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Connecting Lawyers and Communities

October 2006



## Pro Bono Briefs

"CLR Pro Bono Briefs" highlights pro bono activities involving Michigan lawyers referred by Community Legal Resources.

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### SAVE THE DATE! December 5 CLR's Annual Celebration @ Mexicantown Mercado



Community Legal Resources invites you to enjoy cocktails and appetizers at our 8th Annual Celebration and Recognition Event from 5:30 - 7:00pm on Tuesday, December 5. We will present awards to our outstanding volunteer lawyers and law firms and hear from the nonprofit organizations that have benefited from their extraordinary service.

This year's event will also celebrate the much-anticipated opening of the Mexicantown Mercado, a business incubator and public market developed by the nonprofit Mexicantown Community Development Corporation at the foot of the Ambassador Bridge in southwest Detroit. Local food and music will be featured! Invitations will be mailed later this month.

### Clark Hill attorney provides tax advice to Detroit nonprofit

**Tom Nowinski of Clark Hill plc**



[Tom Nowinski](#), a tax specialist in the Personal Legal Services Practice Group at [Clark Hill plc](#), is providing tax advice to the [WARM Training Center](#) of Detroit. Tom is also a member of Community Legal Resources' [Advisory Council](#).

For 25 years WARM Training has provided education, training and technical assistance to other nonprofit and low-income individuals in developing resource-efficient, affordable homes and communities.

### Barris Sott lawyers score major victory for Southwest Detroit nonprofits

**Dan Share and Tiffany Robinson of Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker**

In June 2005, [Barris Sott](#) attorneys [Dan Share](#)



Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker, P.L.L.C

and [Tiffany Robinson](#) filed an *amicus curiae* brief on behalf of CLR clients [Bagley Housing Association](#), [Bridgwatch Detroit](#), [Mexicantown Community Development Corporation](#), [Southwest Detroit Business Association](#), People's Community Services,

and other litigants in support of the City of Detroit's appeal of an earlier ruling involving the Detroit International Bridge Company (DIBC). The original case concerned the DIBC's claim that the privately owned Ambassador Bridge, which sits in the middle of a growing and vibrant neighborhood in southwest Detroit, was an "instrumentality of the federal government" and therefore exempt from local zoning and land use laws. Community groups were concerned that without the protection of local zoning and a public review process, the company's development activities could go unchecked. Share and Robinson agreed to write the *amicus*, and the City argued the case at the Michigan Court of Appeals in April 2006. In September, a unanimous decision was delivered overturning the lower court's ruling.

## Dickinson Wright lawyers advise youth and neighborhood service programs

**Verne Hampton, Kristine Moore, Peter Kulick and Anthony Ferman of Dickinson Wright PLLC**



Four [Dickinson Wright](#) attorneys are assisting nonprofits working in low-income neighborhoods of Detroit and Lansing.

[Verne Hampton](#) and [Kristine Moore](#) are providing advice on corporate matters and the use of volunteers to the Madison

Community Resource Center which operates in the Condon/Chadsey neighborhood of Detroit. The nonprofit tutors and mentors kids and provides recreational opportunities after school and in the summer months.

[Peter Kulick](#) and [Anthony Ferman](#) are helping the Baker Donora Focus Center with corporate matters and obtaining federal tax- exempt status. Based in Lansing, Baker Donora provides GED and ESL training, career development, senior programs and other assistance to the needy of its community.

## Attorney reviews consulting contract for Highland Park nonprofit

**Marla Schwaller Carew of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP**



[Marla Schwaller Carew](#), an attorney in [Honigman](#)'s Corporate and Securities practice area, is providing assistance with a consulting contract to [African Dance Works](#).

Working in Detroit and Highland Park, the nonprofit provides after-school and weekend education and recreation in the areas of



African dance, drumming and folklore for youth grades K-8. African Dance Works learned of CLR's services through a nonprofit capacity-building program designed by [New Detroit](#).

## Wayne State University Nonprofit Law Clinic handles CLR referrals

### Attorneys Randy Perry and Dana Roach lead the Clinic this term

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[Wayne State University Law School](#) students have the opportunity each term, through the school's Nonprofit Corporations Clinic, to work with southeast Michigan nonprofit organizations seeking assistance with drafting corporate documents and state and federal tax filings. Lead by Clinical Assistant Professor [Dana Roach](#) and Adjunct Professor [Randy](#)

[Perry](#), the students are assisting four nonprofit clients this fall:

- Fish and Loaves, a faith-based food program involving a number of churches in Taylor;
- What Dreams Are Made Of, a Detroit-based youth program;
- EMETC, Inc., a mentoring and leadership development program serving at-risk youth; and
- Millennium Xpressions, providing exposure and networking opportunities for inner-city youth interested in the arts.

## No Time to Volunteer?

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