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**Letter from HAP Board President**

Jon L. Cochran, Esquire

HAP's work is more important than ever. As we enter the third year of a global pandemic with outsized impacts on the most vulnerable populations, HAP continues to do whatever it takes to reach and serve our clients.

Last year HAP held 224 legal clinics, including virtual and outdoor clinics, in addition to weekly telephonic office hours. Through these clinics, HAP opened 1,626 cases and provided advice and information to an additional 1,231 clients. Building on its long history of meeting clients where they are, HAP has also launched the HELP (HAP Embedded Legal Professional) Project, where the same experienced HAP attorneys conduct weekly 4-hour legal clinics at Broad Street Ministry and Project HOME's Hub of Hope. (See page 3.)

As Philadelphians experiencing homelessness have faced new challenges, HAP has redoubled its advocacy efforts to reduce the frequency, duration, and harm of homelessness. HAP worked on eviction records reform with a coalition of tenant advocates; pushed for increased funding to the Housing Trust Fund; studied and promoted racial equity in the shelter and housing system through staff participation on the City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Service's Roadmap to Homes Racial Equity Committee; and testified along with other national veterans' advocates before the VA on eligibility for veterans' benefits.

More recently, HAP has worked with the Disabilities Law Project and Michael LiPuma, a long-time HAP volunteer, to become more involved with advocacy surrounding shelter access and denials. HAP has also increased its collaboration with public agencies and other advocates around encampment closures and sidewalk clean-up protocols.

HAP's work is changing lives. In 2021, HAP successfully obtained \$1,648,710 in financial benefits for clients, winning disability and veterans benefits for individuals and families. Last year, HAP also helped 779 clients obtain their Pennsylvania or out-of-state birth certificates. These documents are often the first step to accessing services, benefits, and critical state identification to overcome legal obstacles to stability, security, and self-sufficiency.

HAP is able to carry out its mission to provide free civil legal services and advocacy to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia because of its dedicated staff and the invaluable assistance of government agencies, foundations, non-profit community partners, law firms, law schools, and area corporations, in addition to individual donors who support HAP both financially and by volunteering.

I am grateful for your support and urge you to continue partnering with HAP in this vital work.



Jon L. Cochran

Welcome to HAP

In November 2021, HAP welcomed two paralegals to help with HAP's SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery) Project, an expedited federal disability application project that benefits hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Faye Chevalier previously served at the Center for Employment Opportunities, YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School, and the Center for Hunger-Free Communities at the Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health.

In 2018, Faye received a Master's Degree in English from Temple University, where she studied 20th-21st century African-American literature, gender and women's studies, and disability studies. Her poetry and academic writing have been featured in numerous publications, and she is currently an editor for the Philadelphia-based magazine *Voicemail Poems*. She is the proud stepmother of two cats.

John Schatz graduated from La Salle University in 2015 and the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School in 2020. After graduating from law school, John was a research fellow at the Zimroth Center on the Administration of Criminal Law. He worked on a project summarizing constitutional disclosure violations of prosecutors in Philadelphia from 1980 through the present.

In February 2022 HAP welcomed **Naisha Tyler** as an Executive Assistant. For the past decade Naisha has worked in various high-functioning positions where she was the first or main point of contact for an executive of a Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation program. Naisha has expertise in project and administrative management and has worked closely within communities to support the reading and literacy achievements of Philadelphia's children and families.

Naisha graduated from Camden County Community College with an Associate's Degree in Fine Arts and is establishing herself as a creative consultant and small business owner in Philadelphia. Naisha looks forward to serving HAP's clients and supporting the staff.



Faye Chevalier



John Schatz



Naisha Tyler

New Case Management System

In September, HAP launched a customized, web-based case management system (CMS) through LegalServer. HAP can now open, track, and address each client and their case more efficiently. Through data gleaned from LegalServer, HAP can also evaluate and increase our understanding of our clients' needs and how best to advocate for them.

In October, HAP met with a client who needed help with her stimulus checks. HAP began the intake using LegalServer and saw that we had worked with the client before, allowing us to forgo the intake process and immediately start work on the case. Before the new CMS, first we would have had to complete an 15-20 minute intake at the clinic. Then, when we returned to the office, we would have discovered that we had previously worked with the client. Time lost. Many thanks to HAP staffers **Evan Dubchansky** and **Tanya Rambert** who spent many hours working on the new CMS. HAP also gratefully acknowledges the support of the Patricia Kind Family Foundation in this endeavor.

HAP Annual Benefit—Save the Date!



Join us on Thursday, **October 13, 2022 from 5:30-8:00 p.m.** for an in-person (fingers crossed) HAP Annual Benefit at The Mütter Museum at The College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Enjoy cocktails, hors-d'oeuvres, a silent auction featuring items from local businesses, and great camaraderie! All proceeds support HAP's legal services programs. Please visit our website for more details.

haplegal.org/hap-annual-benefit/

Photo: Larry Kotler and Cassandra Summers—HAP Annual Benefit Co-Chairs

HAP's HELP Project

In October 2021, HAP piloted the HELP (HAP Embedded Legal Professional) Project at Broad Street Ministry (BSM). Every Wednesday from 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM, HAP staff attorney **Joel Sobel** meets with an average of five clients at BSM who need legal services. HAP continues to believe that the most effective way to meet our clients' legal needs is to meet with them at a place and time of their convenience -- on a more *frequent, consistent, and reliable* basis. This restructure of our clinic approach -- an embedded presence in locations serving the especially vulnerable and least-connected homeless population -- will ingrain HAP's free legal offerings into the very fabric of the existing services that occur at the sites where our clients regularly congregate.

In January 2022, HAP was invited to pilot another HELP Project at Project HOME's Hub of Hope which is located in Philadelphia's Suburban Train Station. Currently **Dean Beer**, HAP's Executive Director and **Michael Taub**, a HAP attorney and Advocacy Director, provide legal services at Hub of Hope on Wednesdays from 12:30 to 4:00 PM, focusing on shelter access, a need identified by the staff at the Hub. HAP is thrilled to partner with Broad Street Ministry and Project HOME to help our mutual clients.

Message from the Executive Director—Dean Beer



I've been fortunate to work with the incredible team at HAP for the past 15 months. During this brief time, we have enhanced our traditional service model by:

- Adding a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator to collaborate with HAP staff and our amazing legal volunteers and to improve the experience for staff and volunteers.
- Partnering with Broad Street Ministry and Project HOME's HUB of Hope in the creation of two HELP Projects.
- Working with a coalition of advocates pushing for additional reforms to the way that landlords use old criminal records as a basis for denying housing applications.
- Advocating for reform of the 911 call system to better respond to mental health crisis calls with appropriate crisis response teams rather than the police.

As much as I am proud of the past year, I am even more excited by what's to come:

- Expansion of our demographic and geographic footprint throughout the City by our dedicated in-house legal professionals.
- Expansion and improvement of our work with veterans experiencing homelessness. With the addition of new board members with military service, we plan to form partnerships with various firms and organizations to support our veterans.
- A partnership with Dartmouth Partners in Community Service Internship Program wherein a summer intern will review and analyze the impact of our SOAR work.

Thank you for the support you have given me personally, and to HAP and our clients. Please call, email, or contact me with your thoughts, ideas, and contributions to accomplish our common goal, "to reduce the frequency and duration of homelessness in Philadelphia."



LEGAL SERVICES TO END HOMELESSNESS

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Save the Date - 13 October 2022, 5:30-8:00 PM



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