



# Legal

# Action

FALL • 2009

## VICTORY! BRADY WINS DISMISSAL OF NRA SUIT AGAINST PITTSBURGH

### Gun Lobby Had Sued to Strike Down City's Anti-Gun Trafficking Law

A Pennsylvania judge threw out the National Rifle Association's lawsuit against a Pittsburgh anti-gun trafficking ordinance after the Brady Center's Legal Action Project stepped in to defend the City.

The July 21, 2009 ruling tossed out of court the NRA's lawsuit against Pittsburgh, in which the NRA sought to strike down an ordinance requiring the reporting of lost or stolen guns to the police. The court ruled that the NRA and gun owners who sued lacked standing to bring the case, which was filed on April 24, 2009, against the City, Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, and the City Council in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Shortly after the lawsuit was filed, the City Council hired the Legal Action Project to represent it, pro bono. On June 1, 2009, the Legal Action Project filed a motion on behalf of the City to dismiss the lawsuit.

The ordinance, enacted by the City in December 2008, requires gun owners to report lost or stolen firearms to law enforcement within 24 hours after discovery of the loss or theft. The ordinance is aimed at stopping gun trafficking. When guns are recovered at crime scenes and traced back to illegal gun traffickers, the traffickers frequently claim that the guns were "stolen" to hide their complicity in gun trafficking.

The ordinance also helps law enforcement investigate and quickly recover stolen guns. The ordinance does not punish gun owners who fail to report the loss or theft of a firearm because they are unaware that a loss or theft occurred, but penalizes individuals who seek to hide from police the fact that a gun has been lost or stolen.

The NRA alleged that the ordinance violates Pennsylvania law and is unconstitutional. The City argued that the NRA and the individual plaintiffs failed to explain how a reporting requirement for a gun they no longer possess infringes upon their ability to use, possess and transport that gun. It also argued that the NRA failed to explain how it is the "right of its members" to hide from police the fact that a gun has been lost or stolen and may be in dangerous hands.

On July 9, 2009, LAP Senior Attorney Daniel Vice successfully argued the motion before Judge R. Stanton Wettick of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

In June 2008, the Brady Center helped uphold a similar ordinance enacted by the City of Philadelphia and challenged by the NRA.

**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**  
City gets help in fight with NRA

Brady Campaign lawyers to join 'team effort' to defend gun law

By Rich Lord and Dan Majors  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Two opposing national groups will duke it out in court over Pittsburgh's new ordinance on lost and stolen guns, with the announcement that the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence will join the city's Law Department in fighting a National Rifle Association lawsuit.

Pittsburgh Council President Doug Shields said he will propose legislation enabling the city to receive help from two lawyers with extensive experience tussling with the high-powered NRA. "It will be a team effort," Mr. Shields said. Councilman [Name] passed an ordinance in [Date] requiring owners to report

NRA in court. "When the NRA sued Pittsburgh, it made the national press," Mr. Shields said. "I was contacted by a representative of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, which offered pro bono services to the city. "I spoke with the city solicitor, and he was more than pleased that help was on the way. He and two other attorneys [Name] on it.

**NRA loses gun law battle**

Judge says group has no standing challenge to lost gun rule

By Ed Blazina and Timothy McNulty  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The city of Pittsburgh may soon begin enforcing a law requiring owners to report not reporting a lost or stolen gun and maximum fine of \$1,000 and up to 90 days in jail for additional offenses.

shortly." The law is aimed at straw purchasers who legally buy guns and then sell or give them to criminals. Often

Pittsburgh and Philadelphia are among nine cities and towns in Pennsylvania that have enacted laws requiring the reporting of lost or stolen guns. The Brady Center has offered to assist pro bono any Pennsylvania jurisdiction in defending these laws against NRA challenges. ●

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**R**oss Mathieu, Josh Adames, and Kenzo Dix were three boys growing up in America. Ross lived in Massachusetts, Josh in Illinois, Kenzo in California. They were adolescents: 12, 13, and 15 years old.

*Were.*

12, 13 and 15 would be the last ages they would ever reach.

I don't know if in their all-too-short lives Ross, Josh, and Kenzo had much in common, but in their all-too-sudden deaths they were brought together:

Each of them was killed by a handgun manufactured by Beretta, a high-end company that has made guns for almost 500 years.

**The Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence** is a nonprofit, education, research, and legal advocacy organization established in 1983 to reduce the tragic toll of gun violence in America.

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Their deaths are eerily similar: Each was playing with a young friend. The friend found a gun in the home. The gun appeared to be unloaded. In Ross and Josh's case the ammunition magazine was removed; in Kenzo's, the magazine was empty. Each gun was designed so that a round in the chamber was hidden, without alerting users when the gun was loaded. So the friend, thinking the gun was unloaded and harmless, pulled the trigger.

And Ross, Josh, and Kenzo died.

Each would be alive today if Beretta had simply chosen to include feasible safety devices of which it was long aware. A magazine disconnect safety — a \$10 device invented almost a century ago — would have prevented the hidden bullets from firing when Ross and Josh's friends pulled the trigger. An effective loaded chamber indicator, or internal lock, would have prevented Kenzo's friend from firing his father's gun.

When the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) learned of 15 deaths attributable to bb guns that could fire "even though the airgun can appear empty," they sued to recall bb guns with that defect because "it is foreseeable that a child, believing the BB gun is empty, could play with [it] in an unsafe manner." But guns remain the only product exempt from federal safety oversight, so despite 16,000 unintentional shootings each year, many of which are preventable with feasible safety features, the CPSC cannot require similar design modifications. As a result, lawsuits that compel companies to internalize a portion of the human cost of their design failures are the only means to encourage safer guns.

Which raises another commonality between the three boys: Their parents all brought suit, with help from the Legal Action Project, arguing that

gun makers, like any company that makes any product, have a duty to include feasible safety devices, and they should pay damages that result from breaches of that duty. The suits met different fates, but all succeeded in some way. Kenzo's case won the first court ruling that a gun manufacturer could be liable for a shooting resulting from its failure to include internal locks. And even though the Dixes did not prevail before a jury, the case led numerous gun manufacturers to include the safety features that could have saved Kenzo's life, and paved the way for court victories against gun companies in other cases. Ross's parents won a confidential settlement from Beretta. Josh's family, as explained in this issue, hope to strike down the federal gun industry shield law.

Congress should amend the law to allow the federal government to mandate feasible, life saving safety features, as it does with all other products. Indeed, the gun lobby's chief argument for the exemption — that safety regulations could result in a back-door gun ban — is now off the table, after the Supreme Court's decision in *Heller*.

Even without federal oversight, companies like Beretta could choose to do the right thing and make their guns safer, but history suggests that they will only do so if they are forced or pressured to. With your continuing support, we at the Legal Action Project will never forget Ross, Josh, and Kenzo, and we will do all in our power to prevent future tragedies like theirs.

**Jonathan E. Lowy**  
Legal Action Project Director

# Brady Center Asks Supreme Court To Hold Federal Gun Industry Shield Law Unconstitutional

In August 2009, the Legal Action Project of the Brady Center asked the United States Supreme Court to reverse an Illinois court decision that denied gun violence victims their day in court. The petition for a writ of certiorari filed by LAP in *Adames v. Beretta U.S.A. Corp.* asks the Court to strike down the federal Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA) as unconstitutional, and reverse the Illinois Supreme Court's dismissal of a product liability claim against Beretta, in which Beretta's failure to include feasible, century-old safety features in its guns caused the unintentional shooting death of 13-year-old Josh Adames. The Adames hired the Legal Action Project to represent them pro bono after the Illinois Supreme Court dismissed their case. Even though the Adames would be entitled to relief under established Illinois law, the Illinois court held that the PLCAA required the Illinois state courts to dismiss their claims.

The case arises from the tragic events of May 5, 2001, when 13-year-old Billy Swan found his father's Beretta 92FS handgun in his home, and removed the ammunition magazine. However, Beretta had neglected to include a magazine safety disconnect and also failed to include adequate warnings to indicate when the gun was loaded. As a result, Billy pulled the trigger of a gun he thought was unloaded, and the bullet hidden in the chamber killed his friend Josh.

Josh's parents filed a product liability action against Beretta, and the Illinois Appellate Court held that their failure to warn claim was permitted under Illinois law, and could go forward under the PLCAA. However, the Illinois Supreme Court reversed,

and held that the PLCAA barred state courts from imposing their liability law and hearing such cases.

The petition filed by the Brady Center, along with the Center for Constitutional Litigation, asks the Supreme Court to take the case in order to clarify the scope and constitutionality of the PLCAA. The Centers argue that the PLCAA is an unconstitutional violation of the Tenth Amendment, as it impermissibly dictates to states that they must use their legislature to establish

liability standards in gun cases, but cannot use their judicial branch to establish liability in the same cases.

The petition also argues that the Illinois Supreme Court decision misinterpreted the PLCAA as broadly preempting state product liability claims, though Congress did not express the clear intent to preempt such claims where gun companies caused an injury or death by engaging in wrongful conduct, and they would be liable under established state law. ●

## Adames Highlights Years of Gun Industry Refusal to Include Safety Features

Beretta and the rest of the gun industry have been well aware for many years that tragic shooting deaths such as Josh Adames' are common and preventable. Patents dating to 1890 describe devices invented to "accurately indicate both to the sight and touch whether or not a gun contains a cartridge, thereby obviating the many accidents occasioned by the discharge of guns that are not supposed to be loaded." And fourteen years ago, LAP sued Beretta on behalf of the parents of 15-year-old Kenzo Dix for its failure to include such devices. Kenzo, like Josh Adames, was shot and killed with a Beretta handgun that his friend thought was unloaded. Discovery revealed that for years engineers and others had pleaded with Beretta to include safety features to prevent such unintentional shootings, even sending Beretta design drawings and patents that could save lives. But Beretta refused to make its guns safer.

The testimony provided by Beretta's expert at trial in *Dix* gave a chilling window into the callousness of the

gun company's thinking. The expert said, "I know that some people will be killed because of [design] decisions I have made." He admitted, specifically, that some kids "wouldn't have been killed if [a] magazine safety [a device that prevents the gun from firing when the magazine is removed] had been in place." But the expert then explained that he still did not favor including that life saving device. He said, "if you are back-packing off into the wilderness, and you are going to maybe rely on that [gun] to shoot at snakes, or shoot rabbits to eat, or whatever the heck, and you lose your magazine or damage it so it doesn't work, if it's got a device in there that prevents you from shooting it with a magazine out, you can't use the gun anymore."

In the expert's view, the certain benefit of saving children's lives was outweighed by the speculative possibility that a lost hiker with a damaged magazine might not be able to kill a snake or a rabbit. Three years later, Josh Adames was killed because Beretta failed to include a magazine disconnect safety in another gun.

## LAP Appeals Dismissal of Suit Against Dealer Who Armed Child-Killer

The Legal Action Project is appealing the dismissal of a case brought by a Kansas woman against the gun dealers who sold a shotgun in a straw purchase to a felon, who used the gun hours later to kill her 8-year-old son Zeus. In August 2009, the Brady Center filed a brief on behalf of Elizabeth Shirley in the Kansas Court of Appeals, arguing that under Kansas law gun dealers who supply guns to criminals in straw purchases may be liable for criminal shootings that result.

The case arises from the tragic events of September 5, 2003, when Russell Graham, the father of Zeus and estranged husband of Elizabeth, went to Baxter Springs Gun and Pawn Shop with his grandmother to purchase a

shotgun. Graham, who had prior felonies for attempted kidnapping and rape, was prohibited from buying firearms under federal law. After talking to Joe and Patsy George, the owners of the gun shop, he selected a shotgun. When he informed the gun dealers that he had a criminal record, the Georges had Graham's grandmother fill out the necessary paperwork and "purchase" the shotgun, which Graham paid for and carried out of the store. That night, Russell Graham used his new weapon to murder Zeus, and then killed himself.

When ATF investigated the sale of the gun, the Georges claimed that the gun shop's videotaping systems all failed on the day of the sale, and they threw

away the videotape before it could be examined by law enforcement.

Elizabeth Shirley subsequently filed suit against the Georges and the Baxter Springs Gun and Pawn Shop, claiming that they negligently supplied the gun to Graham, helping cause the death of her son. The trial court dismissed the case against the gun dealers, holding that they could not be liable even if they knew Graham was a felon. The Brady Center joined the case on appeal. In its brief to the Court of Appeals, the Brady Center argues that the trial court failed to follow Kansas law, which holds that gun owners who fail to safeguard their weapons with the highest degree of care may be liable for shootings that result. ●

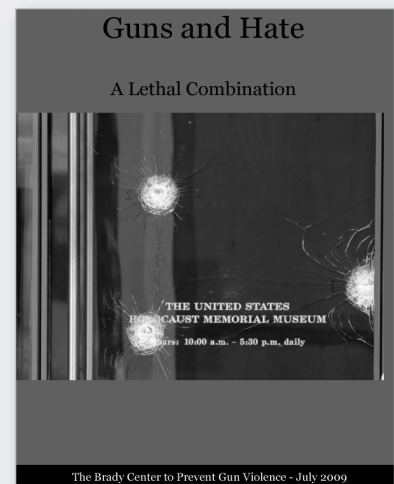
## New Brady Center Report Shows Link Between Loopholes in Gun Laws and Hate Group Crimes

In July 2009, the Brady Center issued *Guns and Hate: A Lethal Combination*, a report chronicling the connection between hate group extremism and gun violence in the United States. Issued on the 10th anniversary of the spree shootings by a neo-Nazi that terrorized the Midwest over July 4th weekend, 1999, the report documents how white supremacists and other extremists have continued to exploit loopholes in our gun laws to commit heinous acts of gun violence. The report also highlights how the leadership of the NRA has engaged in incendiary, extremist rhetoric similar to statements uttered by domestic extremists.

Hate crimes have been on the forefront of news headlines in 2009, with the murder of Dr. George Tiller in a Kansas church, the shooting death of a security

guard by a white supremacist at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and the Department of Homeland Security's report on the rise of right-wing extremism. The Brady Center report draws connections often missed by the media between members of hate groups who are intent on perpetuating violence, the ease of access to firearms by dangerous people due to loopholes in American gun laws, and false and incendiary rhetoric by the gun lobby. The report explains how that toxic mix has led to numerous shootings over the past decade.

*Guns and Hate* analyzes some of the most infamous hate crimes committed in the decade since the July 4th weekend shootings in the Midwest (covered in more detail on the next page) and provides insight into how the shooters



were able to access guns and carry out their crimes by exploiting loopholes in our laws. In the words of Brady Center President, Paul Helmke, "There would be no better way to honor the victims of these hate killings than for our elected officials to act now to prevent other families from having to suffer such senseless loss." ●

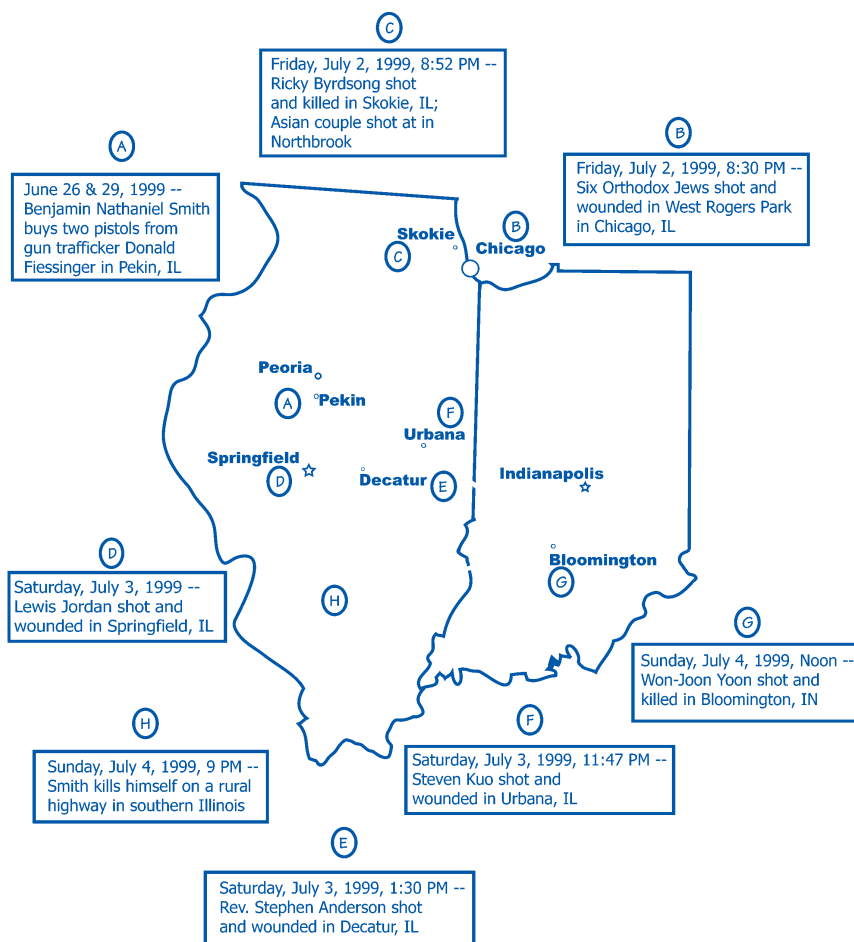
# 10 Year Anniversary of July 4th Hate Crime Murders in Midwest

Ten years ago, over July 4th weekend, a white supremacist named Benjamin Smith went on a hate-fueled shooting rampage through Illinois and Indiana. By the time police tracked him down, Smith had wounded nine people and killed two. Smith was a follower of the now-imprisoned Matthew Hale and his "World Church of the Creator," a white supremacist organization. Motivated by Hale's hateful teachings, Smith decided that he needed to launch his own "one-man race war." Smith was prohibited from legally buying guns, but was able to turn to the criminal gun market to make his hate-filled vision a reality.

Smith attempted to purchase firearms from a federally licensed firearms dealer, but his purchase was denied when a Brady background check revealed an active restraining order placed by an ex-girlfriend. However, because current law does not require that unlicensed gun sellers check the criminal backgrounds of purchasers, all Smith had to do to obtain two deadly weapons was to look through the classified advertisements where he found a gun trafficker named Donald Fiessinger. Fiessinger sold Smith two Saturday Night Specials, no questions asked.

Fiessinger was able to maintain his illegal gun trafficking business due to other loopholes in the law. Over a year and a half he bought 72 inexpensive, low-quality guns from the same licensed gun dealer, Old Prairie Trading Post in Peoria, buying guns at a pace of about one a week. Had a one handgun per month limit been in place, Fiessinger would have found it nearly impossible to amass and sell his arsenal, and Smith may not have had any way of arming himself. And by staggering his sales, Fiessinger was even able to avoid the federal requirement that multiple handguns purchased within five business days be reported to ATF.

## The Trail of Two Guns: Three Days, Eleven Victims



Using the guns he bought from Fiessinger, Smith shot and killed Ricky Byrdsong, the former head basketball coach at Northwestern University, as he walked with two of his children in their Skokie, Illinois neighborhood on July 2nd. Two days later, in Bloomington, Indiana, Smith killed Won-Joon Yoon, a graduate student at Indiana University, while Yoon was on his way to church. During his shooting spree, Smith also shot and wounded an African-American pastor at a church

in Decatur, Illinois, six Orthodox Jews on their way home from synagogue in Chicago, and two others, including an Asian-American graduate student at the University of Illinois. When police finally caught up to Smith outside the town of Salem, Illinois, he took his own life to avoid arrest and prosecution.

The loopholes that enabled Smith to obtain his guns, and enabled Fiessinger to maintain his trafficking business, still exist, ten years later. ●

## Brady Center Urges Massachusetts to Uphold Safe Gun Storage Law Against Second Amendment Challenge

On June 29, 2009, the Brady Center filed an amicus brief in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court urging the Court to hold that a life saving gun safety law requiring that guns be secured to prevent accidents and unauthorized use is constitutional under the Second Amendment.

In the case, *Commonwealth v. Runyan*, prosecutors are appealing a lower court ruling that held that the Second Amendment required dismissal of an indictment against a parent who failed to secure a semiautomatic rifle.

The case arose when police were called to the home of Richard Runyan and found Runyan's 18-year-old son, who has Down's syndrome, shooting a bb gun out the window at a neighbor. Runyan's son was home alone and showed police where a 12-gauge shotgun and a semi-automatic hunting rifle were stored under his father's bed, with the rifle unsecured. Police later discovered that Runyan's firearm identification card expired. Runyan was charged with improperly storing a firearm and possessing a firearm without a valid firearm identification card.

The trial court dismissed the indictment, claiming it violated the Second Amendment. While the trial court based its ruling on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the Court in *Heller* specifically noted that its ruling does not call into question "laws regulating the storage of firearms to prevent accidents." The court also applied the Second Amendment even though the Supreme Court has not held that it is to be incorporated against the states. The appellate decision in *Runyan*

will mark the first time an appellate court considers a challenge to a safe gun storage law following *Heller*.

The Brady Center's brief argues that Massachusetts' safe gun storage law, G.L. ch. 140, section 131L is constitutional. The law allows legitimate self-defense gun use but requires that firearms be secured when not carried by or under the control of an owner or authorized user. The brief explains how studies have found a direct correlation between improper gun storage and accidental shooting deaths, and that unintentional shooting deaths among children have been reduced by 23% in states with safe storage laws. The brief cites Massachusetts' long history of gun laws, including safe gun storage laws dating back to the time of ratification of the Second Amendment.

The Brady Center was joined on the brief by law enforcement and other gun violence prevention groups. Former Massachusetts Attorney General Scott Harshbarger and the law firm Proskauer Rose are representing the groups pro bono. ●



## Brady Center Continues Efforts to Keep Guns Out of National Parks

On July 30, 2009, Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in the Brady Center's favor and permanently vacated the last-minute Bush Administration rule change that would have forced guns into national parks and wildlife refuges. Three months earlier, on March 19, 2009, the Brady Center won a temporary injunction staying enforcement of the Bush rule, reinstating rules dating back to President Reagan that

restrict concealed weapons in parks and refuges.

Between court rulings, Senator Coburn (R-Oklahoma) introduced an amendment to the Credit Card Reform Bill in Congress that would override the court. The Coburn Amendment would force not only concealed carrying of loaded firearms, but also open carrying of loaded guns, including assault weapons, in national parks and wildlife refuges. The amendment,

which passed both Houses and was signed into law by President Obama, goes into effect in February 2010. In an effort to force guns into national parks earlier than February, the gun lobby appealed Judge Kollar-Kotelly's ruling one day after it was issued. The Brady Center is continuing its efforts to fight guns in parks and is now litigating the effect of the passage of the amendment and the gun lobby's appeal to the District of Columbia Circuit Court. ●

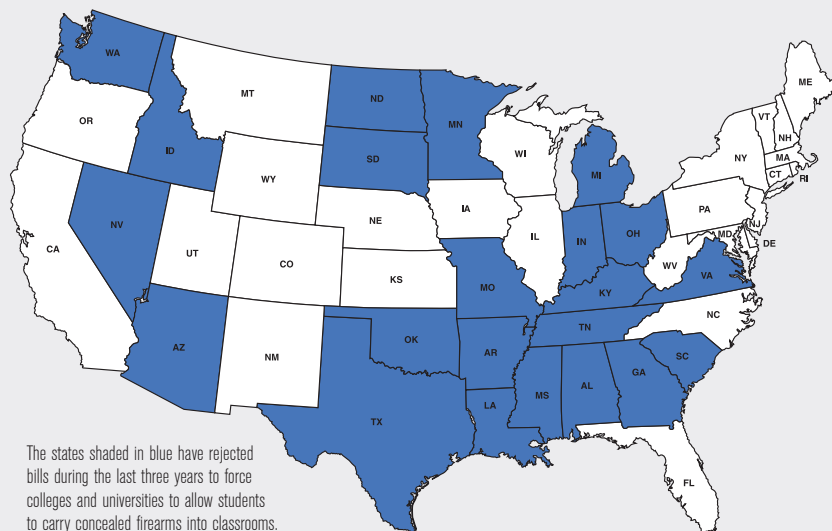
## VICTORY: Colorado Defeats Guns on Campus Lawsuit

On April 30, 2009, El Paso County, Colorado District Court Judge G. David Miller dismissed a lawsuit filed by Students for Concealed Carry on Campus against the University of Colorado that had sought to force the University to allow students to carry loaded, concealed firearms on campus. Attorneys with the Brady Center's Legal Action Project provided advice and assistance to the University in defending against the lawsuit.

In dismissing the lawsuit, the court rejected claims that the Colorado Constitution grants a Constitutional right for students to carry loaded, concealed weapons on campus. The court noted that, to the contrary, the Colorado Constitution specifically states that "nothing herein contained shall be construed to justify the practice of carrying concealed weapons." The court also rejected claims that the Colorado Concealed Carry Act requires the University to allow armed students on campus.

The court agreed that the University acted reasonably in barring students from carrying concealed weapons on campus, noting the University Regents' determination that the presence of firearms on campus "threatens the tranquility of the education environment and contributes in an offensive manner to an unacceptable climate of violence."

The lawsuit against the University sought, and failed, to accomplish in the courts what the gun lobby has also failed to accomplish in state legislatures. In total, 34 independent efforts by the NRA and Students for Concealed Carry on Campus to pass bills allowing guns-on-campus have failed in 22 different states in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech tragedy. ●



## VICTORY: Court Clears Way For Brady Center Suit Against Dealer Who Supplied Gun Trafficker

On June 25, 2009, U.S. District Court Judge William M. Skretny ended four years of legal wrangling and ruled that a Brady Center lawsuit against negligent gun companies can proceed in state court in Buffalo, New York, where it was filed. The court also ordered the gun companies to pay attorneys fees and costs to the Brady Center and co-counsel.

On July 28, 2005, the Brady Center filed a lawsuit on behalf of Daniel Williams, a high school basketball star who was 16 when he was shot in the stomach with a Hi-Point pistol as he played hoops out-

side his home in Buffalo. The suit alleges that Williams was shot by a known gang member, who obtained one of hundreds of guns trafficked from Ohio by notorious gunrunner James Bostic. Between May and October 2000, Bostic purchased at least 250 guns from gun sellers at gun shows in Dayton, Ohio, which Bostic then sold on the streets.

Charles Brown, the President of MKS Supply, the sole distributor of Hi-Point firearms, sold 190 handguns to Bostic and two fellow traffickers, including a sale of 87 handguns in a single purchase, that included the gun used to

shoot Williams. A Hi-Point gun sold by Brown was also used in the 1999 Columbine High School massacre. The lawsuit claims that Brown, MKS, and Hi-Point acted negligently in supplying the traffickers and the shooter with the gun used to wound Williams.

For the past four years, the defendants have stalled progress in the case by moving it from state to federal court and litigating frivolous issues, including an appeal. The Brady Center will now have the opportunity to finally seek justice for Williams and litigate the substantive issues of his lawsuit. ●



# LAP Celebrates 20 Years of Life Saving Work



Sen. Richard Durbin   Rep. Carolyn McCarthy   Past LAP client Kenneth McGuire   Brady President Paul Helmke   LAP Founder Dennis Henigan   LAP Director Jonathan Lowy

“I believe that responsible, law-abiding adults should have a right to own guns. But children have a right to walk to school without being caught in the crossfire of a gang war. Parents have a right to kiss their kids and send them to school without worrying they’re sending their children into the line of fire. For the sake of these kids, and all of our kids, we need the Brady Center and the Legal Action Project to keep up their fight.”

– Sen. Richard Durbin

“We have to fight in the courts. We have to have the victories in the courts. We have to bring [the gun lobby] to their knees. That is the only way that we’re going to stop the violence that we’re seeing in this country.”

– Rep. Carolyn McCarthy

“It is not easy for someone who has suffered the trauma of gun violence to pursue remedies through our legal system. Victims who decide to assert their legal rights, in order to prevent others from suffering similar tragedies, deserve our admiration, as do the attorneys who have dedicated themselves to lifesaving legal work over the last twenty years in partnership with the Legal Action Project.”

– Dennis Henigan

Leaders from Capitol Hill, Jim and Sarah Brady, and many other friends, supporters, clients, and gun violence prevention advocates helped celebrate the Legal Action Project’s 20th anniversary on June 16, 2009. The event honored the Legal Action Project’s two decades of work to assert and defend the legal rights of gun violence victims, and the dedication and commitment of attorneys and law firms who have worked with the Legal Action Project to help achieve this goal. The event’s featured speakers included Senator Richard Durbin (D-Illinois), Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-New York), and past LAP client, former police officer Kenneth McGuire.

“The Brady Center’s lawyers helped two New Jersey cops finally get justice. We also sent a message to gun dealers across the country: Those who put the almighty dollar ahead of public safety in selling guns will pay a high price. I want to thank each and every one of you for your support of the Brady Center’s work in seeking justice in the courts for gun violence victims... There’s no question that cases like mine have saved lives, including the lives of police officers like me.

– Kenneth McGuire

“Over the years, together with Legal Action Project attorneys, the lawyers and law firms [we are honoring today] have helped defend federal gun laws and local city ordinances from attacks by the gun lobby. We’ve helped seek justice for victims, helped cities try to recover the cost of gun violence, and forced gun companies to act responsibly to prevent criminals from getting guns. We’ve won precedent setting victories. And today we’re more active and more committed than ever, and we need and appreciate your support more than ever.”

– Jonathan Lowy



Sarah and Jim Brady with Rep. Carolyn McCarthy