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Pro Bono Collaborative E-Newsletter (No. 5) (February 2010)

Roger Williams University School of Law

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Dear Friend of the PBC:

Happy New Year! 2009 was a great year for the PBC and we are excited to begin 2010 with new projects, new law firms and new community partners. This issue of the e-newsletter highlights many opportunities to get involved with the PBC-through pro bono and networking opportunities.

Finally, many thanks to all of the attorneys and law students who dedicated countless hours on PBC projects in 2009 (a complete list of our 2009 projects is included in this e-newsletter).

Sincerely,

Eliza Vorenberg, J.D.
Director, Pro Bono Collaborative

Suzanne Harrington-Steppen, J.D.
Project Coordinator, Pro Bono Collaborative

News and Updates

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and U Visa Project Off the Ground: In early January, the PBC launched a new project with immigration attorney Joan Mathieu to assist immigrant victims of domestic violence. RWU SOL student, Sarah Lincoln, will be working with Ms. Mathieu on pro bono cases referred by the Immigrant Law and Education Project (ILEAP).

In conjunction with the new project, the PBC will be providing a free U Visa Training (with CLE credit) on February 11, 2010 at RWU SOL. If you are interested in attending, please contact Suzy Harrington-Steppen at (401) 254-4559 or sharrington-steppen@rwu.edu.

Run for the Pro Bono Collaborative! On March 20th, you can support the Pro Bono Collaborative and run the Providence St. Pat’s 5K. If you wish to run or walk the race, please register under the law school's Team Charity Name: "Runners for Justice."
1. Go to www.stpats5k.com
2. Select.... Register
3. Select.... Click here for TEAM registration
4. Enter the username/password. Username: Runners for Justice    Password: rwulaw
5. Complete the team member form. Pay with Mastercard, Visa, or Discover.

Special thanks to law students Sarah Parker and Lawrence Almagno and "Running from the Law"- RWU Law's student running club!!

**Save the Date:** On May 6, 2010 from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the State Lounge in Providence, the Pro Bono Collaborative's Advisory Board attorneys will be hosting a cocktail party to celebrate and support the great work of the Pro Bono Collaborative. For more information contact: evorenberg@rwu.edu.

**Thirsty Thursdays:** Thirsty Thursdays have been a great success. The PBC's "happy hour" events provide an excellent opportunity to catch up with friends and learn about pro bono opportunities.

*December Thirsty Thursday at 3 Steeple Street: Teny Gross, Executive Director of the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence, speaks with Tim Baldwin Esq. of Nixon Peabody LLP.*
Dean David A. Logan and Elizabeth Oliveira, Esq. of Nixon Peabody LLP.
Get Involved: Projects Needing Law Firms

1. Guardian Advocate Project with Looking Upwards
Partnering with Looking Upwards, a nonprofit agency that provides an array of services to children and adults with developmental disabilities, to provide legal counsel to nine developmentally disabled adults regarding financial and medical decision-making options. In some cases, guardianship petitions may be filed.

**Time Commitment: Moderate** (9 discrete cases; potential for additional work if interested)

**Number of Attorneys Needed: 2**

2. Advice & Counsel for Tenants in Foreclosed Properties Project
Partnering with the RI Bank-Owned Tenants and Homeowners Association to provide advice and counsel to tenants of properties that have recently been foreclosed. Twice a month, on Thursday late afternoons, attorneys and law students would attend Association meetings to answer members’ legal questions and provide advice and counseling. Legal problems could range from inability to recoup a security deposit or rent paid after a foreclosure sale to utility shut-offs during foreclosure sale. Attorneys’ role would be to inform the tenant of their legal entitlements and provide advice on how to self-advocate. Attorneys could also negotiate to permit the tenant to stay in the home or get adequate time and money to move.

**Time Commitment: Moderate**

**Number of Attorneys Needed: 2**

3. Special Education Compensatory Services
Partnering with RILS to assist students who have been deprived of educational rights for an extensive period and therefore are owed compensatory services to make them whole or close the educational gap.

**Time Commitment: Moderate**

**Number of Attorneys Needed: 2**

4. Children & Young Adults SSI Project
Partnering with RILS to assist individuals who have been denied critical Supplemental Security Income support (public benefits program for disabled youth and adults).

**Time Commitment: Moderate**

**Number of Attorneys Needed: 2**

5. Transactional Legal Services for Nonprofit Organizations.
The PBC receives several requests each year from nonprofit organizations serving low-income communities in need of pro bono legal assistance. Accordingly, we are always in need of attorneys with business law expertise to assist these organizations. This is an ongoing need, so please contact the PBC if you would like to be added to our list of pro bono attorneys willing to take these matters as they arise.

If your law firm is interested in any of these projects or if you would like additional information, please call Suzy Harrington-Steppen, PBC Project Coordinator, at 401.254.4559 or sharrington-steppen@rwu.edu.
PBC's 2009 Pro Bono Projects--many continuing in 2010:

Special Education Advocacy Projects:
* Meeting Street School, Casey Family Services and Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP
* RI Disability Law Center and Hinckley Allen & Snyder LLP

Housing Rights Clinic Projects:
* Children's Friend & Service RI and Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP
* Women's Center RI and Hinckley Allen & Snyder LLP

Expungement Projects:
* Family Life Center, RI Coalition for the Homeless, Operation Stand Down and Nixon Peabody LLP
* McAuley House and Ratcliffe Harten Burke & Galamaga LLP

Nonprofit Incorporation Projects:
* Grand Divas : Casey Family Services' kinship care group and Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP
* Rhode Island Liberian Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives (RILFECI) and Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP

Monthly Legal Column in Street Sights Newspaper Project: (serving homeless community and advocates) Adler Pollock & Sheehan P.C.

Gender Discrimination in Schools Policy Recommendations Project: Youth Pride RI and Nixon Peabody LLP

Inclusionary Zoning Research and Legislative Advocacy: Women's Development Corporation and Adler Pollock & Sheehan P.C.

Guardianship Project: Bradley Hospital's Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities and Taylor Duane Barton & Gilman LLP

Tax Code Reform Project: Rhode Island Legal Services, Inc. and Adler Pollock & Sheehan P.C.

Donate to the PBC
The PBC needs your help. If you would like to make a financial contribution you can donate online or via mail:

GIVE ONLINE
(please note your contribution is for the "PBC")

Please send contributions to:
The PBC, RWU School of Law, 10 Metacom Avenue, Bristol, RI 02809

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