

In 2019, Shipman & Goodwin devoted over 4,000 hours to pro bono work—a record number! We protected immigrants from deportation; helped vulnerable families stay together; assisted veterans seeking medical benefits and discharge upgrades; challenged unlivable conditions at area housing; and represented non-profits that work to protect the environment, foster the arts, and shelter the homeless. The following examples show the breadth of our work and the large number of our colleagues who devoted their time to these efforts.

Helping Immigrants in Connecticut and at the Border

We partnered with the Hartford Public Library to assist over 50 green card holders apply for naturalization to become full citizens. We helped them prepare the paperwork required by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), conducted mock interviews and occasionally attended the actual interviews with them. A favorite anecdote: HPL asked us to attend the interview of one applicant who repeatedly broke down in tears during her mock interview. At the actual interview, our client burst into tears after the first civics question, sobbing “I’m just so nervous!” She burst into tears again after her application was approved, prompting the otherwise stone-faced interviewer to comment “but those are happy tears, right?!” (**Bradley Harper, Greg Jones, Alfredo Fernandez, Stephanie Gomes-Ganhao, Marine Margaryan, Vaughan Finn**)



With co-counsel Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Connecticut Legal Services, and New Haven Legal Assistance, we filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of 10 women and children who have been waiting for many years for USCIS to review their applications for U Visas and related work permits; our clients were victims of crime (often domestic violence) who provided assistance to law enforcement. After a hearing on USCIS’s motion to dismiss, the government agreed to adjudicate our clients’ applications for the U Visa waiting list, which would provide them with employment documents and protection from deportation. Six of our clients have now received work permits and deferred status, and we expect the remaining four to receive them shortly—a remarkable result that actually exceeds the relief we sought in our complaint. (**Morgan Rueckert, Sue Murphy, Keegan Drenosky, Vaughan Finn**)

We obtained Special Immigrant Juvenile Status findings from the Connecticut Probate Court for five children from Mexico and Guatemala who fled to the US after they were abandoned by their parents and faced extreme gang violence and other harms in their home countries. Our clients are now living with family members in Connecticut, going to school and thriving. The SIJS findings will enable them to obtain permanent resident status in US Immigration Court. (**Laurann Asklof, Stephanie Gomes-Ganhao, Jaime Welsh, Natalia Sieira Millan, Alyce Alfano**)

We prepared parole applications for nine women from Central America, Venezuela, Cuba, and Sierra Leone who were being held at Immigration and Customs Enforcement facilities at the Texas border. These women were victims of political persecution, female genital mutilation, severe gang violence and sexual abuse. Although recent changes in the law have made these applications very difficult—if not virtually impossible—to win, two of our clients were released from detention. (**Stephanie Gomes-Ganhao, Greg Jones, Mike King, Sarah Westby, Vaughan Finn**)

Abused and Neglected Children

We represented 14 children in neglect proceedings in Juvenile Court based on referrals from Lawyers for Children America. Our clients ranged from babies to pre-teens who lived in households dealing with domestic violence, drug use, sexual abuse, or parents who were just overwhelmed. At its 2019 gala, LFCFA presented our colleague Lara Greenberg with an award for her tireless—and fearless—advocacy for children during her time at S&G. (**Kristie Beahm, Sarah Dlugoszewski, Stephanie Gomes-Ganhao, Lara Greenberg, Jay Joyce, Herbie Rosen, Jaime Welsh, Sarah Westby, Andy Zeitlin**)



Civil Rights, Housing, Criminal and Veterans' Matters

We participated in a Pardon Clinic hosted by Greater Hartford Legal Aid, which offered 56 men and women the chance to erase their criminal records and get a fresh start. Our volunteers met with clients to prepare a lengthy written application, draft a personal statement and obtain additional required documentation. Our clients included persons convicted of drug crimes who now wish to start businesses to support their families. They are part of the million adults in Connecticut who face significant barriers to finding a good job and a decent home because of their criminal records. (**Lauren Cullen, Alison Gaffey, Bradley Harper, Kate Mylod, Sydney Parkmond, Sharon Zampino**)



A team of S&G lawyers, including **Jim Bergenn, Joette Katz, Joe Williams, Kristie Beahm, and Greg Jones**, is helping Hartford tenants pursue claims against slumlords arising out of horrifying conditions at their apartment complex, including recurrent flooding from ceilings, broken kitchen appliances, leaking bathroom and kitchen fixtures, heat problems, hazardous air quality, infestations of toxigenic mold species, bacteria, fungi, dust mites, and bedbugs, as well as nonresidents using and dealing drugs in the hallways. The claims were developed by a score of volunteers from the nonprofit Center for Leadership and Justice and are proceeding to litigation in Connecticut Superior Court.

Kristie Beahm and **Greg Jones**, with help from **Jim Bergenn, Mike Chase** and **Drew Kadow**, represented a young woman who was arrested, along with 10 others, during a peaceful vigil and police brutality protest honoring the life of 15-year old Jayson Negron, who was shot and killed by a Bridgeport police officer on his high school graduation day. Our client was charged with interfering with an officer and resisting arrest, inciting a riot, and second degree breach of peace. We emerged from Bridgeport criminal court with a nolle prosequi and immediate dismissal of all charges in exchange for a \$150 donation to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund.



Pat Naples, together with the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project and his former law firm, is representing a Maryland inmate convicted of attempted murder in a federal habeas corpus proceeding. The client, who has already served over a decade in prison, is seeking a new trial on the grounds that the Baltimore County Police Department withheld exculpatory information related to the victim and a key witness (both of whom have since recanted their testimonies against Pat's client in signed affidavits). **Chris Drury** and **Jaime Welsh** continue to assist an immigrant, detained at an ICE facility in Alabama, in a habeas corpus proceeding. Our client has lived in the US since he was two years old and, despite ICE's attempt to remove him to Jamaica, has no established connection with that country.

Sarah Dlugoszewski and **Jay Joyce**, with help from **Lisa Waller**, are representing a former Navy serviceman who received an Other Than Honorable discharge after failing one drug test for marijuana use and are preparing a discharge upgrade application based on evidence that PTSD was a mitigating factor. An upgrade to Honorable would provide our client with access to the full array of VA benefits and help him greatly in future job searches.



We also:

- Obtained a financial settlement from the CT Department of Corrections for an inmate who filed a federal civil rights complaint alleging that he had been improperly designated a “security risk” as a member of the Bloods gang, placed in segregated housing and subjected to illegal treatment and conditions of confinement (**Greg Jones**).
- Are filing an action in Fairfax County Circuit Court that seeks to clear an illegitimate cloud on the title to a property owned in part by our client, an elderly stroke victim who wishes to liquidate her interest in the property to pay for her medical expenses (**Ed Parks, Sara Hunkler, Greg Gomperts**).
- Were awarded a judgment of double damages in Small Claims Court against a landlord who failed to repay our client's security deposit (**Chris Drury, Nikole McCarthy, Drew Kadow**). In what promises to be the *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* of security deposit litigation, **Jay Joyce** is pursuing recovery of our client's security deposit from an elusive landlord through Small Claims and Bankruptcy Court proceedings.
- Made presentations on Connecticut Health Care Instructions and Powers of Attorney to low-income elderly residents of Waterbury (**Danielle Ferrucci, Laura Schuyler**), and prepared HCIs and POAs for nursing home residents (**Lori Romano**).
- Provided multiple legal services to long-time clients Maritime Aquarium of Norwalk and Stamford Center for the Arts (**Mike Widland**); obtained approvals relating to the renovation of ImmaCare's Hartford homeless shelter (**Mary Jo Andrews, Christine Chipman, Christine Donnelly, Mabel Diamond**); and provided employment advice and assistance with lease negotiations to Covenant Prep, Hartford's tuition-free middle school for boys from underserved communities (**Jim Bergenn, Leander Dolphin, Mabel Diamond, Christine Donnelly, Pat Naples**); filed an application for a US trademark on behalf of Connecticut Advocates for Parkinson's (**Cathy Intravia, Barbara Villandry**); and obtained a \$450,000 line of credit for the Neighborhood Music School, a community arts center that serves over 2700 students (**Greg Muccilli, Tasha Marrero, Pattie Chouinard**).

Many thanks to everyone at Shipman & Goodwin who contributed to this very successful pro bono year!

www.shipmangoodwin.com/probono