



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Linda Lank 617-603-1606 llank@gbls.org**

**Greater Boston Legal Services Elects Officers and Welcomes 13 New Board Members**

BOSTON, MA (July 29, 2009) — Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) announced that **Julia Huston** of Bromberg & Sunstein LLP was re-appointed for a second one-year term as the organization’s Board President; **Daryl Lapp** of Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP was re-appointed for a second one-year term as co-Vice President of the Board, sharing that position with re-appointed client/community member **Myrnairis Cepeda**; and **Thomas DeSimone** of W/S Development Associates LLC succeeds Mitchell Kaplan of Choate, Hall & Stewart as the organization’s new Treasurer.

In addition, GBLS welcomed the addition of thirteen new members to its Board of Directors, including five members of greater Boston’s legal community and the General Counsel of EMD Serono, Inc. The thirteen new Board members elected to serve three-year terms are as follows:

- Yessenia Alfaro**, Community Representative of Chelsea
- Elaine Bennett**, Client/Community Representative of Jamaica Plain
- Thomas Gunning**, Vice President and General Counsel, *EMD Serono, Inc.*
- James Haley**, Client/Community Representative of Cambridge
- Jane Mallei**, Client/Community Representative of Canton
- Wendy Mason**, Client/Community Representative of Somerville
- Jeffrey Mittleman**, Partner, *Holland & Knight LLP*
- Thea Oum**, Client/Community Representative of Medford
- Yeshey Palsang**, Community Representative of Roslindale
- Alison Reif**, Partner, *Choate, Hall & Stewart*
- Robert Sanoff**, Co-Managing Partner, *Foley Hoag LLP*
- Eve Slattery**, Associate, *Dwyer & Collora, LLP*
- W. Thomas Smith**, Principal, *Sugarman and Sugarman, P.C.*

Tom Gunning, Vice President and General Counsel of EMD Serono, Inc., explained: “EMD Serono serves the patient community with research and medicines for multiple sclerosis, infertility, metabolic disorders and oncology. We also serve the larger communities where we work by giving back. Partnering with GBLS through *pro bono* work, financial contributions and other service is the right thing for all law firms and corporate legal departments to do — especially in these economic times.”

“Working at a non-profit agency as a Benefits Specialist/Advocate...I often collaborated with GBLS to access services for clients in crisis”, said Elaine Bennett, a community representative of Jamaica Plain. “I have witnessed firsthand, the extremely high ethics and standards of the GBLS professional staff. I am extremely honored to be a Board Member at GBLS and am excited to bring my years of advocacy expertise to the organization.”

Alison Reif, Partner at Choate, Hall & Stewart, stated: “I am honored to have been asked to join the GBLS Board and am very much looking forward to working with the GBLS staff, lawyers, Board members and clients that make this organization the wonderful institution that it is. I am particularly pleased to have the opportunity to play a role and put my professional skills to work for an organization that has such a dramatic and positive impact on so many people's lives.”

“We are very pleased to welcome these new members to our Board of Directors”, said GBLS Executive Director Bob Sable. “They bring invaluable experience and their unique perspectives to our mission to assist the most vulnerable members of our society. Our Board is reflective of the full range of support GBLS is fortunate to have from all segments of the greater Boston legal community and members of the communities we serve.”

###

### **About Greater Boston Legal Services**

Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) plays an indispensable role in the lives of people in need in the Boston area by providing high-quality civil legal assistance to low-income individuals and families. GBLS helps its clients navigate the complex maze of laws and regulations, enabling them to get the help they need when there is no other way to resolve their problems. GBLS annually provides legal assistance to more than 16,000 families or individuals who live at or below 125% of the federal poverty standard. Seventy-two percent of its clients are women, and 75% are minorities. GBLS assists victims of domestic violence, homeless families, elders, people with disabilities, homeowners facing foreclosure, tenants in no-fault evictions because their building has been foreclosed, low-wage workers, families with no source of income, and immigrants facing persecution. GBLS also provides legal counsel to scores of community-based groups and organizations to bring about positive systematic change. For more information, visit [www.gbls.org](http://www.gbls.org).