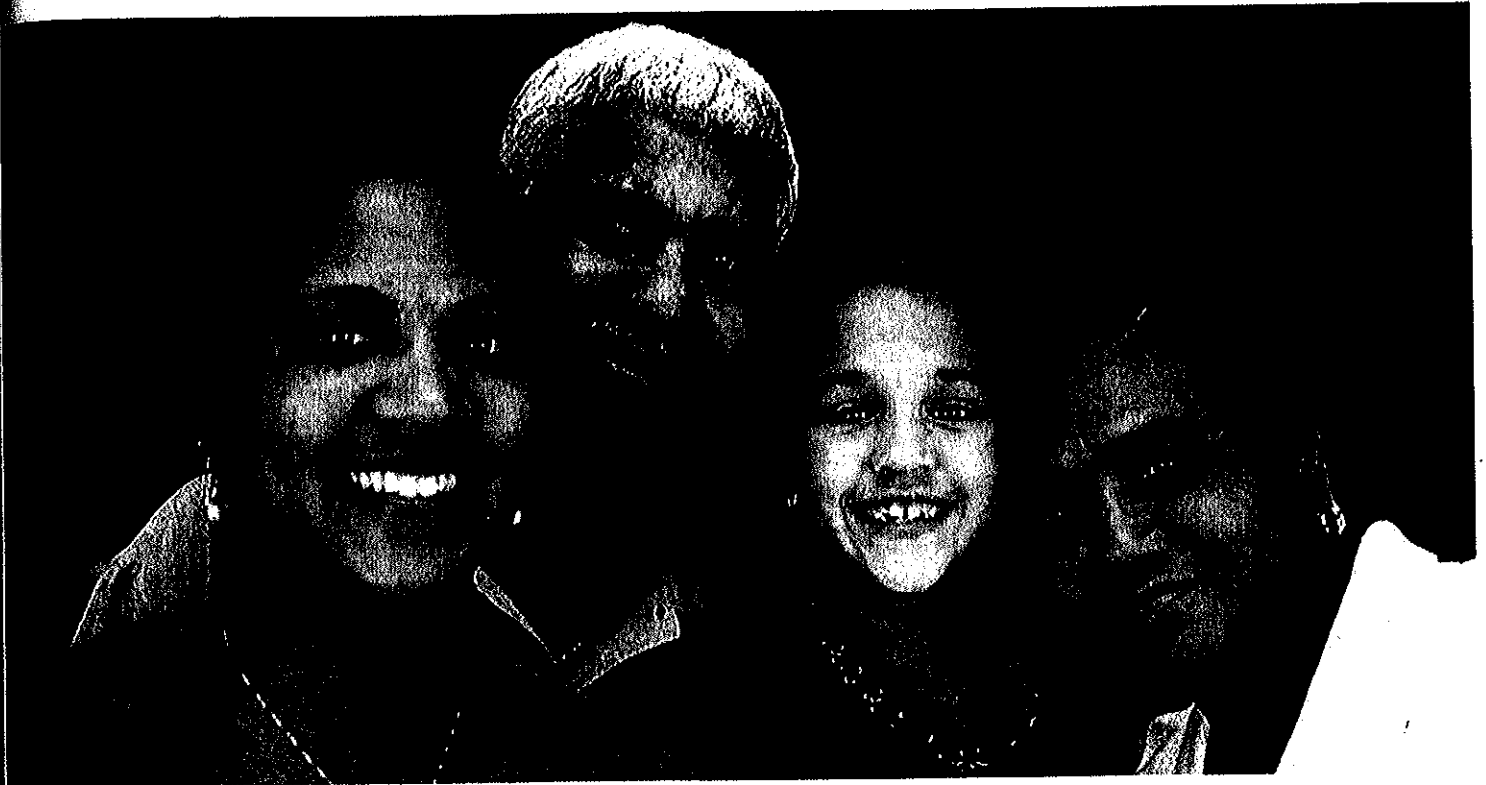


Lancaster Bar Association Foundation

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MidPenn Legal Services



We Care about Children

Custody Attorney Campaign



Lancaster County Custody Attorney

Five year budget
 July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2015
 Prepared May 25, 2010

	<u>7/1/11- 6/30/12</u>	<u>7/1/12- 6/30/13</u>	<u>7/1/13- 6/30/14</u>	<u>7/1/14- 6/30/15</u>	<u>7/1/15- 6/30/16</u>
Salary	\$45,806.00	\$47,180.18	\$48,595.59	\$50,053.45	\$51,555.06
<i>Benefits</i>					
FICA	3,504.16	3,609.28	3,717.56	3,829.09	3,943.96
Retirement	1,145.15	1,179.50	1,214.89	1,251.34	1,288.88
Medical Insurance	15,600.00	19,500.00	24,375.00	30,468.75	38,085.94
Dental Insurance	960.00	998.40	1,038.34	1,079.87	1,123.06
Life/Disability Insurance	1,420.00	1,462.60	1,506.48	1,551.67	1,598.22
Workers Comp (0.24% of wages)	109.93	113.23	116.63	120.13	123.73
Total Expenses	<u>\$68,545.24</u>	<u>\$74,043.20</u>	<u>\$80,584.48</u>	<u>\$88,354.30</u>	<u>\$97,718.85</u>
Five year total	<u>\$409,226.07</u>				
Three year total	<u>\$223,152.92</u>				
Benefits as % of total expense	33.17%	36.28%	39.68%	43.35%	47.24%
Benefits as % of salary	49.64%	56.94%	65.79%	76.52%	89.54%

**MidPenn Legal Services
Lancaster County Office
Fact Sheet**

Mission: We provide critical help for those with critical needs. We are the legal safety net for low-income persons and for domestic violence survivors in Lancaster County. We aim to provide the best service available to the greatest number of clients. We advise and represent on civil issues: domestic violence, custody, housing, health care, consumer, elder law and public benefits. The largest part of our caseload is family law cases. We do not handle criminal cases.

Funding: Government funding is our primary source of funding. The Pennsylvania Legal Assistance Network (PLAN) provides 46% of our funds. PLAN distributes funds earned as interest on legal escrow accounts (IOLTA) and federal Title XX monies. The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) provides 30% of our funds. Additional monies are obtained from local groups, private foundations, and individuals. We receive funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a Lancaster County Community Development Block Grant, the Lancaster County Area Agency on Aging, Lancaster Bar Association/Foundation, RodaNast Foundation, Lancaster General Hospital, Lancaster Osteopathic Health Foundation, Saint Joseph Health Ministries, Ferree Foundation, Lancaster County Community Foundation, Conestoga View, the United Way of Lancaster County, and the Lancaster County Courts.

Lancaster County Statistics:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2009</u>
Residents living below the poverty level	7.55%	9.4%
Food Stamp recipients	2.5%	6.1%
Eligible for Medical Assistance	6.5%	12.3%
Poverty Population	35,553	47,730

Lancaster - FY 09-10 Cases Handled	MidPenn	Volunteer Attorney	Total	%
Consumer	40	59	99	4.0%
Education	1	23	24	1.0%
Employment	8	8	16	0.6%
Family	1132	268	1400	65.9%
Juvenile	1	0	1	0.0%
Health	88	0	88	3.5%
Housing	298	16	314	12.5%
Income Maintenance	419	55	474	18.9%
Individual Rights	2	3	5	0.2%
Other/Multiple Topics	75	7	82	3.3%
TOTAL	2064	439	2503	100.0%

MidPenn advocates spent 11,300.90 hours on cases in Lancaster County in fiscal year 2009-2010.

Staff in MidPenn Lancaster Office

38 North Christian Street, Suite 200, Lancaster, PA 17602

James Orgass, Manager/Attorney
 Michael Goldberg, Attorney
 Victoria Ko, Attorney
 Catherine Schultz, Attorney
 Shawnee Soto-Ortiz, Attorney
 Linda Timberlake, Attorney
 Stephanie Longenberger, Attorney
 Valerie Case, Paralegal
 Geisha Cruz, Paralegal
 Susan Danforth, Paralegal

Paul Sternberg, Paralegal
 Marilyn Retamar, Paralegal
 Melissa Schweers, Paralegal
 Patricia Gomez, Support Staff
 Glenda Pacheco, Support Staff
 Patricia Sternberg, Support Staff

Custody cases are her 'dream job'

Soto-Ortiz: 'It's all about the children'

BY JANET KELLEY
Staff Writer

To many lawyers, fighting custody battles all day long might not sound like an ideal job.

But to Shawnee Strasko Soto-Ortiz, it's a dream come true.

Soto-Ortiz, 32, recently was hired by MidPenn Legal Services for the sole purpose of handling custody cases.

MidPenn Legal Services, a nonprofit organization at 38 N. Christian St., provides free civil and domestic legal help to low-income families.

Soto-Ortiz's position is funded by donations from the Lancaster Bar Association Foundation and other local attorneys.

"It's a dream job," Soto-Ortiz said. "I'm able to focus only on custody matters. In a private law firm, you're required to do a lot of things. ... Here I get to do what I like doing, all the time, every day."

Originally from Lancaster County, Soto-Ortiz recently returned from Massachusetts, where she worked several years in a private law firm after graduating from

New England School of Law.

There, she said, the clientele was far different from those who need MidPenn's services.

"They were very wealthy clients, the opposite end of the spectrum."

"But people are people, no matter how much their house costs. They have the same issues," Soto-Ortiz said.

In the best-case scenario in all custody cases, she said, the goal is to "try and guide people's focus back into what is in the best interest of the child."

"I feel that's a great service that we're making available," Soto-Ortiz said.

"I really like helping people in the most intimate aspect of their life, which is family and children," Soto-Ortiz said.

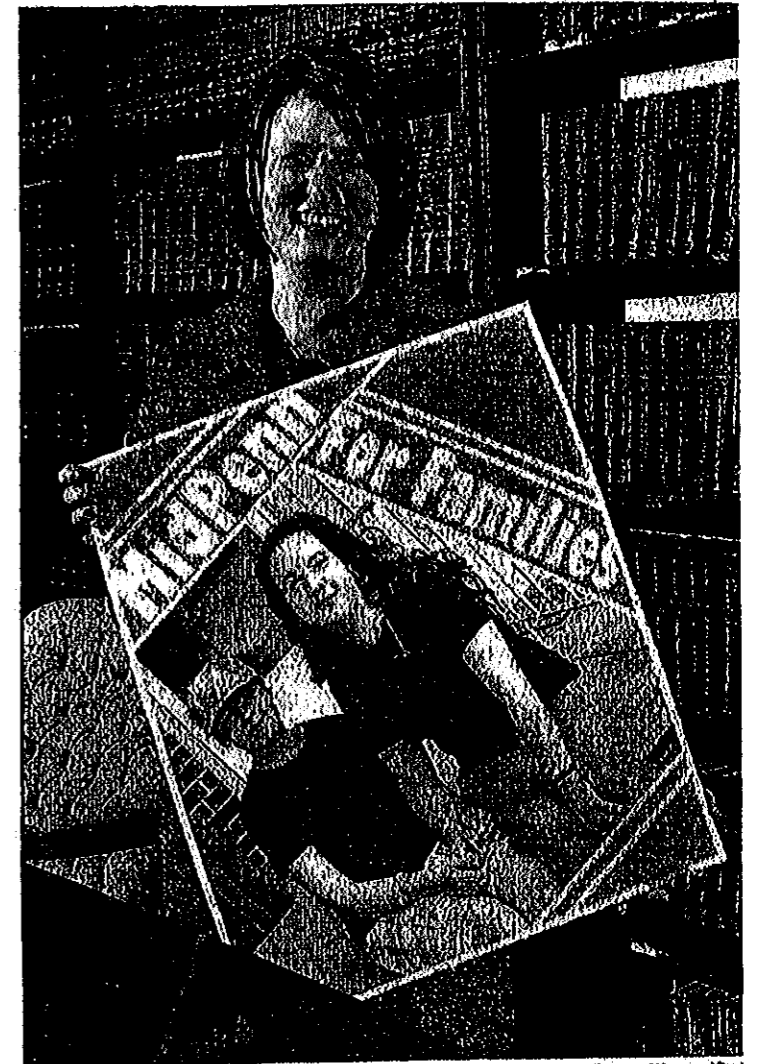
"Custody (law) is where I wanted to be — it's all about the children."

A graduate of Lampeter-Strasburg High School and Penn State University, Soto-Ortiz said she waited two years before deciding she really wanted to pursue a ca-

"I feel that's a great service that we're making available."

Shawnee Strasko Soto-Ortiz
Attorney
MidPenn Legal Services

Please see CHILDREN, page B2



Suzette Wenger/Star

Shawnee Strasko Soto-Ortiz was hired by MidPenn Legal Services for the sole purpose of handling custody cases.

Children: *Dream job*

Continued from B1

reer in law.

During her time in Massachusetts, she also met and married her husband, Phil Soto-Ortiz, a journalist from Connecticut.

Last year, during a visit with her family in Lancaster County, she learned of the opening at MidPenn.

"We were looking for a better quality of life," Soto-Ortiz said, and they jumped at the opportunity.

She got the job at MidPenn.

Her husband was hired as a sports writer for the Har-

risburg Patriot News and a sports broadcaster for Franklin & Marshall College.

Together they bought a house in Lancaster city.

"It's been a fun experience living here," Soto-Ortiz said.

And at work, "the legal community is so welcoming and accepting," she said, in addition to all the volunteer hours local lawyers provide to the needy.

"I thought it would be a difficult transition" coming back to Lancaster County, she said, "but it's been tremendously easy."

jkelly@mpnews.com

Dauphin County Custody Attorney Campaign Contributions

Sustaining Gift

\$100,000

Dauphin County Bar Foundation
(\$20,000/year- 5 years)

Corporate Gifts

Over \$20,000

Metro Bank Foundation

\$10,000 - \$20,000

Citizens Bank
McNees, Wallace & Nurick LLC
Rhoads & Sinon LLP

Under \$10,000

Beckley & Madden
Capital Blue Cross
The Hershey Company
The Jurasits Family Fund of The Foundation
for Enhancing Communities on behalf of
Mr. and Mrs. John F. Jurasits, Jr.
Keefer, Wood, Allen & Rahall, LLP

Mette Evans & Woodside
McCormick Family Foundation
Myers, Desfor, Saltzgeber & Boyle
Miller & Miller
Pepper Hamilton LLP
Schmidt, Kramer, PC
Thomas, Thomas & Hafer

Individuals Gifts

Karen Balaban
Robert Bein
Marvin Beshore
Cara Boyanowski
James & Linda DeAngelo
Jeffrey A. Ernico
Kandice J. Giurintano
Raymond C. Hedger, Jr.
Donald Kaufman
Howard & Ruth Ann Krug
Craig A. & Carl L. Longyear

Elizabeth Mullaugh
Donna & Herbert Nurick
Pamela Polacek
Sandra K. Prah
Larry Putt
Henry Rhoads
William Rothman
Elizabeth G. Simcox
W. Lowell & Nancy J. Starling
P. Gary Weinken

Current Total \$197,275 / Goal \$325,000

Past Leadership Gifts to Custody Campaigns in Central Pennsylvania

York Campaign- 2007

York County Bar Foundation	- \$25,000 year/5 years - \$125,000
DENTSPLY International	- \$ 6,000 year/5 years - \$ 30,000
United Way of York	- \$ 25,000
Barley Snyder LLC	- \$ 2,500 year/5 years - \$ 12,500
CGA Law Firm	- \$ 2,500 year/5 years - \$ 12,500
Stock and Leader	- \$ 2,500 year/5 years - \$ 12,500
M & T Bank	- \$ 2,500 year/5 years - \$ 12,500
Glatfelter Insurance Group	- \$ 2,500 year/5 years - \$ 12,500
Bon Ton Foundation	- \$ 2,000 year/5 years - \$ 10,000
Susquehanna Pfaltzgraff Foundation	- \$ 2,000 year/5 years - \$ 10,000
The Stewart Companies	- \$ 2,000 year/5 years - \$ 10,000
Commonwealth Supply	- \$ 2,000 year/5 years - \$ 10,000
Robert W. Pullo	- \$ 1,000 year/5 years - \$ 5,000
Blakey, Yost, Bupp & Rausch LLP	- \$ 1,000 year/5 years - \$ 5,000

Lancaster Campaigns- 2005, 2008

Citizens Bank	- \$10,000 year/2 years - \$ 20,000
Lancaster Bar Association Foundation	- \$ 17,970
Blakinger, Byler & Thomas	- \$ 5,000 year/3 years - \$ 15,000
Barley Snyder LLC	- \$ 5,000 year/3 years - \$ 15,000
Atlee, Hall & Brookhart LLP	- \$ 4,000 year/3 years - \$ 12,000
RodaNast, PC	- \$ 4,000 year/3 years - \$ 12,000
The High Companies	- \$ 9,000
Appel & Yost	- \$ 2,000 year/3 years - \$ 6,000
Gibbel, Kraybill & Hess	- \$ 2,000 year/3 years - \$ 6,000
Hagelgans & Veronis	- \$ 2,000 year/3 years - \$ 6,000
Stevens & Lee PC	- \$ 2,000 year/3 years - \$ 6,000

Ten Frequently Asked Questions – About Legal Aid

- 1.) Doesn't the court have to give you a lawyer?
No. You have a right to an attorney only in criminal cases. MidPenn handles only "civil cases". The Public Defender, not MidPenn, handles criminal matters.
- 2.) What is a civil case?
In a criminal case, the state charges someone with a crime. A civil case is a dispute between you and someone else. Custody, foreclosures, unemployment compensation, Social Security Disability are all civil matters.
- 3.) How poor do you have to be to qualify for legal aid?
Very poor. Your income has to be within 125% of the poverty level. For a family of four, that is less than \$27,563 per year. An individual must make less than \$13,538. However, victims of domestic violence do not have to be below the poverty level.
- 4.) Because you are funded in part by the government, don't you have all the lawyers you need?
Not nearly. There is one private attorney in Pennsylvania for every 232 people but there is only one legal aid lawyer for every 5220 people.
- 5.) Do poor people have significant legal problems?
More than most people. Lack of money means they run afoul of the system more than those with adequate resources. Family issues, getting a job, access to health care, and home foreclosures are critically important matters.
- 6.) If the court doesn't require it, do you really need a lawyer?
What you don't know might hurt you. Court cases are complicated matters. There is a good chance there will be an attorney on the other side. A lawyer can protect your rights.
- 7.) Does legal aid handle frivolous cases?
No, they handle only critical emergencies. There are so many requests for help that MidPenn has to turn away about 50% of qualified applicants.
- 8.) Do legal aid lawyers have to take a case?
No. Only cases with merit that are determined to be high priority are accepted.
- 9.) Do legal aid lawyers get paid more if they win?
No. Legal aid attorneys are on salary and they do not receive attorney's fees when they win. Fee-generating cases are referred to private attorneys.
- 10.) Is legal aid really free? Don't you have to pay something?
Legal aid is a free service. On rare occasions a client may have to pay some court related costs but not an attorney's fee.