

Seeking Justice for Older People Using the Power of the Law

By Renee Chenault Fattah, Lindsey Zions, Tomasita Luz Sherer, Sarah Egovalle and Marissa Parker

SeniorLAW Center seeks justice for older people using the power of the law, educating the community and advocating on local, state and national levels. Our clients, the majority of whom have faced disparities all their lives, are at the epicenter of this pandemic, the most vulnerable to the virus and most likely to die, here and around the nation and world.

The role of our pro bono partners has taken on new significance in expanding the capacity of our 40 attorneys and advocates to respond to expanding legal crises in these unprecedented times, and their response to the call for action has been inspiring. These attorneys and their firms and organizations joined our Pro Bono Action for Community Impact project, a unique collaboration between SeniorLAW Center and the AARP that uses pro bono to pursue systemic change and resources for older people throughout Pennsylvania, in diverse and powerful ways.

In the early days of the pandemic, Lindsey Zions, an associate in the litigation department at Ballard Spahr, set to work on outlining the process for establishing a standby guardianship, a tool to ensure care for children should their caregivers be ill or face crisis, particularly critical during a pandemic.

“Designating a standby guardian is always advisable,

but the onset of COVID-19 made this especially crucial for senior citizens who have custody of minor grandchildren,” Zions says. “We were thrilled to be a part of a project that not only made it easier for seniors to designate standby guardians, but that also actively encouraged seniors to take advantage of this contingency plan. We hope that our efforts at least gave peace of mind to seniors acting as caregivers for children, and we are excited to continue working with SeniorLAW Center in the future.”

Older people are often the top-targeted groups for scams and exploitation, which has escalated during COVID-19. For help, we turned to a team of pro bono lawyers led by DLA Piper’s of Counsel Tomasita Luz Sherer.

“In the news were many reports of price gauging, financial scams and drug related misinformation that were overwhelming our elderly population,” Sherer says. “We were looking for projects where we could virtually partner with our nonprofit clients and to include some in-house client partners as well. In this case, General Electric reached out to join in with the project, and we were thrilled to be able to make a difference with our three-way collaboration, thanks to technology and DLA Piper’s resources. In the end, our research enabled us to prepare targeted flyers for the elderly, in plain English, explaining what scams to avoid and where to go to seek further assistance.”

The project also benefitted from hundreds of hours of



research from law students at Temple, Drexel and Penn’s law schools.

“We are deeply grateful for the meaningful service opportunities SeniorLAW Center provides our students,” says Sarah Egovalle, staff attorney at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School’s Toll Public Interest Center. “Because of the expert guidance and supportive mentorship they received, Penn Law students have assisted with urgent research needs of pandemic-impacted issues such as foreclosures, utility shutoffs, and voting procedures. Through this important partnership, law students develop practical skills and a commitment to pro bono service that many will carry throughout their careers.”

Last summer at the height of the crisis, Stradley Ronon crafted its virtual summer associate program to tackle research issues for systemic change for SeniorLAW Center’s older clients and communities.

“We jumped at the opportunity and appreciated that the collaboration allowed all of our summer associates

continued on page 19

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In response to the emerging challenges sweeping the legal industry last year, MyCase released a number of features that helped attorneys and supporting staff work full-time from anywhere, engage clients virtually, and continue to get paid promptly with zero disruption to business. Below are the five new, game-changing features that will help law firms reach a new tier of efficiency in 2021.

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collaboration, so firms can tackle their caseloads more efficiently. Chat with some or all firm members to resolve case questions quickly, while keeping record of all case-related chat communications in one place.

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Catering Reboot a Mount Airy Success

By James Zwolak

In the four years I've been doing these reviews, with the exception East Falls' fiery gem Side of the Road Jerk Chicken (I need to seriously get back there), I haven't written about any restaurant outside of a three-mile radius of my South Philly home. Provincialism and laziness are a toxic combination.

But none other than food writer extraordinaire/local culinary celebrity Marilyn Johnson (@phillygrub on Instagram and Twitter) came along to set me straight. She has cheered on my reviews from day one, and I've considered her a mentor. Marilyn recently tweeted about the grand opening of Doho Taqueria, a new Asian fusion bao bun joint in Mount Airy. I was in.

Doho is the brainchild of longtime Mount Airy caterer Catering by Design, and its executive chef Roth Perelman. CBD/Doho manager Mike told me CBD's business shrunk by 90% since the onset of COVID-19, and since Perelman's staff all loved his bao bun concoctions, CBD decided to launch a full takeout menu out of their vast industrial kitchen.

If you order for pickup, you get to walk down a dimly lit alley and walk right into their kitchen (totally cool). Doho's compact menu is quirky and affordable, with sides including eight small soft pretzels with a side of refreshing mint crema, crunchy plantain chips with coconut curry red queso (a good value), sweet plantains with carrot ginger sauce (which melted in my mouth), and chicken dumplings.

Doho's calling card is a trio of "taco bao buns": hot chicken with sriracha sauce and mayo (Mike's favorite, not too spicy, very balanced IMHO), a roast pork with BBQ sauce, pineapple/kimchi salsa and cilantro, shrimp tempura with spicy sauce, avocado and cabbage slaw

(which held up great with a quick stint in the toaster oven), and a cocoa skirt steak with piri-piri sauce. Nothing over \$6. Finally, Doho sells larger rice bowls with mostly the same ingredients at double the price (I did not try).

Along with my wife, Gia, Mount Airy residents/work colleagues Lauren and Sam gladly agreed to participate. Gia was pretty meh about everything we ordered; even commenting to frequent co-reviewers Nigel and Lola that "Those things you serve Peking duck on (bao buns), I don't want tacos in them, they should have Peking Duck in them." OK then.

Conversely, like me, the more enthusiastic Sam and Lauren found a lot to love. Lauren's husband, Dan, stated, "The tacos were expertly done, and I enjoyed the steak tacos the most, with the chicken and pork being a little decadent for me." Lauren liked everything and will "definitely be there again."

Sam's family enjoyed their entire humungous order. Three-year-old Maggie loved the plantains and pretzels, and Sam opined the pork taco bun had a great flavor blend (as did I). But Sam's mother-in-law, Elaine, "gets the cookie" for her thoughtful analysis: "My plantains were sweet and crunchy. Not greasy. The skirt steak taco was delicious. The beef was not overcooked. Moist, with just the right seasoning; not too spicy, but a little bite. The bao buns and veggies were great compliments, and I would order here again." Well put.

I think Doho Taqueria is a nice addition to the Mount Airy scene, and if you live in northwest Philly, go check it out.

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Photos by James Zwolak

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Ransomware Attacks Targeting Attorneys on the Rise



Last fall, the FBI issued a "High Impact" warning regarding increased ransomware attacks on U.S. businesses and organizations. This is notable because, the last time the FBI addressed ransomware was in 2016. Ransomware is software used by cybercriminals to encrypt a victim's electronic files, preventing access to the victim. The criminals then demand a ransom in exchange for providing access.

For more, visit <https://insurancefocus.usiaffinity.com>.

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SeniorLAW

continued from page 16

to dig in and develop research memoranda on timely issues and initiatives of importance to our clients, such as best practices for voting during the pandemic, concerns around equity and access in remote court proceedings, and legislative paths to bolster services for older LGBTQ Pennsylvanians," says Stradley Ronon Vice Chair of Litigation Marissa Parker. "Coordinating and providing meaningful work product in a focused, digestible format engaged our summer associates in real-world counseling and provided value to our clients—a win-win for everyone."

The crisis continues, as does the urgent need for responses to seek justice for those most at risk. We are grateful for these leaders who have stepped up and invite others to join us in this work. Visit www.seniorlawcenter.org for more information or contact Renee Chenault Fattah, director, pro bono action for community impact in PA, at rchenaultfattah@seniorlawcenter.org.