

Spring 1995

## One Can Make a Difference

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### Recommended Citation

Rollin Alexis, *One Can Make a Difference*, 22 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 819 (1995) .  
<https://ir.law.fsu.edu/lr/vol22/iss4/9>

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## ONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ROLLIN ALEXIS\*

On the behalf of our Haitian community and everyone that has been helped by Steve Goldstein, this is a remembrance of his valor.

I met Steve Goldstein in the summer of 1992. The Church World Service had just opened an office in Tallahassee. During this time the Guantanamo refugees were arriving in vast numbers. It was very difficult to find someone to help these refugees with their emigration papers. But, thanks to Steve our worries were over when he decided to take on the case of Ti Mack, a frightened twenty-five-year-old male refugee, who had fled Haiti because he was a believer and supporter in the democratic crusade in Haiti and also a strong advocate of Aristide who was overthrown in the fall of 1991.

At the time, Steve lacked the legal experience with immigration law but, he did not lack compassion or persistence. Steve and I worked diligently for hours helping Ti Mack with his immigration papers. I used vacation time, and Steve rearranged his active and tiresome schedule. Steve never showed any signs of boredom or weariness. Despite the time, day or night, he would always answer our questions with kindness, patience, and concern. He would always say to me "Rolin, if you have any questions or anything I can do, please do not hesitate to call me." We worked as a team until we received the word from the Immigration and Naturalization Service that Mack was allowed to stay in this country. I felt a great deal of jubilation and relief when I received that favorable news.

In March 1993, I turned to my friend Steve again. A group of Haitian women was held at the Leon County Jail due to a shift in policy. Supposedly, there was not enough space at the detention center in South Florida.

When I was called upon, on behalf of the women at the county jail, I called Steve and asked for his assistance. Without wasting any time, he started working diligently as if he was being paid for the trial of the century. Through his efforts they were released a short time later. This is the Steve Goldstein I know. It seems that we were friends and partners for at least fifty years.

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\* President, Tallahassee Friends of Haiti.

Steve Goldstein enriched us about benevolent service. He symbolized the expressions "*one can make a difference, and reach out and touch somebody's hand, make this world a better place if you can.*"

When I learned of his death, I was devastated. Neither I, nor any recipient of the multiple services he rendered will forget his generosity. The question is how many among us in this diverse setting of religion, race, nationality, government, businesses and trade will continue his legacy. It is our goal to continue his work diligently with fairness, and kindness in the battle of democracy. It is this goal that will keep the remembrance of Steve Goldstein with me.

Let us not allow the flame of the benevolent candle to become extinguished by our non-actions. And when we see a candle flame let it be a reminder of the glow and enlightenment Steve Goldstein gave us. To the Goldstein family, thanks a million and our prayers will continue to be with you. Let us all pray for peace.

Love, Rolin Alexis