

NEWS FROM OUR HOUSE

SPRING 2020

The Children's LAW Center of Connecticut • Protecting Children & Strengthening Families



The Children's
LAW
Center

30 ARBOR STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06106

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<http://www.clcct.org>

SUPPORT OUR WORK
www.clcct.org/support

CLC Continues to Provide Essential Services Throughout the COVID-19 Crisis

Although CLC's physical offices remain closed, we continue to provide services to the families and community we serve.

Many of our representation cases require ongoing monitoring and negotiation services throughout this crisis. Remember, these cases are already deemed high conflict. Additional pressure brought to bear by the pandemic only makes things worse for the kids we represent.

Bill and Stacy's relationship was horrible (family names are changed for privacy). Allegations made by Stacy resulted in a criminal investigation of Bill. Although there was no evidence to support Stacy's allegations, it took months for the police to resolve the case. In the meantime, a restraining order kept Bill away from their two daughters, Caroline and Amelia, ages 7 and 6, for months. Staff Attorney David Coughlin was appointed by the court to represent the girls. After speaking with the police, DCF, Stacy, Bill and, most importantly, Caroline and Amelia, David recommended that the restraining order be lifted and a gradual reunification plan begin. Bill started supervised visits and eventually moved on to visits in a public place – a playground nearby. Then COVID-19 hit and the world shut down. David remained actively involved with this family throughout with almost daily phone calls. He brokered agreements between Bill and Stacy that included transition times and appropriate visitation places. Visits at Bill's home began and eventually overnights. Bill and Stacy began to talk regularly. David kept them focused on the girls. They started sharing homeschool responsibilities. They talked about a birthday party for Caroline. Bill installed a trampoline in his yard and sent a video to Stacy to share with the girls. They were so excited for their next visit. Given the stay home, stay safe policies, Bill and Stacy were happy to have each other to share the responsibilities and they made changes to their schedule based on the kids' needs. David suggested they no longer needed him to continue to monitor their conversations or to broker agreements. They agreed. David drew up an agreement for a flexible shared parenting plan. Bill and Stacy signed and the agreement was submitted electronically with the Court. Happily, David continues to receive weekly videos of Caroline and Amelia playing at Dad's.



Now, more than ever, the work we do is essential to help the children we represent maintain healthy relationships with their parents. We are as busy as ever.

LAWLINE REMAINS OPEN... 1-888-LAW-DOOR (529-3667).

MEDIATION SERVICES CONTINUE AND ARE AVAILABLE VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING.

COVID-19 has strained the Law Center's finances. We can't help families without your continued support. Please help us continue to provide these essential services to Connecticut's families with a donation of any size.

Visit <http://www.clcct.org/support> for information on how you can support CLC during this time.

Why I love CLC: Patricia Pheanious

Pat Wilson Pheanious is a Connecticut State Representative from District 53; Ashford, Tolland and Willington, and she is also an active and involved member of The Children's Law Center family. Pat holds a Master's Degree in Social Work as well as a Juris Doctor of Law. When Pat was drawn to CLC some 25 years ago, it's because "it was so wonderful to see an organization that understood the importance of combining those two fields of practice, particularly when dealing with vulnerable children." It has been nearly 27 years since The Children's Law Center was founded and Pat Pheanious continues to be an important supporter, serving as a dedicated Board Member since 2014.



Initially, Pat was particularly interested in CLC's flagship program, Legal Representation. Established in 1993, it provides court-appointed legal counsel to low income children whose parents are embroiled in high conflict family court disputes involving custody, divorce and visitation. But for Pat, there are many things she loves about CLC. In the time since she first became involved, CLC has added the Families in Transition program (FIT) that provides sliding-fee scale family mediation and parenting education services to low and middle-income families. FIT mediation is an alternative to costly, time consuming and often harmful litigation. CLC also offers a free telephone helpline service, the Children's Law Line, which Pat views as an extremely important service: "It's a [help] line that anyone can call, even anonymously; to get answers to the questions they have about the legal process or to receive legal advice from the staff attorneys." Pat's affinity for the Law Line comes from experience with the current system and she knows that for most callers, the Law Line is the first line of information into the complex legal system that often overwhelms even the most experienced advocate. The Law Line gives callers a clear understanding of their legal issues and options and provides a path to resolving the issues callers confront – a path to taking the necessary steps to protect the children in their care. There are few places people can turn to receive help in resolving these issues, which is why Pat views CLC's Law Line as an essential service.

For Pat Pheanious, there exists a deep appreciation for the work CLC does. The Children's Law Center is "an extremely well run organization with very hard working attorneys, social workers and staffers that really tend to the families' needs, not just to the problem but to the people, which is critically important." And of course CLC has a deep appreciation for the support of people like Pat Pheanious, people who dedicate their time and boundless energy to make The Children's Law Center as successful as it is. Thank you, Pat for your kind words and to all of CLC's dedicated supporters.

Updates from CLC

Thank you to our amazing community that has continued to show The Children's Law Center support during the COVID-19 crisis. We are working hard to keep our doors open to serve indigent children.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we have made the decision to cancel many of our in person fundraising events. Visit clct.org/events for updates on upcoming events and for new virtual events we're hosting.

Despite our office being physically closed, our attorneys and staff have been working tirelessly to provide support to families during COVID-19 as family contentions have increased with the onset of the pandemic.

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Stay tuned!!



The Children's Law Center's Annual Gala November 2020

Even 2020 vision could not have foreseen this coming! Our Gala is going to look a little different this year. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for announcements on what we have in store for our 2020 Annual Gala.

Birdies for Charity -- Now through June 28th

The Children's Law Center is excited to announce our fundraising partnership with the 2020 Travelers Championship Birdies for Charity program!

As always, the Travelers Championship will donate 100% of your gift to our organization, PLUS an additional 15% bonus match on every dollar raised!

The children we serve live in unstable home environments and are likely to be in greater jeopardy due to the impact of COVID-19. Your donation will help The Children's Law Center continue to operate, now and for the foreseeable future, as we focus on changing the way we interact with the people we serve, the public and each other.

We appreciate your support, as it is crucial to our success. Thank you.



PLEASE NOTE

If you choose to donate to Birdies For Charity please submit or postmark all donations to the Travelers Championship by Sunday, June 28 at 6:00 p.m.

All checks written out to Travelers Championship MUST be accompanied by the form below. All donations made through Birdies for Charity are tax deductible.



Please make checks payable to "Travelers Championship"

2020 BIRDIES FOR CHARITY DONATION FORM



TRAVELERS
CHAMPIONSHIP

Charity of Choice: The Children's LAW Center

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ **No contact information will be used for solicitation.*

Email: _____ **An email must be provided to receive receipt of your donation.*

Birdies for Charity
Supporting Sponsors



Donation enclosed in the
amount of: \$ _____

Minimum of \$10.00

MAIL YOUR DONATION TO:
Travelers Championship, ATTN: Birdies for Charity
90 State House Square, 11th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103

Checks should be made
payable to
"Travelers Championship"

In Memory of Howard Krieger

In early 2020, we lost Dr. Howard Krieger much too soon. Howard was kindness and generosity personified and we at the Children's Law Center were fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him. Over many years, a mutual respect developed through our professional relationship and this grew into a friendship that was invaluable. Howard was a colleague and a friend who generously contributed his time and knowledge for the benefit of the Children's Law Center's low income families. He added so much value not only to the work we do but also to the community at large. Howard touched the lives of everyone he met in a positive way and, in that sense, he will never truly leave us.

Thank you, Howard.





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Amazon Smile: Simply select CLC as your nonprofit of choice and shop www.smile.amazon.com.

Become a Sponsor: Visit our website to find out about more ways to get involved!

Matching Gifts: Many employers encourage giving by offering matching gift options. Ask your employer about this easy way to grow your donation.

Bequests: Be a hero to CT children—consider a legacy gift. For information, contact Deb at deb@clcct.org.