



Local Charities Will Benefit From \$747,376 Class Action Award

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National and local charities will share in the proceeds of a class action settlement. Fourteen local charities, and two national charities, will each receive between \$ 24,412 and \$49,825. SL Chapman LLC Founding Partner Brad Lakin made the announcement after a court ruling last Tuesday

The proceeds are from unpaid portions of a settlement that was reached in 2006. Lakin indicated the most recent funds required an amendment to the prior settlement. When the class members cannot be readily identified, the law provides for what is referred to as a Cy Pres award to charitable organizations. Lakin said his firm and the lawyers for Hilton had been working on the proposed amendment and negotiated over the charities that would be receiving the funds. SL Chapman donated all of the attorneys' fees, expenses, and time that it incurred over the past six months that was associated with the settlement amendment. "We certainly wanted to make sure local charitable causes benefited from the settlement since it the case litigated in St. Clair County," he said.

The benefiting charities, most in the St. Clair County, MadisonCounty and St. Louis area, include: Autism Speaks, Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, Polaris Project, Feeding America, CommunityHopeCenter, Operation Blessing, American Diabetes Association, Catholic Urban Programs, Kinder Cottage, FamilyLivingCenter, Eagle's Nest, Positive Peach Warriors Network, **Riverbend Family Ministries**, and RiverbenderCommunity Center.

"Riverbend Family Ministries is blessed everyday to serve families in this community. As many of you know, we are a consortium of non-profit organizations that work with youth and families in crisis, most times due to violence and/or addiction, to get them to self-sufficiency. Although each of these areas of service is an independent entity, we all

work in tandem to address various aspects of individual, family and community needs. Bringing them under one roof further enhances the cooperative nature of these support mechanisms to better provide their services in a collective manner. 2012 has been a very difficult year for small non-profits, social service and ministries in Madison County. Many doors have closed, employees let go and services discontinued leaving clients with few options. This summer has been an especially hard season for many of our clients that struggle constantly to make ends meet. We have seen our numbers almost triple this year due to stresses brought on by financial, violence, and emotional hardships. Our service providers have done an amazing job of keeping families safe, providing professional counseling, a voice to youth affected by abuse and neglect, job coaching and energy or rental assistance when eviction or disconnections seem imminent. This award will go along way in changing the lives of families in our community.”-Tammy Iskarous exec. Director

Lakin said, “We are truly excited about so many great local charities benefiting from this settlement. We worked hard with Hilton and Judge Robert LeChien to make sure worthwhile organizations received these funds.” The charities will receive their funding at a ceremony at RiverbenderCommunity Center in Alton, Illinois, 200 West 3rd Street, on Friday September 7, 2012 at 9:00 am. The media is welcome to attend.