

Pro Bono & Justice

A periodic publication of the AALS Section on Pro Bono and Public Service Opportunities

News from Jennifer!

March, 2018

Greetings Colleagues

I'll begin with an apology in advance. As I reviewed past newsletters for inspiration, I acknowledged that I simply won't be able to fill the shoes of our Immediate Past Co-Chairs, Tara and Tom. They fostered a productive year full of camaraderie, collaboration, and much-needed laughter. On the bright side, I'm so pleased that they intend to remain engaged and look forward to the continued benefit of their insights. So here we go!

I am excited to be chairing the Pro Bono & Public Service Opportunities Section this year and considered it an auspicious sign that the theme of my inaugural AALS Annual Meeting this past January was Access to Justice! I repeatedly encountered Section members at sessions that aligned along some recurring themes: balance, purpose, and service intentionality for the well-being of not only the client but also the advocate – and the legal profession as whole.

It's no coincidence that those themes also emerged at our Section business meeting and again in our more recent quarterly conference call. How do we sustain ourselves and innovate? How do we best support our students as they chart their professional paths, traditional or otherwise?

Over the coming year, we will focus on finding ways to be responsive to that input by facilitating the sharing of ideas, both virtually and at in-person gatherings. As you'll read below, the Best Practices in Pro Bono Guides generated by the Pro Bono Collaboration Committee are now available in PSJD's Resource Center. We hope they'll be helpful whether you are developing a new program or examining aspects of a well-established one. And we plan to add a fourth newsletter this year to be sure we're promptly sharing updates from our quarterly Section conference calls and other developments in the field.

In terms of in-person convenings, we'd like to plan informal get-togethers at conferences taking place throughout the year in order to continue to foster our sense of community and to engage as many Section members as possible in dialogue about law school pro bono. So keep an eye out if you're attending the Equal Justice Conference Law School Pro Bono Advisors Program in May or can arrive in DC a day ahead of the NALP Public Service Mini-Conference to join the discussion we're putting together for pro bono and public interest advisors. And looking a bit further down the road, we're developing a program proposal for the 2019 Annual Meeting in New Orleans that will dig deeper into how we can encourage the next generation of public interest leaders through a range of co-curricular and reflective approaches.

Over the years I have seen and benefited tremendously from the power of connection. Please remember that you have a support mechanism in our Section. Here's to a terrific year!

Happy (almost) spring,

Jen

Jennifer Tschirch | Assistant Director of Pro Bono Programs
Office of Public Interest & Community Service
GEORGETOWN LAW | jt1133@georgetown.edu
600 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20001
Office: 202.661.6641

Your Voice Mattered: AALS Pro Bono Survey Results

AALS Survey: Law Class of 2017 Contributed More Than \$81 Million Worth of Pro Bono Legal Services

Washington, D.C. (January 3, 2018) – The Association of American Law Schools (AALS) again measured how much law schools contribute to the delivery of much-needed legal services through clinics, other experiential courses, and pro bono activities of law students.

In November 2017, 94 law schools reported that 18,411 law students in the class of 2017 contributed more than 3.39 million hours in legal services as part of their legal education, an average of about 184 hours per student. Independent Sector, a nonprofit organization coalition, estimates the value of volunteer time to be \$24.14 an hour. Using this number, the total value of the students' time at these schools is estimated to be in excess of \$81.8 million. The schools represent approximately 53 percent of students in American Bar Association accredited law schools in the class of 2017. AALS made the announcement in conjunction with its annual meeting taking place in San Diego, January 3-6.

Many schools indicated that some hours go uncounted or are difficult to track so actual contributions were probably higher. The project also did not include hours contributed by students in law school master's degree programs such as an LL.M.

Law students contributed hours through a variety of efforts, including externships at legal aid and community organizations, law school clinics, and law student organization led projects. These hands-on or experiential learning opportunities enabled students to apply classroom teachings to legal problems under the supervision of lawyers and professors. Students received practical experience in law and communities received critical legal services.

“The aspiration of ‘equal justice under law’ is one of our country’s greatest values and law students across the nation are working toward this ideal while laying the foundations for success in their future careers,” said Wendy Perdue, 2018 AALS President and Dean of University of Richmond School of Law “These efforts represent some of the ways law schools and students can build bridges with the communities where they live and we are tremendously proud of their efforts.”

Current Section Leadership

Chairs: Jennifer Tschirch (Georgetown University) Jennifer.Tschirch@law.georgetown.edu

Chair-Elect: Stephen Rispoli (Baylor University) Stephen_Rispoli@baylor.edu

Secretary/Awards Chair: Jill Friedman (Rutgers Law School) jillfrie@camden.rutgers.edu

Treasurer: Bridget Fuselier (Baylor) Bridget_Fuselier@baylor.edu

Publications/Communications: Pam Robinson (University of South Carolina) Robinspd@law.sc.edu

Immediate Past Chair: Tara Casey (University of Richmond) & Tom Schoenherr (Fordham University)
tcasey@richmond.edu tschoenherr@fordham.edu

At Large: Sande Buhai (Loyola LA): buhais@lls.edu Sam Halpert(NALP) shalpert@nalp.org;

Janet Heppard (Houston jheppard@central.uh.edu; Nura Maznavi (Chicago) nmaznavi@uchicago.edu

Drinan and Rhode Award Recipients Announced

The AALS Pro Bono and Public Service Section selected the recipients of the 2018 Deborah L. Rhode and Father Robert Drinan Awards from an impressive field of nominees. The Awards were presented at the AALS annual meeting in San Diego in January, at the Section's program, Preparing the *Next Generation of Leaders: Mobilizing Students and Community Partner Collaboration to Respond to the Unexpected*. The **Deborah L. Rhode Award** is awarded to a full-time faculty member or dean who has made an outstanding contribution to increasing pro bono and public service in the law school setting through scholarship, leadership, or service. The **Father Robert Drinan Award** is presented 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. The purpose of these awards is to honor those who have dedicated significant efforts toward increasing access to justice both through their own actions and by inspiring others.



The Rhode Award was presented to Professor Angela Drake, founding director of the Veterans' Clinic at the University of Missouri School of Law, which she established in 2013. Professor Drake was honored for her passionate and relentless dedication to her clients and for her equally zealous efforts to engage students and practicing lawyers to serve veterans, and to enhance best practices throughout the nation. Professor Drake's nominator and supporters described her taking on the most dreadful and seemingly hopeless cases on behalf of veterans who otherwise would have "just been forgotten." Not only does Professor Drake model dogged advocacy in individual matters, but she represents the National Law School Clinics Consortium, arguing for fairer procedures more broadly. Likewise, Professor Drake forwards the ethic of pro bono by putting on symposia and writing practice-based publications that help other attorneys take on veterans' cases on a pro bono basis. Finally, Professor

Drake asks for commitments from students who enroll in her clinic that they will engage in pro bono service throughout their careers, and is successful in inspiring those students to honor their commitments.

The Father Robert Drinan Award was presented to Tom Schoenherr of Fordham Law School. Tom is universally recognized as a superhero in the field. Over his 30 years at Fordham, by personal example, strategic program design, and broad collaboration and leadership, Tom has set the standard for cultivating law students who internalize the pro bono ethos throughout their careers; he also has earned the respect and love of the pro bono and public interest community. Internally at Fordham, Tom's contributions span his creation of one of the most vigorous voluntary pro bono programs in the nation (now boasting 27 student-run projects), his vastly elevating the art of raising funds for summer stipends, his challenging the Fordham community to volunteer more hours than ever imagined, his counseling and cultivating hundreds of students to become public interest lawyers, and beyond. Externally, Tom's indelible role in New York and national public interest circles is legendary, and includes service to AALS, the ABA/NLADA Equal Justice Conference, Equal Justice Works, NALP, and the New York State, County and City Bar Associations. Tom's nominators included the current and former deans, faculty, students and alumni at Fordham, and a stunning array of public interest colleagues from throughout the nation.



The Awards Selection Committee included Josh Borderud (Baylor); Tara Casey (Richmond, immediate past chair of the Section); Anna Davis (UC Irvine); and Jennifer Tschirch (Georgetown, newly elected chair of the Section).



Interested in more engagement with the Section?
Join in for the *Quarterly Call*

Watch the Listserv for details



Welcome to the Pro Bono Collaboration Corner. AALS members have come together with representatives from NALP, Equal Justice Works (EJW), the ABA Center for Pro Bono, and the Clinical Legal Education Association (CLEA) to share information on law school pro bono. The goal is to provide our greater communities with news, events, conference recaps, and more so that we are not working in parallel or at cross-purposes.

New “Best Practices” Guides Released from Pro Bono Collaboration Committee

The Pro Bono Collaboration Committee has authored a series of “**Best Practices**” Guides designed to help law schools create or improve their programs for coordinating pro bono volunteer efforts among their students. The guides cover everything from cultivating interest in pro bono volunteering through volunteer training and management, hours tracking, and overall management of the pro bono program itself. The Committee has released these guides on PSJD.org, where students and administrators alike will be able to learn from them. (Look in the Pro Bono Section of PSJD’s Resource Library.)

Materials for the guides were created or compiled by: Laura G. Burstein (SMU Dedman Law), Sande L. Buhai (Loyola Law, Los Angeles), Teresa Schmiedeler (University of Maryland Carey Law), Jennifer Tschirch (Georgetown Law), Diane Fears (Wayne State University Law), Tonya Jupiter (Tulane Law), Pamela Robinson (University of South Carolina Law), Laura Dym Cohen (Southwestern Law), and Angela Inzano (Chicago Bar Foundation).

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

by Matthew Desmond

Reviewed by Eve Ross



Books
We
Love

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American

City tells the stories of individuals and families,

to give human context to statistics showing that millions of Americans cannot afford shelter. One measure of affordable housing under federal law is that rent should “not exceed 30 percent of the adjusted income of a family.” 42 U.S.C.A. § 12745. The individuals and families that Matthew Desmond spotlights in *Evicted* pay much more than that in rent, even 80 to 90 percent of their income. The particulars of each story differs as to whether it involves apartments or mobile homes; pregnancies, children, or teens; addiction; or other situations. Every story shows how eviction is both caused by poverty and causes poverty, in a vicious circle that is very hard to exit.

Desmond puts the specific stories into broader context by connecting them to historical events—such as the rent wars in 1920s New York, and to legal realities—such as that there is no right to a lawyer in an eviction proceeding in most courts. He also explains the business models of landlords who rent to people who are poor. This background and perspective helps the reader grasp the deep roots of the system that evicted people are fighting. The book shows how well-intentioned programs, and even a good-hearted landlord, can fall far short of keeping a roof over everyone’s head.

Study guides are available at <http://evictedbook.com/reading-group-guides>

Eve Ross, Reference Librarian, Law Library, University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia, SC

National Pro Bono and Public Interest Calendar of Events

2018

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| April 24-27, 2018 | NALP 2018 Annual Education Conference
Hollywood, FL |
| April 29-May 2, 2018 | AALS Conference on Clinical Legal Education
Chicago, IL |
| May 10-12, 2018 | ABA/NLADA Equal Justice Conference
San Diego, CA |
| October 26, 27, 2018 | Equal Justice Works Conference and Career Fair
Arlington, VA |

2019

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| January 2-6, 2019 | AALS Annual Meeting
New Orleans, LA |
|--------------------------|--|

AALS -Association for American Law Schools
<http://www.aals.org>

ABA- American Bar Association Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono_public_service.html

EJW- Equal Justice Works
<http://www.equaljusticeworks.org>

NALP- National Association for Law Placement
<http://www.nalp.org>

Unable to attend the 2018 AALS Annual Conference?
Podcasts and presenter material and now available online!

Log in to the AALS website with your username and access the free audio recordings of the presentations at: www.aals.org/am2018/podcasts



RESULTS

Periodically the Section will post a Survey question on the Listserv, results will be published in the next newsletter

PopUp Survey Question #7

Over the past few years, have you noticed an increased student awareness of the need for public service?

Increase- 72/41%

No increase-27.5%

If yes, has this change made your job easier or more difficult?

Job is easier-33.33%

job is harder- 20.13%

About the same- 45.83%

Comments

1. Easier in terms of always filling volunteer spots and increasing numbers of students who complete public service hours by graduation.
2. We've seen a consistent awareness from students of the need for public service. However, the nature of the need - and the nature of the response - have changed. I would say the focus has moved slightly from local poverty needs to national and global civil liberties issues.
3. Our school has a pro bono graduation requirement. Nevertheless, I notice many students come to law school with a service-oriented disposition or DNA. This makes my job one that focuses less on compliance and more on matching students with opportunities to which they are passionate about or yearning to explore.
4. I don't think I've noticed an increased student awareness, though it is an interesting question to ponder!
5. we're definitely seeing a Trump effect!
6. I am experiencing more student interest at the same time that I am experiencing cuts to our Pro Bono Program. The inverse relationship is challenging.
7. general observation: students seem to be more aware and animated in discussing issues and a need for service, very few actually translate awareness and animation into action
8. Student awareness has led to increased student activism. While that means that there is more work to be done in supervising this work, it is gratifying to see the interest and not as much time is spent tracking down students to recruit them to pro bono and public service activities.
9. The increased awareness tends to be tied to current events, which does make it difficult to find pro bono opportunities related to those areas of interest.
10. It's great to have a Dean and a strong cohort of faculty and student leaders who promote and encourage public service. We've been expanding our programs, but not our staff. It would be great to have additional staff administrative and counseling support to expand our programs even more.
11. Especially since the 2016 election
- 12 I sometimes deal with student leaders who are reluctant to take on the tasks that our local legal services org asks of us (often wills) in hopes of doing something more relevant to current news, etc. I attempt to stress that we need to continue to address

constant needs while we also respond to trendier issues.

13. I would probably have answered question 1, as “maybe.” I’m not sure there is a genuine difference.

14. My students have remained engaged in public service.

15. Though awareness is keen, public service remains a tough sell.

16. we have a pro bono grad requirement, so i spend a good deal of energy trying to convince students that it is an awesome opportunity to build skills and learn about lawyering. With the current political climate, we have seen a surge of students concerned with social justice issues and with that a renewed interest in public service, beyond simply completing required hours! I see this as making my job easier because I don’t feel I have to work as hard to convince folks of the inherent value of public service, rather I can spend more of my time cultivating programming and working to create a culture of service and public interest lawyers from our school! Maybe it is giving me more work, but it is more gratifying!

17. My experience over 25 years in this business is that student interest in and awareness of the need for public service is directly correlated to how strong the firm job market is. The last few years have been pretty good in the private sector, so there has not been any noticeable surge in student awareness of public service.

18. Students have such great FOMO, that is creating issues with them accepting an opportunity and rate of rescinding offers has likewise increased.

19. I’d say that our students’ level of awareness of the need for public service has remained pretty much constant during the 16 years I have worked in this field.

20. I have noticed that today’s law students are seeking opportunities to make a difference. In the past, I believe I felt more of a need to explain why they should volunteer, but this generation gets it. So, I get to spend more time helping them find service opportunities that match their interests.

21. there is greater interest in my immigration clinic

Schools responding

Atlanta’s John Marshall Law School
Elon

Northwestern Law

Rutgers Law School

Tulane Law School

Roger Williams Univ. School of Law

University of Michigan Law School

UCLA School of Law

University of Houston Law Center

University of Wisconsin Law School

Southwestern Law School

The University of Tennessee College of Law

University of Richmond School of Law

Fordham University School of Law

Villanova

Loyola Law School

UNC School of Law

University of Missouri-Kansas City

UC Irvine School of Law

Wayne State University Law School

SMU Dedman School of Law

University of Virginia School of Law

Baylor Law School

Chapman University

University of South Carolina School of Law

Meet a Colleague

Pro bono leaders are spread across the entire country! You may know the leaders in your state, city or community. Expand your networking by learning a bit about a fellow leader. In each Newsletter we will introduce you to one of your colleagues through a short Q & A. Learn about what makes them tick!

Name Jennifer Tschirch

Title Assistant Director of Public Interest Programs

School Georgetown Law

Please give a brief description of your school pro bono program or efforts? And your role in making things happen

Georgetown Law challenges all incoming students to pledge to complete at least 50 hours of law-related volunteer work before they graduate. I work with community partners throughout the year to identify pro bono projects that are responsive to their clients' needs and connect them with students who want to help. I also work with student organizations to develop projects and programming that highlight the access to justice gap and the critical role that pro bono can play in addressing it.

Why do you think this job is important?

I am a firm believer in service learning. Instilling a pro bono ethic early and often in our future social justice leaders is a smart investment, plain and simple. I have seen an evolution of law school pro bono since my days as a student, when Pro Bono Students America (now PSJD) was just emerging onto the scene, and I am hopeful that will continue. Having staff dedicated to fostering pro bono is the best way to ensure a robust, responsive program that benefits both the students involved and the organizations they serve.

What special skills or attributes do you bring to it?

Although my law school days are well behind me now (your grad year is just a number, right?), I remember as if it were yesterday the sheer terror and exhilaration of conducting my first intake as a law student. I was in a position to really help this person! I see that same level of enthusiasm among students here and immediately relate to their wanting to take on pro bono work. And once again I find myself thinking, how terrific that I'm in a position to help! I've spent well over a decade in DC in the social justice realm, and I've thoroughly enjoyed cultivating and maintaining what has become an extensive network of incredible advocates. That has proven extremely beneficial in helping students find opportunities that complement their professional development.

Who is your go-to person when you need advice on law school pro bono matters?

My fellow AALS Pro Bono & Public Interest Opportunities members! Along with the pro bono directors at the other DC law schools. We've created an informal work group that initially met simply to share ideas, and now we coordinate a local Alternative Spring Break and are conducting a joint poverty simulation this month. While I am surrounded by wonderful colleagues at Georgetown, I am the sole staffer of our pro bono program, so when a novel issue arises and I'm looking for a sounding board, I know I have a network ready and willing to help.

Do you have a favorite quote? Is yes, will you share it with us.

I'm clearly still feeling inspired by *The Book of Joy*, which captures a discussion between Archbishop Tutu and the Dalai Lama about how one can find joy in the face of suffering:

Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world. – Desmond Tutu