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For More Information

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Attorneys Who Championed Choice In Illinois To Receive Prestigious Award

***VOR, a national organization who participated
as Amicus Curiae in Ligas v. Hamos, offers its congratulations***

Elk Grove Village - Under any circumstance, acts of generosity deserve recognition, especially when it is not sought.

On November 15, Bill Choslovsky and Scott Mendel, two Chicago attorneys who were motivated by doing right and not by recognition, will get the honor they deserve.

Both will be receiving the *Sister Rosemary Connelly Service Medallion* at the annual *Misericordia Heart of Mercy Ball* for their *pro bono* legal representation of *Misericordia* in *Ligas v. Hamos*, a class action lawsuit that threatened to close private facility homes of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) across Illinois.



Choslovsky (l) and Mendel (r)

You're Invited!

***Misericordia
Heart of Mercy Ball***

***Nov. 15, 6 pm
Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel
221 N. Columbus Dr.
Chicago, IL
\$350***

***Tickets available at
www.heartofmercyball.org***

"Misericordia is a world-class provider of residential services to about 600 children and adults with developmental disabilities," said Tamie Hopp, Director of Government Relations and Advocacy of VOR, a national nonprofit advocacy organization that also joined the case in support of affected individuals.

"This is a well-known, highly respected home – the waiting list is as long as the number of individuals served. Make no mistake, the *Ligas* lawsuit was not about conditions of care. It was filed solely because places like *Misericordia* were considered too large by federal lawyers who seemed unconcerned that people would lose their homes."

The lawsuit was filed as a class action case in 2005 against the State of Illinois by Equip for Equality, the ACLU of Illinois and About Access Living, which alleged that residents of intermediate-care facilities were institutionalized, warehoused and segregated. The suit originally sought for residents to have the choice to move into smaller community-based settings, a goal all parties supported. However, the original settlement infringed on the rights of those who desired to remain in their larger facility homes.

Choslovsky and Mendel saw the injustice of expanding services for some individuals by denying choice to another. Both have family members well-served at Misericordia and knew firsthand that their loved ones were well-cared for and happy in their home.

They joined with other attorneys representing VOR and residents of other affected private homes, and donated countless hours of time and skill to coordinate a legal and advocacy strategy that resulted in a new settlement that both protected and expanded living options for those with developmental disabilities throughout Illinois.

The namesake of their award - the *Sister Rosemary Connelly Service Medallion* - has been overseeing Misericordia's care and services since 1969. A Sister of Mercy, Sister Rosemary has selflessly dedicated the past 44 years to the care of individuals with I/DD.

"I get so much joy just meeting the kids and knowing they're happy and that they're really being cared for," she said recently in *Michigan Avenue Magazine* article. "Some people go through their whole lives and at the end they have to ask themselves, 'Is the world any more compassionate and loving because I walked this journey?' And at Misericordia, every single day we make a difference. It's a tremendous gift to have in your life, it really is."

Choslovsky and Mendel will receive their award at the Misericordia Heart of Mercy Ball on November 15, 2013, at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. A cocktail reception and silent auction begins at 6:00pm, and the award presentation and dinner start at 7:30 pm. The cost is \$350, with proceeds benefiting Misericordia and the people it serves. Black tie is optional. The public is welcome. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit <http://heartofmercyball.org>

To learn more about Misericordia, visit www.misericordia.com.

About VOR:

VOR is a national organization that advocates for high quality care and human rights for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Offering community, legal, health care and educational resources for families of individuals with special needs, VOR is committed to providing help for people with disabilities. Standing up for long term care facilities and community disability programs, VOR is dedicated to maintaining family choice for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For more information about VOR, please visit us at www.vor.net.

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