

Colorado Lawyers Committee

Pro bono legal advocacy for children and the underserved

2021 Annual Lunch Recap

On October 21, 2021, almost 400 lawyers and community leaders gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of Colorado Lawyers Committee volunteer attorneys and law firms, many of which were honored at the 2021 Awards Luncheon. During 2019 and 2020, more than 2,000 volunteers donated more than 15,000 hours and over \$6 million worth of time through the Colorado Lawyers Committee's 29 active projects in the areas of Children's Rights & Education, Civil & Criminal Law, Poverty & Public Benefits, Community Development, and Immigration. **Keynote speaker Lee Gelernt**, Deputy Director of the American Civil Liberties Union Immigrants' Rights Project and Director of the project's Access to the Courts Program, inspired the luncheon audience.



photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



OUTSTANDING SUSTAINED CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Peter Schwartz (Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP) received the Outstanding Sustained Contribution Award for his longstanding support and extensive contributions to the work of the Colorado Lawyers Committee.

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Board of Directors selected **The Harris Law Firm** as the Colorado Lawyers Committee Law Firm of the Year.

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

This year's Team of the Year Award is the **Hate Crimes National Team** which includes Elizabeth Froehlke (Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti, LLP), Beth Ann Lennon (Sherman & Howard L.L.C.), John M. McHugh (Fennemore), Tarek F. M. Saad (Crowell & Moring LLP), Christine Snider (Ballard Spahr LLP), Valeria Spencer (U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Colorado), Phyllis V. Wan (Holland & Hart LLP), and Mark D. Wilding (Fortis Law Partners LLC).

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



PANDEMIC HEROES AWARD

This year, the CLC created a special award to honor volunteers for their work during the pandemic. The 2021 Pandemic Heroes Award was presented to the **Colorado COVID Legal Relief Steering Committee & Frequent Volunteers** which includes the volunteers for their work during the pandemic: Roger C. Adams (Adams Law, LLC), China Califf (Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce), Katayoun A. Donnelly (Azizpour Donnelly LLC), Howard M. Haenel (Antonio Bates Bernard PC), Brad Hamilton (Jones & Keller, P.C.), Michelle L. Harden (Messner

Reeves LLP), Cynthia T. Kennedy (Kennedy Law Firm), Nikki Maloney (CO Office of Economic Development and International Trade), Nathan J. Moore (Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP), David Padrino (formerly the Office of the Colorado Attorney General), Hester M. Parrot (Ballard Spahr LLP), Carolyn S. Powell (MCR Development), Chalysse Robinson (Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP), Chris Rodgers (Colorado SEO Pros), Peter H. Schwartz (Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP), Rodney W. Stieger (Stinson LLP), Lorri Strizich (Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP), Keith Trammell (Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP), Samuel D. Walker.

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC

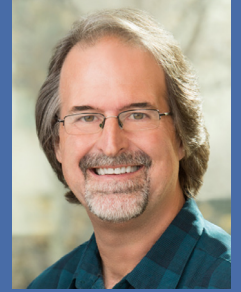
2021 Annual Lunch Recap (cont.)



SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

Special Recognition Awards were presented to: **Michelle Berge** (Denver Public Schools) for her coordination and administration of Greeley Legal Night Clinic, and to **Paul Hartmann** (Hartmannphoto, LLC) for his pro bono photography contributions during the last ten years. Paul's beautiful photos are displayed in our Annual Report and on our website.

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



Chair's Roundtable Reception



The annual Chair's Roundtable Reception took place on September 22nd on the rooftop deck at Polsinelli PC. Thank you to Polsinelli PC for hosting. It was a great event. Thank you to all who attended! **The Chair's Roundtable** is a group of individuals who show their support for the Colorado Lawyers Committee through a personal contribution of \$1,000 per year for five years. If you are interested in joining the Chair's Roundtable, please contact [Connie Talmage](#).

photos courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



Task Force Updates

COLORADO SMALL BUSINESS LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Beginning in 2020, the Colorado Lawyers Committee participated in a very effective partnership, Colorado COVID Legal Relief ([CCLR](#)), that served over 250 small businesses struggling during the first year of the pandemic. In July 2021, the CLC led the creation of a new long-term partnership ([Colorado Small Business Legal Assistance Program](#)) to assist small businesses (primarily those with 10 or fewer employees) with their economic recovery and success. Volunteer attorneys provide one hour of free legal assistance to answer questions from small businesses on a range of legal issues. The program is housed at the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade. The other program partners are the Colorado and Denver Bar Associations, the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado, the Sam Cary Bar Association, the Association of Corporate Counsel-Colorado Chapter, the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association, the Colorado Women's Bar Association, and Legal Entrepreneurs for Justice. Almost 100 volunteer attorneys have already agreed to participate. If you want to participate, you can [sign up here](#).



FOSTER CARE SUBCOMMITTEE

In 2018, this subcommittee of the CLC Children's Task Force partnered with Children's Rights, a national nonprofit which advocates on behalf of abused and neglected children throughout the country, to explore possible litigation regarding the State's failure to provide appropriate placements and mental health services to youth involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The Subcommittee was concerned that these youth were being housed illegally in detention facilities after their release had been ordered and were not receiving adequate mental health support. In 2021, the Colorado legislature passed a bill that will likely resolve the placement issues raised by the Subcommittee. The State also recently implemented new policies and procedures regarding mental health which they think will reduce the problems they have faced in the past. After many months of negotiation with the State, the Subcommittee agreed to withdraw its concerns; Children's Rights will monitor the State's progress.

Task Force Updates (cont.)

HATE CRIMES EDUCATION TASK FORCE

For more than 27 years, volunteers have presented an educational program on Colorado's Hate/ Bias Motivated Crimes Statutes to schools and community groups around the state. Using a fictional trial format involving a high-school student charged with hate crimes against a Muslim teacher, a perceived LGBT student and others (including by way of a social media threat), the presentation empowers student participants to act as jurors to improve their community culture in areas concerning discrimination, stereotyping, bias and inclusion and to prevent the severe harm caused by hateful slurs and biased-motivated actions. While the pandemic significantly reduced the number of opportunities to present the Hate Crimes Program in person, the Task Force was able to modify the program and has offered it virtually since 2020. The team is ready to provide a virtual or in person presentation to any school that is interested. If you know of schools that might want this free program, please contact [Connie Talmage](#) or refer them to the [CLC website](#).



EDUCATION TASK FORCE

The Education Task Force met recently and will be working through four subcommittees for the near future: The Special Education Subcommittee is exploring challenges to the State's limited funding for special education programs. The School Discipline Subcommittee will explore possible interventions in the school to prison pipeline that disproportionately impacts students of color. The Charter School Subcommittee will examine the status of charter schools in Colorado and whether they satisfy legal requirements for serving students with disabilities. The School Finance Subcommittee is exploring possible action to assure that schools are adequately and fairly funded. If you're interested in joining one of these subcommittees, please contact [Connie Talmage](#).

IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE

The Immigration Task Force has been very busy. The Task Force recently created a new subcommittee to assist with the legal needs of Afghan refugees; Denver is expecting to receive around 2,000 Afghans in the coming months, many of whom will need help with asylum and other applications. The Task Force also recently partnered with Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network to offer a virtual training for non-immigration attorneys who want to represent families seeking asylum before the Denver Immigration Court. In May 2021, the Department of Justice selected Denver as one of just eleven cities across the U.S. to pilot an expedited docket for newly arrived asylum-seeking families. With no appointed counsel in immigration proceedings, most families are now forced to navigate these high-stakes, complex and adversarial proceedings entirely on their own. The training is free for attorneys who agree to take a pro bono case through RMIAN. Visit the [CLC website](#) for more information.



RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

In response to recent events in our country, including the tragic death of George Floyd and so many more, the Colorado Lawyers Committee formed the Racial Justice Task Force in the Summer of 2020, in order to reassess our internal and external racial justice practices. Since it was formed, the Task Force has focused primarily on CLC internal structure and operations, to assure we are doing all we can in support of racial justice. The Task Force has focused on strengthening our relationships with the specialty bar associations (all of whom have a representative on the CLC Board) and expanding our outreach to diversity organizations at the law schools (so they are aware of CLC internship and volunteer opportunities). The Task Force plans to survey CLC contributing firms regarding best EDI practices and is also identifying minority law firms not currently active in the CLC. In September 2021, the Task Force co-sponsored, with the CLC Young Lawyers Division, a highly successful YLD Racial Justice Summit on the topic of racism in the criminal justice system. If you missed the event, you can access the Zoom recording on [the CLC website](#). A second Summit is planned for September 2022 on the issue of voting rights. If you're interested in joining this Task Force, please contact [Connie Talmage](#).

Task Force Updates (cont.)

TAYLOR RANCH LITIGATION

The Taylor Ranch litigation (*Lobato v. Taylor*) involves the right of landowners in the San Luis Valley to access a 77,500-acre mountainous parcel known as the Taylor Ranch. This right was created in the mid-1800's when settlers on the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant, then a part of Mexico, were promised access to the mountainous regions near their homes for uses necessary for their survival. The first phase of the litigation (which began in 1981) ended in 2018 when the Colorado Court of Appeals rejected the ranch owner's efforts to limit the rights of the landowners. In recent years, however the ranch owner has engaged in numerous practices which limit the rights of the landowners. A stellar team from Ballard Spahr filed a motion on behalf of Plaintiffs objecting to these harassing practices and the court recently held a two-day hearing. Here's a link to a [PBS story](#) on this hearing and to two stories in *Law Week Colorado* ([September 21, 2021](#) and [October 18, 2021](#)). In the interim, the ranch owner has filed several lawsuits against individual landowners, including a trespass action that asks for declaratory relief and specifically impacts the class rights, as well as a quiet title action of a class member. The individual landowners cannot afford to defend these actions. We are deeply concerned that these individual actions may erode (and conflict with) the rights we have been working to preserve for the last 40 years. Sherman & Howard L.L.C. agreed to take on representation of these individual landowners.

YLD News

Thank You YLD Board!

Chair Emeritus



Ryan Thurber (Chair Emeritus)

Ryan is a 2013 graduate of the University of Colorado Law School and a Shareholder at Polsinelli PC where he practices Health Care Law. He served as Board Chair until September 2021. Thank you for your extended dedication to the YLD as Board Chair, Ryan!

New Chair & Chair Elect



Caitlin McHugh (Chair)

Caitlin is a 2012 graduate of the University of Colorado Law School. She is a Partner at Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie LLP where she practices Civil and Commercial Litigation. Caitlin will serve as the YLD Board Chair until September 2022.



Mack Wilding (Chair Elect)

Mack is a 2016 graduate of the University of Colorado Law School. He practices Complex Commercial Litigation at Fortis Law Partners LLC. Mack will take over as YLD Board Chair in September 2022.

Denver Legal Night

In 2020, in response to the pandemic, Denver Legal Night switched from in-person to a virtual clinic. Instead of meeting at Centro San Juan Diego, volunteer lawyers consult with clients over the phone to help determine significant legal issues, refer individuals to legal services, and answer other questions about the legal process. The Legal Night Team has grown since becoming virtual with the addition of one extra YLD Board member and three YLD members. In February 2022, Alicia Drury will take over as Legal Night Administrator and will continue working closely with Centro San Juan Diego staff and the Legal Night team to provide a much-needed service for our community. Welcome to the team Alicia! To volunteer, [click here.](#)



YLD Lunches with Legends

The Young Lawyers Division continues to offer a series of one-hour lunch talks with local legal legends to help inspire young lawyers on their path to greatness. Over the past several months, we have been fortunate to speak with former Colorado U.S. Attorney John Walsh, US District Court Judges Brooke Jackson and Christie Arguello, Representatives Jason Crow and Joe Neguse, Retired District Court Judge Gary Jackson, and Denver City Attorney Kristin Bronson. We thank all of our Legends for sharing their time and wisdom with us. As a reminder, this free event is held via Zoom, and you do not need to be a member of the YLD to attend. All are welcome! Please join us in March to hear from U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Kristen Mix. We look forward to another great event! [Click here](#) to sign up.

YLD Grant Program

The mission of the Colorado Lawyers Committee Young Lawyers Division is to empower passionate young lawyers to make a difference for children and the underserved through education, advocacy, and systematic change. The CLC YLD Grant Program supports this mission by making funding available to members of the CLC YLD to assist in their efforts. Examples include helping to defray costs in pro bono representation, funding for materials or space for clinics or other direct services, or scholarships to trainings that will assist lawyers in providing pro bono services. Grants are awarded on a rolling basis based on need and availability of funding. Grants are generally limited to \$1,000 per lawyer/project. Applications are available on the [CLC website](#).



Welcome New Intern

Francesca Lipinsky DeGette is the Colorado Lawyers Committee's extern for the 2022 Spring semester. She is a second-year law student at the University of Colorado. Francesca has a strong interest in civil rights and intends to focus her legal career on the needs of underserved Coloradans. Before starting law school, she was an investigator at Killmer, Lane & Newman. In addition to working with the CLC, Francesca is a volunteer with the Korey Wise Innocence Project and is a member of the Colorado Law Review. Welcome Francesca!

2022 Hill & Robbins Paid Internship

An exceptional first- or second-year law student from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law or the University of Colorado Law School will be selected as the recipient of the **2022 Hill & Robbins Paid Internship**. The Hill & Robbins Internship was established in 1996 to encourage law students to do work in the public interest. Each year, a student from CU or DU is awarded the internship to work on a public interest project either through the Colorado Lawyers Committee (CLC) or Colorado Legal Services (CLS). This year's Hill & Robbins Intern will be placed with the CLC and will have an opportunity to work on various public interest projects relating to poverty issues and children. **Thank you to Hill & Robbins for your continued support of this important program.** Deadline [to apply](#) is February 25, 2022.



Thank You Olivia Weed

Olivia Weed joined the Colorado Lawyers Committee in May 2020 as Interim Office Manager and moved into the permanent full-time position in August 2020. This summer, Olivia transitioned to a new career in the travel industry. Thank you for all that you did for CLC, Olivia!

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC

Welcome New Board Members



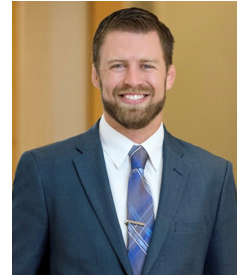
Sarah Carlson
CHBA Board Representative
Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP



Adam DeVoe
DeVoe Law, LLC



Tess Hand-Bender
Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP



Dalton Kelly
Butler Snow LLP



Matt Larson
Wilkinson Barker Knauer, LLP



Jonathan Rivinus
Cooley LLP



Cara Thornton
Fortis Law Partners LLC



Lucy Walker
Hutchinson Black and Cook, LLC

Welcome New CLC Law Firms



Welcome New Staff



Kaitlynn Sartor joined the Colorado Lawyers Committee in August 2021. As Office Manager, Kaitlynn involves herself in the day-to-day details of CLC operations and is thrilled to collaborate with a team committed to public service and advocacy. Kaitlynn has extensive experience in event planning, organization and office operations. Welcome Kaitlynn!

photo courtesy of Hartmannphoto, LLC



Alicia Drury joined the Colorado Lawyers Committee in June 2021 where she began working as our Data Manager and just recently agreed to be the Legal Night Administrator. Prior to joining the Colorado Lawyers Committee, Alicia worked in both the business and nonprofit sector. Most recently, she worked for a nonprofit providing scholarships to low-income students. Alicia earned her B.A. in International Studies from the University of Colorado, Denver. Welcome Alicia!

COLORADO LAWYERS COMMITTEE

1401 Lawrence Street, Suite 2300, Denver, CO 80202
Connie Talmage, Executive Director (303) 256-2780

Kathleen McCrohan, Associate Director (303) 256-2781 | Kaitlynn Sartor, Office Manager (303) 256-2782

www.ColoradoLawyersCommittee.org

