

**“A lot of what I did for historic preservation contributed directly to my ability to help the cause of elder justice... I never thought I would go down this road, but I could not turn my back on this.”**  
**- Phillip Marshall**



Photo (Left) courtesy of Roger Williams University, (Right) by Alec Marshall - AlecMarshall.com

of our atmosphere in less than ten seconds,” Adria says. “While we don’t know how to protect Earth from this kind of catastrophe yet, it would be good to know if one is on its way, so we need to study how they work.”

It is the hope that by understanding these GRBs, Adria can begin to understand a bit about how stars evolve and the chemical composition of early galaxies – for what are galaxies, but clusters of millions or billions of stars. When stars explode, they leave behind certain remnants, depending on their size. However, one of her collaborations this summer resulted in a published paper that describes a remnant that was not expected to be seen after a GRB. Turns out there’s always something to learn in the vast cosmos, and perhaps we are a few explosions away from truly understanding the stars.

### **A Declaration of Interdependence** *Philip Marshall fights for elder justice, one keynote speech at a time*

**When Philip Marshall was** presented with the fact that his grandmother, socialite Brooke Astor, was the victim of elder abuse, he stepped up and is now fighting for the cause of elder justice. He’s been teaching Historic Preservation at Roger Williams University since 1991, and is encouraged by how much historic preservation and elder justice have in common. “First of all, in a strange way, it’s all about preservation. Historic preservation, people say, is really specialized,” explains Philip. “But the fact of the matter is that both preservation and elder justice, and other social causes, are the same in that they deal with advocacy, legislation, community



and state... and understanding existing partnerships and resources.”

Years ago, Philip chose historic preservation as the professional field that he wanted to go into because of his interest in the built environment and from childhood experiences. Then around 2006, his life changed drastically as he made a very personal and very hard decision to basically save his grandmother against abuse by her son, his father. “So many [are] affected, and it is hard telling the story,” he says, adding, “It’s hard living it and not telling the story.”

So how does one shift gears from a lifetime of work in historic preservation to advancing the cause of elder justice? Well, to start, Philip is currently on unpaid academic leave. From about 2010 to this year, he continued teaching but also provided keynotes at national and state conferences from coast to coast with elder justice practitioners. In early February of this year, he testified before the US Senate Special Committee on Aging and realized that there was such an incredible need to help the cause of elder justice. By late February he applied for an unpaid academic leave from Roger Williams University, it was granted, and now he is on his journey.

“I like to use the term elder justice because elders are victimized enough. And to have the negative campaign of ‘Stop Elder Abuse,’ it doesn’t forward the cause of elder justice,” Marshall explains. “In looking at elder justice I said, ‘look, there’s a systemic problem of elder abuse, and elder justice needs a systems-based solution of

understanding all of those organizations, professionals and resources that come together.”

There are many factors contributing to the widespread and little-known problem. According to Philip, it’s because of ageism, which makes elders invisible to society. And as for abuse, abusers are, at times, close family members, and the incidences are highly underreported. Only 1 in 44 cases are reported. Many live in fear or denial because of their relationship with trusted ones. But now, as there are 10,000 elders a day who are entering into this 60+ arena, the issue is coming to the forefront.

Another roadblock to elder justice is that we have put the onus of growing old on the shoulders of the elderly. “According to the FrameWorks Institute report ‘Gauging Aging,’ we’ve said that elders are independent. But that’s not how it works,” says Marshall. “I think there has been a breakdown of the family unit... There is interdependence of different generations in other parts of the world.”

Philip’s ultimate goal is to establish an initiative in his grandmother’s name and to further connect the dots with this systemic approach of elder justice. “Elders are retiring and they’re not part of the problem, they’re part of the solution,” he says. “Instead of having folks retire at 60-something, switch out, look to some different arena, use your decades of knowledge and wisdom and apply it.”

“It’s interesting, you don’t choose something but you’re presented with something and you make a decision,” says Marshall. “So that’s what I’ve done. This is not a spectator sport.” **B**

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