

VALLEY! LAWYER

DECEMBER 2016 • \$4

A Publication of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association

Giving Back: One Firm's Legacy of Serving the Community

Practice Areas for New Lawyers

Earn MCLE Credit

BLANKET THE HOMELESS

A Project of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association and the Valley Community Legal Foundation of the SFVBA



Share the spirit of the Holidays - Help Blanket the Homeless when they need it most!

Since 1995, the SFVBA has delivered more than 40,000 blankets to homeless and battered women shelters in the San Fernando Valley. SFVBA members are invited to assist with the blanket distribution and volunteer for a legal clinic on December 10, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. at L.A. Family Housing, 7817 Lankershim Boulevard, North Hollywood.

Thank You for Supporting Blanket the Homeless!

A \$75 donation buys 10 blankets. Please accept my donation for \$_____.

Name _____

Firm/Company _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Make checks payable to VCLF of the SFVBA. The Valley Community Legal Foundation (VCLF) of the SFVBA is a registered 501(c)(3) organization (Tax ID No. 95-3397334). Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Mail donation to VCLF, 5567 Reseda Blvd., Ste. 200, Tarzana, CA 91356 or fax to (818) 227-0499.

For more information, please call (818) 227-0490.

Supporting our Future Valley Legal Scholars

OVER THE PAST YEAR IN this column, we've seen several heartfelt stories of individuals who have confronted hardship and adversity with courage and determination and how those courageous people have benefitted from the generosity and commitment of remarkable service organizations like Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Safe Passage, Haven Hills and the Boys and Girls Clubs—all of which are supported by the San Fernando valley Bar Association's Valley Community Legal Foundation (VCLF) and the generous donations of committed, community Valley residents.

What many people are not aware of is that in addition to supporting these and other worthwhile charitable organizations, the VCLF encourages and provides scholarships to qualified students pursuing a legal education like Myrna Velasquez. Ever since Myrna immigrated to the United States at the age of 13, her father taught her that school should be her number one priority. "Education has always been a big part of my life" said Myrna. "I always knew I wanted to be successful and I knew I would accomplish my goals by educating myself."

In high school, she realized that success at her studies would be the

key to becoming a strong, independent woman. Her resolve paid dividends, and after completing her undergraduate degree in political science, she earned a master's degree in public administration.

The subsequent years she spent working for an immigration attorney awakened the aspiration of becoming an attorney herself. Working with people of different backgrounds taught her that a career in the law would be more than



just a job—it would give her the tools to help bring struggling families together and help reunite estranged family members with their loved ones.

Having grown up in Latin America, Myrna knows all too well the trials

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of poverty, the hardships of financial instability, and having to face the gut-wrenching choice between clothing, food, and education.

"I come from a humble family, a family that has been of great support to me," said Myrna. "My father is a construction worker, and even though [he never earned] a lot of money, he has always helped me financially as best as he could. My economic situation is tough, as law school is very expensive. And there are tremendous sacrifices that I have had to make in order to pay for classes. I take nothing for granted. My hard work scholastically has paid off, as I have been blessed to receive scholarships that have funded a portion of my legal education. I am eternally grateful!"

Myrna is now in her second year of law school. Looking back, she thanks God for giving her the knowledge to lead her life in the most positive way possible. Looking forward, she is thankful for the Valley Community Legal Foundation for their encouragement and support.

"Law school has made me a different woman—a woman with bigger dreams and hopes," said Myrna. Law school is by far one of the most difficult things that I have experienced. "It has taught me about stress, anxiety, and

About the VCLF of the SFVBA

The Valley Community Legal Foundation is the charitable arm of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association. The Foundation's mission is to support the legal needs of the youth, victims of domestic violence, and veterans of the San Fernando Valley. The Foundation also provides educational grants to qualified students pursuing legal careers. The Foundation relies on donations to fund its work. To donate to the VCLF or to learn more, visit www.thevclf.org and help us make a difference in our community.

NEW MEMBERS

The following joined the SFVBA in October 2016:

Gerardo E. Alcantara
Graves and King LLP
Glendale
Civil Litigation

James Andrade
The Burbank Firm, L.C.
Burbank
Business Law

Courtney E. Arnold
Boyamian Law Inc.
Glendale
Family Law

Nabil R. Atalla
Atalla Law, APC
Encino
Immigration and Naturalization

Gina Aubry
Lewitt Hackman
Encino
Paralegal

Braden M. Cancilla
Law Offices of Braden M. Cancilla
Pasadena
Immigration and Naturalization

Magdalena Casas
Granada Hills
Law Student

Atyria Shantell Clark
The Community Law Firm
Santa Monica
Immigration and Naturalization

Caitlyn Dillon
Lewitt Hackman
Encino
Paralegal

Samy Harmoush
Kramer, Deboer & Keane LLP
Woodland Hills
Insurance Litigation

Katherine M. Heersema
Lewitt Hackman
Encino
Family Law

Janet Kerobyian
Van Nuys
Law Student

Michelle M. Kezirian
Neighborhood Legal Services of LA County
Pacoima
Litigation

Joan L. Shultz
Moorpark
*Alternative Dispute Resolution:
Arbitration and Mediation*

Ronald M. Supancic CFLS
The Law Collaborative
Los Angeles
Woodland Hills
Family Law

doubt. But I know that everything that I am going through is worth it because becoming an attorney is my greatest dream," she said.

"All of us who have received financial help from this great Bar Foundation are extremely lucky and humble to receive such help, as I am. I cannot wait to pass the Bar exam so that I can utilize my law license and begin to give back by helping the less fortunate people of the San Fernando Valley."

VCLF AT WORK

Every year the VCLF is proud to offer financial scholarships to qualified and worthy students from the San Fernando Valley who are pursuing a legal education. We are all encouraged by the amazing people that we support like Myrna Velasquez. On behalf of the VCLF, I truly thank you for your continued support, and I wish you a healthy and joyous holiday season a most prosperous New Year! 🏠



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Join us for our Holiday Celebration!

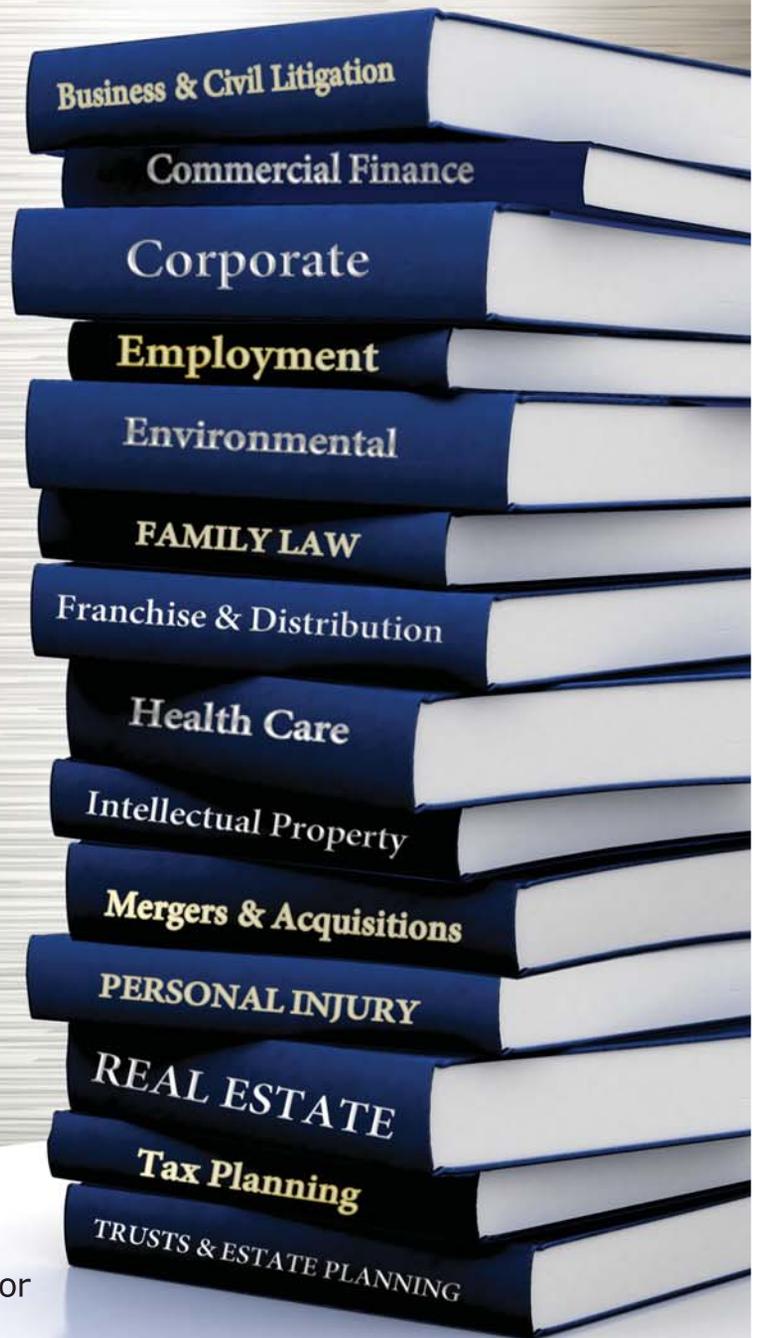
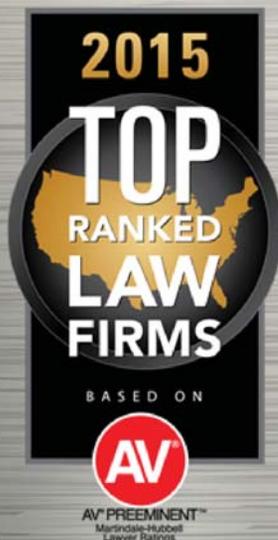
Bring an unwrapped toy or gift card for the West Valley Food Pantry and Haven Hills Domestic Violence Shelter.

RSVP to (818) 227-0490, ext. 105 or events@sfvba.org.



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