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Dean Logan's Blog

It's Spring, and Public Interest Is in the Air

Posted by David Logan on 04/30/2010 at 12:00 AM

The Feinstein Institute for Legal Service is the hub of public interest activities at RWUSOL, and it has been an eventful spring semester.

The APIL Auction was held on February 26th, and it turned out to be a smashing success. Students, faculty, staff, judges and lawyers mingled at the elegant Federal Reserve in Providence. The event raised over \$17,000 to support students who will work at public interest jobs this summer. Auction proceeds supplement the \$50,000 provided by the Law School and University President Roy Nirschel for these valuable, hands-on experiences. Last year, 28 students received stipends for public interest work around the country. Read more about [student experiences](#).

And here are some pics from that fun evening.



Judge Fortunato ponders whether or not to bid...



Auction co-chair Jen Coliflores (2L) urges folks to bid on those vacation packages



Linda & Charles Newton (parents of Dean of Students Lorraine Lalli) are enjoying an evening out at the APIL Auction



2Ls Andrea Merisotis, Lauren Bilodeau & Shannon O'Neil



Casey Lee and Sevan Baghdasarian



View of Erik Johnson (2L) and Kathryn Primiano
(from the balcony at the elegant Federal Reserve)

One of our signature programs, the Pro Bono Collaborative, continues to receive national attention for its innovative model. PBC Director, Eliza Vorenberg, has been invited to the ABA Equal Justice Conference in May to participate in a panel discussion about law school pro bono programs. Among other things, the panel will showcase an upcoming article in “Georgetown’s Journal of Legal Ethics” co-authored by the Feinstein Institute’s staff entitled: “Don’t Do It Alone: A Community-Based, Collaborative Approach to Pro Bono.”

The PBC has several new programs and law firm sponsors. Attorney Joan Mathieu, 1L Sarah Lincoln, and the Immigrant Victims Representation Project (IVRP) at Catholic Social Services in Fall River, are providing assistance to immigrant victims of domestic violence through Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) petitions and U Visa applications. In February, award-winning RWU Alum Alison Foley, Legal Director of IVRP, provided a U-Visa training for the project participants and will provide ongoing referrals to the PBC project.

Also in February the PBC welcomed the leading law firm of Pannone Lopes Devereaux & West LLC, helping the new Dream Center of Praise Tabernacle Church in Cranston establish a non-profit organization and advocate for space to provide a range of services to the homeless.

We will be raising fund for and celebrating the great successes of the PBC at a cocktail party on May 6 from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the State Lounge in Providence. I hope to see many of you there!

Finally, the first “Public Interest Pot Luck” was held on Friday, February 19th, at the always-lively Barron/Yelnosky home in Tiverton. There was a great turnout and students brought delicious appetizers and desserts. Sal Lincoln’s “whopper ball” cup cakes were an especially big hit. Students from all three classes attended, along with sundry kids and pets. Fun was had by all, setting the stage for another at the end of April.

