



Pro Bono Projects

Spring 2016

Each semester the Citizen Lawyer Program (CLP) partners with non-profit and government agencies to create a number of structured law-related volunteer opportunities for students at the University of Iowa College of Law. These Pro Bono Projects provide students with an opportunity to gain experience in a legal setting, develop skills, network with practicing lawyers, explore their interests, and provide public service. These are strictly volunteer positions –students are not compensated (as they would be for summer clerkships) nor do they receive academic credit (as they would for field placements or clinic).

CLP advertises Pro Bono Project openings at the start of each semester. Each Pro Bono Project has a separate description that includes information on the agency, project duties, expected time commitment, scheduling concerns, qualifications, necessary travel, number of positions available, preferences (e.g., multi-semester commitments preferred), and restrictions (e.g., required course/skills or upper-class standing). Students should carefully review project descriptions, available through Symplicity, and then apply to all positions for which they wish to be considered, ranked by preference.

Application materials (Pro Bono Project application form and the student’s resume) are submitted to CLP via Symplicity by the application deadline. CLP then makes assignments based on student applications and available positions. The number of applicants regularly exceeds the number of available positions, so students who indicate an interest in multiple projects have a greater chance of assignment. Students will be notified of assignments approximately a week after the deadline.

Symplicity can be accessed from: <http://www.law.uiowa.edu/careers/symplicity> Under the “Jobs” tab select “CSM Jobs” and then look for “Spring 2016 Pro Bono Projects.” Citizen Lawyer Program is listed as the employer.

Questions regarding the Pro Bono Project application process should be directed to the Citizen Lawyer Program at law-clp@uiowa.edu.

Applications for Spring 2016 projects are due by midnight on Wednesday, February 3.

Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence: U Visa and VAWA Immigration Project

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) seeks to engage all people in a movement to change the social and political systems that perpetuate violence against women. It does so through education, advocacy and quality services. As part of its holistic approach to serving victims, ICADV is providing immigration legal representation to victims of domestic violence.

<http://www.icadv.org/>

Project Information: Students will assist ICADV's legal staff in preparing and submitting immigration applications based upon U Visa and VAWA eligibility. Students will be working in pairs and each pair will be assigned two cases at the beginning of the semester. Under the direction of an ICADV staff attorney, students will work directly with victims and their advocates collecting evidence and preparing the immigration petition for submission to USCIS.

Volunteers must participate in an initial training to be scheduled in early February. The training will cover volunteer expectations, case management, communications, and the unauthorized practice of law.

Agency contact: Salome Nengean, staff attorney at Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, salomen@icadv.org.

Volunteer Responsibilities: Each student pair will be responsible for two immigration cases during the semester. Under the supervision of and at the direction of the staff attorney, students will interview ICADV clients, gather evidence, and coordinate with domestic violence victim advocates as necessary to build a viable case. In addition to compiling the immigration petition for their clients, students will be required to participate in phone conferences, submit weekly progress reports, and attend periodic webinars on relevant domestic violence/immigration topics. Students will refer questions to ICADV's supervising attorney. Some travel may be necessary.

Agency responsibilities: ICADV legal staff will provide basic domestic violence and immigration training for the students, provide directions for protocol and case management throughout the semester, be available at scheduled times for progress checks and concerns about legal issues.

Time commitment/Scheduling: Student pairs will be expected to commit approximately 5-7 hours per week, including training time. A required initial training session will be scheduled in early February.

Criteria: Up to 8 positions are available. **Suitable for second or third year students**, particularly those interested in immigration law or issues of domestic violence. Spanish language skills are desirable, but not required.

Iowa Legal Aid: Self-Represented Divorce Litigant Clinics

Iowa Legal Aid (ILA) serves eligible clients (within income and asset limits, based on household size), helping with a variety of civil legal problems. ILA assists clients in matters regarding consumer law, debt collection, education, employment, family law, government benefits, health care, and housing.

www.iowalegalaid.org

Project Information: This project involves students assisting persons who are self-represented litigants in divorce cases using forms approved by the Iowa Supreme Court. Under the supervision of an ILA staff person or volunteer attorney, students will review forms with litigants for completeness and assist them in filling them out. Students will refer questions to the on-site supervising attorney. Clinics are scheduled at the Johnson County Courthouse in Iowa City on the following dates:

- Monday, February 28, from 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 29, from 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 25, from 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Monday, May 24, from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

This project requires travel to the Johnson County Courthouse.

Agency contact: Jan Rutledge at jrutledge@iowalaw.org.

Volunteer Responsibilities: Students will meet one-on-one with self-represented litigants to review forms and provide assistance in completing the required information. Students will refer questions to the supervising attorney. Students will complete required training and a self-study of provided materials prior to the training.

Agency responsibilities: ILA will provide a coordinator for the project. The coordinator will arrange for volunteer attorneys to staff the clinics, and will send reminders to the students for each clinic.

Time commitment/Scheduling: Students will be expected to commit approximately a total of 12 to 15 hours to the project during the semester, including training time. A required training session will be scheduled.

Criteria: Up to three positions are available. Suitable for all students, particularly those interested in family law.