



# AALS Pro Bono & Public Service Section

[www.aals.org/probono](http://www.aals.org/probono)

SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

## Pro Bono: A forum for many hats, and many opportunities

**By: Pamela Robinson, University of South Carolina, New Section Chair**



### ***In this Edition:***

***Message from the Section Chair***

*p. 1*

***Pro Bono News***

*p. 2-4*

***Reading, Writing, & Responsibility,***

*p. 4*

***2008 Executive Committee Listing,***

*p. 5*

A few weeks ago I was gift wrapping a copy of the children's book "Caps for Sale" for a young friend. This had been a favorite of mine in my life as a children's librarian. I loved the repetition of the phrases and the simplicity of the story. Ironically this particular book is as relevant to my career today as it was those many years ago! I think "Caps for Sale" is analogous to my day to day life as a manager of a law school pro bono program.

If you are not familiar with the story it involves a peddler walking along with his wares- caps of many colors- stacked on his head. He stops to take a nap under a tree where a troop of monkeys steal all his caps except one. The remainder of the story explores the many ways the peddler tries to get his caps back. He stomps his feet and yells at the monkeys. They stomp their feet and yell at the peddler. He shakes his fist; the monkeys shake their fists, but no caps come sailing down. You get the picture. Finally in a moment of frustration the peddler rips his cap off his head and throws it to the ground. And of course the monkeys do the same!

As the leaders of pro bono programs in law schools across this county we are fully aware of the many caps we wear. Even if your sole job is to manage a pro bono program on a daily basis there are any number of tasks that require your skills and talents. And these skills and talents have as much diversity as all the caps possible. We are interviewers, counselors, educators and administrators. Some of us raise funds, serve as public relations directors, teach classes, write; complete a myriad of surveys, design, implement and supervise projects, distribute scholarships and manage clerkships and a myriad of yet to be named tasks! Some days we wear so many hats it is hard to know what our job is! We are the stars of the

## **COMING SOON**

### **AALS Pro Bono & Public Service Section Program**

### **Opportunities for Collaboration & Interdisciplinary Learning: Medical-Legal Partnerships**

**Thursday,  
January 8th  
4:00–5:45 p.m.**

#### **MODERATOR:**

**Elizabeth Tobin Tyler,**  
Director of Public Service & Community Partnerships,  
Roger Williams University  
School of Law

#### **PANELISTS:**

**Sylvia B. Caley, JD**

Assistant Clinical  
Professor &

Director, Health Law  
Partnership,

Georgia State University  
College of Law

**Melissa Rodgers, JD**

Directing Attorney,

Legal Aid Society of San  
Mateo County; Co-Founder,  
Peninsula Family Advocacy  
Program; & Lecturer in  
Law, Stanford Law School

**Dana Weintraub, MD**

Clinical Instructor, Division  
of General Pediatrics,  
Lucile Packard Children's  
Hospital at Stanford &  
Lecturer in Law, Stanford  
Law School

**Deborah Weimer, JD**

Professor, Health Care  
Delivery and Child Welfare  
Legal Issues Clinic,  
University of Maryland  
School of Law

multitasking world and as such much is asked of us.

When AALS President John Garvey announced that "Institutional Pluralism" was to be the theme for the 2009 Annual Meeting I took a few moments to ponder what he was saying and how the Section on Pro Bono and Public Service Opportunities reflected his vision. We do represent diverse schools and diverse programs whether voluntary, mandatory, state, private, religiously affiliated and those governed by a particular point of view.

I have the personal and professional pleasure of working with an amazing group of people- the elected officers and appointed chairs of this section. Many of them I have worked with on projects over the years and some are new to me but come with tremendous experience, wisdom, creativity and passion for pro bono. I speak for all of us when I ask that you talk to us- tell us what you want from the Section, where are we going with our subject matter; how are we doing, what are the challenges we face and what are the solutions. We invite you to use the Section listserv to pose questions, make suggestions and seek advice. John Garvey noted in his 2009 theme announcement that "a community of scholars working on the same problem....may accomplish things a group of disconnected individuals could not." We know that as directors of pro bono and public service programs we are problem solvers; we do this on a daily basis. Your Section team is ready, willing and more than able to help you with your problems. We will put on our thinking caps and come up with a solution.

Just like the peddler in my book, I will stack all my caps on my head and set out for another day.

## **Pro Bono News**

### **Student Award Puts a Premium on Service**

**By: K Royal**

**Director of Pro Bono Programs and Student Life  
Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at ASU**

Mary Schroeder, who is stepping down after seven years as chief judge for the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, was honored March 27 as the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University awarded a \$10,000 prize in her honor to a law student committed to public service.

The award, organized and funded in large part by Schroeder's current and former law clerks, was given to Cheryl Kane, a third-year law student who will graduate in May. Dean Trish White says "By making this the biggest award the College of Law gives, we are sending an important signal to students, that public service is deeply important. Mary's legacy as the public service 'queen' will last a very long time." White said that after deciding to create the Schroeder Prize, the College contacted Michael Traynor, senior counsel at

## **CALL FOR ARTICLES**

Does your law school have a public service project you would like to showcase? The next Section Newsletter will be published in the fall. Please forward any suggestions or contributions to Arlene Rivera Finkelstein, University of Pennsylvania Law School, [arfinkelstein@law.upenn.edu](mailto:arfinkelstein@law.upenn.edu).

All submissions must be received by **September 12, 2008.**

Cooley Godward Kronish in San Francisco and president of the American Law Institute, to put the plan in motion.

The award was presented at Hohokam Stadium, where Schroeder, a 1965 graduate of the University of Chicago Law School and fanatic Chicago Cubs supporter, watched the Cubs battle to a 10-10 tie with the Milwaukee Brewers. Before the game, Schroeder laughed as the scoreboard said: "Congratulations Judge Mary Schroeder. Top of the 9th (Circuit Court of Appeals) for seven years."

Schroeder, who had been a trial attorney with the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and served on the Arizona Court of Appeals, joined the 9th Circuit in 1979, appointed by President Jimmy Carter. She was the youngest woman appellate judge in America at the time. She became the first woman chief judge in 2000, when she took leadership of the 9th Circuit, the largest judicial circuit, which encompasses Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and the islands of Guam and the Northern Marianas.

The court serves about 20 percent of the nation's population and wrestles with some of the most controversial issues, like immigration, legalization of marijuana and religion in schools.

Before law school, Kane taught at-risk second- to eighth-graders at a Detroit public school for one year through AmeriCorps and taught English as a foreign language to 60 high-school students for one year in a rural village in Guinea, West Africa, through the Peace Corps.

"While I was teaching in Detroit, I lived in an inner-city neighborhood, and we were organizing the residents to turn some of the blighted areas into parks," Kane said. "We needed a lawyer to deal with the permits and things, and I thought, 'I want to be that lawyer some day.' "

While at law school, Kane did an externship at the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona; conducted research in housing law for the Community Legal Services program; was a judicial extern for Judge Michael Daly Hawkins on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals; represented minors in repatriation hearings through the College's Immigration Law & Policy Clinic; worked on wrongful convictions through the Arizona Justice Project; was a law clerk for the Arizona Corporation Commission; and worked on consumer fraud complaints in the Arizona Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. She will graduate Pro Bono Highest Distinction, having recorded 158 hours, so far, during law school.



Cheryl Kane, left, a third-year law student at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law has been awarded the first Schroeder Prize, a \$10,000 award named in honor of Judge Mary Schroeder, right, who is stepping down as chief judge of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

## Spotlight



## Innovation in Public Service

### **Roger Williams University Students Partner with Pro Bono Attorneys to Take Statements for Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

By: Liz Tobin Tyler, Esq.  
Director of Public Service & Community Partnerships  
Feinstein Institute for Legal Service, Roger Williams University School of Law

Many Liberian refugees suffered terrible human rights atrocities during many years of civil war. Like other war-torn societies trying to move past deeply troubled times, Liberia has created a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to deal with its past. Through its Pro Bono Collaborative, Roger Williams University School of Law has partnered with three major law firms to take statements from Liberian refugees about their experiences during the period from 1979 - 2003. Eleven RWU law students are working with attorneys from Dechert; Edwards, Angell, Palmer and Dodge; and DLA Piper, to take statements from Liberians living in Rhode Island. The students and attorneys were trained by Advocates for Human Rights, the group organizing the statement-taking project in the U.S. The statements will be provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to help bring perpetrators to justice and heal the wounds caused by decades of unrest.

### **READING, WRITING, & RESPONSIBILITY? Lessons Learned in Pro Bono**

By: Pamela Robinson, University of South Carolina, New Section Chair

A few weeks ago I was providing support to a team of 1L's with our VITA program. I was observing a student as she conducted the intake interview and listened to the responses from the client. As another student entered the data into the tax program, I realized the client just might be lying about his marital status. The team of students came to the same conclusion.

After the client left, the students asked me what we should do with our suspicion. We spent a half hour talking about our ethical responsibility as part of the VITA program – brainstorming what our response would be as lawyers. It was quite an "aha" moment for those idealistic young people. They were a bit surprised that people they were trying to help for free might just lie to them!! I quite enjoyed the intellectual exchange and was reminded of how much we teach through our pro bono efforts.

**Do you have a teaching moment you can share?  
Please submit it to [arfinkelstein@law.upenn.edu](mailto:arfinkelstein@law.upenn.edu), and we'll include it in this new regular feature of our newsletter.**

**The 2007 Executive Committee of the AALS Pro Bono & Public Service Section offers its sincere thanks to outgoing Chair, Harlene Katzman, for her leadership, and extends a warm welcome the new Executive Committee and to incoming Section Chair, Pamela Robinson.**



## JOIN US

The AALS Section on Pro Bono and Public Service includes a diverse group of faculty and administrators committed to pro bono and public service in law schools. Our members teach in a variety of areas across the law curriculum and work in law school offices ranging from career services, student services, financial aid, dean's offices, and public interest offices, demonstrating that our Section has something to offer everyone. Each year, our section offers: a network of resources to support you in your school's pro bono and public service work; unique and exciting programming and events at the AALS Annual Conference; an informative newsletter detailing section events and service projects at schools across the country; committee opportunities for you to get involved in pro bono and public service initiatives on a national level; the Rhode and Drinan Public Service Awards, presented annually at the AALS Conference. To become a member of this section, contact the AALS National Office at 202.296.8851 or [aals@aals.org](mailto:aals@aals.org).

## 2008 Section Executive Committee

Officers	
Chair:	<b>Pamela Robinson</b> University of South Carolina <a href="mailto:Robinson@law.sc.edu">Robinson@law.sc.edu</a>
Chair-Elect:	<b>Charlene Gomes</b> American University, Washington College of Law <a href="mailto:cegomes@wcl.american.edu">cegomes@wcl.american.edu</a>
Secretary:	<b>Marni Lennon</b> University of Miami <a href="mailto:mlennon@law.miami.edu">mlennon@law.miami.edu</a>
Treasurer:	<b>J.P. "Sandy" Ogilvy</b> Columbia School of Law, The Catholic University of America <a href="mailto:ogilvy@law.cua.edu">ogilvy@law.cua.edu</a>
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Past Chair:	<b>Harlene Katzman</b> Columbia University <a href="mailto:hkatzm@law.columbia.edu">hkatzm@law.columbia.edu</a>
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Awards:	<b>Deb Ellis</b> NYU <a href="mailto:ELLISD@juris.law.nyu.edu">ELLISD@juris.law.nyu.edu</a>
Program:	<b>Liz Tobin-Tyler</b> Roger Williams University <a href="mailto:lt Tyler@rwu.edu">lt Tyler@rwu.edu</a>
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