

social justice initiatives honors celebration

Columbia Law School
Social Justice Initiatives
04.16.14

Welcome and Student Awards

Ellen Chapnick

Dean for Social Justice Initiatives

Introduction

Anurima Bhargava '02

Chief, Educational Opportunities Section, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice

Keynote Address

Distinguished Public Interest Graduate of the Year Award

Theodore M. Shaw '79

Professor of Professional Practice, Columbia University School of Law

distinguished honoree

Theodore M. Shaw ‘79 is Professor of Professional Practice at Columbia University School of Law. He is also Of Counsel to Norton Rose Fulbright (formerly Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP). For twenty-three years Professor Shaw was an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He served as Assistant Counsel and Director of the Education Docket (1982-1987), Western Regional Director (1987-1990), Associate Director-Counsel (1993-2004), and Director-Counsel and President (2004-2008). Professor Shaw started his legal career as a Trial Attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (1979-1982). Professor Shaw taught at the University of Michigan Law School (1990-1993), and held the 1997-98 Haywood Burns Chair at CUNY Law School and 2003 Phyllis Beck Chair at Temple Law School.

Professor Shaw has testified before Congress and before state and local legislatures on many occasions, and he has been a frequent guest on national and local television and radio. He has authored numerous articles and opinion pieces.

Professor Shaw has argued before the U.S. Supreme Court and before U.S. Courts of Appeals in numerous cases, and has tried education, voting rights, housing discrimination, capital punishment, and other civil rights cases in trial courts throughout the nation. He played a key role in initiating and drafting the admissions policy that was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, and was lead counsel for black and Latino interveners in *Gratz v. Bollinger*. Professor Shaw served on the Obama Transition Team after the historic presidential election of 2008, as team leader for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. He has also trained, worked and consulted with human rights lawyers in Africa, South America, Europe, and Asia.

Professor Shaw is an honors graduate of Wesleyan University (1976) and a graduate of Columbia Law School (1979). He is the recipient of scores of awards, honors, and citations. He was an Aspen Institute Fellow on Law and Society (1987); a Twenty-first Century Trust Fellow on Global Interdependence (1989) (London, England); and a Salzburg Institute Fellow (1991).

Professor Shaw currently serves on the Board of Common Sense, The Equal Rights Trust (London, England), The International Center for Transitional Justice, The New Press, the Poverty and Race Research Action Council, the Wesleyan University Center for Prison Education, and the Board of Deacons of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in the City of New York. He is a Trustee Emeritus of Wesleyan University, and a former Board member of the American Constitution Society.

On July 1, 2014, Professor Shaw will transition from Columbia Law School to the University of North Carolina Law School at Chapel Hill, where he will be the Julius L. Chambers Distinguished Professor of Law in Civil Rights and the Director of the UNC Law School Center for Civil Rights.

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

The following 79 students have performed at least 100 hours of pro bono service since their first day at Columbia Law School (*as of April 4th*):

Class of 2014

Naz Pasha Ahmad
Class of 2014

100 pro bono hours
Sanctuary for Families

Tai Cosmos Aliya
Class of 2014

314 pro bono hours
San Jose University Record Clearance Project
Rightslink
New York State Supreme Court, Commercial Division

Michael Badain Aron
Class of 2014

200 pro bono hours
U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York

Kathryn Benedict Stanton
Class of 2014

195 pro bono hours
South Brooklyn Legal Services
African Services Committee
U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
Public Defender Services for the District of Columbia
Sanctuary for Families, Courtroom Advocates Project

Emily Brailey
Class of 2014

440 pro bono hours
U.S. District Court, Central District of California

Alexander James Buonocore
Class of 2014

120 pro bono hours
Resilience Advocacy Project
San Jose State University Record Clearance Project

Aretha Chakraborti
Class of 2014

550 pro bono hours
American Bar Association Polaris Project
Human Rights Watch, U.S. Program
Rightslink

Diane Chan
Class of 2014

400 pro bono hours
U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit

Kiran Kaur Cheema
Class of 2014

170 pro bono hours
New York State Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration

Abigail Flynn Coster
Class of 2014

400 pro bono hours
U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

Alec Blaine Finley, Jr.
Class of 2014

240 pro bono hours
Texas First Court of Appeals

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

Ian Paul Fisher
Class of 2014

459 pro bono hours
Environmental Protection Agency
Wisconsin Judicaire
Natural Resource Defense Council

Karen Lynn Geringer
Class of 2014

120 pro bono hours
New York State Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration

Max J. Goldman
Class of 2014

360 pro bono hours
U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York

Stephanie Ann Grajales
Class of 2014

400 pro bono hours
Legal Services for New York City, Legal Support Unit

Ze-Emanuel Myrkaate Hailu
Class of 2014

104 pro bono hours
African Services Committee
International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia

Kimberly J. Hargrove
Class of 2014

110 pro bono hours
STEPS to End Family Violence
Community Service Society
Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Daniel W. Hatten
Class of 2014

400 pro bono hours
Office of the White House, Executive Office of the President

Paula Henin
Class of 2014

329 pro bono hours
Secretariat of the ICC International Court of Arbitration
Rightslink
CLS Society for International Law for China Human Rights Lawyers' Concern Group

Benjamin David Howard
Class of 2014

450 pro bono hours
U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit

Johanna Rae Hudgens
Class of 2014

120 pro bono hours
Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center
Alaska Department of Law, Environment
Rightslink

Caitlin M. Hyduke
Class of 2014

280 pro bono hours
District Court of New Jersey

Feifei Bo Jiang
Class of 2014

212 pro bono hours
High School Law Institute
U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of California
Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project
Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana

Carl Michael Johnson
Class of 2014

350 pro bono hours
Cook County Court

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

| | |
|---|--|
| Brittany Alicia Jones Class of 2014 | 124 pro bono hours U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, Criminal Division |
| Alexander Justin Konik Class of 2014 | 150 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Raj Krishnan Class of 2014 | 349 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, New Jersey |
| Angela Wenry Lee Class of 2014 | 247 pro bono hours Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund Rightslink U.S. Office of the Trade Representative Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual |
| Nancy Lee Class of 2014 | 200 pro bono hours Legal Outreach U.S. Office of the Trade Representative |
| Marc Emmanuel Legrand Class of 2014 | 210 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Kirill Levashov Class of 2014 | 112 pro bono hours California Office of the Attorney General, Public Rights Division |
| Xiaolong Liu Class of 2014 | 420 pro bono hours New York State Attorney General's Office |
| David Bainbridge Lyons Class of 2014 | 117 pro bono hours Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Wisconsin Judicaire African Services Committee |
| John J. McDonnell Class of 2014 | 392 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, District of Columbia |
| Jared Steven Miller Class of 2014 | 164 pro bono hours Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana Center for Court Innovation Correctional Association of New York, Women in Prison Residential Charter Schools for Incarcerated Adults Louisiana Capital Assistance Center ACLU of Puerto Rico Sanctuary for Families, Immigrant Intervention Project African Services Committee |
| James Leon Moore Class of 2014 | 240 pro bono hours U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit |

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

| | |
|--|--|
| William John Nahill Class of 2014 | 153 pro bono hours High School Law Institute Georgia Public Defender Standards Council |
| Kensing Ng Class of 2014 | 312 pro bono hours New York Legal Assistance Group |
| Sara E. Ortiz Class of 2014 | 140 pro bono hours District Attorney's Office, County of NY |
| Elizabeth Ellen Owerbach Class of 2014 | 390 pro bono hours U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division |
| Katherine Jina Park Class of 2014 | 170 pro bono hours New York Asian Womens' Center Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project Sanctuary for Families, Battered Women's Project |
| Bryn Murtagh Paslawski Class of 2014 | 315 pro bono hours Vermont Supreme Court |
| Olga Fedorovna Peshko Class of 2014 | 150 pro bono hours New York State Supreme Court |
| Jane Estelle Petersen Class of 2014 | 490 pro bono hours International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project |
| Rambod Peykar Class of 2014 | 204 pro bono hours U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit |
| Brian Rabkin Class of 2014 | 100 pro bono hours Queens County District Attorney's Office |
| Emery G. Richards Class of 2014 | 133 pro bono hours Rightslink IAVGO Community Legal Clinic Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual |
| Jacqueline Elizabeth Rios Class of 2014 | 305 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, New Jersey |
| Olena Vera Ripnick Class of 2014 | 350 pro bono hours Immigration Equality |
| Michael John Ruthenberg-Marshall Class of 2014 | 130 pro bono hours High School Law Institute Resilience Advocacy Project |

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

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|--|---|
| John R. Schinasi Class of 2014 | 400 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana |
| Moshe Dov Segal Class of 2014 | 360 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| John Eric Starcher Class of 2014 | 370 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York High School Law Institute |
| Caroline Alexandra Stover Class of 2014 | 147 pro bono hours Rightslink Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project |
| Angela Sun Class of 2014 | 140 pro bono hours California Appellate Project Center for Appellate Litigation |
| Anthony David Tiberio Class of 2014 | 152 pro bono hours Project Renewal, Inc. Georgia Legal Services Program |
| Laura Kathleen Umbrecht Class of 2014 | 370 pro bono hours U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania Unemployment Action Center |
| Jason Velinder Class of 2014 | 320 pro bono hours United States Navy |
| Daniel Joseph Werb Class of 2014 | 277 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Matthew James Whited Class of 2014 | 237 pro bono hours City of Warren, Office of the City Attorney |
| Brian Witthuhn Class of 2014 | 100 pro bono hours Broadway Housing Communities City of Newark Law Department |
| Stephanie Siyi Wu Class of 2014 | 273 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York |
| Heming Xu Class of 2014 | 280 pro bono hours New Mexico Court of Appeals, Chambers of Roderick T. Kennedy |
| Karen W. Young Class of 2014 | 336 pro bono hours U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Central District of California |
| Jeanne-Paloma Zelmati Class of 2014 | 450 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |

honorees for 100 or more hours of pro bono work

Class of 2015

| | |
|--|--|
| Asif Attarwala Class of 2015 | 400 pro bono hours U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of New York |
| Brian Benvenisty Class of 2015 | 400 pro bono hours U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of New York |
| Matthew E. Delgado Class of 2015 | 368 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Central District of California |
| David A. Griffin Class of 2015 | 280 pro bono hours U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of New York |
| Jun Hu Class of 2015 | 368 pro bono hours New York Anti-Trafficking Network U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Kelly M. Knoll Class of 2015 | 217 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Hannah Margaret Lepow Class of 2015 | 192 pro bono hours U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia |
| Corinne Nhaissi Class of 2015 | 240 pro bono hours New York State Supreme Court, Commercial Division |
| Cody A. Ruegger Class of 2015 | 329 pro bono hours Environmental Defense Fund |
| Rachel O. Stein Class of 2015 | 320 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Sofia G. Syed Class of 2015 | 112 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |
| Carrie A. Tirrell Class of 2015 | 143 pro bono hours Sanctuary for Families New York Legal Assistance Group Ombudsman's Office, Legal Analysis Department |
| Miaoting Wu Class of 2015 | 224 pro bono hours New York State Supreme Court |
| Tal Yahalom Class of 2015 | 400 pro bono hours U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York |

honorees for two public interest summers

The following 53 students spent both of their law school summers working for public interest organizations or government agencies:

| | | |
|--------------------|------|---|
| Naz Ahmad | 2013 | American Civil Liberties Union, Center for Democracy |
| | 2012 | International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia |
| Stephanie Amoako | 2013 | United Nations Development Programme |
| | 2012 | Centro De Estudos Das Relacoes De Trabalho |
| Angeline Andersen | 2013 | Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Division |
| | 2012 | Legal Outreach, Inc. |
| Jennifer Anderson | 2013 | The City Project |
| | 2012 | The Family Center |
| Ifeoma Anunkor | 2013 | Columbia Law School, Center for Climate Change Law |
| | 2012 | Manhattan Legal Services |
| Rachel Bandli | 2013 | The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota |
| | 2012 | New York Public Library |
| Matthew Brock | 2013 | U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission |
| | 2012 | New York City Department of Consumer Affairs |
| Sara Chimene-Weiss | 2013 | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New England Regional Office |
| | 2012 | Advocacy Forum |
| Suehyan Cho | 2013 | The Immigrant Council of Ireland |
| | 2012 | The Aire Centre |
| Min Choi | 2013 | Legal Aid Society, Health Law Unit |
| | 2012 | Minkwon Center for Community Action |
| James Crowley | 2013 | Columbia Law School, Center for Climate Change Law |
| | 2012 | Office of the Attorney General, Rhode Island |
| Michael Curtis | 2013 | Queens County District Attorney's Office |
| | 2012 | Westchester County Attorney |
| Lindsay Gardner | 2013 | U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights |
| | 2012 | Children's Law Center of California, Sacramento |
| Sherie Gertler | 2013 | Human Rights Watch, International Justice Program |
| | 2012 | The Carter Center, Liberia |
| Eduardo Gonzalez | 2013 | U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission |
| | 2012 | Legal Aid Society, Prisoners' Rights Project |

honorees for two public interest summers

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| Ze-Emanuel Hailu | 2013 2012 | International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva |
| Jillian Hernandez | 2013 2012 | Madre Fundación De Estudios Para La Aplicación Del Derecho |
| James Michael Hubbard | 2013 2012 | Southern Center for Human Rights Legal Resource Centre |
| John Hughes | 2013 2012 | New York County District Attorney's Office U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Colorado |
| Malaika Jabali | 2013 2012 | New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development |
| Brittany Jones | 2013 2012 | Illinois Attorney General U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Ohio |
| Ashley Kinseth | 2013 2012 | Care International, Myanmar The Carter Center, Lubumbashi |
| Kathleen Kline | 2013 2012 | Environmental Law Institute Columbia Law School, Center for Climate Change Law |
| Sarah Krieger | 2013 2012 | The Innocence Project Legal Aid Society, Immigration Law Unit |
| Diego Lafuente Acosta | 2013 2012 | Asylum Access Ecuador American Friends Service Committee, Immigrant Rights Program |
| Ivy LeTourneau | 2013 2012 | Law Offices of Zachary Margulis, Ohnamu Her Justice |
| Samantha LiTrenta | 2013 2012 | The New York County District Attorney's Office New York City Council |
| Scott Marsik | 2013 2012 | Illinois Attorney General Governor of Illinois, General Counsel's Office |
| Suchita Mathur | 2013 2012 | Southern Poverty Law Center Legal Aid Society, Immigration Defense Unit |
| Rumbidzai Maweni | 2013 2012 | United Nations Development Programme United Nations Development Programme |
| Allison McCarty | 2013 2012 | Sustainable Development Institute Yirenping Center |
| Jared Miller | 2013 2012 | Neufeld, Scheck & Brustin, LLP Louisiana Capital Assistance Center |

honorees for two public interest summers

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------|--|
| R. Benjamin Nelson | 2013 | Natural Resources Defense Council |
| | 2012 | Fundación De Estudios Para La Aplicación Del Derecho |
| Kensing Ng | 2013 | Legal Aid Society, Arkansas |
| | 2012 | New York Legal Assistance Group |
| Diana Nielsen | 2013 | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes |
| | 2012 | United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials |
| Laura O'Neill | 2013 | U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission |
| | 2012 | Media Legal Defense Initiative |
| Patrick O'Connor | 2013 | Legal Aid Society, Criminal Appeals Bureau |
| | 2012 | Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual |
| Katherine Park | 2013 | Legal Aid Society, Immigration Law Unit |
| | 2012 | United Nations Human Rights Commission Geneva |
| Natasha Reyes | 2013 | The Public Interest Law Project (PILP) |
| | 2012 | Public Counsel Law Center |
| Sarah Mechlovitz Saadoun | 2013 | International Federation for Human Rights |
| | 2012 | Human Rights Watch, Business and Human Rights Program |
| Chelsea Salem | 2013 | The Family Center |
| | 2012 | Urban Justice Center |
| Xavier Sanchez | 2013 | United Farm Workers |
| | 2012 | United Farm Workers |
| Anne Silver | 2013 | Federal Defenders of New York |
| | 2012 | Safe Horizon, Domestic Violence Law Project |
| Gedalia Stern | 2013 | Queens County District Attorney's Office, Appeals Bureau |
| | 2012 | New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety |
| Angela Sun | 2013 | Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia |
| | 2012 | California Appellate Project |
| Joshua Tarrant-Windt | 2013 | Bredhoff & Kaiser |
| | 2012 | Legal Aid Society, Employment Law Center |
| Anthony Tiberio | 2013 | Animal Defense Fund |
| | 2012 | Project Renewal |
| Raquel Toledo | 2013 | Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Commissioner Julie Brill |
| | 2012 | East Bay Community Law Center |
| John Toth | 2013 | Office of the Attorney General, California; Antitrust Division |
| | 2012 | New York City Campaign Finance Board |

honorees for two public interest summers

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|----------------|------|---|
| Rosie Wang | 2013 | Sanctuary for Families |
| | 2012 | Law Students for Reproductive Justice |
| Brian Witthuhn | 2013 | City of Newark Department of Law |
| | 2012 | Broadway Housing Communities |
| Congsi Wu | 2013 | Kings County District Attorney's Office |
| | 2012 | International Institute for Conflict Prevention & Resolution |
| Allison Yurcik | 2013 | Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund |
| | 2012 | Legal Services for New York City, Bedford Stuyvesant Community Legal Services |

honorees for post-graduate employment in public interest

The following 69 J.D. and 3 LL.M. students will be working at public interest organizations or government agencies immediately after graduation:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Naz Ahmad | Jillian Hernandez | Scott Marsik |
| Angeline Wilson Andersen | James Michael Hubbard | Suchita Mathur |
| Jennifer Aleah Anderson | John Hughes | Rumbidzai Maweni |
| Ifeoma Oluchi Anunkor | Rosa Indenbaum | Allison Marie McCarty |
| Vipasha Bansal | Joseph Itkis | Jan E. Messerschmidt |
| Kiran Cheema | Malaika A. Jabali | Jared Steven Miller |
| Sara Chimene-Weiss | Carl Michael Johnson | Michael Kipp Mueller |
| Julia Christian | Brittany Alicia Jones | Daniel Gary Mule |
| Daniel Chung | Youmi Jun | R. Benjamin Nelson |
| Brian Civale | Elizabeth Anne Kaplan | Kensing Ng |
| Clint Cohen | Sara Kayyali | Toochi Lillian Ngwangwa |
| Matthew Collins | Hannah Kim | Diana M. Nielsen |
| Samuel Comi | Ashley Starr Kinseth | Alexander Gregory Obal |
| Michael Curtis | JoAnn Lynn Kintz | Dayo Mariam Oshilaja |
| Amal Mohamed Deria | Kathleen M. Kline | Katherine Jina Park |
| Matthew Dias | Sarah Krieger | Rayna Delaviev Reid |
| Ian Paul Fisher | Ivy Ann LeTourneau | Natasha Reyes |
| Jonah Garson | Samantha LiTrenta | Sarah Saadoun |
| Sherie Gertler | Xiaolong Liu | Chelsea Anne Salem |
| Ze-Emanuel Hailu | Chandni Luhar | Anne Silver |
| Claire Hammerton | Dinah Manning | Kathryn Rose Skaggs |

honorees for post-graduate employment in public interest

Caroline Stover

Angela Sun

Joshua Tarrant-Windt

Sarah Frances Thompson

Anthony David Tiberio

Rosie Wang

Brian Witthuhn

Allison Marie Yurcik

Wenjuan Zhang

honorees for public interest philanthropy

The following students engaged in leadership efforts to raise funds for public interest legal work by their fellow students and/or grassroots legal organizations.

Dean's Cup

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Tai Aliya | 2014 |
| Daria Chirkov | 2016 |
| Jason Bang | 2014 |
| Debbie Jang | 2016 |
| Srilekha Jayanthi | 2016 |
| Shruthi Ramakrishnan | 2014 |
| Luke Roniger | 2015 |
| Jenny Xie | 2014 |

Public Interest Law Foundation

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|------|
| President | Georgina Yeomans | 2015 |
| Auction Chairs | Carrie Tirrell | 2015 |
| | Lane Feler | 2015 |
| Dinner Chairs | Dee Kuchukulla | 2015 |
| | Mary Dohrmann | 2015 |

spring break caravans

Groups of Columbia Law School students spend their spring break week working on projects organized by student groups and SJI at legal services and public interest organizations across the U.S. and abroad, providing much-needed legal assistance to underserved communities. In 2014, 95 students went on these Caravans:

New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice (BLSA) New Orleans, LA

Sponsored by Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

The New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice (NOWCRJ) is dedicated to organizing workers across race and industry to build the power and participation of workers and communities. Students engaged in legal work touching on areas of employment law, immigration law, and housing law, doing legal research and drafting legal memos, working directly with the community residents that NOWCRJ serves.

California Appellate Project of San Francisco San Francisco, CA

Sponsored by Criminal Justice Action Network (CJAN)

The California Appellate Project in San Francisco (CAP-SF) is a non-profit corporation established by the State Bar of California in 1983 as a legal resource center to implement the constitutional right to counsel for indigent persons facing execution. CAP serves the largest population of condemned individuals in the country and is funded primarily by a contract with the Judicial Council of California. Students worked on a variety of projects.

Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana New Orleans, LA

Sponsored by Criminal Justice Action Network (CJAN)

The Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana's mission is to transform the juvenile justice system into one that builds on the strengths of young people, families and communities to ensure children are given the greatest opportunities to grow and thrive. Student volunteers visited a youth facility, interviewed the youth JJPL serves, attended a legislative session/hearing, analyzed bills introduced in the legislature, researched a variety of topics related to juvenile justice and drafted pleadings.

Public Defender Service of D.C. Washington, DC

Sponsored by Criminal Justice Action Network (CJAN)

The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS) provides and promotes quality legal representation to indigent adults and children facing a loss of liberty in the District of Columbia and thereby protects society's interest in the fair administration of justice. Students worked on a variety of projects including short term parole appeals, research and writing assignments within the context of the appellate practice, work with the general counsel, and generalized trial assignments.

The Bronx Defenders Bronx, NY

Sponsored by Criminal Justice Action Network (CJAN)

The Bronx Defenders are credited with pioneering the concept of the "holistic defense." Clients defended by the Bronx Defenders are assigned to a team including attorneys and social workers to help them resolve not just their case but a host of problems with the ultimate goal of keeping them out of jail. Caravan participants worked on one criminal defense project, one family defense project and one civil practice project.

Miami-Dade Public Defender Service Miami, FL

Sponsored by Criminal Justice Action Network (CJAN)

MDPD strives to have a public defender's office that is a national model, provides quality legal representation, treats clients with dignity and respect, is a guardian of liberty, justice, civil liberties and human rights, recruits and retains talented and diverse staff, and has employees committed to life-long learning, personal and professional growth. Their mission is to effectively and zealously represent court-appointed clients who are at risk of losing their life or liberty. Students worked on a variety of projects.

spring break caravans

Myanmar Justice for All (JFA) – Yangon, Myanmar

Sponsored by the Columbia Society of International Law (CSIL)

Founded in 2011 by a group of well-known lawyers in Myanmar, JFA is an independent civil society organization committed to the advancement of human rights and the rule of law. JFA works in partnership with civil society organizations to promote human rights and improve legal mechanisms for rights protection and enforcement. A member of the Myanmar Legal Aid Network (MLAW), JFA conducts a variety of activities related to advancing access to justice and rights awareness, including pro bono legal aid to those who cannot afford a lawyers and training seminars on constitutional law, citizens' rights, democracy, land rights, and international human rights law. Students contributed to numerous JFA initiatives in the context of Burma's historic democratic transition.

Legal Resources Centre (LRC) Grahamstown, South Africa

Sponsored by Columbia Society of International Law (CSIL) and Education Law & Policy Society (EdLaw)

The Legal Resources Centre (LRC) is South Africa's leading public interest law center. The Grahamstown Office is dedicated to using impact litigation to help children obtain their right to basic education. Students traveled to South Africa to engage in documentation of school conditions in the rural Transkei region and interview teachers and learners. Students also conducted research and drafted legal documents, based on their fieldwork, to help the LRC institute legal action.

Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project, Jordan Amman, Jordan

Sponsored by Columbia Society of International Law (CSIL) and Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (SIRR)

Students traveled to Amman, Jordan to provide direct legal assistance to Iraqi and Syrian refugees with the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP). Students participated in training on how to interview victims of torture and conducted client intake interviews for IRAP with refugees in urgent situations. Students conducted outreach meetings with local NGOs to learn more about the situation facing refugees on the ground in the Middle East, met with representatives from the UN Mission in Amman, and participated in a training hosted by the U.S. government for refugees resettling in the United States.

Appalachian Citizens' Law Center Whitesburg, KY

Sponsored by Environmental Law Society

The Environmental Law Society's caravan traveled to Whitesburg, Kentucky to work with the Appalachian Citizens' Law Center in its mission to provide justice for the people of a region deeply affected by extractive industries. The students assisted the Center with a number of legal projects, such as a standing clinic to educate citizens about the requirements necessary to establish standing in environmental cases. Students also performed legal research and drafted sections of briefs for ongoing cases.

Wisconsin Judicaire Wausau, WI

Sponsored by Midwest Society

Students worked with Judicaire staff attorneys to conduct a series of Will Clinics for American Indians residing throughout Wisconsin. To prepare for the Clinics, students received training on Indian Law, Basic Estate Planning, the American Indian Probate Reform Act, and the procedures and processes for the Clinics. After training, students traveled with staff attorneys to different reservations or tribal communities in Wisconsin to conduct day-long Will Clinics.

Navajo Nation Department of Justice Window Rock, AZ

Sponsored by the Native American Law Students Association (NALSA)

Students traveled to Window Rock, Arizona to work with the Navajo Nation Department of Justice in one of six different units – Tax, Human Service & Government, Economic and Community Development, Natural Resources, Water Rights, and Labor and Employment – each providing legal services to the Navajo Nation community in need.

spring break caravans

Dakota Plains Legal Services, Pine Ridge Office Pine Ridge, South Dakota

Sponsored by the Native American Law Students Association (NALSA)

Dakota Plains Legal Services (DPLS) provides legal services to indigent clients and practices in both tribal and state courts. The organization's clients are mostly Native Americans, and DPLS practices mainly in the following areas of law: family law, consumer law, abuse and neglect, housing and wills. Caravan participants assisted attorneys at DPLS with their clients and cases.

Paso Del Norte Civil Rights Project El Paso, TX

Sponsored by Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (SIRR) and Workers' Rights Student Coalition (WRSC)

Students worked on a variety of legal pleadings and research memos, including helping to draft declarations for VAWA/U-Visa packets, assisting with requests for evidence, and investigating complex immigration issues, including some involving civil rights issues.

New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice (SIRR and WRSC) New Orleans, LA

Sponsored by Sponsored by Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (SIRR) and Workers' Rights Student Coalition (WRSC)

This caravan at NOWCRJ involved providing legal support to grassroots organizing projects that build power for immigrant workers, protect workers' rights to organize, and provide support to directly-affected peoples fighting against the criminalization of immigrants by local and federal law enforcement and for dignified migration and employment. Students were exposed to the current work of the legal department, which includes federal impact litigation and law reform cases, strategic membership defense against unlawful raids, deportation, and detention, administrative advocacy, and campaign research and support.

Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center El Paso, TX

Sponsored by Sponsored by Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (SIRR) and Workers' Rights Student Coalition (WRSC)

Las Americas is a non-profit serving the legal needs of low-income immigrants, including refugees and battered women in El Paso, Texas near the port of entry with the second highest number of land crossings into the United States. Students this year worked with the Crime Victims' Visa Coordinator.

San Jose Record Clearance Project San Jose, CA

Sponsored by Society for Chinese Law

Students were trained in expungement law and helped clients to complete petitions for dismissals of all eligible criminal convictions in court. Law students worked in partnership with Record Clearance Project advanced students in interviewing their clients and completing their cases. Students attended an expungement court hearing and engaged in discussions with former clients, state and federal judges, criminal justice officials and others who highlighted the importance of clearing individuals' criminal records.

Jamaicans for Justice Kingston, Jamaica

Sponsored by Windmeadow Glens/Older and Wiser Law Students (OWLS)

Founded in 1999, Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-violent citizens' rights action organization that advocates for good governance and improvements in state accountability and transparency. JFJ primarily works with victims whose rights have been breached by members of the security forces spanning unlawful search or detention, to excessive use of force and extra-judicial killings. Students researched Jamaica's new human rights charter and how it will/may affect the standard of inquiry for the Coroner's Court (the country's lowest court), and did research and editing contributing to the NGO's report to the UN on Jamaica's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

in-house pro bono projects

Columbia's in-house pro bono projects, some of which are student-run, are ongoing partnerships between Columbia Law School and legal services organizations and/or law firms in the community. In 2014, the in-house projects were:

Student-run Pro Bono Projects

Criminal Justice Action Network

The Reset Foundation: The Reset Foundation aims to create an alternative model of incarceration centered on learning, education, and reentry. It allows sentenced young adults to reset their life trajectories—to envision and achieve futures of meaning, opportunity, and purpose—thus enabling communities to break the cycle of poverty and incarceration and dramatically reduce recidivism. Students have had the opportunity to assist them on research relating to sentencing, education, politics, and potential non-profit partners.

Correctional Association's Women in Prison Project: Created in 1991, the CA's Women in Prison Project (WIPP) works to create a criminal justice system that protects women's rights and addresses women's specific needs, ensures that prison conditions for women are as humane and just as possible, and treats people and their families with fairness, dignity and respect. Students are involved with creating informational materials for prisoners in WIPP's prison correspondence program, as well as researching the parameters surrounding policy advocacy opportunities for incarcerated people.

The Domestic Violence Project

Battered Immigrant Women's Project: Under the supervision of Sanctuary for Families, participants represent abused immigrant women seeking residency status under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petition process, petitions for U nonimmigrant status, or Battered Spouse Waivers. Students are assigned a client and complete the petition or waiver application from beginning to end, and learn skills such as interviewing and drafting affidavits.

Courtroom Advocates Project: Students serve as advocates in Family Court for domestic violence victims. Under the supervision of Sanctuary for Families, students help victims draft and file petitions for Orders of Protection, educate them on their rights and safety precautions, and advocate for them during court appearances.

Uncontested Divorce Workshop: Under the supervision of Sanctuary for Families, law students represent clients in obtaining uncontested divorces. Students work in teams of two and are assigned a client; representation includes meeting with the client, drafting divorce documentation, and going to court with the client.

STEPS to End Family Violence's Family Law and Prison Outreach Project: Under the supervision of STEPS attorneys, students staff community outreach clinics to educate women about orders of protection, child support, and custody issues. Students also have the opportunity to conduct presentations on family court issues to women incarcerated at Rikers Island.

Educational Law and Policy Society

Education Advocacy Project (EAP): Students work with Legal Aid attorneys specializing in education issues relating to children in foster care, often utilizing the Birth to Three and Early Intervention Federal Programs.

New York Charter Schools Incubator: Students intern on a Charter School Board, where they assist with governance work and concerns. Students have the opportunity to see how Charter School Boards work, both internally and in relation to school leadership, and will directly impact the education of school children.

in-house pro bono projects

High School Law Institute

HSLI is a year-long program that serves low-income high school students from throughout New York City. Columbia Law students teach courses in criminal law, constitutional law, mock trial, and moot court. The year culminates with Graduation, which includes a mock trial competition against our sister organization at NYU.

Human Rights Law Review – The Jailhouse Lawyer’s Manual

The JLM is a handbook of legal rights and procedures distributed to thousands of prisoners across the country each year by Columbia’s Human Rights Law Review. Student volunteers write, update, edit, and cite check discrete sections of the JLM and its various state supplements.

Legal Clinic for the Homeless

A team of Columbia students staff a legal clinic at a local homeless shelter. Working with attorneys from the City Bar Justice Center, students are assigned a client and advocate for the resolution of various legal issues. Students commonly work on issues related to public assistance, immigration, employment, and family law.

Mentoring Youth through Legal Education

Legal Outreach: CLS students work with attorneys from major New York firms in coaching New York high school students for constitutional law debates. The year-long constitutional law debate program is a key part of Legal Outreach’s effort to inspire and prepare young people to go to college. Student coaches establish a strong mentoring relationship with individual students through one-on-one tutoring and guidance. They also adjudicate a series of four exciting debates, all conducted at CLS.

Outlaws

NYLAG Pro Bono Project: In the spring, students under the direct supervision of pro bono attorneys from NYLAG and a sponsoring firm spend one evening helping LGBTQ community members complete health care proxies, advance directives, and living wills. These documents are especially important for members of the LGBTQ community because family members who would be making the choices by legal default might not respect their orientation and gender related choices.

Rightslink

Leveraging the vast research resources available to Columbia students, Rightslink provides free legal research services to human rights groups that lack the capacity or political freedom to conduct their own research. Students interested in human rights gain the opportunity to contribute to research projects covering both domestic and international issues ranging from language discrimination to human trafficking.

Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

African Services Committee: Attorneys at the ASC represent West African immigrants in housing court, immigration matters, and other civil legal proceedings. CLS students help ASC attorneys gather and provide information to clients during open immigration nights and diversity lottery workshops, as well as assist with legal research memoranda for particular cases.

Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project: CLS students partner with attorneys at major New York firms in order to help Iraqi families currently living in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, or Jordan. Students work as teams and follow the client’s case through its completion. Students have the opportunity to interview families (telephonically), assist them with the preparation of submissions to and interviews with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, and the Department of Homeland Security.

Kids in Need of Defense: In the United States, children who are undocumented do not have a right to counsel in their proceedings in immigration court. KIND works to provide representation for undocumented children in deportation and other immigration matters. Students participate in client intake sessions and are assigned to work on a case from beginning to end with a small team of two or more attorneys from large law firms and/or the general counsel office of major corporations.

in-house pro bono projects

Suspension Representation Project

The Suspension Representation Project (SRP) has successfully reduced or overturned Superintendents' suspensions of students in virtually every case in which its advocates have been involved. Students review documents provided by the school, interview clients, conduct legal research and appear at suspension hearings where they negotiate with school officials and/or question witnesses.

Tenants Rights Project

Students assist attorneys at the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation and the Goddard-Riverside SRO Law Project in all aspects of low income tenant representation. Types of work include legal research, motion and memorandum drafting, client intake, and court appearances. Cases range from eviction defense, to living condition complaints.

Unemployment Action Center

Students advocate for unemployment insurance claimants throughout NYC who are appealing their denials of unemployment compensation. Students prepare for Department of Labor hearings by interviewing clients and researching applicable law, conducting direct and cross examinations, and presenting closing statements before an administrative law judge.

Youth Justice Association

Resilience Advocacy Project:

Students work with RAP attorneys to provide information in various areas to youth in schools and youth organizations. Students lead "Know Your Rights" and advocacy workshops for youth around issues ranging from dating violence to reproductive rights, to public benefits and education, in order to help teens build social justice focused youth advocacy clinics in their communities.

SJI-directed Pro Bono Partnerships

Bankruptcy Assistance Project

Under the direction of Legal Services for New York, students conduct client intake to assess the appropriateness of cases and will help clients file bankruptcy petitions.

Cadwalader Non-Profit Incubator

Under the direction of attorneys from Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, students assist organizations in attaining 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status by ensuring the proper filing of paperwork.

Davis Polk Asylum Workshop

Under the direction of Davis Polk & Wardwell, teams of Columbia students assist in preparing the factual record and brief the legal issues involved in complex asylum cases from Human Rights First that bring human rights violations from around the world into the US legal arena.

LawHelp/NY

Students will staff LiveHelp, an online, real-time chat service that will direct users toward relevant self-help materials, legal assistance organizations and court information.

Milbank Tweed's Low Income Tax Representation Project

This project offers students the opportunity to represent low-income taxpayers in disputes with the IRS. Under the supervision of Millbank Tweed tax partners and associates, students work directly with clients on a variety of tax issues, including earned income tax credit entitlement, identity theft, innocent spouse relief and offers in compromise.

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