



The Torch

Maxwell Street Legal Clinic Newsletter
A program of Kentucky Equal Justice Center

Fall 2017

Since January 2017

Maxwell Street Legal Clinic has handled 321 cases including:

- 154 DACA applications and renewals
- 2 T visa approvals for victims of human trafficking
- 18 citizenship application approvals

We answer, return and make over 500 calls a month.

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DACA opened doors to work and education

Noemi's parents came to Lexington 20 years ago, hoping to give their daughter the best opportunities possible. **Noemi** has taken full advantage of those opportunities, as a social activist, medical assistant and mother.

In high school, Noemi's immigration status stopped her from getting a drivers' license or a part-time job and from applying to college. Luckily, a talk by **Erin Howard** from Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) inspired Noemi to pursue her goals.

Noemi qualified for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which allowed her to work and study and gave her some security.

With new doors open to her, Noemi started college at BCTC while also working a full-time job. It wasn't easy, and Noemi had to take a short break from school. She went back to finish her degree after becoming pregnant with her son and is now a pediatric medical assistant.

Noemi doesn't only work hard to improve life for her own family. She also gives back as a social activist. When Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the end of the DACA



Noemi and her son at Festival Latino

program, people needed a space to express their anger, sadness and hopes for the future. Together with other community leaders, Noemi organized a rally in Lexington in support of DACA. There, she bravely shared her story and encouraged others to do the same.

Noemi will keep fighting for permanent solutions for undocumented immigrants. Meanwhile, she helps people find the information they need.

Maxwell Street Legal Clinic has been a valuable resource for Noemi. She says, "I know I can always count on them when I need answers for the undocumented community." Maxwell Street will help Noemi and many young people renew their DACA status this fall!

Immigration emergencies: helping families prepare

Immigration policies and enforcement priorities are changing. Families are hungry for reliable news and sober guidance based in fact and law.

Best advice: be prepared

Maxwell Street is a trusted source of information. Its capacity to separate myth from fact and rumor from policy make it a vital resource, especially for mixed status families at risk of separation.

To help, founding volunteer Marilyn Daniel, staff and volunteers have created **family checklists** for emergency preparedness and forms for **temporary Power of Attorney** to ensure that children are cared for by relatives or friends of their choice in the event of separation.

Our “Know your Rights” presentations leave participants better informed about immigrants’

rights on the job, at home and on the street. Audiences are diverse. Staff and volunteers have spoken to church members, high school students, inmates and more.

Over the past year, more than 900 people attended a Maxwell Street “Know Your Rights” presentation.



Nathalie Dietrich and Leah Engle

Toolkit

We’ve also created a toolkit to help families prepare for emergencies. Families can fill in

phone numbers and other information they might need if someone is detained. The toolkit includes a checklist of important documents and items that should be kept in a safe place, like car keys. (See it on our website.)

Power of Attorney

One important document: Power of Attorney (POA) to care for children. Kentucky law allows parents to designate a trusted adult to care for their children, one year at a time. Maxwell Street holds workshops to help families fill out the form, notarize it and get background checks done.

So far, we’ve held four POA workshops—at Maxwell Street, Global Lex, Village Branch Library and Catholic Charities. Many thanks to donors, attorney volunteers and the **Kentucky Bar Foundation** for supporting the effort!

Bringing information to the people

Outreach staff have been busy all year speaking around the state. Soon, you’ll be able to hear them on the radio too.

Outreach Coordinator **Miranda Brown** and Employment Law Attorney **McKenzie Cantrell** partnered with Lexington Community Radio to produce a series of radio shows in Spanish. The shows will be aired on **El Pulso Latino 95.7** and streamed online. Each episode will give important information on workers’

rights. Topics include wage and hour laws, discrimination and workplace health and safety. Workers will be able to learn about their rights while in their cars, at home and at work.

Our outreach team also offers in-person talks at churches, schools, libraries and more.

This year, we connected with people at 33 sites in Fayette County, and more in Bourbon, Jefferson, Jessamine, Madison, Pike and Scott.



Miranda Brown and McKenzie Cantrell recording at Lexington Community Radio

Maxwell Street staff news

We answer an average of 280 calls a month. We make just as many. Staff is growing to keep up with the demand. This summer we welcomed new Legal Assistants **Michelle Haubner** and **Ivonne Camacho** and AmeriCorps VISTA member **Corinna Svarlien**.

With their help, phones and the front door are being answered 9 to 5, Monday through Friday. That means more questions answered and more clients helped.

This March we also welcomed **Leah Engle** as Program Director at Maxwell Street. Leah came to

us from Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, where she served as an Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Fellow. Welcome, Leah, Corinna, Ivonne and Michelle!

We also celebrate members of our team who have taken on new challenges. Former Legal Assistant **Sofia Calleja** just started her first year of law school at the University of Louisville. Former Program Director **Guion**

Johnstone is now Executive Director of the Kentucky Bar Foundation.

Congratulations to Sofia and Guion!



Ivonne Camacho, Nathalie Dietrich, Leah Engle, Marilyn Daniel, Michelle Haubner and Corinna Svarlien

Student and volunteer corner

Maxwell Street Legal Clinic couldn't do what it does without help from dedicated volunteers and interns. Special thanks to our volunteer attorneys, interpreters and paperwork copiers from our Power of Attorney workshops!

Thank you Betty Abdmishani, Bethany Baxter, Rania Belmadani, Katie Blair, Elisa Bruce, Sofia Calleja, Chris Claunch, Rick Clewitt, Marilyn Daniel, Steven Davis, Ben Finch, Jesse Fries, Vanessa Grossl, Anne Klette, Jamie Love, Rosa Martin, Chiani Murray, Mary Ellen Neill, Dominique Olbert, Galadriel Olbert, Jeremy Paden, Young-Eun Park, Selena Quintanilla, Rachel Shelton, Nicholas Skidmore, Scooter Stein, Isabel Taylor, Dalene Vasbider, Melinda Wester, Susan Wester and Monique Winther!

Maxwell Street Graduate: from AmeriCorps Member to Attorney Volunteer

As our 2010-2011 AmeriCorps member, **Rachel Shelton** helped with our wage claim clinic, outreach presentations and client intake. Now, she's a volunteer attorney in our Power of Attorney workshops. After finishing her year of service, Rachel attended UK College of Law. Later, she joined Wallingford Law. Rachel is excited to stay connected to Maxwell Street, "because of the relationships I've developed with people there." Thank you, Rachel!



You can help

Want to lend a hand? You can!

Donate: Your gift keeps Maxwell Street up and running. It can help us:

- **Pay DACA government application fees** for families facing severe hardship
- **Use Language Line phone interpretation** to help us fulfill our "211 for immigrants" role

Or donate to Maxwell Street "wherever needed most." To make a secure donation online, visit www.kyequaljustice.org.

Educate: To host a "Know Your Rights" session, call our AmeriCorps VISTA member at **1-800-699-0805**.

Volunteer: To find out about current volunteer options, email leahengle@kyequaljustice.org.



Maxwell Street Legal Clinic is a program of Kentucky Equal Justice Center. The Clinic is located conveniently between the University of Kentucky and downtown Lexington.

We are a trusted source of high quality, low-cost legal assistance for the immigrant and refugee communities in Central and Eastern Kentucky. Many thanks to 2016 and 2017 supporters of our work:

- **American Association of Immigration Lawyers Mid-South**
- **Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC)**
- **Fayette County Bar Foundation**
- **Harvard Law School Public Service Venture Fund**
- **Kentucky Bar Foundation**
- **Kentucky for Kentucky “I am a Kentuckian”**
- **Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church**
- **Mission and Ministry Fund, Lexington Catholic Diocese**
- **United Way of the Bluegrass**

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