



## Kline & Specter Eletter - April 2020

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During the COVID-19 pandemic our law firm continues to work remotely! We are available to our clients and counsel by email, phone and Zoom and are doing everything possible to push cases forward. And while we have much to report about our firm's recent accomplishments by way of verdicts and settlements, we focus this newsletter on the important work of our lawyers and staff in the community.

## Small acts make a big difference in time of crisis

*Delivering food, making donations, sewing, staying home*

### Sewing for troops on the front line



When **Amanda Lorentson** was a little girl, she used to watch her Aunt Christine, a formidable seamstress, sew all sorts of things, including her prom dress and dozens of holiday sweaters and outfits. Before she passed away two years ago, she taught Amanda her trade. But being busy at Penn Law School and clerking at Kline & Specter, Lorentson didn't have the time to do much sewing. Until now. She has been busy with needle and thread, but not making the usual garments. She is crafting masks for nurses and physicians who are helping people with the coronavirus. Lorentson learned of the shortage of masks firsthand from her best friend, an ENT physician at Tufts Medical Center in Boston. The doctor was provided with only four masks, which she kept in a brown paper bag and was forced to re-use many times over. Lorentson looked everywhere to try to buy more for her friend but finally gave up. Instead, she used ingenuity. She found some of her aunt's old sewing supplies and went to work. Lorentson discovered that one material in particular — Hoover Hypo-allergenic vacuum cleaner bags — offered similar filtration to that of the critical N95 masks.

First Lorentson created a pattern to make masks, then she found elastic headbands and set up a makeshift sewing room in her house. As of this writing she had manufactured several dozen masks and hoped to make hundreds to donate to Tufts and Philadelphia hospitals. "It's not much," she said, "but it feels good to help."

## Delivering food and supplies to those in need

Legal assistant **Carolyn Belgiorno** and her daughter Samantha (pictured here) put themselves on the coronavirus second line – the supermarket – by making food and supply runs for a nearby couple in their seventies, a 98-year-old friend and other elderly people who she calls to ask what they might need from the market or drug store. Belgiorno, who lives in Bellmawr, N.J., also was making daily deliveries to people in New Jersey, Philadelphia and Chester who reached out on Facebook. She and Samantha brought fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, cereal, rice, juice, bread, available meats and even, when they could find it, that most elusive commodity of all – toilet paper.



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## Attorneys deliver, get the kids involved



**Kila Baldwin** was sending a text every morning to about 10 people also asking them what they need. Then, at lunchtime, she put down her office work, ran out to the market and, like Belgiorno, picked up essentials and delivered them to neighbors' houses and a local nursing home. She was also buying lunches for hospital doctors and their staffs, including the group pictured here at Jefferson Torresdale Hospital. Baldwin also put her kids, Braelyn, 9, and Liam, 7, (pictured here) to work in her kitchen, where they baked cakes that were also distributed to those in need or simply trying to satiate a sweet tooth. **Andra Laidacker** took grocery requests for neighbors and then was making trips to the local co-op for Garden Court, the West Philadelphia organization where she is a member of the

community organization board. She delivered food to the homes of elderly neighbors with the idea of limiting their exposure to others as well as foot traffic at the co-op. Going forward, Laidacker was hoping to convince the community association board to assist in having groceries purchased and delivered at no cost.



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## Donating, keeping everyone at home

Many Kline & Specter employees also helped with their pocketbooks, paying bills for those put out of work by the COVID-19 crisis and increasing contributions to organizations that help feed and provide services to the most vulnerable populations, while also supporting local businesses through purchases and donations to relief funds. Groups included Philabundance, Project H.O.M.E. (Housing, Opportunities for Employment, Medical Care, Education) and Fuel the Fight Philly, a group that purchases food from local restaurants to feed health care providers on the front lines.

And Kline & Specter, which, along with its attorneys, donates to more than 125 charities and organizations, gave contributions to groups such as the Share Food Program, a nonprofit that last year helped distribute 35 million pounds of food to 505 volunteer-led Philadelphia food pantries. Food cupboard recipients are among the city's most vulnerable citizens: low-income, children and senior citizens. Among other groups receiving donations from the firm and its attorneys were Children and Families First, the Children's Crisis Treatment Center, Children's Hospital Foundation and various ambulance and hospital organizations.

During the crisis, all Kline & Specter employees save one — thank you **Ken Porter** — have been working from home. Noted **Tom Kline** and **Shanin Specter** in a joint statement: "While we continue to take cases and try to help people as best we can, the pandemic has closed most legal offices and the courts. The crisis has made us feel frustrated and somewhat helpless as we watch the news and see more and more friends and acquaintances stricken with COVID-19. But there are things we can all do to help, especially making sure to wash hands frequently, maintain social distance and, perhaps most importantly, just stay at home. It may seem a distant hope now, but we will get through this."

"To quote Martin Luther King Jr., 'Courage is the power of the mind to overcome fear.'"



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# Volunteerism

Kline & Specter employees had been helping people out in various ways before the worst of the pandemic struck. Here are several examples:



More than 700 people turned out for the Barristers’ Association of Philadelphia’s annual breakfast at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel Regency Ballroom. After the Breakfast, the Barristers’ held a Clean Slate Screening Event to advise Philadelphians about their eligibility for record sealing, expungement and pardons. Barristers’ President **David Williams** and Elected Member **Aaron Dunbar**, of Kline & Specter, helped spearhead the program. (Photo shows firm attorney **Jaclyn Crittenden** and staffer **Tracy Leonardis** working at the event.)

Kline & Specter’s **Lisa Lewandowski** and her son Joey volunteered at the Alicia Rose Victorious Foundation, a group dedicated to providing strength and support to hospitalized children across the country through its Victorious 4 Teens program. Lisa and Joey helped pack handmade pillows to be shipped out to the parents of teens with cancer and prepared bookmarks for journals to be sent to the courageous teens battling diseases.



**Theresa Reed** joined the Heritage Conservancy- Bristol Marsh Cleanup for a Day of Service to collect trash surrounding the Bristol Marsh. Along with 30 other volunteers, Reed helped collect dozens of bags filled with trash such as bottle caps, cigarette butts and straws to prevent the objects from harming the natural habitat.

**Jill Stewart** and **Kim Comey** (back row left to right) made the blanket they are holding for the homeless at “Halliday Dance - Blanket The Homeless” project in Pennsauken, N.J. Volunteers made care packages of toiletries, socks, gloves and inspirational cards.



Kline & Specter proudly supports the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

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*“You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.*  
—Eleanor Roosevelt

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