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Dean Logan's Blog

Brown Medical Students Team with RWU Law Students in Innovative Program

Posted by David Logan on 09/22/2011 at 04:29 PM

One of our signature experiential learning environments is the class [Poverty, Health and Law: The Medical/Legal Collaborative](#) and the related externship opportunity at the Rhode Island Medical-Legal Partnership for Children. Conceived and implemented by [Liz Tobin Tyler](#), Director of Public Service and Community Partnerships in our Feinstein Institute of Legal Service, the class teams Brown Med and RWU Law students (plus resident physicians from Hasbro Children's Hospital) to prepare them for two important, but often overlooked, aspects of the professions they are entering: one, learning how to help people with the complex of legal and medical problems often associated with poverty; two, learning how to work with professionals from other disciplines. Here is a link to a previous blog on Liz's important new book [Poverty, Health and Law: Readings and Cases for Medical-Legal Partnership](#).

Here is Liz's thumbnail description of the course.

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The joint course brings law students, medical students, and medical residents together in the classroom to explore collaborative problem-solving for poverty-related health problems that may have legal remedies, such as unlawful denial of food stamps or unsafe housing that violates the housing code. The course culminates with a clinic at Hasbro in which law students and medical students and residents are trained together in teams to assist and seek protection for patient families who are threatened with utility shut-off. An early aspect of the program involves a simulation in which the students are assigned to play the role of poor families, while others play the role of employees of the range of social service agencies that these families must interact with on a daily basis. In addition to students from Poverty, Health and Law, students from Laurie Barron's Public Interest Lawyering class and our Criminal Defense Clinic participated in the simulation.

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I attended the fascinating event last week and took some candid pics with my Iphone, and asked one of the law students involved, Allison Krause ('12), to share her reaction.

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The class has provided me with a wonderful and unique opportunity to collaborate with Brown Medical students and employees from Hasbro. I am also looking forward to meeting with individuals who deal with issues regarding poverty and problems they encounter daily such as healthcare, housing, diseases related to lack of income, and other serious issues. I will be speaking with these individuals about their lives and about any potential legal options they might have to improve their living situation.
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Here are the pics:





