

***Achieving Higher Ground:
Increasing Client Services through Student Involvement***

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Brief Description:

Equal Justice Works (EJW) AmeriCorps Attorneys will share innovative strategies and techniques to increase law student involvement in pro bono to expand services and reach diverse client populations. Panelists will examine model partnerships between law schools and legal services organizations that vary in geographic location, proximity of law students and availability of resources. This workshop will highlight the benefits of collaborations between pro bono coordinators, staff attorneys, law students and EJW AmeriCorps Attorneys and will identify strategies for tackling some of the challenges of working with law students.

Topical Outline:

- I. Introduction/Overview of Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Attorney Program**
 - a. Mission of Pro Bono Legal Corps
 - b. General overview of how attorneys work with organizations and law schools

- II. Preconceived notions of law students and pro bono**
 - a. Create brief list
 - b. Questions attendees would like answered by the end of the session

- III. Model 1: Urban Setting The Pro Bono Project through the Public Interest Clearinghouse in San Francisco, CA**
 - a. Overview of the Pro Bono Project
 - Part of the Public Interest Law Program (program of PIC)
 - Serves three schools in Northern California: University of California, Hastings College of the Law; University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law; and New College of the Law

 - b. How PIC works with law schools
 - Presentations
 - Office hours
 - Website listing pro bono projects
 - One-on-one counseling

- Trainings and clinics
 - Alternative Spring Break
 - Coordination with Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC)
- c. Involving law students – challenges and successes
- Challenge of identifying what pro bono is and how to create programs within Bay Area
 - Semester schedule
 - “me-ism”
- d. Steps to implement or get involved with this kind of program

IV. Model 2: Three Rivers Legal Services, Gainesville, FL

- a. PBLC programs in general at TRLS
- Pro se clinics
 - Advice only programs
 - Research
 - Hearings/full service programs
 - General Intake
 - Public Interest Outreach/Speaking in community
- b. Challenges with involving students
- Turnover
 - Possibility to generate huge numbers of cases
- c. Successes with involving students
- Create lasting relationships with law schools (externships, internships, etc.)
 - Speaking opportunities at law schools
 - Get students committed to public interest law
 - Watch students become advocates
 - Fulfill needs in the community
 - Good way to determine needs in the community

V. Model 3: Volunteer Lawyers Network, Minneapolis, MN – Teaming Up Law Students and Pro Bono Attorneys

- a. PBLC Program at Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN)
- Overview of VLN
 - Partnership with Minnesota Justice Foundation
 - Law Student Public Service and Law Schools in Minnesota
- b. How law students increase the quantity and quality of VLN services
- Clinic management
 - Collecting demographic information
 - Initial interviews
 - Drafting pleadings and letters
 - Helping clients follow through on advice

- Staffing intake lines
 - Assisted pro se workshops
 - Legal research
- c. What to expect when working with students
- Benefits
 1. Leveraging limited resources
 2. Increase benefits offered to volunteer attorneys
 3. Future volunteers
 - Overcoming Challenges
 1. Student turnover
 2. Training new volunteers
 3. Managing schedules
 4. Convincing private attorneys to work with students outside of clinics
- d. Using Law Students to Expand Services in Rural Areas

VI. Model 4: Law Students in Action Project- Legal Assistance of Western New York

- a. Overview of LSAP & its projects
- b. The problem of geography
- When the law students aren't so close
 1. Making connections at area law schools
 - o Importance of multiple points of contact at law schools
 - o Use of staff's alumni connections
 - o Expanding your reach / use of career fairs
 - o Former students make the best recruiters
 2. Remote projects
 - o Matching community need with law student interest
 - o LSAP's remote projects
 - o Spanish Translation & Interpretation Team (STIAT)
 - o Volunteer Research Assistance Team (VRAT)
 - o Pro Bono Assistance Project (PBAP)
 - Use of students in rural settings
 1. Convincing students to think outside of NYC
 2. Introducing students to the unique problems of rural areas – (Public forgets that rural individuals have problems too, and that they're often different than those faced by individuals in urban areas)
 3. Convincing attorneys to give “outsiders” a chance
 4. Offering unique experiences
 - o Summer Associate Program
 - o Practice Orders
 - o Clinics in cutting edge areas of the law

VII. Addressing List

- a. Discussion with audience

VIII. Wrap-Up/Questions/Follow-Up

- a. Discussion with audience

Bibliography & Website Links:

1. Volunteer Lawyers Network – www.volunteerlawyersnetwork.org
2. Minnesota Justice Foundation – www.mnjustice.org
3. Equal Justice Works – <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/>
4. E-Guide to Public Service at America’s Law Schools – <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/139722293>
5. Three Rivers Legal Services- www.trls.org
6. Legal Assistance of Western New York – www.lawny.org
7. Probono.net – www.probono.net/ny
8. Public Interest Clearinghouse www.pic.org
9. Probono.net www.probono.net/ca
10. Legal Aid Association of California www.calegaladvocates.org
11. American Association of Law Schools Pro Bono Website <http://www.aals.org/probono/report.html>