



COMMUNITY  
LEGAL SERVICES IN  
EAST PALO ALTO



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Hear how Craig Largent, Managing Partner of Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton's Silicon Valley office and CLS Board Member, helps change the lives of those impacted by the housing crisis.

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**Craig Largent**

***You've taken a particular interest in housing issues in Silicon Valley. Why is this important to you?***

**Craig:** For me, safe, affordable and quality housing is a fundamental ingredient to a healthy life. I believe that a community in which different socio-economic groups interact with each other is a better and stronger community. Unfortunately, as a result of increasing housing costs, our community is becoming increasingly stratified. It's an issue that I want to see addressed.

***Kilpatrick has committed to helping families at the courthouse once a month to negotiate the best possible resolution for their eviction cases. What do you think volunteer attorneys gain from this experience?***

**Craig:** This is a great opportunity for our attorneys to have a direct impact on people's lives. It's clear that our attorneys help the tenants achieve significantly better outcomes than if we were not there.

Our attorneys, both transactional and litigation, also develop interviewing and negotiation skills. Attorneys develop the ability to interview a client quickly,

assembling and identifying facts and determining the applicable law in real-time. All attorneys benefit from improving their negotiation skills, whether they are used to interview an Examiner at the Patent Office or to set a discovery schedule with opposing counsel. I would strongly encourage everyone to try it.

***What advice might you give to those nervous about the time commitment?***

**Craig:** It's not that hard to block out the morning and staff the clinic. Treat it like a client meeting and set aside the time. You are out for a few hours and back in the swing of things before you know it.

***Thanks so much for your insight. Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share?***

**Craig:** I think this project is a great way to make a real impact in just a few hours. I always leave with two overriding feelings. The first is that I have really made a difference in a person or a family's life. The second is that I am incredibly grateful for so much - my parents, education, spouse, health, interesting work...the list goes on. I have been really fortunate. It feels really good to give a little back to help someone in my neighborhood and I would encourage anyone who has an interest in the housing crisis to participate.

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Our volunteers help families at settlement conferences every Thursday at the San Mateo County Courthouse from 8:45 – noon. Supervising attorneys are on hand to provide guidance and training. For more information, please contact Joyce Song, Pro Bono Director, at (650)391-0363 or [jsong@clsepa.org](mailto:jsong@clsepa.org).

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