

Calling All New Jersey Lawyers to Fight Hunger



Every year at Thanksgiving, before my family sits down to eat dinner, we spend the day at my restaurant in Jersey City feeding anyone and everyone from the neighborhood who needs a meal.

We don't take a bite until each visitor has a chance to fill their plate. All are welcome, and I am always humbled by the parade of people who come in. They include homeless individuals, people with jobs who are just scraping by each week, and families with children. I am honored to be able to feed them and appalled that we live in a society where people, particularly kids, are hungry.

As a mother and restaurant owner, there are few things more important to me than providing nutritious meals to the people around me. In my eyes, a healthy meal is an expression of love. It is a crime that in a state as well-off as New Jersey, 900,000 of our neighbors don't have enough to eat. Even more devastating is the fact that nearly 330,000 children face a daily challenge of food insecurity; that means one in seven kids does not have enough to eat, according to the Community FoodBank of New Jersey.

Two of those children are the seven- and 10-year-old daughters of Elmer, a construction worker. He and his wife work, but they struggle to provide nutritious food for their children. As a result, the girls haven't always been able to stay at a healthy weight. Thanks to the meals the girls receive at one of the FoodBank's Kid Cafes, they are getting back to a

normal size, Elmer said.

"We're very thankful for that," he added.

Another is Gabriel, whose parents receive food distribution from GRACE's Refrigerator in Summit every week. He has a heart condition, and eating right is critical to his health. The food pantry provides Gabriel with a wide variety of fresh vegetables—like peppers, radishes, and tomatoes—and other food his mother includes in his lunches and dinners.

They are also kids like eight-year-old Emma, who gets an afterschool meal thanks to the FoodBank's efforts. "If I didn't come... I would probably be hungry at home," she said. "If you don't eat, your stomach gets hurt, and you don't have enough food or energy."

I am excited to announce that the members of the New Jersey State Bar Association can soon do something concrete to help feed these families.

Next month, we will kick off our new Lawyers Feeding New Jersey campaign, a partnership and virtual fundraising drive with the Community FoodBank of New Jersey.

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey works with food banks and affiliates across the state. Their programs to help kids are meaningful to me. Their Kid Cafes allow kids to get a nourishing meal after the school day ends; family packs mean kids can go home with a bag of food to get through the weekend with enough to eat; and last year summer programs provided 118,000 meals.

On Sept. 24, we will hold a special event at the Community FoodBank's headquarters in Hillside where state bar members can take a tour of the facility and attend a reception featuring a comedy set by Assemblyman Jon Bramnick. And this winter we will host a family day of service where you can join me

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lords and tenants based upon the non-payment of rent, and the elements required to be contained in such settlement agreements.

With few exceptions, tenants can be evicted only under one of the grounds for eviction listed in the Anti-Eviction Act. Jose Abreu, a senior attorney at Central Jersey Legal Services, covers one specific cause of action in his article: a person's willful and grossly negligent damage, destruction or injury to the leased premises. This cause of action is unique in that the tenant has no opportunity to cure, and it does not require a notice to cease.

In his article, Robert Flanagan points out that although one of the most commonly filed lawsuits in New Jersey is a residential summary dispossess action (seeking to remove a residential tenant), in his experience many attorneys are unfamiliar with the steps required to properly remove a tenant. Since many tenants leave their belongings behind after being removed from the premises, Flanagan provides a helpful discussion on the New Jersey Abandoned Property Act.

The next few articles turn to landlord-tenant law from a commercial per-

spective. In their article, David Gordon and Todd Ledher discuss remedy provisions in commercial leases. They point out that many attorneys use boilerplate clauses in the remedies sections of their leases, and they provide practical alternatives on how to modify these provisions to help the parties reach desired outcomes. Next, Stephen McNally points out that since commercial tenant bankruptcy filings are not uncommon, it is important for landlords to understand the Bankruptcy Code sections that address landlords' rights when tenants file for bankruptcy. McNally sheds light on some of these provisions so landlords can take these points into consideration when negotiating leases.

In his article, Brian Lehrer examines insurance issues that surround landlord-tenant relationships, and reviews various court holdings in this area of law. The next article, by Adam Sklar and Gary Albrecht, discusses the Construction Lien Law's provisions on contractors' lien rights with respect to tenant work, and whether the lien applies to both the landlord's fee interest in the property and the tenant's leasehold interest, or only the tenant's interest.

Finally, Ivette Alvarado closes out this

issue of the magazine with a discussion of trending topics in commercial office space. Alvarado discusses various issues and risks that must be considered when negotiating office leases in light of the increased demand for open-space office plans and innovative common area amenities such as daycare centers and rooftop patios.

We would like to thank all of the authors for their contributions to this issue of *New Jersey Lawyer* magazine. We would also like to express our gratitude to Mary DeMarco for her invaluable assistance with this issue of the magazine. ❧

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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and my daughter for a morning sorting food for food-insecure families.

I am so excited about this latest Lawyers Feeding New Jersey campaign. The program was launched in 2014, and over the course of three campaigns our members raised nearly \$95,000 to feed the food-insecure in New Jersey.

As president of this association, I vow to fight on behalf of the professional interests of lawyers with the passion and zeal I use when representing clients. I am privileged to do that in no small part because I have the luxury of not worrying about where daily necessities like meals will come from for me or my daughter.

Please join me in donating to Lawyers Feeding New Jersey in the months ahead so that our friends and neighbors who struggle to get enough to eat can do more than focus on where their next meal will come from.

For every dollar our members donate, Community FoodBank of New Jersey can provide three meals to people in need. Together, I know we can make a real difference in the lives of families and children who deserve our help. ❧



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