



# CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE COMBINED CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE

*From Visionary Experiment  
to Successful Tradition*

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COMPILED BY MOLLY MCPHEETERS

In 2024, the Combined Campaign for Justice (CCJ) will celebrate 25 years since its inception. CCJ raises critical funds for the three civil legal aid agencies in Delaware: Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI), Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Inc. (DVLS), and Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, Inc. (LSCD). To get the celebration started we asked a few long-time champions, some of whom were involved in the formation of the campaign, to share reflections on 25 years.





### **FORMER VICE CHANCELLOR DONALD F. PARSONS, JR.**

In the late 1990s I had the privilege of being appointed by then Delaware State Bar Association (DSBA) President, the late Anne Naczi, to chair a Bar committee that included the heads of Delaware's three legal services providers: (the now Honorable) James G. McGiffin, Jr. from Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI), Dana Harrington from Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS), and Doug Canfield from Legal Services Corporation of Delaware (LSCD). The Committee worked to increase coordination among these agencies in both the provision of services and fundraising. One result was Legal Help Link; the other the Combined Campaign for Justice.

When the Committee began, each of the agencies engaged in an annual fundraising effort, which caused some confusion and fatigue among current and potential donors. Being more established at the time, CLASI and DVLS raised significantly more than LSCD, a relative newcomer. In the aggregate, they raised a total of approximately \$185,000 in 1998. Those dollars were important, however, and trepidation among the agencies about surrendering their ability to conduct independent campaigns made achieving consensus challenging. Ultimately, the agencies decided to participate in a single joint, annual campaign with the strong support of the Delaware State Bar Association.

The parties negotiated a detailed agreement for an initial period of years, and the Combined Campaign for Justice was born. Among the Committee's most consequential decisions were: (1) the hiring of the late M.C. Byrd as CCJ's fundraising consultant and (2) the adoption of a statewide fundraising framework that involved volunteer lawyers from all sectors of the Bar. In its inaugural year, 1999, CCJ raised approximately twice what CLASI, DVLS, and LSCD had brought in separately. Although today's results far eclipse that amount, that first step helped unleash the exceptional generosity and commitment to legal services the Delaware Bench and Bar and those who work in support of our legal system have exhibited ever since.

### **FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE LEO E. STRINE, JR.**

When you claim an exclusive privilege — as lawyers do — to serve the public, you should serve everyone. When you claim to be a nation where the law applies equally to everyone, then everyone needs to have a fair shot. Delaware is a long way from ensuring that everyone who needs a lawyer to protect their critical rights, in areas like parental and tenant rights and protection from domestic abuse, gets one. The Combined Campaign for Justice represents part of our Bar's effort to close this important gap by providing funding to those in our Bar who do the challenging, stressful, and essential work of helping people who lack the means to hire a lawyer. The funding CCJ provides Delaware's three legal aid agencies has kept vulnerable women and children safe, assisted refugees fleeing oppression and violence in establishing residency and citizenship in the United States, and helped poor people solve countless situations and keep their families from homelessness. We best honor CCJ's historic quarter century by vowing to redouble our commitment to funding its agencies more fully and making our state fairer and more just.



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**JENNIFER GIMLER BRADY, ESQUIRE**  
**PARTNER, POTTER ANDERSON & CORROON LLP**



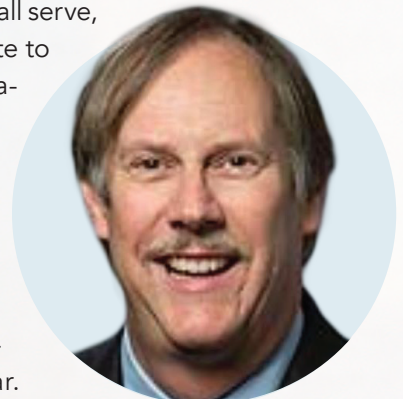
When I joined Potter Anderson in 1990, I quickly discovered our firm's deep connection with legal services in Delaware. In 1945 and 1946, members of the Delaware legal community including three attorneys who had close ties to Potter Anderson spearheaded the formation of the Legal Aid Society in Wilmington. Those attorneys were: William Poole, The Honorable Collins J. Seitz, and The Honorable Clarence Southerland. And in 1981, Potter Anderson's David Brown helped establish Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) to address gaps created by significant cutbacks in the federal funding of legal services. One of my first pro bono matters (a guardianship case) was through DVLS, and it had a lasting impact on me. Beginning in the mid-90s, I had the privilege of serving on the board of the Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI). In 1995 the federal Legal Services Corporation imposed significant restrictions on the advocacy recipients could engage in, which led CLASI and the DSBA to collaborate on the formation of Legal Services Corporation of Delaware (LSCD) in 1996. Also at that time, each of the three legal services organizations was engaging in individualized fundraising efforts, and those efforts sometimes overlapped. It became apparent that a coordinated fundraising approach could benefit all three legal services organizations, by maximizing the resources of the Bar and promoting efficiencies. Through the efforts of CLASI, DVLS, LSCD, and the DSBA, Delaware's Combined Campaign for Justice (CCJ) became a reality. For almost 25 years, CCJ has been dedicated to increasing the resources available to fund critical legal services for individuals with limited income. These legal services are directed to the most essential human needs: housing, employment, food security, public benefits, children's safety, education, disability services, and health insurance. I've been proud and honored to serve as a co-chair of the CCJ for the past 3 years. It has given me a fresh perspective on how the funds raised through the CCJ have a direct and meaningful impact on Delawareans of limited means. The needs are vast and deep, exacerbated by the pandemic. But CCJ supporters have stepped up in several ways – they've dug deeper, they've graciously shared their time and talents, and they've showed up (enthusiastically!) to support events that benefit CCJ, and by extension, the provision of critical legal services to those who desperately need them. Unfortunately, there is no sign that the needs are lessening, but I take comfort in the knowledge that CCJ supporters don't shy away from a challenge.

**DOUGLAS B. CANFIELD, ESQUIRE**  
**FORMER LSCD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Over 25 years ago, the DSBA President, the late Anne Naczi (who would go on to be a valued long-serving member of the LSCD Board of Directors) had the foresight to appoint another Bar luminary, former Vice Chancellor Don Parsons, to chair a committee to help coordinate the services of the three legal services providers. There was well founded concern (held by myself, among others) that going from three campaigns to one annual campaign might result in a decrease in overall funds raised. Vice-Chancellor Parsons was convinced that given the commitment of the Delaware Bench and Bar to the provision of equal justice for all, that would not happen. Thus, the experiment of the Combined Campaign for Justice was born.

Not only did the concerns of some of the doubters not come to fruition, but, due to the brilliantly conceived structure of the Combined Campaign (run by volunteers and attorneys soliciting their peers), it became a hugely successful effort. The Campaign raised far more than the individual organizations had raised individually, in its inaugural year. Due to the generosity and commitment of Delaware attorneys the Combined Campaign for Justice became the most successful legal services annual campaign in the United States, raising more than twice per capita than the next closest effort. National publications recognized CCJ as a model for other legal services organizations to emulate.

LSCD, CLASI, DVLS, and the thousands of Delawareans that we all serve, are truly fortunate to be the beneficiaries of the amazing foresight, commitment, leadership, and generosity of the members of our very special Delaware Bar.







**WILLIAM H. SUDELL, JR., ESQUIRE**

Almost 25 years ago, I was present at the “Big Bang”, when the Combined Campaign for Justice was created. At the suggestion and leadership of then DSBA president former Vice Chancellor Donald F. Parsons, Jr., the executive leadership of CLASI, DVLS and LSCD met in a conference room at Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnell LLP to discuss future fundraising for these organizations. Historically, each attempted to raise funds by sending annual letters to prospective donors. That process led to confusion and a duplication of effort. On the other hand, it was feared that abandoning the old order for combined fund raising might lead to a smaller total donation overall. After several meetings, it was decided to give a combined effort a try. The rest, as they say, is history. Just as with another, somewhat older Big Bang the result of the annual Combined Campaign for Justice has been an ever-expanding universe of donors and funds raised.

However, just as it was 25 years ago, there remains a substantial, unmet need for civil legal representation of the disadvantaged in Delaware, which will most certainly continue for years to come. It is, therefore, critically important not only to support CCJ annually, but to ensure its long-term viability by making a legacy gift to the CCJ Equal Justice Society endowment fund. I have done so and encourage all who support CCJ to do so as well. There are several easy ways to make a legacy gift, such as in your will or living trust, a gift of stocks, bonds or other assets, an IRA charitable rollover, a gift of life insurance, and others. More about the Equal Justice Society and ways to contribute to the endowment can be found on the CCJ website.

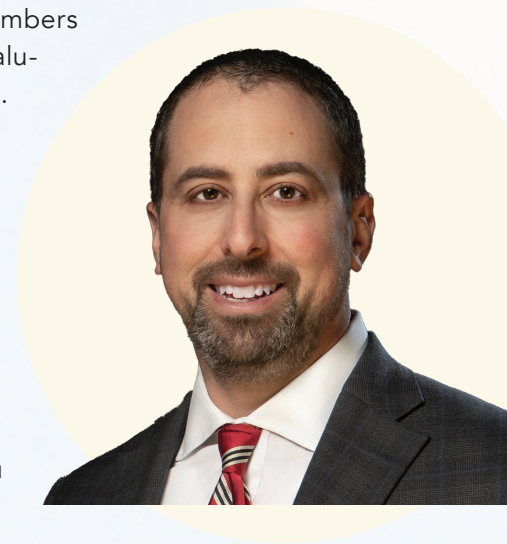
**ERIC J. MONZO, ESQUIRE**


**PARTNER, MORRIS JAMES LLP**

**CHAIR OF 2023 COMBINED CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE**

There are countless stories of those impacted through the work of CCJ and the organizations it supports — when I got involved, I wasn’t fully aware that my story would be one of them. I have had the distinct privilege of practicing law in Delaware for the last 15 years, seven of which I served on CCJ’s fundraising committee, culminating in co-chairing the campaign for the last three years. It has been one of the honors of my career to work proximate to these agencies and the good people in them who work hard day in and day out to create a dynamic and lasting impact on the lives of our neighbors. In my time with CCJ, I’ve learned so much about legal services, the people providing them, and the strength of commitment to this cause within the Delaware Bar. Over 100 of my colleagues in the Bar have contributed to CCJ for 20+ years, and many more of my colleagues have volunteered their time and expertise on top of that. In my time with CCJ, I have seen this campaign grow exponentially (now boasting 1,000 annual donors), I’ve seen the direct impact of a contribution to CCJ on the livelihood of my fellow Delawareans and I’ve been a part of the 25-year effort to raise over million dollars for CLASI, DVLS, and LSCD. The agencies

CCJ supports allow unserved members of our community to receive invaluable access to our court system. This access not only helps those who receive the representation to reach their potential but also helps all Delawareans. Our community is stronger when we work together and help each other. When the call comes up for you to get involved with the work of legal services, I encourage all of you to take it.



**To be part of the mission by contributing or volunteering, find out more here: [www.delawareccj.org](http://www.delawareccj.org).** 



**Molly McPheeters** is the campaign manager for the Combined Campaign for Justice. She can be reached at [mmcpheeters@delawareccj.org](mailto:mmcpheeters@delawareccj.org).