



April 19, 2006 - Legal Services of New Jersey Receives Cy Pres Award to Support Consumer Work

EDISON—Attorneys Andrew R. Wolf of Galex Wolf, LLC (East Brunswick) and Glen H. Chulsky (Ledgewood) today presented a check for \$19,650 to Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ), to be used in support of Legal Services’ efforts on behalf of low-income clients in cases involving consumer issues. The check represents a *cy pres* distribution from the settlement awards that could not be distributed to the settlement class members in *Galatis v. Psak Graziano Piasecki & Whitelaw, et al.*, a class action lawsuit brought by Wolf and Chulsky on behalf of consumers who received debt collection notices and did not receive the validation notice required by law.

“Legal Services’ vital efforts on behalf of low-income consumers make them a perfect fit for this *cy pres* award,” said Wolf. “We’re happy to have played a role in having the award directed to a New Jersey organization, especially one whose work we have such a high regard for.” Accepting the award for LSNJ, Melville D. Miller, Jr., LSNJ president, said “We’re grateful for the opportunity to use these funds to serve our clients, and hope that others in a position to influence the distribution of *cy pres* awards think of our clients’ needs when the circumstances are appropriate.”

Miller explained that “under the *cy pres* doctrine, when supplemental class payments are not practical or economical following the primary distribution, the funds are put to the next best use. The court analyzes the characteristics of the class at issue and, based on that analysis, designates a third party or agency to use those residual funds in a way that directly benefits the class members. In recent years, courts throughout the country have awarded *cy pres* funds to programs that provide free legal services to low-income people.”

Legal Services programs provide essential legal aid—and access to the judicial system to resolve disputes—to people who cannot afford legal counsel for their civil legal problems. Through a network comprising LSNJ and six regional programs covering all 21 counties, the Legal Services system in New Jersey provides legal representation to more than 50,000 clients every year, as well as legal information and referral to tens of thousands more.