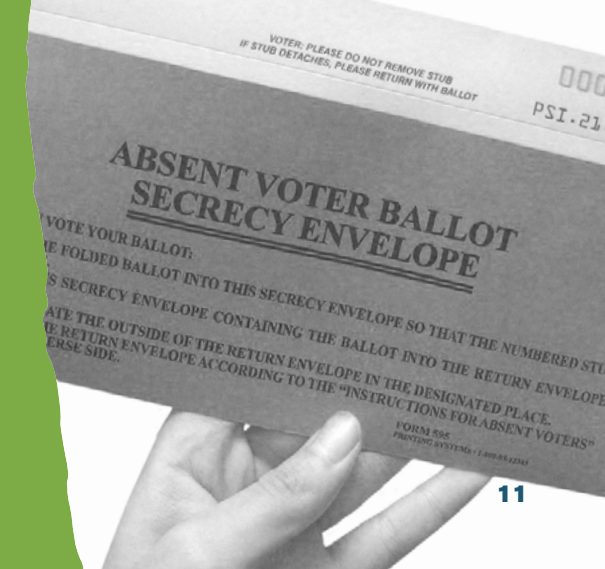


FUTURE

## Bringing Pennsylvania's Voting Laws into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Edward Ream works 24-hour shifts as an EMT in Perry County. He requested an absentee ballot on October 27, 2018, as soon as he learned he would be working on Election Day. Pennsylvania has some of the tightest deadlines for requesting and returning absentee ballots of any state. Under Pennsylvania law, county election officials must receive completed absentee ballots the Friday before Election Day, the earliest deadline in the country. Mr. Ream received his ballot from Perry County on October 31—the Wednesday before election day—and could not return the ballot through the mail by the deadline, only two days later. He was unable to vote.

Mr. Ream was far from alone. Last election, more than 4,500 completed absentee ballots were rejected in Southeastern Pennsylvania alone because they were received after the Friday deadline, according to a report from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In February 2019, we joined a challenge to Pennsylvania's absentee ballot laws along with the ACLU of Pennsylvania, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and pro bono counsel from Simpson Thacher on behalf of nine voters, including Mr. Ream.







50 YEARS  
OF EMPLOYMENT

FUTURE

# ENDING DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

PRESENT

PAST

## 1974: Gender Discrimination in the Philadelphia Police Department

In the 1970s, Penelope Brace challenged the Philadelphia Police Department's refusal to hire women as police officers. We represented her in court.

The prevailing attitude of Police Department leadership was no secret. In a report filed in the case, *Women as Police Officers*, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neil wrote: "Female officers are not as effective as male officers ... Women are not physically capable of handling violent incidents on patrol... women are less likely to take charge at an incident."

At trial in 1976, a federal judge ordered the Department to hire one-hundred new female officers, and to conduct a study on their performance. Later, reviewing the results of this study, the judge determined that there was no basis in fact for the Philadelphia Police Department's arguments. Today, 27% of Philadelphia police officers are women, nearly twice the national average.



Penelope Brace on her first day as a police detective



Frank Finch III, the lawyer who filed the case, passed away in 2018.

**"The Law Center was fortunate to have such an exemplar of the spirit of justice on its staff. He was an outstanding member of our alumni community."**

- Michael Churchill, who worked with Frank.

## Helping People with Disabilities Thrive in the Workforce

Like all young adults, students with disabilities need to be fully prepared for life after high school in order to thrive. Federal and state law requires schools to provide transition services to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to help them prepare for work, further education, or independent living starting at age 14. Unfortunately, many parents and educators do not know about this right, and as a result, many students do not receive the preparation they need.

We represent students, provide legal advice, and train parents and other advocates for students about what these services are and how to secure them. In 2018, we reached 399 parents, advocates and teachers.



Our Greenberg Traurig Equal Justice Works fellow Darlene Hemerka speaks at the 2018 Disability Inclusion Summit in Philadelphia.



During the 1970s and 1980s, we filed multiple cases fighting racial discrimination in the US steel industry.

## Eliminate Discrimination Against Job-Seekers with Criminal Records

Frank Long, a 55-year-old Philadelphian and a commercially licensed bus driver, received a job offer from SEPTA in 2014. After reviewing a criminal background check, SEPTA rescinded the offer based on a drug-related conviction from 15 years before. SEPTA, the sixth largest transportation authority in the country, would consistently reject job applicants based on old, unrelated criminal records.

Returning citizens face a staggering 27 percent unemployment rate nationwide. One 2002 survey of employers found that more than 60 percent would probably not hire an applicant with any criminal history at all. Black and Hispanic communities, which already face the disproportionate burden of mass incarceration, are particularly hard-hit by this type of discrimination.

Mr. Long and two other job-seekers filed a federal class action lawsuit against SEPTA, as representatives of all job applicants who were categorically barred from employment because of old, unrelated convictions. We are co-counsel with Outen & Golden LLP, Willig, Williams & Davidson, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity. In 2018, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a dismissal by the District Court and held in a precedential opinion that job applicants have a federal right to review and respond to background check reports before being denied employment. The case, *Long v. SEPTA*, was sent back to District Court for further proceedings. We look forward to the chance to enforce the legal protections for job seekers with criminal histories.







50 YEARS  
OF HEALTHCARE

# REMOVING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO HEALTHCARE

PAST

## 2005: Medical and Dental Care for Children in Florida

In the early 2000s, the healthcare system for millions of poor and disabled children in Florida was in crisis. In 2005, we filed a case on behalf of the Florida Pediatric Society, the Florida Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, and twelve families who were enrolled in Florida's Medicaid program. The court certified the case as a class action on behalf of approximately two million children.

During a bench trial, we proved, together with co-counsel from Boies Schiller Flexner LLP, that hundreds of thousands of children, including newborns, did not receive even one of the check-ups they need in a year. To give one stark example, 190,000 one- and two-year-olds missed lead screenings that they should have received. In 2014 the court entered findings of fact and conclusions of law, agreeing that Florida's Medicaid program was not delivering the care to children required by federal law.

The parties settled in 2016 with an agreement that has significantly increased the numbers of physicians and dentists who will accept Medicaid patients. As a result, hundreds of thousands more children in Florida have access to high-quality medical and dental care. We continue to monitor Florida's implementation of this settlement agreement.



*The Gorenflo family, whose two sons were plaintiffs in the case.*



## Gun Violence in Philadelphia: a Health Crisis

In Philadelphia, gun violence is an epidemic. Last year, in addition to the 249 Philadelphians killed in shootings, over 1,100 people were shot and survived, leaving many with lifelong disabilities. This violence does not affect everyone in the city equally: nearly 85 percent of shooting victims last year were black, and gun violence is the leading cause of death for black men and youth in Philadelphia between the ages of 15 and 34.

The majority of this violence is carried out with easily accessible handguns. In 2018 we developed new legal theories for regulating firearms under Pennsylvania's current gun laws, which have blocked virtually all attempts at local gun control.

PRESENT

FUTURE

## Protecting and Preserving the Promise of Medicaid

On June 7, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson laid out his vision for Medicaid, a program for low income Americans, children and people with disabilities: "[w]hatever we do or hope to do depends upon the health of our people. We cannot be satisfied until all Americans have available to them the best medical treatment that the best medical men can devise."

Although this program is now 54 years old, its bold plan remains a work in progress.

Medicaid faces ongoing attacks. Proposed work requirements threaten to reduce participation. State programs do not attract enough providers to meet demand. We will continue to be vigilant in enforcing the law's requirements and fighting legislative efforts to destroy this essential healthcare program.





# THINKING OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM

PAST

## Shining a Light on Police Brutality in 1970s Philadelphia

In the early 1970s, police brutality was pervasive in Philadelphia, baked into the culture of the Police Department. We joined the Coalition Against Police Abuse, serving as a legal clearinghouse for police brutality cases. With our help, lawyers filed over 230 charges against police officers in 1976 alone, and in collaboration with the NAACP, held highly visible public hearings.

Mayor Frank Rizzo described our efforts as “a liberal-leftist conspiracy” to “tear this city down by getting Rizzo and (Police Commissioner Joseph) O’Neill” after we joined other attorneys to discuss the issue with the Department of Justice. Eventually, our advocacy did lead to meaningful change: in 1980, Mayor William Green adopted new police disciplinary rules and appointed a commissioner to enforce them.



In the 1980s, we worked closely with Disabled in Action and other advocacy groups in their efforts to secure public transportation that people with disabilities could use.



In the 1990s, we collaborated with community organizations in Chester, Pennsylvania to fight environmental racism and the concentration of polluting facilities in this low-income, African American community.

PRESENT

## Take Action Philly

We founded Take Action Philly with lawyers from the City of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Bar Association, ACLU-PA, HIAS, Community Legal Services, and the Mazzoni Center in early 2017 as a space for Philadelphia lawyers to gather and provide avenues to fight new threats from a new administration facing people in Philadelphia.

That year, Take Action Philly organized hundreds of lawyers to represent individuals in immigration proceedings, and it organized lawyers to fight back Congressional threats to Medicaid. In 2018, the group organized a serious in-depth examination of race and policing; then organized advocacy in Philadelphia against proposed changes to immigration rules (the Public Charge rule) that were already having a chilling effect on immigrants’ use of medical care and other basic needs.

#TakeActionPhilly



In 2008, we joined with other disability rights experts and activists to protest a segregated school for students with disabilities newly opened in Central Pennsylvania.

FUTURE

## A Clean Slate for Eviction

For low-income tenants, any contact with the eviction process results in a blemish on their records, making it even harder for them to find new housing, even when they win their eviction cases. We are advocating for new laws that require courts to expunge certain eviction records to give tenants a chance to make a new start.



Our housing clients testifying before City Council.



# SEEING CHANGE THROUGH

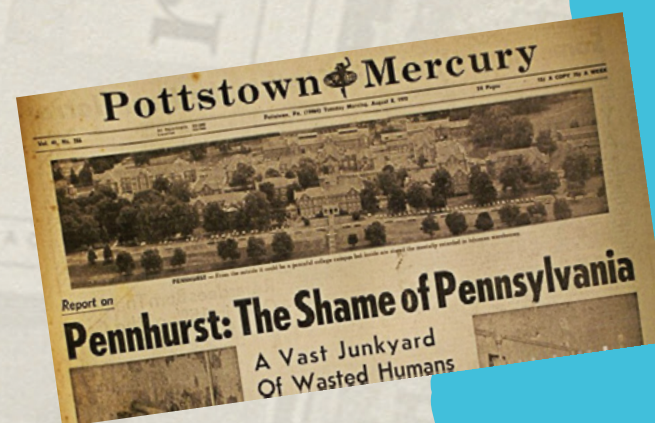
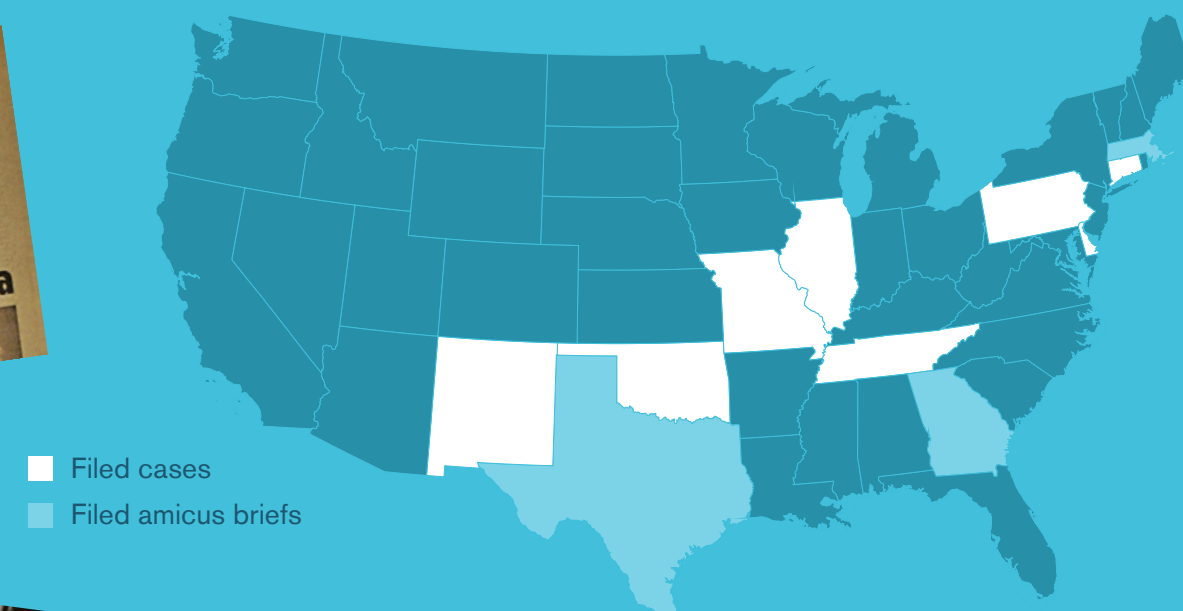
# The Movement for Community-Based Services for People with Disabilities

The barriers we take on are formidable and entrenched. Persistence has always been a key element in our success. The decades-long fight to secure community-based services for people with disabilities is one example. This work began when our clients joined a class-action complaint, *Halderman v. Pennhurst*, filed by residents challenging the horrendous conditions at Pennhurst State School and Hospital, a large institution where Pennsylvania warehoused and segregated thousands of people with developmental disabilities. At Pennhurst, residents were often needlessly restrained, denied educational services, and abused by staff in prison-like conditions.

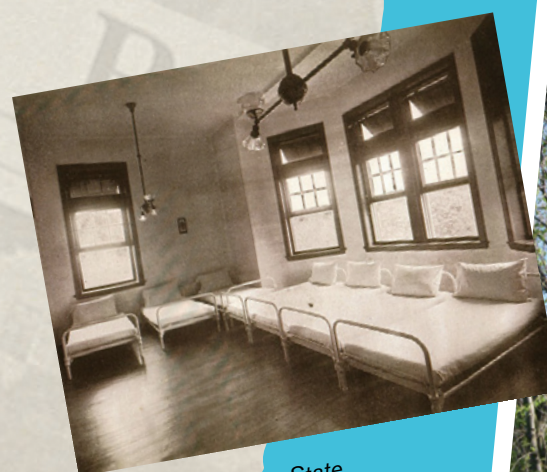
Our lawsuit alleged that this segregation discriminated against the Pennhurst residents in violation of their constitutional rights. In 1977, U.S. District Court Judge Raymond Broderick agreed with us and issued an order requiring the state to transition residents from this isolated institutional setting to homes in the community with appropriate services. Then, a decade of appeals ensued, including three appearances in the United States Supreme Court. In the end, we reached a settlement in 1986 to close the facility, and Pennhurst closed its doors a year later. Even then, the case continued as we continued to monitor the state's progress, filing motions to enforce the quality of community services for another 10 years.

The Pennhurst case sparked a national movement for community-based services. We and others filed additional class action lawsuits in Pennsylvania and across the country over a period of almost 40 years. Today, thousands of people more fully experience and contribute to community life. We continue to support efforts furthering the dignity, integration, and full participation of people with disabilities in Pennsylvania and beyond.

*We litigated cases advancing community-based services for people with disabilities in eight states over a period of 37 years, and filed amicus briefs in successful cases in three other states.*



*The dining hall at Pennhurst State School and Hospital.*

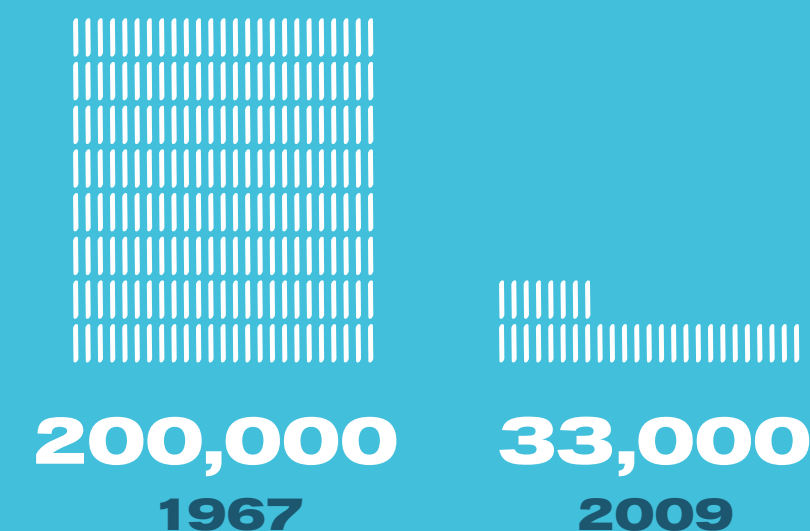


Beds in Pennhurst State School and Hospital



*In 2010, we joined state officials and advocates for the unveiling of a historic marker commemorating the closure of Pennhurst and the movement for community-based services.*

## Number of people with disabilities housed in large state-run institutions



Source: National Council on Disability



# Pro-Bono Attorneys

## PEOPLE IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE



*"I had the privilege of working with the Public Interest Law Center on a growing issue in Philadelphia – deed fraud. When Alicia Welcome was notified that the garden next to her home, which she had maintained for over twenty-five years, was about to be turned into a condominium, she reached out to the Public Interest Law Center, who then asked Reed Smith for help.*

*With the help of a great team at Reed Smith, I was able to secure a preliminary injunction, block the bulldozer and eventually transfer title to the garden to Ms. Welcome. While I have been committed to pro bono service my entire legal career, I was thrilled that this project gave me the opportunity to give back locally; Ms. Welcome's beautiful garden is only a few blocks from my home."*

– Alexis Cocco, Reed Smith LLP

### 2018 PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

#### Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP

- Mira Baylson

#### Arnold & Porter

- Andrew Bergman
- Lindsey Carson
- John Cella
- John Freedman
- David Gersch
- Daniel Jacobson
- R. Stanton Jones
- Helen Mayer Clark
- Steven Mayer
- Sara Murphy
- John Robinson
- Troy Strunkey
- Elisabeth Theodore
- Jennifer Wieboldt
- Dylan Young

#### Ballard Spahr LLP

- Patricia Cramer
- Thomas Eshelman
- Wendi Kotzen
- Michael McDonald
- Paul Safier
- Michael Sklaroff
- Matthew White

#### Berney & Sang

- David Berney
- Kevin Golembiewski

#### Blank Rome LLP

- Alexander Berman
- Alex Hassid
- Domingo Llagostera
- Peter Soloff

#### Boies Schiller Flexner LLP

- Carl Goldfarb
- Stuart Singer

#### Chimicles & Tikellis LLP

- Nicholas Chimicles
- Alison Gabe Gushue

#### Cuddy Law Firm

- Joseph Sulpizio

#### Dechert LLP

- Judah Bellin
- Steven Bizar
- Diane Siegel Danoff
- George Gordon
- Giovanni Insana
- Ryan Moore
- Derek Runyan
- Barton Winokur
- Catherine Yun

#### DLA Piper

- John Huh

#### Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

- Victoria Andrews
- Jordan DiPinto
- Lucas Michelen
- Chanda Miller
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*"During my entire tenure with the Board, I have been witness to the power of passionate, caring protectors of justice that make up the Law Center's Staff. I have also witnessed how, in partnership with individuals in our communities who were willing to stand up for themselves and others, the Law Center has changed the lives of people in our Community forever."*

*In this, our 50th year, we seek to continue that fight and elevate our impact. We take pride in this moment today to celebrate the work we have done, knowing tomorrow there is still so much more to do."*

– Lea Knight, Board Chair 2017-2019

Board members Richard Pasquier and Matthew Glazer (left) with guests at our 2018 Annual Event.



Former Board Chair Lea Knight (right) with former board member Stacy Hawkins at our 2018 Annual Event, Voting is Our Superpower.

Former Board Chair Bill Ewing speaking at a Law Center event.



Board member Nicholas Chimicles (second from right) with guests at our 2018 Annual Event.



Board Chair Ellen Friedell speaking with Thaddeus Stevens Award Honoree Thomas Schmidt at our 2013 Annual Event.

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## Remembering Barbara Grimaldi

All of us at the Public Interest Law Center are mourning the loss of our colleague and dear friend, Barbara Grimaldi, on June 14, 2019. She was 32. Barbara began working with us in 2013 and served for several years as our director of development and communications. Those who had the fortune of knowing and working with Barbara will remember her kindness, generosity of spirit, courage, strategic brilliance, and deep commitment to the people we serve.

On June 20th, Philadelphia City Council recognized Barbara with a citation highlighting her work advancing justice and her inspirational passion. Excerpts from the citation, introduced by Councilmember Helen Gym, are below.

*Whereas, Barb Grimaldi, known endearingly as Barbie by her friends and family, devoted her talents to working on the important moral issues of our time and to making Philadelphia a more just city; her impact was remarkable and will continue to benefit countless people for years to come; and*

*Whereas, Barb's commitment to her work advancing justice bore immense success in rallying public support and packing courtrooms, and her talent for writing and distilling complex legal concepts effectively brought readers into the courtroom with her, such as when she earned a fan following for her updates on PILC's gerrymandering trial with many readers waiting each night for her blog's next installment; and*

*Whereas, above and beyond her duties, Barb was a cherished friend, mentor and vital support system to everyone who knew and worked with her; her colleagues describe her as brilliant, talented, passionate, smart, empathetic, committed, kind, and generous, with a work ethic and organizational skills that were epic, and "the best boss ever"; and*

*Whereas, Barb was both fierce and resilient in her fight against cancer, bravely taking on a public platform to elevate the importance of universal access to healthcare as a human right at a critical time for our nation, all the while managing to be a profound force of courage and care for those around her; and*

*Whereas, rivaling Barb's serious commitment to justice and civil rights was her sense of joy and her relentless dedication to the quest for the best southern-style biscuits in Philadelphia, and to debates of vital questions such as whether mac and cheese counts as a casserole and whether axe throwing is an inherently dangerous activity for liability purposes; and*

*Whereas, she is remembered by those who knew and loved her as the embodiment of all that is right with this world, and as someone who made it easy to believe in goodness and kindness; and*

*Therefore, by virtue of this Citation, the Council of the City of Philadelphia does hereby honor Barbara Grimaldi and recognize her life and legacy, especially her passionate dedication to transformative advocacy advancing justice and civil rights.*



*"She was the one who always reminded us of the exact experience that [the people we serve] were having. She always asked, 'Why are we doing this? What is it accomplishing? How can this make our clients' lives better?'"*

– Jennifer Clarke, Executive Director



*"She could connect a legal theory to the fundamental reason why we were bringing a case to begin with."*

– Dan Urevick-Ackelsberg, Staff Attorney

## The Barbara Christine Macholz Grimaldi Memorial Fund

Contributions in honor of Barbara will be placed in the Barbara Christine Macholz Grimaldi Memorial Fund, used to support our work removing systemic barriers to healthcare.



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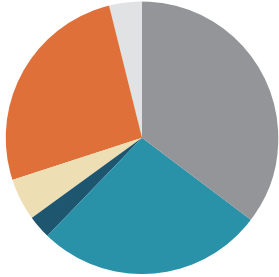
FINANCIALS

January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

SUMMARY OF REVENUE & EXPENSES\*

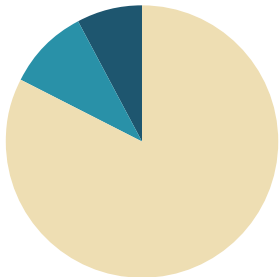
REVENUE

Grants & Contributions	\$878,445
Legal Community & Other Support	\$668,925
Fee Awards	\$72,033
Contracts & Honorarium	\$121,218
In-Kind Legal Services	\$647,870
Investment Income	\$92,872
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,481,363</b>



EXPENSES

Program Services	\$1,817,877
General & Administrative	\$216,048
Fundraising	\$166,990
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,200,915</b>



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Current Assets	\$1,185,070
Other Assets	\$1,722,236
Fixed Assets (net of depreciation)	\$6,109
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,907,306</b>
Current Liabilities	\$147,099
Prior Year Net Assets	\$2,611,992
Current Year Change	\$148,215
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,907,306</b>
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,896,062

\*Audited financial reports are available on our website

The Next 50 Years  
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LEGACY?**

As we celebrate a half century in pursuit of justice, we look ahead to the next 50 years. When you designate a gift to the Law Center in your estate or planned giving, our work becomes a part of your legacy, too. You ensure equality and access for all people, and you ensure that civil rights will be secured against any challenge today or in the future.

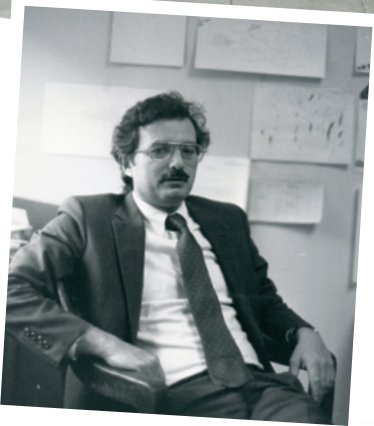
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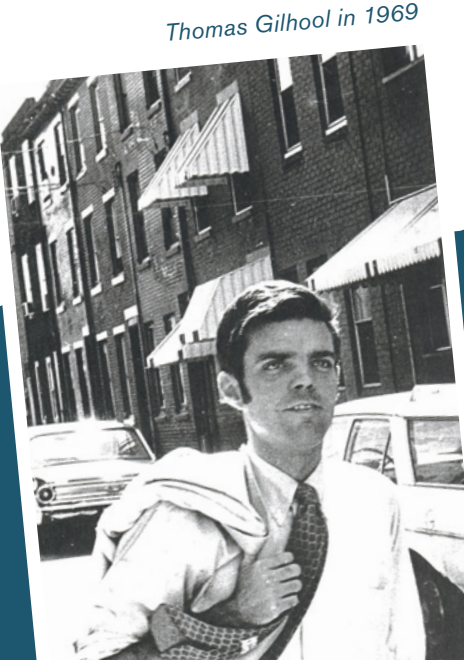
Michael Churchill in the 1980s



Ned Wolf in 1972 in front of the Fairmont Apartments.



Our client Lydia Gaskin in our case for integration of students with disabilities within public school classrooms.



Thomas Gilhool in 1969

**The Thomas K. Gilhool Disability Rights Center Fund**

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