



CHAVEZ & GERTLER LLP ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Stanford Community Law Clinic



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## CALIFORNIA JANITORS SETTLE MINIMUM WAGE CLASS ACTION SUIT

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** – Janitors will share in an approximate \$1 million class action settlement of a case brought against USM, Inc., and a leading retailer, which contracted with USM to provide janitorial services in California. The janitors claimed that USM and the retailer failed to provide enough money in their contract to permit USM’s subcontractors to pay minimum wages to their janitors. While the Defendants denied all claims against them, USM has agreed to pay the settlement and USM has agreed to a monitoring system designed to ensure that these janitorial subcontractors pay their employees at least minimum wage for performing daily janitorial services.

In September 2013, Plaintiff janitors filed *Vasquez et al. v. USM, Inc. et al.*, and based their case on a little-used state law, Labor Code section 2810. This law requires every entity that enters into a contract for janitorial services to provide sufficient funds to enable the janitorial companies to pay minimum wage and comply with worker protection laws.

This is the largest settlement to date for alleged violations of Section 2810.

“This is a landmark victory for janitors,” said Legal Aid of Marin staff attorney Joanna Shalleck-Klein.

Judge James Donato of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California preliminarily approved the settlement on April 13, 2015.

Plaintiffs are represented by the Bay Area law firms of Legal Aid of Marin; Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho; Chavez & Gertler LLP; and the Stanford Community Law Clinic.

**For more information or to schedule an interview contact: LAM Director of Communications Delfin Vigil (415) 492-0230, Ext. 315. Email: [dvigil@legalaidmarin.org](mailto:dvigil@legalaidmarin.org).**

**About Legal Aid of Marin** Since 1958 Legal Aid of Marin has been providing access to the civil justice system for low-income, vulnerable and otherwise underserved residents of Marin County. LAM strives for practical solutions to client problems through quality legal services.

**About Chavez Gertler LLP** For over twenty years Chavez & Gertler LLP has been one of the leading civil rights class action and personal injury law firms in California. The firm’s practice has included important victories in cases involving employee, consumer, disability and other civil rights, as well as catastrophic accidents. Chavez & Gertler’s offices are in Mill Valley, California.

**About Goldstein Borgen Dardarian & Ho** As one of the oldest and most successful plaintiffs’ public interest class action law firms in the country, GBDH represents individuals against large companies in complex, class and collective action lawsuits in the firm’s three primary practice areas: employment discrimination, wage and hour violations, and disability access, as well as in other public interest areas. The firm is located in Oakland and has a national practice, litigating

cases in federal and state courts throughout the country.

**About Stanford Community Law Clinic** Located near the campus in East Palo Alto, SCLC is part of Stanford Law School's clinical legal education program, and provides law students the opportunity to represent low-wage workers and other low-income people in employment, housing, social security, and re-entry cases. Clinic faculty members are counsel of record and provide close supervision to ensure quality of services.