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40th
A N N I V E R S A R Y G A L A

M A Y 7, 2022
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How to Participate

To participate in VIP's silent auction, you must register in one of three ways. It's quick and easy.

1. Scan the QR code below, click "Register," and follow the instructions
2. Download the HandBid app, register, and access the site by scanning the QR code below
3. Go to the auction check-in table and ask for help



Once you've logged in, click "Browse Items" to see our slate of artworks, getaways, and Philly experiences. All proceeds from the auction benefit VIP's mission. So don't be shy – get bidding!

Don't forget to enter our Anniversary Raffle! You can buy raffle tickets at the auction or raffle tables. Drop your tickets in the raffle boxes and stay tuned for the drawing at the end of the night.

Our raffle items are not listed on Handbid, so take a stroll and see what's on offer, including a robot bartender, gifts from local businesses, Phillies and Sixers tickets, and more!

DEAR FRIENDS:

Thank you for joining us tonight to celebrate 40 years of Philadelphia VIP!

When the leadership of the Philadelphia Bar Association tapped a small cohort of service-minded private attorneys in 1981 to mount a local response to the massive federal funding cuts to legal services agencies around the country, the expectation was that the resulting initiative—the Philadelphia Lawyers Volunteer Action Program (PLVAP) would serve as a temporary supplement to the critical work of established legal aid organizations that had been affected by those cuts.

But the need for free legal services on a large scale persisted through the years, and therefore so did the work of PLVAP. By 1985, through the collaboration of Bar Association Chancellor Bennett G. Picker and a handful of visionary attorneys including Carl “Tobey” Oxholm III and Eve Biskind Klothen, PLVAP evolved into the more mellifluously named Philadelphia VIP, with Eve as its first Executive Director, and remains today a bastion of community empowerment in Philadelphia.

Some four decades later, the great need for legal services in Philadelphia continues, as does the spirit of collaboration at the heart of VIP’s founding, and its sustained success in helping its clients secure their basic human needs. That spirit of collaboration can be found in the relationships between VIP volunteer attorneys and the clients they work to empower, between those volunteers and VIP’s brilliant, hardworking staff—today led by Executive Director Rida Haq, who has steered the organization through the tumult of the past two years with unflagging grace, grit, good humor and clarity of purpose—and most essentially, between Philadelphia’s private and public interest bars. It is this first of its kind collaboration that has made VIP a lasting and national model for legal services organizations in the 21st century.

Tonight, as we celebrate Philadelphia VIP’s 40th anniversary—a milestone made possible thanks to you—we envision a day when all will have equal access to justice. But until that day arrives, we remain grateful for your generosity, your support and your dedicated collaboration in the years to come.

With gratitude,

Alex Braden
Alex Braden

Francis Devine
Francis P. Devine, III

Megan Watson
Megan Watson

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Preserving Income
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C O N C L U D I N G R E M A R K S

S P E C I A L G U E S T S

We're honored to share tonight's festivities with three special guests: two VIP clients who received pro bono legal services from volunteer attorneys, and one esteemed volunteer. Our guests will share some of their thoughts on VIP's impact during dinner. Read on to learn more about their stories.



Robert Blanton

Mr. Blanton had lived in his home for over forty years, but the home was not in his name. The only way to become a homeowner was to pursue adverse possession – a complex and costly process, and one that's virtually impossible without a lawyer's help. VIP found Mr. Blanton a volunteer to pursue adverse possession, and as a result, he owns his home. He is currently working with a volunteer to draft a will so he can pass his wealth to the next generation.



Shands Cleaning Company LLC

Alonzo Shands encountered VIP at a Small Business Legal Clinic, and over the next several years, he returned to VIP for help with multiple legal issues related to his family cleaning business. VIP volunteers assisted with drafting waivers, reviewing corporate documents, and, notably, answering emergent pandemic-related questions during COVID shutdowns. Thanks to his volunteers' help, Mr. Shands' small business has weathered the pandemic and continues to operate securely.



U.S. Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon

Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon has been the U.S. Representative for Pennsylvania's 5th District since 2018. A staunch believer that everyone is entitled to equal protection under the law, Congresswoman Scanlon previously worked as national pro bono counsel at a Philadelphia firm, where she directed over 600 lawyers in providing more than 50,000 pro bono hours annually. In that capacity, she was instrumental in serving hundreds of small business and nonprofit clients by organizing VIP legal clinics at her firm. In addition, she carried her own VIP guardianship caseload.

C H A M P I O N A W A R D S

STEVE T. PARK

Promoting Community Economic Development

Steve T. Park is a co-leader of Ballard Spahr's P3/Infrastructure Group and is a partner in the Public Finance Group. He is a public-private partnership (P3) lawyer who routinely advises public entities, private developers, and lenders in all phases of transportation, infrastructure, energy, social infrastructure, innovative delivery, and P3 projects. Steve is based in Philadelphia and has significant experience advising issuers, developers and lenders in connection with project financings for utilities, solid waste disposal facilities and transportation and infrastructure facilities.

"Thanks to Ballard's Pro Bono Department who does a great job of fostering the right pro bono opportunities to the right professionals within the firm. Similarly, Philadelphia VIP makes it so easy to work with them in all aspects – from finding the right cases to dealing with the hard ones. Thank you to VIP for all that you do in our community."

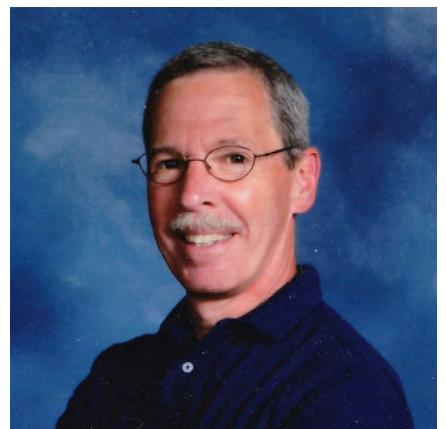


STEVE HEIMANN

Preventing Homelessness

Steve Heimann was a corporate transactional lawyer with Verizon for nearly 25 years. Steve has been active in his church, Saint Paul's Episcopal, where he enjoys singing in the choir, and is a board member of The Clergy Assurance Fund, which provides life insurance and other benefits to Episcopal priests and their families. Steve and his wife, Monika Hemmers, have lived in Chestnut Hill since moving to the Philadelphia area in 1990. Their three grown children all live in Philadelphia.

"When I retired from corporate law in 2014, I realized that it was time for me to start giving back by doing the pro bono work I had badly neglected before. I couldn't have done it, though, without Philadelphia VIP. Judge Rainy Papademetriou, who then was VIP's Managing Attorney, warmly welcomed me and assured me that VIP would make it possible for me to help clients in areas I had no prior experience or expertise in. How right she was! VIP's dedicated staff, training programs, resource library and volunteer mentors make it easy for even a corporate wonk like me to provide useful legal services to those in need."



CHAMPION AWARDS

LUZ DENISE NEGRON-BENNETT Supporting Family Stability



Denise is a 2015 graduate of Temple Law and Managing Attorney at Fight 4 Families Law LLC, practicing criminal and parental defense, immigration, family law, and civil defense because these are the needs of the communities she wishes to serve. She believes holistic representation to immigration, criminal and parent defendants means providing legal services to the underserved and the least economically and socially empowered. She currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Pro Bono, Access to Justice, and Community Service Committee of the Montgomery County Bar Association. She volunteers with VIP, HIAS PA, MMLAP, and many other organizations.

"Working for VIP has been incredibly rewarding, allowing me to give back and build a reputation in the community. During law school, I was able to get valuable exposure as a Spanish interpreter/translator. When I opened my solo practice straight out of law school, VIP helped me to assist the types of underserved clients I wished to represent pro bono while building my skillset to get paid clients low bono. VIP took a chance on me, and I was mentored and trained. Since they were instrumental in the success of my practice, I continue volunteering with them, helping them achieve our shared goals of equal access to justice and helping to guide other attorneys to join the ranks."

*Denise's award will be accepted by Sarah Katz, Associate Clinical Professor of Law at Temple University Beasley School of Law.

BETHANY R. NIKITENKO Preserving Income

Bethany Nikitenko is a partner at Feldman Shepherd Wohlgelernter Tanner Weinstock Dodig LLP where she represents individuals and families who have been catastrophically injured by medical malpractice, auto and motor vehicle accidents, unsafe buildings, defective products, and sexual abuse. She has secured many significant verdicts and settlements that have provided her clients with financial security and the resources for future medical care. Bethany earned a B.A. in Political Science magna cum laude from the University of Pittsburgh and her J.D. cum laude from Temple University Beasley School of Law.



"The unfortunate reality of our civil justice system is that those who cannot afford an attorney are not treated equally under the law. Those without legal representation will likely face life-altering economic consequences. Having legal representation makes a world of difference, and Philadelphia VIP provides attorneys the opportunity to make that difference. By providing pro bono services, VIP is changing the narrative for so many Philadelphians who cannot afford critical legal services."

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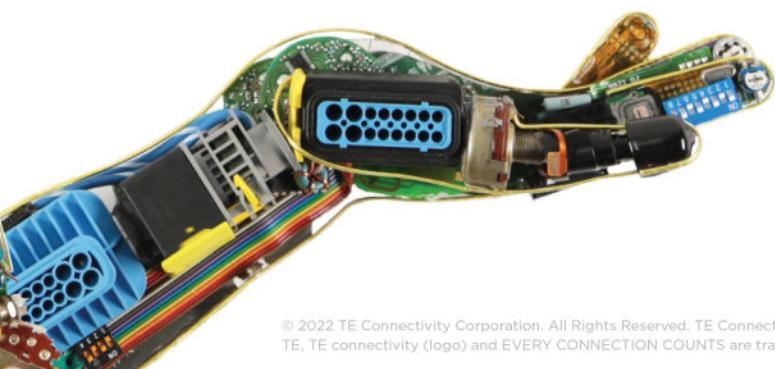


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TE Connectivity salutes the work of Philadelphia VIP and its volunteers as we celebrate over 40 years of community empowerment.



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40 years of expanding
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A photograph of the Philadelphia skyline at sunset, featuring the One Liberty Place, Two Liberty Place, and the Comcast Center. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. In the foreground, a bridge structure is visible.

**Congratulations to VIP! You
have achieved amazing things
as the leader in providing pro
bono legal services to lower
income Philadelphians for 40
years. It has taken an army of
volunteers to accomplish this.
We are proud of all of you!**

- Bob and Didi Scott

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Thank you for your efforts to ensure access to justice
for low-income Philadelphians. You make the community stronger.





Happy 40th!

Our Faegre Drinker colleagues were among the founders of Philadelphia VIP and have volunteered to serve hundreds of VIP clients over the last four decades. We continue to support VIP's mission of expanding access to justice and congratulate its staff, board, officers and many volunteers in the Philadelphia legal community for 40 years of work protecting Philadelphia's most vulnerable citizens.

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*We salute VIP for promoting equal access
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Congratulations to Philadelphia VIP on its 40th Anniversary! GSK are incredibly proud to support an organization with a focus on maintaining access to justice.

We continue to support and encourage VIP in all they do and look forward to working together more in 2022 and beyond.

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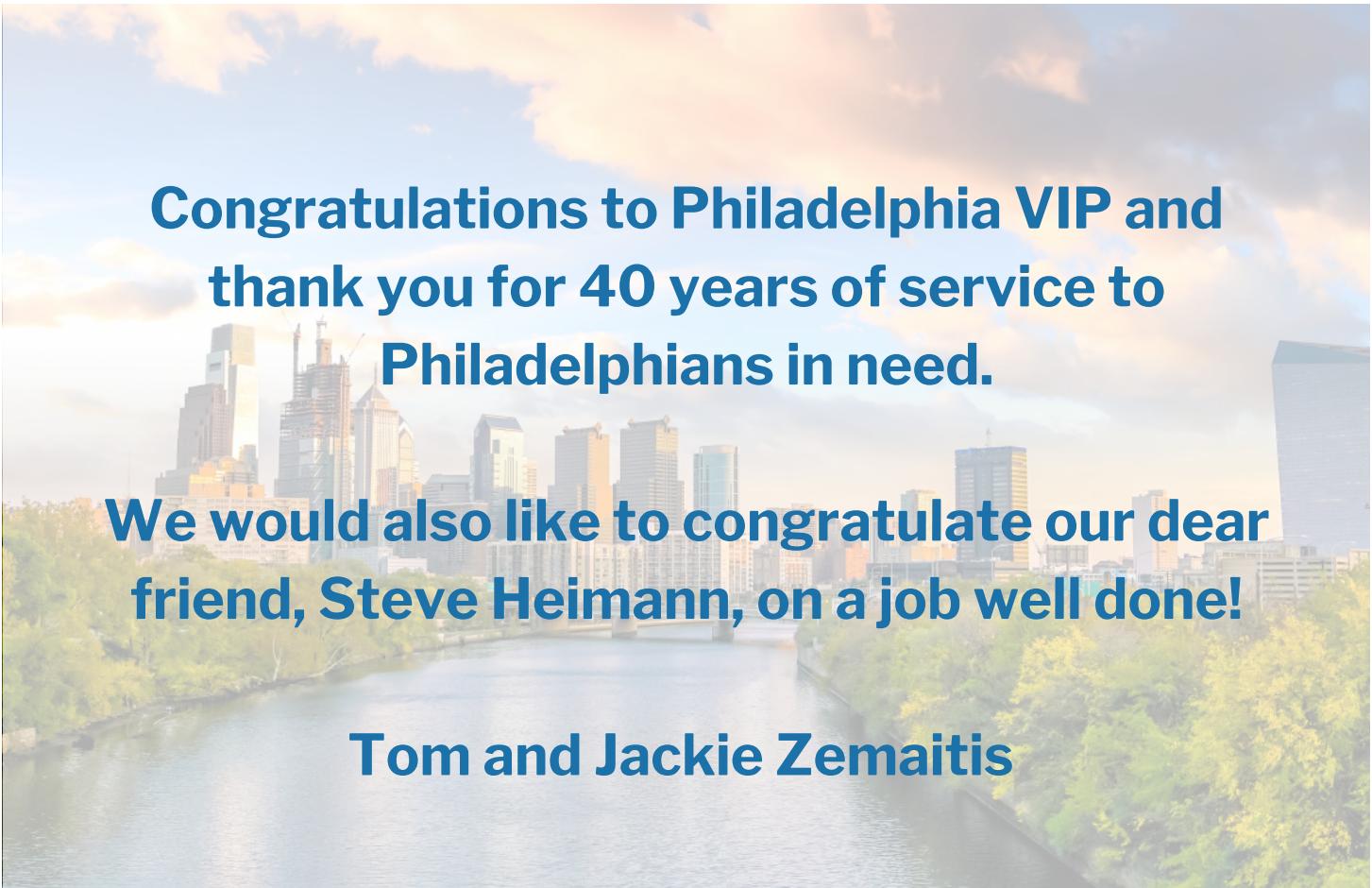
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A photograph of the Philadelphia skyline at sunset, featuring the city's iconic skyscrapers like One Liberty Place and the Comcast Center. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, and the water in the foreground reflects the light.

**Congratulations to Philadelphia VIP and
thank you for 40 years of service to
Philadelphiaans in need.**

**We would also like to congratulate our dear
friend, Steve Heimann, on a job well done!**

Tom and Jackie Zemaitis

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Fish is proud to support **Philadelphia VIP** in its mission to leverage the powerful resources of the community to provide free, high-quality legal services to low-income Philadelphians.

Fish & Richardson, the premier global intellectual property law firm, is trusted by the world's most innovative and influential companies. As a firm that serves the world's greatest visionaries, we know that creativity and innovation almost inevitably are the result of seeing the world from multiple perspectives. From patent, trademark, and copyright prosecution and counseling to our full-service litigation practice, we work together to provide our clients with exceptional advocacy across the life cycle of intellectual property needs in the U.S. and around the world. Now, more than ever, we are committed to providing pro bono services to the communities in which we live and work.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO PHILADELPHIA VIP
FOR 40 YEARS OF SUPPORTING OUR
COMMUNITY'S CHILDREN



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Langer, Grogan & Diver, P.C. congratulates
Philadelphia VIP

on 40 years of leveraging the power of the Bar to help Philadelphia's most vulnerable residents overcome legal challenges threatening their basic human needs: housing, family, income, and community.



LGD is proud to partner with Philadelphia VIP and other public interest organizations in Philadelphia and across the country to disrupt the systems that create inequity and the businesses that prey on people who lack economic security.



A photograph of the Philadelphia City Hall building, featuring its iconic clock tower and ornate facade, serves as the background for the entire card.

**Congratulations to Philadelphia VIP for
celebrating forty years of service to our city;
what an incredible milestone!**

**I am proud to support your efforts to expand
access to justice to all Philadelphians, and
look forward to your future accomplishments.**

The Honorable Gerald A. McHugh

I N K I N D D O N O R S

Thank You for Supporting VIP's Mission

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The Philadelphia Bar Association
would like to congratulate

Philadelphia VIP on more than 40 years of empowering our community

We are proud to be your partner in helping
to ensure equal access to justice for all!



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