Manhattan Legal Services (MLS) is proud to announce the formation of the Edward N. Simon Fellowship in partnership with the family of our colleague and partner in the fight for social justice, Ed Simon. Throughout his professional life Ed fought for the rights of New Yorkers living in poverty and passionately challenged systems of oppression. The annual summer fellowship will honor Ed's fierce dedication to justice by providing a $3,000 stipend to a promising law student who will work with the MLS Housing Unit and help low-income Manhattan residents at risk of losing their homes. This stipend is intended to defray the cost of living in NYC for the summer and attract a diverse and competitive pool of candidates.

The Edward N. Simon Fellow will have a strong commitment to represent low-income people and a keen interest in landlord and tenant issues. He/She will experience NYC Housing Court and Landlord and Tenant Law and Ed's legacy of service.

Click here to meet the Ed Simon Fellows.

About Ed

Edward N. Simon was born on Elvis' birthday - January 8th, 1941 in Falls Church Virginia where he attended segregated elementary, middle, and high schools. Graduating from George Washington Law School in 1967, he went on to work for President Johnson's Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), where he supervised a team of inspectors investigating complaints of civil rights abuses in the south. Ed's most poignant experience was when he visited a black church in Alabama to hear civil rights complaints. He was moved to tears by the hundreds of parishioners who bravely came forward to provide testimony and file complaints.

Experiences like these helped forge and solidify what would become a life-long career dedicated to civil rights. After leaving OEO and traveling the world, Ed worked for small law firms dedicated to public interest law in Texas and California working on cases regarding labor, criminal justice, discrimination, and disability.

Ed joined Legal Services New York City in 1980, serving as a senior staff attorney for housing authority issues and reform. In this capacity, Ed was one of the leading advocates for the Legal Services / Legal Aid NYCHA task force, and the Co-Director of Public Housing Legal Action Center (PHLAC) at MFY Legal Services. In 2002, Ed was promoted to managing attorney where he insisted on maintaining his normal caseload while managing 15 attorneys and two caseworkers. As a managing attorney, Ed was responsible for litigation at the state and Federal level of housing law. Ed worked on many appellate issues, including cases that went to the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the New York Court of Appeals. Furthermore, Ed was called in as an expert witness by the New York City Council to lend his expertise regarding due process concerns at NYCHA hearings.

As many of you know, Ed worked tirelessly for his clients, working too many late nights—there was always one more motion that could be filed. In 2003 Ed's dedication to the provision of free legal services was recognized when he was presented with the Legal Services Award by the New York City Bar Association.

Ed retired in 2010 due to health complications relating to his cancer and treatment. He was happily married to Marcelle Brandes for 29 years, with whom he had two amazing children, Lenny and Dana.

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