



CENTER CONNECTIONS

Welcome to the Spring Edition of Center Connections. Each quarter, we share and celebrate our recent pro bono, charitable giving and community service work. We hope you enjoy reading about some of our latest community successes and connections!



Pictured above: 2017 participants in the free summer debate camp by BR Relationship grantee, New York City Urban Debate League.

The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation announces the recipients of its 2018-19 Relationship Grants program. In all, the Foundation is awarding 15 grants totaling over \$200,000 dollars to tax-exempt organizations in Boston, Hartford, Orange County (CA), Providence, London (UK), New York City, and Washington, D.C. Read more about our 2018-19 grantees in the next newsletter.



The 2018 Brown Rudnick kicked off the Center Summer event schedule with a visit to Rosie's Place homeless shelter, where we served lunch to over 175 women.

Being able to volunteer at Rosie's Place has been one of the most meaningful experiences I've had this summer. There was this tiny old lady, who was very kind and polite, but was only able to speak Spanish. She simply sat down and waited for her food to come, not able to talk to anyone. Though she seemed lonely and without support, she remained hopeful. During this time, where we see so many problems with immigration, and immigrants are sometimes demonized in our government, I think of her. To be willing to give up everything they had, to come to a country where they have nothing, not even the language, and to remain hopeful even in the situation she's in, it was sad, yet satisfying to have been able to at least serve her lunch once.

- **Jesus Ruiz**, Brown Rudnick Summer Intern

Other Summer Activities included...



Volunteering on Thompson Island

The Center for the Public Interest held a volunteer day on Thompson Island, a long-time Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation Relationship Grantee, which provides STEM education to Boston

Public School students through the Island's "Connections Program".

Brown Rudnick volunteers spent the day cleaning a salt marsh that serves as an outdoor classroom for students visiting the Island. Thank you to all who participated!

NexStage Visits Our Brown Rudnick London Office

'Nextstage' is a UK drama project run by Relationship Grantee Mousetrap. It is aimed at young people (aged 14-18) with moderate learning difficulties or mental health issues to improve their soft skills (such as communication, meta-cognition, confidence and teamwork). This is done by way of drama and theatre exercises to help them move to the next stage of life, whether higher education or employment.

This year's group of young people (about 10-15) came to Brown Rudnick's London office to learn what it is like to work at a law firm. Brown Rudnick Associate Peter Wozny reported on Nextstage's visit:

The event was a big success. We had a great group from NextStage Projects who were all eager to ask the panel of Brown Rudnick attorneys questions about our background, why we chose the jobs we have today, work life balance, interview techniques and what can make you stand out from the others applying for a role you want. We also had a good turnout from BR employees. Probably about 30 people in total attended. The talk lasted for an hour and then I took the young people on a tour of the office space. They were all very grateful for the experience to come into a workplace like Brown Rudnick and they loved our offices 8 Clifford Street (as everyone always does)!



Relationship Grantee, Century High School Holds Graduation Caminata

In late May, Century High School (CHS) held its third annual Graduation Caminata (an opportunity for parents and administrators to emphasize to the elementary school

kids the importance of doing well in school) in collaboration with Brown Rudnick. Century High is a Foundation Relationship Grantee using grant funds to help advance students to college.

CHS Principal Jonathan Swanson, Ed.D. and Brown Rudnick Associate **Honiieh Udenka** led a delegation of more than 140 CHS graduation candidates wearing their caps and gowns. To promote the importance of education, the students visited Madison Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary and Kennedy Elementary Schools. The graduation candidates went on a processional walk through the halls of the three schools, which were lined with elementary students cheering on the seniors. CHS seniors gave short messages of encouragement and a brief question and answer session was held.

By participating in this annual event, CHS seniors are helping even the very youngest students to appreciate the importance of doing well in school and planning for college and their future. CHS seniors have an opportunity to share their enthusiasm and pride about their next steps after high school, and to serve as positive role models to the young children. Kennedy, Madison and Roosevelt Elementary students have an opportunity to become excited about their future milestones, and in turn, college can become a goal that they talk about at home and in school.



Relationship Grantee, Generation Citizen Holds NYC's 14th Civics Day

Brown Rudnick's Director of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Ari Joseph, participated in Generation Citizen's New York City's 14th Civics Day, which convened over 94 classrooms from 25 schools representing over 500 students, teachers and guest judges. A Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation Relationship Grant helps Generation Citizen develop programs promoting civic education in public schools.

This last Civics Day was my fifth, and I walked away as inspired as ever by the students and the change they're attempting to make in their communities. As always, the kids presented their community change action projects in a science fair-like environment - replete with cutout display boards and, for some, multimedia presentations. The issues their projects addressed ranged from community policing to improving the health of school lunches to providing counseling to at-risk

youth.

- **Ari Joseph**, Brown Rudnick's Director of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity



Pro Bono: Spotlight on KIND

Through Brown Rudnick's partnership with Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), Brown Rudnick Associate Blair Rinne has successfully obtained a permanent resident visa (aka green card) for a nineteen year old girl from El Salvador. Blair, former associate Katherine Andrew and supervising partner Amanda Varella began working with our client after she arrived as an unaccompanied minor nearly four years ago. The client had fled El Salvador, where she had been sexually assaulted by gang members and was too scared to leave her house to attend school.

The client's father was verbally abusive and her mother suffered from depression and neglected her. After a successful motion for guardianship and special findings in the Probate and Family Court, the attorneys submitted applications to US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for immigration relief as a special immigrant juvenile. Unfortunately, shortly thereafter, USCIS announced a delay on processing visa applications for youth from El Salvador, so the client had to wait several years for the approval of her application.

Working on this matter has been an eye-opening introduction to the U.S. immigration process, where unaccompanied immigrants do not have a right to an attorney, and it has inspired these attorneys to take on several additional KIND matters.

Blair Rinne has successfully obtained a permanent resident visa (aka green card) for a nineteen year old girl from El Salvador. Blair began working with this client after she arrived as an unaccompanied minor nearly four years ago, along with former associate Katherine Andrew and supervising partner Amanda Varella, through Brown Rudnick's partnership with Kids in Need of Defense (KIND). The client fled El Salvador, where she had been sexually assaulted by gang members and was too scared to leave her house to attend school. The client's father was verbally abusive and her mother suffered from depression and neglected her. After a successful motion for guardianship and special findings in the Probate and Family Court, the attorneys submitted applications to USCIS for immigration relief as a special immigrant juvenile. Unfortunately, shortly thereafter, USCIS announced the visa backlog for youth from El Salvador, so the client had to wait several years for the approval of her application. Working on this matter has been an eye-opening introduction to the U.S. immigration process, where unaccompanied immigrants do not have a right

to an attorney, and it has inspired these attorneys to take on several additional KIND matters.

- Blair M. Rinne, Counselor at Law



The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation recently awarded Community Grants to the following non-profit organizations:



[Brooklyn Community Arts and Media High School](#)

(Brooklyn, NY) to allow the School to join the *MyLibraryNYC* Program, increasing student access additional resources through the school library and local city library.

[The Riverview School](#)



[The Riverview School](#) (New York, NY) to purchase stress reducing play and equipment and learning materials for children served by the counseling department.



[Edwards Middle School](#) (Boston, MA) to support an E/LA class writing exercise involving publishing student's personal narratives.

[Providence Schools](#)

[Carl G. Lauro Elementary](#) (Providence, RI) to fund a school talent show consisting of sixteen acts (100 students) of singing, dancing, performing comedy routines and reciting original