



October 12, 2010

Los Angeles

**CULTIVATING FUTURE PRO BONO LEADERS: PROJECTS THAT INCORPORATE
LAW SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, AND NEW GRADUATES**

10:40 AM – 12:00 PM

Moderators: Lisa Mead, Southern California Expansion Consultant for Public Interest Clearinghouse

AGENDA

- Welcome and Goal for the Session
- Part 1: Discuss featured models for building pro bono projects that involve law schools, firms and students.
- Part 2: With the larger group, brainstorm and identify:
 - Other replicable programs across the state
 - The needs of various partner entities in such models
 - The required components to make a project involving law schools and students successful, e.g., best practices from the perspective of all parties: firms, agencies and schools.
- Next Steps—Develop best practices and ensure replication of effective models on a statewide basis.
- Closing

NOTES FROM THE SESSION

Next Steps and Closing: [these are listed at the beginning of the notes for readers' convenience]

At the end of the breakout session, the participants decided that the logical next steps are to:

- Establish a working group to continue the conversation about student accountability, including whether there is an expectation of a job offer if a student partners with a firm on a pro bono project.
- Have law school representatives continue discussion of whether law schools should have a formal pro bono requirement tied to graduation. Need to get Deans of law schools on board.
- Continue the conversation on how we can keep law students a part of the pro bono community once they leave school? The possibility of using social media tools such as Facebook and LinkedIn, or existing alumni programs.
- PIC working on creating a listserv for pro bono opportunities in SoCal.

Current Successful Models

- **Homeless Legal Services Program—Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe, Bar Association of SF VLSP, and UC Hastings.**
 - Developed organically—from student interests in helping at a homeless shelter. Partnered with Orrick, but needed expertise from attorneys with poverty law background, in case VLSP.
 - ABA came out with a standard for law schools to provide help because of the potential for unauthorized practice of law by law students.
 - On average, help 3 clients a week—mainly clearing county warrants, calling PD or DA's offices. Six students each week, each student goes 3 times for about 24 students.
 - Not a huge commitment for firms, 10 hours per legal issue.
- **U-Visa Collaboration—Public Law Center and UC Irvine**
 - Limited number of direct legal services in Orange County whose staff could supervise law students on projects. Partnered with PLC and Snell & Wilmer, who agreed to supervise students on U-Visa cases because attorneys had experience working on U-Visas with their summer associates.
 - Already had trainings set up. Had a sample u-visas/3 hour trainings at the beginning of the semester. Firm was then able to take over and drive the supervision
 - U-visas lend well for students because there are no firm deadlines, intensive intake, and declarations.
 - Firm attorneys good at breaking down cases and facts for students.
 - Lesson learned: not work with 1Ls b/c does take a pro bono attorney 40-50 hours, so may be work with 2Ls from now on.
 - LSO provides malpractice insurance. The model does not violate the wage and hour laws because of the educational components.
 - U-visa cert process: PLC prescreens the cases and obtains the certification.
- **Foster Caregivers Advocacy Program—Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, Alliance for Children's Rights, and UC Irvine**
 - Students and pro bono attorneys work together to represent foster care givers and recipients of benefits in administrative hearings.
 - Students and firm attorneys receive extensive training together and are paired up.
 - Each team consists of 2 students and 2 attorneys who take on 3 cases, one of which is the sole responsibility of the student pair. Each team generates the facts and legal issues and has regular calls with staff attorneys at Alliance who will guide the teams with their next steps.
 - Firm uses Alliance malpractice insurance.
 - Project has been much more long-term than expected and requires a huge commitment from the firm. The student/firm attorney partnership allows the firm attorneys to take lead when students are in finals and cannot dedicate as much time.
- **Justice Bus™ Project—Public Interest Clearinghouse**
 - Works on a clinic model where PIC brings law students during the school year and associates during the summer to rural California to volunteer at legal clinics.
 - Two programs: one where PIC physically takes students to rural areas and the other is a research project managed by Julie Mercer-Ingram.
 - Research projects are under 20 hours and are only placed in the fall and spring semesters.

- **Law School Pro Bono Project & The Summer Associates Program—Public Interest Clearinghouse**
 - PIC helps staff legal clinics in the Bay Area.

Identify Other Programs in the State

- USC and Sheppard Mullin partner on Street Law where students go into a classroom 3 or 4 times a semester.
- UC Berkeley—students creating projects involving employment clinics, youth justice and the Muslim community, and serving as lay advocates. Just started exploring partnerships with firms. Law school trying to figure out its role in supporting students, e.g., providing ethics and advocacy training to students.
- Stanford—students working on special education cases.
- El Centro clinics—each clinic partners with different legal organizations to provide trainings and supervisions. Have also developed partnerships with firms and provided school sponsored trainings.
- Hastings—Involved in the Marshall-Brannan constitutional literacy project to teach Constitution Law at high schools. Use service learning students from social work schools to provide therapeutic/holistic models.
- Legal Aid of San Mateo County—Staff attorneys works with law students and medical students. Law students help at a guardianship clinic that is staffed by law firms. Students do the interview. If firm takes a case, then firm attorney will meet the client. Firm/LSO run conflict checks before hand.
- Public Law Center and Whittier—bring students in to help with evaluation work for grants.
- Public Law Center and UC Irvine—new effort where Superior Court came to PLC to work on foster care projects. Also has UCI students work on transactional cases for nonprofits. When firm attorneys has a case, will call Anna Davis at UCI to see whether she has interested students. Some difficulty in finding legal organizations clients because they have other more pressing priorities such as funding.
- Public Law Center—publishes a newsletter for nonprofits. Many articles written by firm attorneys.

The needs of various partner entities in such models

- Perspective from firms not working with law schools
 - Go back to the firm to ask what area of law the firm would like to work on.
 - Need better understanding of the management process, including valuing students as team members who can do a lot of the work too.
- Perspective from firms with successful projects
 - Perkins Coie (Seattle)--works with Seattle Univ. on transactional cases.
 - Students do not want to work with junior associates.
 - When partnership is only two-way (firm and law school), faced with limitations because the expertise has to come from in-house.
 - Baker--feel like firm attorneys need to have some area of expertise because they still have to supervise.
 - Firm decided to limit pro bono cases to special education because already do some of those cases in-house.
 - PLC suggested legal organizations to provide intensive training for firms and sample cases and manuals.

- Public Counsel: Must find balance within each partnership to find the right level of support. Can have attorneys take on one case first and get the comfort level up, then take on more cases and supervision of students.
- NY firm: Spent over 1 year developing a pro bono practice in-house before bringing law schools/law students (summer associates) into the practice.
- Ventura County: Uses mentors who are retired attorneys because they are available 24/7. They can mentor in-house counsel on cases, but may not be able to attend court.

The required components to make a project involving law schools and students successful

- **Accountability**
 - Law school public interest/career offices must remain involved.
 - If there were an issue, then schools can step in to ensure that someone will hold students accountable if they do not follow through with their commitments.
 - Pairing students up and having an application process builds in a sense of formality.
 - More and more students are seeking skill building opportunities from legal organizations, and advice/referral clinic models may not assist in developing advance legal skills in students.
 - Pro bono attorneys also looking to develop particular skill sets. Firm moving towards a model of core competency.