



# Pro Bono Projects

## Spring 2020

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 on the CLP website, 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. We regret that we cannot guarantee placement for all applicants. 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 2020 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](mailto:law-clp@uiowa.edu).

**Applications for Spring 2020 projects are due by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, January 30.**

## **Immigrant Detention Access to Justice Pilot Project (Spanish-proficient students not currently in clinic)**

The Immigration Detention Access to Justice Pilot Project (IDAJP) aims to address the severe shortage of representation for detained immigrants in Iowa by offering phone screenings to detained immigrants and attempting to connect those eligible for bond or relief from removal with pro bono attorneys, or, alternatively, offering them legal advice. The IDAJP will consist of students in the Clinic's Community Empowerment Law Project and Immigration practice groups in addition to CLP volunteers.

**Project Information:** Iowa has several immigration detention centers that house non-citizens held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) while they are in deportation proceedings. Many of these individuals have defenses to deportation, such as asylum or claims under the Convention Against Torture, but there are very few attorneys available in Iowa to represent detained immigrants for free, and detainees often lack funds to pay attorneys. [A recent study](#) of the impact of representation on case outcomes for detained immigrants estimates that representation will lead to a 1,100% increase in success rates. The IDAJP aims to screen detainees in one detention center in Iowa to determine how many are eligible for release on bond or relief from removal, with the ultimate goal of connecting them with attorneys or offering them legal advice. The project is a collaboration with Iowa Law's Clinic on behalf of Iowans for Immigrant Freedom.

**Agency Contact:** Daria Fisher Page at [daria-fisherpage@uiowa.edu](mailto:daria-fisherpage@uiowa.edu) and Geoffrey Heeren at [geoffrey-heeren@uiowa.edu](mailto:geoffrey-heeren@uiowa.edu).

**Volunteer Responsibilities:** Students must attend a training from 12:30-3:30 p.m. on February 5, 2020, and will conduct screenings via telephone from February through April. Spanish proficiency is required.

**Agency Responsibilities:** The IDAJP will provide training on how to gather information via telephone that is necessary to assess a non-citizen's eligibility for bond and relief from removal and how to complete a screening form that will be used to evaluate detainees' cases.

**Expectations/Time Commitment/Scheduling:** Student volunteers are required to attend the February 5 training session and to handle multiple telephonic screenings this semester, each of which should last approximately twenty minutes.

**Criteria:** Only Spanish-proficient students not currently enrolled in the Legal Clinic may apply.

## Migration Policy Institute: Legal Research

Founded in 2001, the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) has established itself as a leading institution in the field of migration policy and as a source of authoritative research, learning opportunities, and new policy ideas. MPI maintains a special commitment to work on immigration and integration policies in North America and Europe, where its two offices are located, but it also remains active around the world, and takes a global and comparative approach to migration issues when possible.

The Institute is guided by the belief that countries need to have sensible, well thought-out immigration and integration policies in order to ensure the best outcomes for both immigrants and receiving communities.

The U.S. Immigration Policy Program analyzes U.S. policies and their impacts, as well as the complex demographic, economic, political, foreign policy, and other forces that shape immigration to the United States. The program also offers influential thought leadership and policy recommendations regarding ways to improve the U.S. immigration system.

**Project Information:** Legal research. Under supervision, the law student volunteers will assist the Migration Policy Institute in conducting confidential legal research on efficiency reforms for court systems.

**Agency Contact(s):** Sarah Pierce at [spierce@migrationpolicy.org](mailto:spierce@migrationpolicy.org)

**Volunteer Responsibilities:** Students will be assigned research and writing projects. Writing projects will take the form of memoranda. Students will be supervised by an attorney and will receive feedback on all assignments.

**Agency Responsibilities:** Supervise student's written work, provide feedback, and contact law school with any concerns with the volunteers or program.

**Expectations/Time commitment/Scheduling:** The anticipated time commitment depends on the student's availability and how quickly they complete the assigned work. Expected time commitment is 2-3 hours per week at minimum. The student and supervisor will work together to establish deadlines for projects and regular check-ins that work with the student's schedule.

**Criteria:** One position is available. Students must have strong research and writing skills and must be able to work independently. Students are expected to be responsive to the supervising attorney.

## University of Iowa Labor Center: Iowa Worker Rights Project

The Labor Center's Iowa Worker Rights Project produces and disseminates reliable, accessible information about workers' rights under a wide range of federal and state labor and employment laws, and delivers interactive "know your rights" workshops to a broad audience of Iowans. Topics of recent workshops have included subjects such as wage theft, unemployment insurance, labor trafficking, workplace discrimination and harassment, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and workers' compensation.

The UI Labor Center is Iowa's trusted source for statewide worker education and research. Since its founding in 1951, tens of thousands of Iowa workers have participated in Labor Center classes on practical industrial relations, labor and employment law, occupational health and safety, labor history, communications and leadership, and economics and public policy. Today, as part of The University of Iowa College of Law, the Center annually reaches over 2,500 adult learners; conducts applied research; engages in community partnerships, outreach events, and special projects related to labor issues; provides information on labor and workplace issues to faculty, students, and the public; and mentors students interested in careers in labor-related fields.

**Project Information:** Legal research, curriculum development, outreach, and adult popular education on workplace legal rights and strategies for front-line enforcement of workers' rights. Under supervision, law student volunteers will assist the Labor Center in conducting legal research, contributing to annual updates of the Center's *Iowa Worker Rights Manual*, creating accessible resource materials for working Iowans, and potentially assisting in delivering adult education on labor and employment law subjects.

**Agency Contact(s):** Jennifer Sherer at [Jennifer-sherer@uiowa.edu](mailto:Jennifer-sherer@uiowa.edu).

**Volunteer Responsibilities:** Students will be assigned research, writing, or curriculum development projects. Writing projects will take the form of brief summaries, digital posts, or resource brochures intended for public audiences. Curriculum development projects will take place in collaboration with Labor Educators in preparation for community workshops. Students will be supervised by Labor Center staff (including two JDs) and will have the chance to participate in community-engaged applications of legal scholarship.

**Agency Responsibilities:** Supervise student's work, provide feedback, and contact law school with any concerns with the volunteers or program.

**Expectations/Time commitment/Scheduling:** The anticipated time commitment depends on the student's availability and how quickly they complete the assigned work. Expected time commitment is 2-3 hours per week. The student and supervisor will work together to establish deadlines for projects and regular check-ins that work with the student's schedule.

**Criteria:** Up to three positions are available. Students must have strong research and writing skills and must be able to work independently. Workshop facilitation or presentation experience is desirable, but not required.