



Legal Ease

The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley's
Bi-monthly Newsletter

November 2021



Jarryd Smith

Jarryd is a staff attorney who primarily practices in landlord-tenant law. He is from Virginia Beach and is a graduate of Washington and Lee University School of Law and Virginia Tech. While in law school he worked in the Advanced Administrative Litigation Clinic assisting coal miners pursuing federal black lung benefits. Since graduating, he worked for a law firm doing black lung litigation defense and more recently as an Assistant Public Defender.

Are there certain areas of the law that are your specialty and/or you particularly enjoy? Why?

At LASRV my practice revolves around housing law and within that area I mostly focus on Landlord-Tenant law. I enjoy this area of the law because of the positive impact that LASRV can have on people's lives in this area. Housing is such a basic need and I enjoy that we get to fight to uphold people's rights in this area.

Your experience/background includes working for an insurance company dealing with black lung disease in coal miners, but you also represented coal miners against insurance companies. What was that like?

Both experiences provided their own rewards and opportunities. Through it all I learned to be mentally flexible and see the same set of facts from both sides of a case. The experiences helped me learn how to better prepare a case. I also worked at a public defender's office representing indigent defendants. My time there exposed me to how much some people are struggling in various areas. [At](#) the time I was looking for a change and LASRV provided an opportunity to help people in a different way.

What do you like best about working at Legal Aid?

What I like most about working at Legal Aid is getting the opportunity to help people in such an important area of their lives.

How has COVID-19 impacted your work and your clients?

COVID-19 has drastically affected my work and the lives of my clients. As people are aware the pandemic has led to a lot of people struggling to pay their bills and rent. This led to a lot more people facing evictions including my clients. I started working for LASRV last November and at that time the General Assembly began making changes to Landlord-Tenant law seemingly in response to the possible wave of evictions. The General Assembly has continued to pass new laws in this area that provide tenants more protections and I'm hopeful this will continue. For me, this meant learning an area of law that is changing regularly and hopefully for the better.

You're originally from VA Beach. How did you discover Roanoke and decide to move here?

I went to Virginia Tech for undergrad and to Washington and Lee for law school

so, I was familiar with this area and enjoyed living here. Also, after my first year at law school, I had an internship in Roanoke where I worked in the downtown area. I've grown comfortable in this area and the mountains are a nice change.

What do you think would happen if there was no Legal Aid and you were not there to represent your clients?

If Legal Aid was not here, then I think a lot of our clients would not be able to enforce their rights. Some clients would likely assume that landlord, creditor, or other party is right and just give in or feel too overwhelmed to fight. Others would want to fight but wouldn't know the proper way to go about it.

To learn more about Jarryd and how he helped a mother and her children remain in their homes during the pandemic, read the next article "Living in Fear of Being Evicted."



Gail W. (her name is fiction, to protect Gail and her family's identity, but her story is not) waited four years for Section 8 housing, only to find her housing voucher had been terminated because her landlord confused her with another tenant who was sub-leasing their apartment. When the landlord terminated her lease, Gail requested a Section 8 hearing and was denied her benefits after being heard. Gail was terrified she and her children would need to find a different place to live during a pandemic. As she'd lost her housing voucher, she was also afraid she wouldn't be able to afford a new apartment.

"I started thinking about the Rescue Mission and how we might have to go there so we'd have a roof over our heads. It was a scary experience for me and my children.

The Housing Authority staff continued to give Gail more and more paperwork to fill out, which she did and submitted back to them, in hopes that her situation

would change. However, she sensed that even though the Housing Authority and her landlord had made the error, Gail felt they were slowly backing away from her and the situation. It was almost as if she was being swept under a rug in hopes no one would find out what had really happened.

“After a while, the Housing Authority brushed me off and stopped trying to help me. It was an awful feeling and made me feel like I didn’t matter.”

Luckily, Gail knew about The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley and asked for help with her situation. She was assigned to attorney Jarryd Smith and in reviewing Gail’s file at the Housing Authority office, he found that the landlord did in fact mistaken Gail for another tenant.

Jarryd’s presence and his ability to be Gail’s advocate, caused the Housing Authority’s to help her right away. Gail and her children no longer needed to worry about losing the Section 8 Housing voucher or going to live at the Rescue Mission.”

“I really don’t know what I would have done with Legal Aid,” said Gail. “The terrible things that might happen to us caused me and my children to feel very afraid and like we didn’t matter. But thanks to my attorney Jarryd Smith and Legal Aid supporting me, my Section 8 Housing Voucher was re-issued, and we could stay in our home.”

If you, or someone you know, is facing possible eviction or having issues with their landlord, please refer them to The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley.

www.lasrv.org

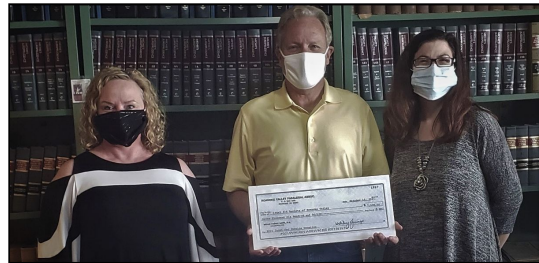
The images in this story are not actual photos of Gail and her children to protect their identity.

We are so grateful to Gail for allowing us to share her story with you!



Second Annual Jaunt for Justice 5K

Raises \$7,600 for The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley's FY22 Annual Fund Campaign to Support Programs and Services



We would like to thank the more than 159 runners, walkers, children & youth, four-legged friends, volunteers, Runabout Sports, The Lazy Bulldog Food Truck, Mountain Junkies, the City of Roanoke, and our twenty-four generous and community minded sponsors, for making the second annual *Jaunt for Justice 5K* on Saturday, October 2, an enormous success. This year's *Jaunt for Justice 5K*, created and hosted by the Roanoke Valley Paralegal Association (RVPA), raised \$7,600 enabling LASRV to provide services for low-income individuals and their families. *Jaunt for Justice* also raised the awareness of so many low-income individuals and families throughout the valley who did not know they might qualify for FREE legal assistance.

Thanks again to all participants and sponsors. You are the reason LASRV can impact and change the lives of our most vulnerable populations, right here, in your community. This is especially important now as LASRV connects both landlords and tenants to rent relief so tenants can remain in their homes and do not become homeless. If you, or someone you know, needs legal advice, or rent relief if faced with an eviction, please reach out to LASRV 540-344-2080 or visit lasrv.org

We are already hard at work for the third annual *Jaunt for Justice 5K*, on Saturday, October 1, 2022. We hope to see you there!

With great appreciation and gratitude,

Shannon Honaker
President
RVPA

Roy Creasey
President
LASRV



If you, or someone you know, is dealing with bankruptcy & evictions because of the Covid Pandemic, please join The Roanoke Law Foundation's FREE workshop:

Navigating Bankruptcy & Evictions During the Covid Pandemic on Thursday, November 4, 2021, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Roanoke Higher Education Center.

Featured speakers include David Beidler, Executive Director & General Counsel, at The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley. Attendance is FREE, but you must register at <http://roanokebar.com/event/you-and-the-law-evictions-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Restrictions: Everyone is asked to follow protocols set by the Higher Education Center. Please wear a mask.

YOU AND THE LAW

Roanoke Higher Education Center
108 N. Jefferson Street
November 4, 2021 6:00 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.

The Roanoke Law Foundation presents
**NAVIGATING BANKRUPTCY &
EVICTIONS DURING
THE COVID PANDEMIC**

This is a two part presentation. One part will provide an overview of how bankruptcy courts operate and key rules and procedures that govern how bankruptcy cases are conducted. Attendees will gain a better understanding of the fundamental differences between Chapters 7, 11 and 13, and the role of attorneys and trustees in bankruptcy proceedings.

The second part will focus on basic landlord-tenant law related to residential evictions in Virginia, including recent changes of state and federal law affecting evictions. This session will finish with an overview of Virginia's Rent Relief Program.

Attendance is free but you must register at
<http://roanokebar.com/event/you-and-the-law-evictions-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Restrictions: Everyone is asked to follow protocols set by the Higher Education Center. Please wear a mask.

Speakers include:

*Judge Paul Black,
U.S. Bankruptcy Court*

*Andrew Goldstein, Esq.
Bankruptcy Trustee*

*David Beidler, Esq.
Legal Aid Society*

*Grimes Creasy, Esq.
Johnson, Ayers & Matthews*





LASRV says Goodbye to Attorney Kristi J. Murray

Kristi has been an amazing part of LASRV's team.

Throughout her time with LASRV,
she has commuted to Roanoke from Christiansburg.

This month, Kristi starts a new job at *Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society* in their Christiansburg office, which will allow her to work in the community where she lives, and be closer to her family.

Thank you Kristi for your passion, dedication, and countless hours helping LASRV clients. We will miss you but wish you nothing but success in your new position!



Your gift to LASRV's Annual Fund Has Power

Immediate impact - most LASRV annual funding comes from grants but grant awards can sometimes take months to arrive

Bridges the gap - grants are highly competitive and LASRV might not receive the grant or learn we received only partial funding

Keep our lights on - are unrestricted, and help with general operating expenses (e.g. office supplies, attorney salaries)

Mission-driven - ensures our legal programs are always FREE

Show your power and make your gift to the [Annual Fund Campaign](#) today!

**The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley
is grateful for *YOU!***

**It takes our friends, supporters,
volunteers, and clients to ensure
justice for all.**

THANK YOU!!



LEGAL AID SOCIETY
of Roanoke Valley
ACCESS TO JUSTICE

**We need your feedback
on our work!**



The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley is beginning our new strategic plan for 2022 - 2027. Your input is critical and will ensure we are serving your legal needs and the legal needs of our community.



**More info coming
November 15th, and a
link to our survey.**



For more than 50 years, Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley has been providing free civil legal assistance to low-income residents throughout the Roanoke Valley. We are the only legal services organization serving the Roanoke Valley and surrounding areas of the Blue Ridge that provides a full range of civil legal services include issues involving housing, protection from abuse, custody, divorce for victims of domestic violence, employment and unemployment, consumer problems like debt collection defenses and actions against predatory lenders.

If you or someone you know who can't afford a lawyer and is in need of legal assistance please visit our website. lasrv.org



Copyright © 2021 The Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

132 Campbell Ave SW
Roanoke, VA 24011

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.