



## Five Reasons to Support the "Together, We Must" Campaign for Justice

**"Until you have been thrown to the wolves, you don't know what it feels like to be rescued."**

*-Cynthia El Dehar, LSGMI client*

1. Huge numbers of homeowners face homelessness as the mortgage foreclosure rate in Miami-Dade jumps 700% from 9,814 in 2006 to a projected 69,358 in 2009.
2. Historic rates of unemployment have pushed increasing numbers of workers and their families into poverty.
3. As the unemployment rate in Miami-Dade rises, so does the welfare rate which has increased by 30% in 2009.
4. The demand for help with civil legal problems has escalated, while local, state and private funding has declined.
5. LSGMI helps make the justice system more accessible, helps the courts function more effectively and efficiently, helps the Bar by taking cases that private attorneys cannot handle, and helps make the community a better place to live.

**"LSGMI is the means by which equality is provided to thousands of people in this community, and now is the time to support them."**

*-Senator Bob Graham*

### Calendar of Events

#### Judicial Reception

Honoring Third District Court of Appeal Judge Vance E. Salter, hosted by the Together, We Must Plaintiff's Bar Subcommittee  
**November 5, 2009**

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#### Corporate Counsel Reception

featuring Representative Dan Gelber, hosted by Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines  
**November 9, 2009**

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#### Donor Recognition Reception

at the Margulies Art WAREHOUSE, featuring the Farm Securities Administration Depression Era Photo Collection with Guest Speakers Michael Putney, Senior Political Reporter and Moderator of "This Week in South Florida" and Constance Collins Margulies  
**March 11, 2010**

.....

#### Benefit Performance

at Fisher Island featuring Metropolitan Opera Soprano Elizabeth Caballero in Recital with Baritone Nelson Hernandez, and Guest Lecturer Martin Bookspan, the Voice of Lincoln Center  
**April 15, 2010**

.....  
For more information or sponsorship opportunities, contact Marcia Rabinowitz at 305-438-2531 or MRabinowitz@lsgmi.org.

## Federal Litigation Update



Monica Vignes-Pitan

LSGMI has sued the Florida Medicaid program for refusing to cover the cost of medically necessary incontinent supplies for children under 21, an alleged violation of federal law and contrary to case decisions in two other jurisdictions. Our client is a 16 year old girl suffering from mental retardation, cerebral palsy and other disabling conditions leaving her incontinent. Her family is extremely low income, and the cost of the diapers is prohibitive. The outcome of this case could potentially affect all medically incontinent Medicaid children in Florida. (Co-counsel: Florida Legal Services)



Sean Rowley

Two other lawsuits challenge practices of the Hialeah Housing Authority. The first case alleges that HHA's practice of requesting documents which are not rationally related to an applicant's eligibility for Section 8 violates HHA's own application procedures. The result is the wrongful denial of housing assistance to many poor, elderly, and disabled people who are qualified applicants in desperate need of housing assistance. (Co-counsel: Florida Justice Institute)



Maria Sciolto

The second case alleges that HHA wrongfully denied our disabled client's request for a live in aide, in violation of both the Fair Housing Act and the Rehabilitation Act. Although the request for a live in aide was supported by a treating physician's letter, HHA failed to grant our client a reasonable accommodation and denied the request without stating a valid reason. (Co-counsel: AARP)

## We Want your Email!

We are shifting to web-based communication and want your email. Please visit us at [www.lsgmi.org](http://www.lsgmi.org) to sign up!

## Help Prevent Homelessness

Volunteer at LSGMI's self-help clinics for private tenants facing eviction.

Email [ISanchezBryson@lsgmi.org](mailto:ISanchezBryson@lsgmi.org) for more information.

# *"Together, We Must" Campaign Kickoff Event*

Featuring Senator Bob Graham



# "Together, We Must" Campaign for Justice

Many Thanks to our 2009 Supporters

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Legal Services Corporation  
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## "Thank You for Saving My Home!"



Thelma Williams came to LSGMI for help after she was evicted from the home she owned and lived in. LSGMI discovered that when Ms. Williams became ill and fell behind in her mortgage payments, she was tricked into signing over the title of her home to a predatory investor. The investor told her he would save her home. Instead, he had Ms. Williams deed the house to him and then evicted her. LSGMI filed a lawsuit and was able to restore title to Ms. Williams and recover her home.

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**Gene Stearns**  
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"The provision of legal services for those unable to afford them is always important. In the current economic environment it is critical. Our firm's participation in the "Together, We Must" campaign is the least we can do to help others enjoy the access to legal services our clients take for granted. A free and just society depends on access to professionals knowledgeable of the legal system. If access is limited to those who can afford it, we will have failed. We are encouraged by the success of LSGMI in serving the poor in this community. And we are gratified that so many have been willing to help provide the financial support so desperately needed."



**Bob Parks**  
Law Offices of  
Robert L. Parks, P.L.

"Like Legal Services of Greater Miami, I believe that "equal justice for all" is the ethical foundation of our nation - and our community. Throughout my career as a trial lawyer, I have consistently supported that principle. No one should ever be denied access to legal representation due to their inability to pay, especially in difficult economic times. That's why I have taken a leading role in the "Together, We Must" Campaign for Justice. Today, more than ever, your support is essential to ensure that everyone in our community, regardless of income, can obtain quality legal services to protect their rights."



**Corali Lopez-Castro**  
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"When Legal Services of Greater Miami asked me to Co-Chair the "Together We Must" Campaign, I had no choice but to answer this call for help. As a bankruptcy lawyer, I have seen first hand the effect the current economic crisis has had on our community. Our community is hurting and we need to help heal the wounds. As lawyers we have a unique role to play in the healing. Let's maximize that role in a way that helps low income individuals and families keep their homes, their benefits and other basic needs. Together we can help, together we should help, together we must help."