



Leadership in Public Service

Spring 2008

University of Maryland School of Law
Career Development Office

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

Anne Frank

Dear Law School Community:

Thank you for your contributions to community and pro bono services to our communities. We have many highlights to showcase in the Leadership in Public Service Newsletter. Nonetheless, we are interested in sharing your stories.

Please check out the Leadership in Public Service: Community Service & Pro Bono Activities Survey at <http://www.law.umaryland.edu/publicservice/initiatives/leadership/>

We welcome you to take a

In Public Service Program is to celebrate and support University of Maryland School of Law students in public service through community service and pro bono projects. Ultimately, we hope to inspire law students to become more involved in making a real difference in their communities as future leaders in the legal profession.

Again, thank you for taking time out of your busy lives into making a positive difference in our communities.

Take care and congratulations, Ben!

M. Teresa Schmiedeler, Esq.
Director, Pro Bono & Public Service Initiatives

Ben Peoples,
Pro Bono Fellow
Class of 2008

Contact Us:

We are interested in sharing your stories. Please let us know about any member of the legal profession, faculty, staff, or law students involved in either community service or pro bono projects by contacting:

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AALS Awards 2008 Father Robert Drinan Award to Professor Michael Millemann

Commending him for his leadership in "inculcating the pro bono ethic in law students and attorney volunteers," as well as for his deep commitment to public service, the Association of American Law Schools' section on Pro Bono and Public Service Opportunities will present Jacob A. France Professor of Public Interest Law Michael Millemann with its 2008 Father Robert Drinan Award on Jan. 4 at the AALS annual meeting in New York.

The award, which was created in 2001, is given annually to a professional faculty or staff member at a

law school who has forwarded the ethic of pro bono service through personal service, program design or management.

"I deeply appreciate the award, but I accept it on behalf of the many people who were partners in developing the projects, clinics and courses that the award recognizes, and on behalf of the law school, which provides extraordinary support to me and for these initiatives," said Prof. Millemann.

Spanning almost 40 years, Prof. Millemann's work has encompassed clinical legal education, law re-

form efforts across Maryland, and assistance to advocates of law and moderate income people and communities, aimed at increasing the quality of their legal representation. At the law school, he was a leader in establishing the nationally recognized Clinical Law Program, and helped develop the Cardin Requirement. He continues to teach several clinical courses each year.

Professor Millemann
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Schweitzer Fellows

Meyers and Ryan Selected as Schweitzer Fellows

Joseph Meyers ('10) and Sara Ryan ('10) recently were selected as Schweitzer Fellows for the upcoming year. Schweitzer Fellows receive a \$2,000 stipend for 200 hours of community service from the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship—an organization committed to funding graduate student community service work. Meyers and Ryan will work together on continuing the Domestic Violence Hotline Project (DVHP) at the School of the Law. The DVHP is a satellite office of the House of Ruth Do-

mestic Violence Hotline. Approximately 30 University of Maryland graduate students serve on the DVHP. Deepti Kulkarni ('08) founded the DVHP as a Schweitzer Fellow in 2007.

Isserman and Yanacek Selected as Schweitzer Fellows

Noah Isserman ('10) and Meg Yanacek ('10) were selected as Schweitzer Fellows for the upcoming year. Schweitzer Fellows receive a \$2,000 stipend for 200 hours of community service from the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship—an organization committed to funding graduate student community

service work. Isserman and Yanacek will work with the Homeless Persons Representation Project and local private attorneys on outreach to homeless veterans, in particular, focusing on access to quality mental health services for homeless vets.

Millemann Continued

began his legal career as a legal services attorney. He served as a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow in the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau from 1969 to 1971. For the next two years he was chief attorney in Legal Aid East, Baltimore City and supervisor of the law school's Legal Aid Clinic. During this time, Professor Millemann founded the Legal Aid Bureau's Prisoner Assistance Project and worked as a staff attorney for the National Prison Project. He became a full-time member of the law school's faculty in 1974.

From 1979–81, Professor Millemann was chief general counsel and chief of the Civil Division of the Maryland Attorney General's Office, re-

sponsible for supervising the assistant attorneys general who practice civil law. Professor Millemann has been chairman of the Maryland State Bar Association's Judicial Nominations Committee, was the first Secretary to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, and served as a longtime Board Member and chairman of the Correctional Reform Section of the Maryland State Bar Association. He has both published extensively and participated as an attorney in major constitutional litigation.

Congratulations, Professor Millemann!

2008 Peggy Browning Fellows

Congratulations to the 2008 Peggy Browning Fellows from the University of Maryland School of Law!

- Michael Melick will be working with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America in Pittsburgh, PA;
- Aniko Schwarcz will be working with the National Employment Lawyers Association in New York, NY.

Send Your Public Interest News to tschmiedeler@law.umaryland.edu

Professor Blom's Journey to a Public Interest Law Career

Professor Brenda Blom entered college as a pre-law major. However, Professor Blom would not fulfill her plans to become a lawyer until nearly twenty years later. Looking back on it, Professor Blom does not regret the delay, as her experiences during those intervening years shaped her legal career.

After taking a break from college, Professor Blom spent her time in a multitude of odds jobs. For example, Professor Blom was a goat herder, coal miner, bathroom cleaner, bartender, waitress, receptionist, community organizer, and youth employment developer. After having kids, Professor Blom realized that it was time to go back to school, and finished her undergraduate degree in 1989. Following her graduation, Professor Blom entered graduate school. While in graduate school, Professor Blom ironically worked as a research assistant advising undergraduates interested in law school. After a few years of graduate school, Professor Blom realized that she needed a degree that provided more concrete skills. In 1990, Professor Blom entered the University of Baltimore Law School—seeking the same degree that she planned on pursuing when she began college approximately twenty years earlier. Learning from this journey, Professor Blom did not abandon her goal of obtaining a Ph.D., and returned to her Ph.D. program after her second year of law school.

After graduating from law school in 1993 and passing the bar, Professor Blom worked as a staff attorney at the Community Law Center, addressing numerous property issues on behalf of indigent clients. At the same time, Baltimore's empowerment zones began to grow a multitude of community based organizations that needed help with a variety of property related issues. Aware of Professor Blom's work with property

issues, Professor Michael Milleman asked Professor Blom to work as an adjunct faculty member in the School of Law's new clinic designed to help the community organizations within the empowerment zones. The School of Law took on Professor Blom as a full time faculty member two years later in the Economic, Housing and Community Development Clinic. As the head of the clinic, Professor Blom provided legal representation to community based non profit organizations regarding a wide range of complex urban issues.



This career move fit Blom well. "At my core, I am a teacher. But, I love practicing law. Practicing community law within a clinic is a perfect fit for me because I am able to teach students and the clients that I serve." Little did Professor Blom know, that her teaching eventually would help her finish her Ph.D. program.

While working in the Economic, Housing and Community Development Clinic, Professor Blom was asked by the residents of Wagner Point, the southern most area of Baltimore city, to take on their case. Wagner Point was an industrial peninsula containing fifty chemical plants. The residents asked Professor Blom to help them

force the chemical companies to pay for them to relocate. After all, the families had lived on Wagner Point for years, ingesting the toxic chemicals created by the chemical companies. Along with the Environmental Law Clinic, Professor Blom took on the case. Without ever filing suit, the clinic negotiated with the companies mediated the best buyout in Baltimore history. "The story of Wagner Point is a valuable testament about the power of just having a lawyer represent you."

When Professor Blom met with the residents to tell them about the favorable settlement, she also asked the residents if she could use their story as the subject of her Ph.D. dissertation. The residents agreed, and a short time later, Professor Blom finished the Ph.D. program that she started nearly ten years earlier.

Professor Blom continued to work in the Economic, Housing and Community Development Clinic until 2003, when she decided to do something about a trend that she noticed. Specifically, Professor Blom noticed ex-offenders returning to the same neighborhoods over and over again with the neighborhoods never making any progress. At that point, Professor Blom realized that some type of community justice had to take place before any community organizations ever could succeed. To address this trend, Professor Blom helped found the Community Justice Clinic (CJC). Since its founding, the CJC has worked with community based organizations, schools, courts, prosecutors, and public defenders to explore and evaluate the efforts to reduce violence and reclaim communities currently in crisis. Today, Professor Blom serves as the Director of the Clinical Program at the School of Law, working to ensure that students are meaningfully engaged in the delivery of legal services to those who lack access to justice.

Class of 2008 Establishes an Endowment to Fund Future Public Interest Projects

The class of 2008 created an endowment as a class gift to the University of Maryland School of Law. The endowment will provide funds for student community service and pro bono projects annually, both locally and out-of-state. The endowment is a testament to the class of 2008's strong commitment to community service, as reflected by their creation of the Maryland Katrina and Indigent Defense Project, their active participation in the Maryland Public Interest Law Project, and their work with local organizations like the House of Ruth, Paul's Place, Habitat for Humanity, and Our Daily Bread.

So far, members of the class of 2008 have combined to give and pledge approximately \$33,000 to the School of Law. John Isbister '77, a partner at Tydings & Rosenberg in Baltimore and a member of the law school's Board of Visitors, agreed to match the students' contributions. Thus, the size of the endowment now stands at well over \$60,000.

"By reviving the tradition of making a class gift, we will encourage future classes to follow our example and make gifts of their own," said Gift Committee co-chair Justin Browne '08. "And the endowment we create will provide valuable resources for de-

serving students."

"Our current students have truly distinguished themselves as leaders in service to the community, and now to the law school as well," said Dean Karen Rothenberg. "They have established a legacy that will benefit generations of Maryland Law students to come." Indeed, the Class of 2008 has created a legacy in the School's public interest community.



Maryland Legal Services Corporation Releases a Video in Celebration of Its 25th Anniversary

The Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) reached a milestone in 2007 and celebrated twenty-five years of expanding access to justice for all in Maryland. The 25th anniversary activities included a symposium at the School of Law, a gala dinner and awards reception at the Tremont Grand, and the creation of a video commemorating MLSC's history and vision for the future as told by many people associated with MLSC through the years. The video was produced by GreiBo Media, 2007 and is approximately 10 minutes in length. View the video at <http://www.mlsc.org/awards.video25.htm>

A Public Service Pathway

Kay Bhagat always knew that she wanted a public interest career. However, Bhagat was not always sure that she wanted to be a lawyer. Before entering law school, Bhagat considered other graduate programs in social work and public policy. Eventually, Bhagat chose to enter law school at the University of Maryland because, in her words, “No other profession that I considered offered as much potential to make change as the legal profession.”

Bhagat kept her passion for public interest throughout law school. For Bhagat, it was easy to keep her passion because she surrounded herself with like-minded individuals by participating in the Maryland Public Interest Law Project (MPILP) and clinic.

Bhagat’s path to her career as a public interest attorney began after her first year of law school. After her first year of law school, Bhagat worked for a full service legal services firm in New York City. Even though the organization offered a full range of services, Bhagat’s work concentrated on servicing individuals with mental disabilities. Specifically, Bhagat visited public facilities and interviewed clients regarding any issues of abuse and neglect. Bhagat also conducted research that she found particularly interesting. Bhagat explained, “I enjoy researching public interest issues because it requires creativity in order to develop new causes of action to find justice for our clients.”

During Bhagat’s second year of law school she worked in the immigration clinic under the direction of Professor Sweeney. Bhagat found the client contact satisfying, something that she missed dearly as a third year law student.

Because Bhagat missed client contact, she started looking for an internship to fill that void. After researching

a number of non-profits, Bhagat applied to the Maryland Disability Law Clinic (MDLC) for an internship because she had such a good experience working in public interest mental health law during the summer after her first year. The MDLC is a non-profit legal services organization that the State of Maryland mandated to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. After working at the MDLC for two months, Bhagat’s supervisor moved on to another career opportunity. The MDLC began hiring for a re-



placement, and Bhagat applied. At the end of their internship, the MDLC offered Bhagat a staff attorney position.

As a staff attorney at the MDLC, Bhagat monitors private homes that house individuals with mental disabilities, provides rights training to people with mental disabilities, and represents individual clients in rights violations. Bhagat also engages in legislative advocacy for individuals with mental disabilities. Bhagat explained, “usually our monitoring of private homes and representation of individual clients reveals systemic problems that we address during the legislative session.”

Bhagat loves her work at the MDLC, but admits that it is not easy. “Public interest work is not easy to begin with because the indigent population does not have a voice,” she commented,

“However, mental health public interest law is even more difficult because individuals with mental health do not even realize that they don’t have a voice.”

Bhagat recognizes that financial concerns deter many law graduates from pursuing a public interest career. However, Bhagat believes that it is a lifestyle choice that is worth making. “While a public interest job might be just as stressful as a private job. You do not have the worries of billable hours.” In addition, loan repayment programs are available through the School of Law and the state. She remarked, “It is not impossible. You just have to make some sacrifices. As long as you have a reasonable lifestyle, you will be fine.”

Bhagat’s short and long term goals are the same: serve her clients well and make an impact on the mental health community in Maryland. While Bhagat still is running off the high of starting an exciting new career, she realizes that burn out is possibility over the long run. “Burn-out is a big problem in public interest law—after all, public interest attorneys spend long hours doing stressful work for little pay.”

While Bhagat fell into her job, she admits that getting a job with a public interest organization is not as easy for everyone else. Instead of interviewing two years in advance, like some private firms, most public interest organizations do not hire until immediately before an opening appears. After all, public interest organizations never know whether they will have adequate funding. Bhagat remarked, “You have to keep at it, the jobs are not going to come to you. It is worth trying, and you eventually will find one and then it is just up to you to make the best of it!”

UMD Law Students Receive Diversity Recognition Award for Efforts to Rebuild Gulf Coast Legal System

Since Hurricane Katrina's devastation of New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, University of Maryland School of Law students have traveled to the region repeatedly, working to rebuild homes and provide volunteer legal services.

On February 5, the students of the Maryland Katrina and Indigent Defense Project and Professor Doug Colbert were recognized for this efforts with UMB's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Diversity Recognition Award for achievements by a student group. The recipients serve as a model for the entire campus of the personal and professional commitment to the ideals epitomized by the life and work of Dr. King.

The January 2008 trip was the fifth time students from the law school had traveled to the region. Working in Biloxi, Miss., and New Orleans, La., 77 Maryland Law students offered essential relief services that ran the gamut from courtroom representation and to home restoration. The students were accompanied by Professor Doug Colbert and Maryland Law alumni James K. Archibald, of Venable, and Matthew G. Hjortsberg, of Bowie & Jensen.

Students in Biloxi worked for the Mississippi Center for Justice and the Catholic Diocese. In one instance, they helped a disabled man living in a FEMA trailer that, in addition to having mold and formaldehyde problems, was not handicap accessible. The students helped him apply for a new trailer that would conform to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and they put his form at the top of the pile. "You have given me hope that things will get better," the man said.

Other students in Biloxi worked directly with homeowners to help rebuild their homes. The Catholic Diocese pro-



John Archibald ('10) works at the Mississippi Center for Justice.

vided furnishings, and the students provided elbow grease and muscle, cleaning up one woman's storm-ravaged home and bringing in donated furniture. The students said that receiving the woman's gratitude was the most rewarding part of the undertaking. Standing in front of her newly restored house, the woman said, "I will



Law Students rebuilding homes on the Gulf Coast.

never forget the students from Maryland Law."

In New Orleans, students helped at Public Defender offices in Baton Rouge and Orleans Parish, working to clear an overwhelming backlog of pending cases. One public defender was struggling with more than 850 unsettled matters. The students went to the local prison and interviewed dozens of inmates many of whom had been waiting months to speak with a lawyer for the first time. Most of the inmates had been incarcerated after failing to make bail for minor crimes. With the judge's permission, the students then argued for bail reductions in court and succeeding in having many of the clients released pending trial.

Nationally, more than 3,200 law students have volunteered to help with the recovery from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Maryland Law has been at the forefront of this effort, sending more than 150 students since the storm occurred.

"There is a legacy now," said Dean Karen H. Rothenberg, "and I can't begin to express how proud we are."

The students said their experiences had taught them about humanity and made them appreciate the value of serving people in need. Many hope to sustain that spirit of service back in Maryland. "I hope that going forward, we can continue to make a difference not just in the Gulf Coast, but in Baltimore," said Alicia H. Welch, the coordinator of the project.

The students also expressed their gratitude to Professor Colbert, calling him "a teacher, and a leader, and a friend."

UMD Student Interns at WHO

Atresha Karra ('08) recently completed an internship at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland. Karra worked as an intern with the Health and Human Rights team, which is a division of the Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments cluster at WHO. Karra's principal project was supporting the activities of the health and human rights team by contributing to databases of both international case law and scholarly articles on the right to health services.

During Karra's internship, she also monitored the Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) at the Palais de Nations. Karra attended a session concerning minorities, migrants, and indigenous peoples. Karra found the interaction of country representatives, HRC officials, and UN Special Rapporteurs fascinating. Karra recalls that "[a]ll of the statements were prepared and submitted beforehand and were being translated into at least six languages simultaneously."

Karra also attended a small parallel meeting on the topic of the human rights of migrant workers. The president of the HRC and many other specialists were in attendance. Karra noticed that this smaller panel meeting was more informal and was a better forum for candid discussions. The President of the HRC was able to express his criticism of those countries that have not ratified the International Convention on Migrant Workers.

While Karra obtained a valuable work experience at the WHO, she also developed new friendships. Karra's friendly demeanor certainly played a role in her appointment as the intern point person halfway through her tenure at the WHO. As the intern point person, Karra was responsible for relaying information to the intern community about job fairs and opportunities as well as for organizing weekly social events such as lunches and happy hours. In doing so, Karra also collaborated with two of the other interns to implement an intern presentation series, which is still in place. Each session provides a forum for two interns to give a ten to fifteen minute

presentation on the work they do in the course of their internships. Karra says, "We thought that the intern presentation series was a good way for interns to reflect upon their work and to have the opportunity to present to their peers."

Karra values her time at the WHO. "The opportunity to live abroad" says Karra, "for an extended period of time was exciting, frightening, enlivening, and fascinating all at once and I have broadened my job search in the hope of securing an international job after graduation"

In fact, Karra says that she "welcomes the thought of moving to a new country, learning a new language, engaging with people from different ethnic and national backgrounds, and adopting the customs of my host country."

UMB Forms Outreach Council to Connect Professional Schools with the Community

At the request of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) President David Ramsey, the UMB Outreach Council was formed in January 2008 to channel educational, health and career experiences and opportunities to children in local community schools. It is composed of approximately 35 faculty, staff, students and community school representatives who meet several times a se-

mester to exchange ideas and create action plans on ways to achieve their goals.

The Council is currently partnered with several community schools in West Baltimore—Vivian T. Thomas High School, Diggs-Johnson Middle School, and George Washington Elementary—and plans to eventually expand its partnership to work with other local community schools.

Thus far, it has helped the schools in a

variety of ways, including recruitment of student, faculty and staff volunteers for school career and family events, tutoring programs, recruitment of staff to help raise awareness among parents about gangs, creation of a summer career mentoring program for those interested in science, and coordination of free dental services. Nina Wu is the law school liaison for this program.



Of Service: Bargains of a non-Faustian sort

Md. Public Interest Law Project helps UM Law students counter myth they must give up their career dreams

JOE SURKIEWICZ

Special to The Daily Record

March 24, 2008

The annual goods and services auction by the Maryland Public Interest Law Project later this week has a lofty goal: to raise enough money to provide a grant to any University of Maryland School of Law student who wants to work 10 weeks this summer at a public interest law firm.

This year, meeting that goal may take a little extra effort.

"We've always tried to give a grant to anyone who wants one," said Claire Pierson, a second-year UM Law student and co-chair of MPILP's publicity effort. "But this year we want to increase the grant from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for the fellowship."

On top of that, applications for the grants are up over last year.

"So it will be a challenge to get the grants for everyone who is eligible and committed to public interest law," said Lydia Nussbaum, MPILP's other publicity co-chair (also in her second year at UM Law).

One reason for the surge in interest is that the new class of incoming students already has a background in community involvement, Pierson explained.

"Many have volunteered for Habitat for Humanity, Project Clean Streams, the House of Ruth, Project HEAL, and tutored at schools on Baltimore's West Side," she said. "So we expect more interest and more questions on how to apply for a grant. We're hoping to use that interest and excitement to energize the school's community for this event."

Now in its 20th year, MPILP gave out 27 grants last summer — an increase over the previous year. The money allowed law students to work at organizations such as Maryland Legal Aid, the Public Justice Center, public defenders' offices in Baltimore, Washington and New Orleans, and the ACLU of Maryland.

Others went even farther afield.

"Some went overseas to Geneva to work at the World Health Organization on health policy issues related to tobacco," Nussbaum noted.

Another turned her MPILP experience into a pro bono project for other law students, added M. Teresa Schmiedeler, director of UM Law's pro bono and public service initiatives.

"The student set up training with Project HEAL attorneys, who work with children at the Kennedy Krieger Institute and the Johns Hopkins Children Center with educational needs and medical disabilities," Schmiedeler said. "They help the children obtain appropriate educational programming in public schools and to gain access to adequate medical benefits, helping attorneys on a weekly basis on special education cases and access-to-healthcare issues."

Promoting MPILP and this year's auction comes easily to Pierson and Nussbaum.

"I worked at the ACLU as a paralegal between college and law school and fell in love with public interest law," Pierson said. "I think public interest lawyers do wonderful things and it's what drove me to law school. But lots of students don't think about public interest careers, so it's important to educate them that it's another option."

Nussbaum came to law school after a career as a high school history teacher who focused on human rights and conflict resolution.

"I decided to become a practitioner and came to law school to get a skill set," she said. "I'm interested in conflict resolution at the grassroots level — 'local justice' systems that help communities as an alternative to formal state systems.

"The stereotype for law school graduates is that they have to sell their souls, be Faust in order to pay off their school loan debts," Nussbaum added. "MPILP is trying to counter that myth. You don't have to sell out or give up your dreams."

The auction is Saturday, March 29, at the law school, located at 500 W. Baltimore Street in downtown Baltimore. The silent auction kicks off at 6 p.m. and is followed by a live auction.

Goodies up for grabs include stays at vacation houses (including a 500-year-old chateau in France and an oceanfront condo in Bethany Beach), timeshares in Mexico, a Quebec ski getaway, a petting zoo for kids, dinner at local restaurants, tickets to sporting events, music lessons, a sunset yacht cruise on the Severn River, and an invitation to a barbecue at the home of law professor Michael Millemann.

The evening will also feature a DJ spinning blues, jazz and R&B tunes, as well as a tribute to professor Douglas Colbert, who will be honored for his work with the law school's Katrina Project. Two other law students, whose names won't be announced until the reception, will be honored for their dedication to pro bono and public interest law work.

Tickets are \$25 in advance (go to www.law.umaryland.edu/studentorg/mpilp/index.asp) and \$35 at the door, and include hors d'oeuvres, dessert, drinks and a bidder number.

(Joe Surkiewicz is the director of communications at Maryland Legal Aid. His e-mail is jsurkiewicz@mdlal.org.)

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Frazee Interns at Project Heal

Last semester, Erin Frazee ('09) worked as an intern at Project Heal, a joint medical and legal office physically located in a clinic office at Johns Hopkins University. Project Heal obtains its clients almost wholly through referrals from the resident doctors in the medical portion of the clinic. Most of the clients originate from east Baltimore.

Erin Frazee was introduced to Project Heal through the Leadership in Public Service Program. Sarah Novak ('09) initiated the partnership with Project Heal and School of Law after she expressed an interest in public interest work, but did not know what to do. Frazee was a perfect fit in Project Heal's diverse practice. Specifically, Project Heal handles cases involving family law, landlord/tenant, special education, and social security disability. Project Heal also was a perfect fit for Frazee, a Myerowitz Finalist and National Trial Team member, because Project Heal's attorneys constantly are involved in oral advocacy. Frazee says,

Mendez Awarded Equal Justice Works Fellowship at CASA

Michelle Mendez ('08) was awarded an Equal Justice Works (EJW) fellowship for 2008-10 to facilitate legal representation for low-income non-citizen

"One of the best things about working at Project Heal is that I get to observe great oral advocacy from my supervisors on a daily basis in court appearances and various other presentations."

As for Frazee, she spends most of her time at Project Heal drafting complaints, reviewing medical records, and helping her supervisor prepare for presentations and court appearances.

One of Frazee's most meaningful experiences occurred when she drafted a complaint in an appeal to the Federal District Court of Maryland from the Social Security Administration concerning a denial of disability benefits. Frazee's complaint resulted in the District Court overturning the Social Security Administration's initial denial of benefits. Frazee not only found this practical experience professionally rewarding, but she also found it per-

Maryland residents and immigrant detainees by coordinating pro bono and reduced fee legal services, and linking the non-citizens to such providers. EJW is a non-profit organization that provides two year fellowships to recent law school graduates to complete public interest projects.

Mendez will complete her project at the CASA of Maryland. CASA of Maryland is a community organization that fights for equal treatment and full access to resources and opportunities for



low-income Latinos.

Helping immigrants is an issue that falls close to Mendez's heart, as she is a Colombian immigrant. However, Mendez's status as an immigrant is not her only motivation. Rather, Mendez is motivated by her "life-long intolerance of injustice." Michelle certainly will fulfill this passion in her work as an Equal EJW fellow.

MPILP Annual Auction Is Again Successful

The Maryland Public Interest Law Project (MPILP) hosted its Annual Goods and Services Auction on March 29, 2008 in Westminster Hall. This year's auction included a silent auction with over 150 items and a live auction with over 100 items. Guests enjoyed light refreshments and drinks.

MPILP is a 501(c)(3), student run organization, dedicated to increasing awareness of, possibilities for, and participation in public interest legal work. To further these goals, MPILP raises funds to sponsor students who wish to practice public interest law full-time during the summer to work at public interest agencies that provide direct legal services to individuals and communities that could not normally afford legal services. Some past summer grant recipients worked at Mary-

land Disability Law Center, Potomac Conservancy, Legal Aid, the House of Ruth, Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County, the Public Defender, and the Health Education Resource Organization. These grant recipients aided low-income persons in rent court, helped battered spouses secure legal protection from their abusers and secure social services, and assisted low-income, HIV infected persons apply for disability and health benefits. The Auction is MPILP's largest fundraising effort. One hundred percent of MPILP's Auction proceeds are used to fund MPILP's summer grants program. The funds generated by this year's auction funded over 25 summer grants.

Not only did the auction raise money for summer grants, but it also honored Professor Douglas L. Colbert

and two law students Michelle Mendez and Sarah Novak. In addition to leading student members of the Katrina Project in providing legal services to the indigent from the Gulf Coast, Professor Colbert has supported MPILP constantly throughout his tenure at the School of Law. Michelle Mendez, a 2008 graduate of the School of Law, has been an active member of MPILP and the Latino Law Student Association during her law school education, and will begin her legal career as an Equal Justice Works fellow at CASA of Maryland in the fall of 2008. Sarah Novak, MPILP student leader, was instrumental in recruiting law students to participate in pro bono work at Project Heal.

HIGHLIGHTS: Spring 2008 Community Service Projects

We are interested in sharing the many stories of students, student organizations, faculty, and staff members involved in good works. Many members of our law school community volunteer their time in community service and pro bono projects. Below we have highlighted some of the spring 2008 community service projects at the University of Maryland School of Law:

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF LAW 2008 DAY OF SERVICE: A group including law students, staff, and faculty members from the School of Law volunteered on April 5, 2008 at Habitat for Humanity, Project Clean Stream, Youth Dreamers, and the Ronald McDonald House, as part of the School of Law's first annual Day of Service. **OUR DAILY BREAD:** A group of law students volunteered at Our Daily Bread, a local soup kitchen, on April 12, 2008.

PAUL'S PLACE: Fifteen tutors completed the Law School's tutoring program at Paul's Place this year. The Law School students tutored elementary and middle school aged kids once a week in writing, reading, and math.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE: Approximately 50 Law School students currently staff the House of Ruth's Domestic Violence Hotline's satellite office at the School of Law.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE: Eight law students from the Student Health Law Organization (SHLO) hosted a game night for the residents of the Ronald McDonald House on April 14, 2008.

Highlights: Spring 2008 Pro Bono and Public Interest Speaker Series

Each semester, the Law School hosts a series of practitioners, judges, and academics who address students about the importance of pro bono and public interest work. Below we have highlighted some of the spring 2008 speaker series events at the University of Maryland School of Law:

- Congressman John P. Sarbanes hosted a luncheon on March 10, 2008 to discuss federal student loan repayment assistance for public service lawyers.
- Liza Zamd, from CASA of Maryland, delivered a lecture entitled "Immigrants in the U.S.: Myths and Realities" on February 13, 2008. The program was co-sponsored by the Leadership in Public Service Program and the Latino Law Student Association. Thank you, Michelle Mendez!
- Juliet Choi, J.D., an Officer from the Diversity Partnerships of the American Red Cross discussed public service opportunities with law students on April 2, 2008.
- Heather Jarvis, Equal Justice Works' expert on law school debt, discussed the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 on March 13, 2008. The new legislation provides debt relief for public service attorneys.



Pro Bono Resource
Center of Maryland

An MSBA / Legal Services Partnership

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland is a partnership of the Maryland State Bar Association and the Maryland Legal Services Corporation.

Thank you to Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc. (PBRC) for partnering with us in our efforts to find ways to expand pro bono opportunities for our law students. The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc. (PBRC) is the statewide clearinghouse and coordinator of pro bono legal services. The Center's mission is to promote equal access to justice by coordinating and supporting volunteer civil legal services, providing resources and support for legal advocates for the poor, and promoting cooperation within the legal community. Check out PBRC's website at www.probonomd.org.

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