

Health Law Advocates *Legal Network Update*

Lawyer of the Month



Alyssa Yenikomshian

Alyssa formally registered for HLA's *Pro Bono* Legal Network this year but she has been contributing mightily to HLA and HLA's clients for many years.

Alyssa practices with the Boston law firm of **Rosenfeld & Rafik, P.C.** representing clients with chronic illnesses and disabilities in employee benefit-related matters. Prior to her admission to the bar **Alyssa** served, beginning in 2002, as a paralegal with **Rosenfeld & Rafik** where she worked on the same types of matters she now handles as an attorney. During her time as a paralegal, **Alyssa** participated in the successful representation of numerous clients referred by HLA who

You Are Invited!

HLA's Annual Benefit Breakfast

Monday, Nov. 10, 2008

7:30 - 9:30 a.m.

Sheraton Boston Hotel

30 Dalton St.

Featuring:

In performance, a one-man show by the incomparable:

Jimmy Tingle



To Become an Event Sponsor or Purchase Tickets

[Click Here!](#)

Event Co-Chairs:

Jeffrey N. Catalano and Elizabeth Ryan-Catalano

were improperly denied health care coverage and access.

Now a member of HLA's *Pro Bono* Legal Network, **Alyssa** has taken on two cases in the past few months. In the Spring, **Alyssa** accepted the referral of the case of **R.U.**, a 48 year old Franklin man who purchased a rider to his health plan to cover hospitalization for a heart attack. **R.U.** had a heart attack in 2007 and required several days of hospitalization. The insurance carrier **R.U.** purchased the heart attack rider from denied coverage for his hospital stay based on a disputable reading of the policy terms. **R.U.** owes over \$15,000 in medical bills and is already falling behind on his mortgage and other responsibilities.

This Summer, **Alyssa** took on a referral case from HLA involving, **N.T.**, a 48 year old Mansfield woman receiving treatment for breast cancer. **N.T.** was referred to an out of state oncologist for specialized radiation treatment. **N.T.**'s health insurer denied coverage for her treatment and now **N.T.** owes about \$26,000 to the doctor's hospital. **N.T.**'s insurance carrier should have been asked for prior authorization for the specialized radiation. **Alyssa** is aggressively pursuing relief for both **R.U.** and **N.T.**

Alyssa received her undergraduate degree from

*** Cases Available for Referral ***

If you wish to accept or discuss a specific referral case reply to this email or call Matt Selig at 617-338-5241 x2986.

We have 2 cases available for referral today.

G.M. -- G.M., an 85 year old Nahant woman with Alzheimer's Disease, has been in a nursing home since December 2007. Medicare and MassHealth (Medicaid) paid for the first several months of the nursing home services. **G.M.** has been billed directly by the nursing home for the last several months of her stay and now owes about \$2,900. **G.M. needs an attorney to help her determine if her insurance should have continued covering the nursing home services and, if not, how she can address her medical debt.**

S.A. -- S.A., a 57 year old Wilmington woman, recently had hip replacement surgery. She now owes about \$25,000 in medical bills including \$15,000 to a hospital. When she entered the hospital, **S.A.** was uninsured. A hospital staff person advised **S.A.** that as long as she applied for public insurance her care would be covered. **S.A.** applied for public insurance, but was deemed eligible only for coverage that would not cover her bills. **S.A. needs an attorney to assist her with an appeal with the State if she was improperly denied more comprehensive insurance coverage, to seek additional assistance from other public programs and/or to argue for debt relief from her medical providers.**

Upcoming Trainings Featuring Legal Strategies for Representing Clients with Medical Debt

We invite you to two upcoming trainings at which HLA attorneys will appear to discuss advocacy on behalf of clients

Tufts University and her law degree from Suffolk University Law School with distinction honors in the Health and Biomedical Law concentration.

For many years, **Alyssa** has served as a volunteer at HLA's Annual Benefit Breakfast and her firm has contributed generously financially to HLA as well.

Thank you **Alyssa** for your wonderful contributions to HLA and our clients over the years!!!

HLA Law and Policy Forum:
Brown Bag Luncheon Series

Jarrett T. Barrios

President

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation



Topic:

The Shadow of ERISA

with medical debt:

The Growing Problem of Consumer Medical Debt:
Everything you want to know but are afraid to ask

Sept. 25, 2008, 9:00 a.m -- 12:00 p.m., 16 Beacon St.

Sponsored by the Boston Bar Association

HLA Exec. Director Barbara Anthony will co-moderate and HLA Senior Staff Atty. Lorianne Sainsbury-Wong will serve as a panelist. See the Calendar page at www.BostonBar.org for more details.

Massachusetts Health Insurance Update

Oct. 2, 9:30 a.m. -- 12:30 p.m.

(PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE)

Worcester Public Library, 2 Salem Sq., Saxe Room

Sponsored by The Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts

RSVP to Linda Boss at lboss@laccm.org.

HLA Deputy Director Matt Selig will serve as a panelist speaking on medical debt. The Massachusetts Bar Foundation provides support for Matt's participation in this training.

**** Special Thanks ****

Thank you to Deborah Filler of Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services for accepting the case of M.C., a 65 year old Somerville resident with renal cancer who lost his MassHealth (Medicaid) coverage and has begun to accumulate medical debt from a Cambridge hospital. M.C. needs an attorney to help him regain insurance coverage and address his medical bills.

Thank you to Professor David Cutler, Senior Health Care Advisor to Presidential Candidate Barack Obama and Otto Eckstein Professor of Applied Economics at Harvard University for his participation HLA's Law and Policy

and Mass Health Reform

October 8, 2008

12:00 -- 1:30 p.m.

AARP of Mass.

1 Beacon St, 23rd Fl.

Boston, MA 02108

RSVP Required Call 617-338-5241 or Email
tboland@hla-inc.org

Upcoming Brown Bag Lunches

Marylou Sudders

President & CEO

Mass. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children



Topic:

Children's Mental Health Care: The Stepchild of Health Care

Forum, Brown Bag Luncheon Series on Sept. 15. **Professor Culter** delivered a wonderful presentation and led the discussion on Sen. Obama's health reform plans with over 70 attendees.

Thank you to Suffolk University Law School for providing the room, refreshments and A/V support for the Sept. 15 Brown Bag Lunch.

**** Success Story****

Rebecca Haffajee of Ropes & Gray successfully closed the case of **W.L.**, a 61 year old Wareham man diagnosed with prostate cancer in January 2007. **W.L.** had been laid off in December 2006. His employer never informed the company's health insurer that **W.L.** should be taken off the health plan and he was not informed of his right to continue his coverage through a COBRA plan as required by law. **W.L.** needed extensive health care in early 2007. Several months into 2007, **W.L.** learned his health insurance was terminated retroactively to January 1, 2007. As a result **W.L.** became liable for \$7,000 in medical bills. **Attorney Haffajee** successfully advocated for all of **W.L.**'s medical bills to be covered by his former insurer.

Legal Network Members,

Thank you very much for everything you do for HLA's Pro Bono Legal Network. We are grateful for the services you provide to clients referred by HLA.

If you have any colleagues who might be interested in Health Law Advocates Pro Bono Legal Network please encourage them to sign up! We, and our clients, need their help!

Do not hesitate to contact me with any thoughts about HLA or the Legal Network.

Nov. 18, 2008
12:00 -- 1:30 p.m.
AARP of Mass.
1 Beacon Street, 23rd Fl.
Boston, MA 02108

RSVP Required
Call 617-338-5241 or
Email tboland@hla-inc.org

HLA Pro Bono Legal Network Listserve

HLA recently launched the
*Pro Bono Legal Network
Listserve!*

The Listserve is now being
used by *Pro Bono* Legal
Network members to seek
and give advice on HLA
referral matters from fellow
Legal Network members.

Once you join the Listserve,
HLA will send you guidelines
for using the Listserve.

To join the Listserve **click
here**

- **Matt**



Matt Selig
HLA Deputy Director

**The HLA Legal Network Update is sent to attorneys on
the first and third Monday of each month.**

**Please Contact Matt Selig with any questions at selig@hla-inc.org or
617-338-5241 x2986.**

www.healthlawadvocates.org