

COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROJECT

CJP HIGHLIGHTS

June 2016

The Community Justice Project has offices in Harrisburg, Hazleton, Pittsburgh, and Reading. Below are some recent highlights:

Pittsburgh Office Beats Motion to Dismiss in Fair Housing Act Case:

Several months ago, CJP's Pittsburgh office filed a federal lawsuit challenging unlawful familial status discrimination by a landlord under the Fair Housing Act. Recently, the court denied the defendant's motion to dismiss.

Hazleton Office Challenges Disparate School Discipline:

In April 2016, our Hazleton office began representing the mother of a sixth grade student in a civil rights complaint with the Department of Education against a local school district, alleging that the school district over-polices and disparately disciplines Hispanic students. We hope this complaint will force the school district to reform its discipline practices so that it no longer over-disciplines Hispanic children.

Reading Office Helps Asylum Applicant Avoid Removal of her Children:

Our Reading office successfully helped a client prevent Children and Youth Services ("CYS") from taking custody of her three young children. We represent this client and her children in a pending asylum application based on the extreme domestic violence she suffered in her home country. Late one afternoon, we received a call from our client's CYS caseworker stating that our client's landlord had locked her out of her apartment, and that if she did not find housing by 5pm, CYS would have to take custody of her children. We sprung to action, finding an emergency shelter willing to accept our client and her children. Meanwhile, we spoke with our client, who relayed that the lockout had been illegal, that the police had helped her regain possession of her apartment, and that she had relatives in the area she could stay with if need be. Advocating on her behalf with CYS, we pointed out that our client had housing as well as several alternative options. CYS eventually agreed to allow her children to remain with their mother. We feared that had CYS taken custody of the children, it would have taken our client months or years to get them back.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Over the past several years, CJP's regular sources of support, including IOLTA funds, have been at historically low levels. You and/or your firm's contribution will go a long way in providing effective legal assistance to protect the basic needs and rights of Pennsylvania's poor families and low-wage workers and to assist them in their efforts to become self-sufficient. Please consider making a gift to:

Community Justice Project, 118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Please also consider naming the Community Justice Project for *cy pres* awards/class action residuals.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about CJP, please contact Marielle Macher at mmacher@cjplaw.org or 717-236-9486, ext. 214.