

# CAHILL

Eighty Pine Street, New York, NY 10005 | 212.701.3000 | 212.269.5420 (fax)

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## Pro Bono

Cahill has a long and honored tradition of pro bono work. Each year since 2005, The Legal Aid Society of New York has presented Cahill and our lawyers with the Pro Bono Publico Award "in recognition of Cahill's outstanding commitment to the cause of equal justice through pro bono service." The firm supports the efforts of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York through Volunteers of Legal Service ("VOLS") to provide an average of 30 hours per attorney to qualifying pro bono work annually.

Through our partnership with The Legal Aid Society, Cahill lawyers advocate for educational services for young children who are the subjects of abuse and neglect proceedings in New York family Courts, disabled individuals in need of Social Security benefits, tenants who are denied the most basic of services, and indigent defendants in criminal appeals. The housing program component was recently expanded when Cahill initiated a new project with the Civil Practice's Queens Neighborhood Office to represent tenants in Housing Court actions to compel landlords to repair dangerous building conditions, threatening life, health, safety and continued occupancy.

Many Cahill lawyers have taken cases on behalf of abused and neglected children and disabled, low income adults. Others have undertaken to handle criminal appeals on behalf of indigent defendants as part of Legal Aid's Criminal Appeals Project. Working with guidance from Legal Aid attorneys, our lawyers have the primary responsibility for all aspects of the appeals, including consulting with the clients, mastering the trial record, formulating issues for appeal, drafting the brief, and conducting oral argument. In addition to the benefits afforded by hands-on experience, Cahill lawyers have repeatedly obtained successful results, securing educational and developmental placements and disability benefits for their pro bono clients.

Through our partnership with the Legal Services Center of The Door, a youth services agency for people between the ages of 12 and 21, Cahill lawyers provide pro bono counsel to young people in crisis through individual representation on immigration (asylum, SIJS, VAWA self-petitions), family law/family violence, public benefits, and public assistance. Also through this partnership, Cahill lawyers conduct Emancipation Clinics. Our attorneys meet with young people who have questions or concerns regarding emancipation, benefits, becoming an independent student for purposes of financial aid eligibility, or combinations of the above issues and teach youth legal rights.

In 2008, a team of Cahill associates pioneered the teaching curriculum "Know Your Rights." Designed specifically for urban students whose schools are heavily patrolled by NYPD safety agents and who are interested in learning about the legal process and how it affects them, the seminar series covers rights under the Constitution such as arrest procedure, search and seizure, juvenile rights, voting rights and free speech rights. "Know Your Rights" has gained national attention by non-profit press, and a teaching manual has been developed to facilitate the continued expansion of the program. Now in its fourth year, "Know Your Rights" workshops are held for students of various Urban Assembly Schools around the five boroughs. The program is currently being expanded with the creation of a "Media Law" curriculum and manual covering topics such as trademarks, copyrights, digital infringement, and fair use. This curriculum will be used to teach "Media Law" seminars at the Urban Assembly Media High School in Manhattan and perhaps other schools in the future.

Through the Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund, Cahill lawyers assist transgender individuals with the "Name Change Project." The project allows transgender individuals to begin conforming their legal identities to the way they identify and live their lives. Cahill lawyers lend their services by advising clients on the applicable law and petitioning a court as well as appearing as co-counsel to the Fund in court proceedings.

In addition, Cahill lawyers individually have taught inner city youth law programs, mentor troubled youth, provide advice to not for profit organizations and serve as volunteers for community service projects in and around New York City.

