

Calendar of Events

CPIL Civil Legal Services Panel	Sept. 19
LCS "How to Get a Public Interest Job"	Sept. 26
PILA/UMNI Speakers Panel	Oct. 3
LRAP Reception	Oct. 3
Vincentian Conference	Oct. 9
CBA Pro Bono Fair	Oct. 11
CPIL Speakers Panel.....	Oct. 17
School of the Americas Trip	Nov. 16-18
*Public Interest Mondays—Every Monday in Room 901	

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TO THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST LAW**

Checks can be made payable to DePaul University College of Law; please indicate on the check that your donation should go toward CPIL and mail to: Shaye Loughlin, 25 E. Jackson, Chicago, Illinois 60604-2219. Thank you for your continued support!

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Rose Rivera, Jennifer Keys, Leonard Cavise, Shaye Loughlin, Justin Hansen, Susan DeCostanza, Allegra Cira, Anisa Jones, Dima Khalidi.



The Center for Public Interest Law Committee

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the ADVOCATE



September 2007

Chiapas Human Rights Practicum a Success Once Again!

By Allegra Cira

DePaul's Chiapas Human Rights Practicum provides an unparalleled opportunity for College of Law students to become involved in the struggles and the culture of the people of Chiapas, one of the most impoverished Mexican states, where indigenous communities fight to protect themselves and their land from government interference and military violence. This was the eighth year of the program, spearheaded by Leonard Cavise, DePaul law professor and director of the Center for Public Interest Law (CPIL).

According to Prof. Cavise, the Chiapas program is the only one of its kind in any American law school. Students selected to participate in this year's practicum attended weekly meetings last spring to discuss the history and politics



The Chiapas Group poses for a photo op with the governing body of the Zapatista Community.

of the region. After finals ended in May, the group traveled to Chiapas for the ten-day immersion experience with human rights and indigenous community organizations.

While in Chiapas, the group met with a wide variety of

non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that promote and protect the rights of women, children, and indigenous peoples, and promote fair trade practices. Students also participated in cultural events and traveled to Zapatista communities, where they had the opportunity to speak with leaders of the revolutionary movement to fight against government interference with indigenous territorial, social, and cultural rights. Sarah Gelsomino, a practicum participant, was impressed by the unity of the various indigenous villages across the region that join together to defend one another's land in disputes

against the government. "We in the United States can learn so much about how to organize for justice from these poor farmers of Chiapas, Mexico," said Gelsomino.

In addition to coordinating the human rights practicum, CPIL provides stipends to cover living expenses for a select number of Spanish-speaking students who remain in Chiapas to work with human rights organizations for the entire summer. This year, four DePaul law students spent their summer working with NGOs in and around the city of San Cristóbal, one of the

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CPIIL hosts second annual Vincentian Conference

By Anisa Jones

Center, 11th Floor.

The Center for Public Interest Law (CPIIL) will hold its second annual Vincentian Public Interest Law Conference on Tuesday, October 9, 2007. The event is co-sponsored by University Ministry.

The conference, entitled "Building a Critical Mass for Change: Developing Socially Responsible Attorneys" will have three sessions.

The first session will be a panel discussion about social activist lawyering. The panel will feature Professor Bill Quigley and two other social activist lawyers from Chicago. The panel will take place at 11:50 a.m. in the Lewis Building, Room 905.

The second afternoon session will focus on how the College of Law can develop socially responsible attorneys. The event will involve members of the law school community and the Goal 2 Committee of DePaul University's Vision 2012.

This session will use a World Café format. The World Café model is based on the belief that knowledge is exchanged and action is encouraged because of "conversations that matter." Implicit in this is a belief that the people committed to an idea within an organization already possess much of the knowledge and vision necessary to make the idea come to life. However, they need a format in which to share this knowledge. The World Café will be held from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the DePaul

The evening session will feature Professor Bill Quigley, human rights attorney and Director of the Law Clinic and the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. Quigley teaches several courses, including Law and Poverty and Catholic Social Teaching and Law. Quigley's talk is entitled "Katrina, Law and Social Justice" and will focus on the efforts to bring justice to housing, education, and criminal procedure to New Orleans citizens in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Quigley is internationally known for his human rights work and has been devoted to human rights issues in Haiti for many years. Quigley has received numerous awards for his lifelong commitment to serving the common good, including a 2006 Stanford Law School National Public Service Award and the 2006 National Lawyers Guild Ernie Goodman Award.

The reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Jenner and Block LLC, 330 N. Wabash Ave., 40th Floor with the speaking portion beginning at 6:00 p.m. MCLE credit available.

Jenner & Block building security requires pre-registration and a Photo ID. Please RSVP by October 2, 2007 to Shaye Loughlin, CPIIL Assistant Director at (312) 362-7212 or at sloughli@depaul.edu.

CPIIL helps students with loan repayment

By Rose Rivera

The Center for Public Interest Law Loan Repayment Assistance Committee is pleased to announce it has selected six alumni to receive 2007 LRAP awards.

The recipients have outstanding qualifications and proven dedication to public interest law. The recipients are: Peter Bibler ('05), Beth Johnson ('05), Amy Kessler ('00), Gil Lenz ('05), Teri Ross ('06) and Shawna Scheidel ('05).

The awards are made in the form of a forgivable loan from the law school in the amount of \$5,000 to be used toward the payment of the enormous

law school debt many public interest lawyers experience.

"When I first moved to Louisville, I had to work a second job as a server to continue to make my monthly student loan payments," Scheidel said. "With this award, I now can focus entirely on my work at Legal Aid and not worry so much about my financial situation."

Lenz, who works at the Office of the State Appellate Defender in Chicago, expressed a similar reaction to the significance of the award.

"The LRAP award will go a long way in allowing me to remain at the Appellate

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Cover story continued:

largest cities in Chiapas. The students collaborated with attorneys and other community members at a number of different human rights organizations, and participated in a wide variety of legal and non-legal activities. Their projects included the following: educational workshops and free legal assistance for women on a number of issues including child support, domestic violence, and sex crimes; monitoring and mediation of land disputes; and research and composition of reports and press releases on torture, arbitrary arrests, and paramilitary action in the region.

Many of the DePaul law students who participated in the Chiapas Human Rights Practicum during the summer of

2007 have said that their outlook on the legal profession has been forever changed. In addition to the experiences she gained in Chiapas, Hill appreciates the practicum because it connected her with other DePaul students who participate in public interest law activities on and off-campus. "It was refreshing to suddenly become part of a vibrant, activist group of law students interested in and with prior experience in public interest law efforts," said Hill. She also noted that a number of students who participated in the Chiapas program indicated that "the practicum is the reason they applied to DePaul."

Students to Provide Legal Help and Manual Labor to NOLA and Appalachia Residents

By Jennifer Keys

DePaul law students have a unique opportunity to provide legal assistance to the under-represented in New Orleans and Appalachia.

The DePaul Student Hurricane Network and University Ministry are working together to plan two service immersion trips. A group of students will head to New Orleans during winter break, and another group will travel to the Appalachian region during spring break. Students Kayleigh Van Poolen and Paul Temple have taken the lead in organizing the trips with the assistance of law school chaplain Tom Judge.

"Law students have been down in the Gulf Coast ever since the floodwaters receded and the advocacy work done to date is staggering," Van Poolen said. "You will have a chance to be part of the monumental work being done as well as have the chance to

interact with your colleagues, the residents of New Orleans and other law students."

Between 10 and 20 students will join the New Orleans trip from January 6-12, 2008. The cost for the trip is \$100 and covers transportation, lodging and many meals. However, no one will be turned away for inability to pay. In New Orleans, students will provide legal assistance in the areas of family law, employment law and succession, as well as help with manual labor projects in the ongoing rebuilding efforts.

Another group of eight to 10 students will head to Appalachia during spring break. The exact departure and return date have yet to be determined. Students in Appalachia will be working on a variety of projects, such as cleanup of rivers, illegal dumping areas and trails. Students also will work with environmental attorneys representing commu-

nities affected by toxic waste pollution.

"Our coming in and spending time and money in their community are basic but effective means of saying to these people, this place and this community matter," Van Poolen said.

Van Poolen and Temple, who have each assisted New Orleans residents during past service trips, both know firsthand the continuing need for legal and manual labor assistance. Temple wants law students to know that they can help – and that there is still a lot of work to be done.

"I think one of the misconceptions people have about New Orleans or Appalachia is that the problems there are fixed, or at least are on their way to being fixed," he said.

"Whether it's cleanup or legal research, we will certainly lend a hand in the long-term, ongoing efforts."

Both Van Poolen and Temple agree that helping the residents is the most important aspect of the trip; however, law students also have a lot to gain personally from the experience.

"It gives me an opportunity to personally meet the people affected by the hurricanes and help them in their daily lives," Temple said. "It's not just theoretical learning in a classroom. It's reality."

Applications for the New Orleans trip are currently available from Van Poolen at psvan333@yahoo.com or Temple at patemple@gmail.com. The application deadline is November 9, with payment due soon thereafter. Applications for the Appalachia trip will be available later this fall.

Loan Repayment, continued from page 2:

Defender."

The recipients are thankful that the College of Law is committed to fostering and supporting its students' dedication to public interest law,

"DePaul provided an excellent support system for public interest students, both during law school and now after law school," said Johnson, a staff attorney at the Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic.

Lenz concurred and stated, "While every law school has its public-interest programs, I have noticed that few of my colleagues shared what I had at DePaul- a large, close-knit group of fellow students who were dedicated to public service before they ever walked in the door. I don't think it's a coincidence that so many of these students choose DePaul Law."

Many of the recipients ex-

pressed their gratitude for the LRAP program and wished to thank the LRAP Committee, Dean Glen Weissenberger, Professor Leonard Cavise, and Teri Ross among others, for the creation of this invaluable program.

"Overwhelmed with debt, this award has enabled me to focus more on serving my clients without the added stress on how I'm to pay my own bills," Bibler said.

The DePaul Center for Public Interest Law and the LRAP Committee will host a reception on from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 5 in the Rare Book Room to recognize the recipients and to celebrate the growth of the LRAP at DePaul. All alumni and members of the public interest law community are invited to attend.

STUDENTkudos

Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) Intern Recipients

PILI sponsors internships for current law students. For more information, please visit www.pili-law.org.

Jennifer Keys, ACLU

Cat Ceko, Chicago Legal Clinic

Rebecca Star Carson, National Immigrant Justice Center

Susan DeCostanza, Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

Marcus Martinez, Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Equal Justice America Fellowship Recipients

Equal Justice America has sponsored fellowships for nearly 1,200 law students to work with more than 150 legal services organizations across the country. Fellows earn up to \$3000 per person for working a minimum number of hours at an approved legal service organization. For more information, please visit equaljusticeamerica.org.

Mary Meixner, Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Equal Justice Works Summer Corpsmembers

The Summer Corps is an AmeriCorps-funded program that provides 250 law students with the opportunity to earn a \$1000 education award voucher for spending the summer in a qualifying internship at a non-profit, public interest organization. For more information, please visit equaljusticeworks.org.

Tracy Walsh, IL Migrant Assistance Project

Jarrett Knox, Legal Aid Bureau

Mary Meixner, Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Albert & Anne Mansfield Fellowship Recipients

The Mansfield Fellowships were developed in 1982 to encourage students to pursue careers in legal service programs that represent low-income clients. Each year, two DePaul students are selected from as fellows and receive a stipend for clerking fulltime during the summer at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. Applications are available in the Spring at Law Career Services.

Sarah Baum

Molly Stoffen

CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST LAW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The Center for Public Interest Law offers a number of summer funding opportunities for students dedicated to public service. For more information, please visit www.law.depaul.edu/cpil.

CUDAHY FELLOWS:

Justine Hansen, Office of the Public Guardian, Juvenile Division

Mary Meixner, Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Meredith Schmitt, Office of the Public Guardian, Juvenile Division

Paul Temple, Cook County State's Attorney's Office

Elizabeth Turillo, Office of the Cook County Public Defender

Kayleigh Van Poolen, First Defense Legal Aid & Student Hurricane Network

Crawfie Ward, Office of the Cook County Public Defender

SONNENSCHNEIN SCHOLARS:

Allegra Cira, Illinois Migrant Assistance Project

Chris Letkewicz, Office of the Cook County Public Defender

PUSATERI FELLOW:

Dima Khalidi, Center for Constitutional Rights

Public Interest Law Association (PILA) Stipend Recipients

PILA's annual auction raises funds to create stipends for students committed to summer public interest law jobs.

Paul Temple

Crawfie Ward

Nisha Verma

Meredith Schmitt

Rocio Armendariz

Maria DeHowitt

Sarah Gelsomino

Justine Hansen

Elizabeth Ricks

Malorie Struck

Elizabeth Turillo

ALUMprofile

Q & A with DePaul Alumna

Name:

Ruth Ann Schmitt

Title:

Executive Director of the Illinois Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois

Education:

DePaul University College of Law, Class of 1974

Q: What courses at DePaul most prepared you for a career in public interest law?

Schmitt: Family Law and Constitutional Law were most on point for legal services practice, but I really enjoyed UCC courses and Conflicts. Even the courses I didn't like so much (and there were a few!) taught me something and opened my mind to approaching problems in my career, but at the Clinic, I found real excitement. The Clinic was an experiment in 1973, and it was almost-controlled chaos. The directors that I worked with came from private practice. We worked on criminal, civil, state and federal court cases at both trial and appellate levels. It was there that my legal services leanings were developed.

Q: Upon entering law school did you know you were interested in public interest law?

Schmitt: I did, or at least the pump was primed. I had seen the harshness in the lives of migrant workers and their families who came each summer to work the fruit farms in my upstate New York community. I experienced physical abuse, mental illness, divorce and decline into poverty within my own family. By the time I headed to college in 1967, I had a good idea of how difficult it was if you were on the outside of the 1950s socially

acceptable world. The Kennedy administration, especially Bobby's focus on rural poverty, the Peace Corps, Johnson's War on Poverty and the socially conscious direction the country had taken all carried me to law school and to the Clinic. A job in legal services seemed the natural path for me.

Q: How did you become the Executive Director of the Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois?

Schmitt: I couldn't find a job after law school. There were not a lot of opportunities for public service work. The narrow view that I had of what I was willing to do coupled with not being from Chicago (and therefore without the tools to navigate the job market), meant that I spent a year working at a real estate firm. I interviewed for a job working with inmates at Cook County Jail and was hired. When I reported for work, I was told the program had lost federal funding and there was no job, but that they had funding from the Illinois Department of Public Aid to hire an attorney to handle civil cases of IDPA recipients. The job also required working with volunteer lawyers. I was enraged and indignant! But Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS) hired me anyway. Three years later, I became executive director, largely because all the funding for the other projects dried up and everyone left. I managed to fundraise enough to keep the volunteer program alive and growing. In 1980, the ABA asked me to be the project manager for their newly formed Pro Bono Activation Project, so I took an 18-month leave of absence from CVLS. When I returned to CVLS, I worked with bar leaders and interested legal services people on a new idea called Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA). In 1983, I became the first director of Illinois' new IOLTA program, the Lawyers Trust Fund.



Ruth Ann Schmitt ('74), Executive Director of the Illinois Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois.

Q: What advice do you have for students interested in public interest law?

Schmitt: If this is what you want to do, prepare while you are in law school. Make all the contacts you can and volunteer for programs so that you can see if you like the work they do and if you are a good fit. It is not easy to find a job, but don't give up! Don't be afraid to ask for help, and be creative.

Student Recalls Her Experience as a Pusateri Fellow

By Dima Khalidi

More than 300 prisoners remain at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba. Their plight is now at the forefront of the nation's attention. The torture and inhumane treatment that many underwent at the hands of their U.S. captors has become public knowledge.

Five years ago, however, no one dared question the United States for imprisoning what the government claimed were suspects in the "war on terror." The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) was the first organization to challenge these detentions, many of which resulted from individuals turning their innocent neighbors over to U.S. forces for a bounty in Pakistan and Afghanistan. CCR now coordinates the work of more than 500 lawyers and law firms that represent the detainees.

I had the good fortune to be an Ella Baker Intern at CCR this summer, thanks to a fellowship provided here at DePaul by the Pusateri family. I was assigned to work on several Guantanamo cases, as well as several cases in CCR's human rights docket. The sheer novelty of the legal issues arising in the Guantanamo cases made the experience distinctive from any other work. Although the Supreme Court has already issued three decisions confirming the rights of the detainees to challenge their detention through habeas corpus proceedings, Congress managed to curtail this right through legislation creating an entirely new process for determining whether the detainees are "enemy combatants" and establishing military commissions to try those that were so labeled.

This entire system was put into question this past summer as the United States Supreme Court granted *certiorari* in two Guantanamo cases after it had denied *cert* in the same cases only months before. This incident created a flurry of new motions and challenges in the lower courts regarding their previous dismissals on the basis of the legislation, which the D.C. Circuit had interpreted as stripping the federal courts of their jurisdiction over the detainees' habeas claims. Not only was I privy to the intense discussions among the 500 lawyers as they coordinated their strategies, I also was able to draft motions on behalf of two CCR clients and conduct research on the cases of others.

In particular, I worked on one of the most pressing problems for many detainees, namely that of repatriation. The United States often releases detainees to their home countries without warning. For many of the detainees, some of whom are United Nations High Commission for Refugees mandated refugees, this is a fate worse than Guantanamo because of their fear of returning to their country of origin, where they believe they will be persecuted. Ironically, these men are asking the United States, which has itself persecuted them, to comply with its obligations under the Torture Convention and the Refugee Convention and spare them from further persecution by their own governments. The United States has already returned many such men who fear persecution to their home governments, and there are reports that many have been detained arbitrar-



Dima Khalidi and the interns at the Center for Constitutional Rights

ily and tortured by their own governments.

While the action in the Guantanamo department was certainly the most fascinating in terms of the constantly evolving issues, I also was able to work on cases based on the Alien Tort Claims Act and the Torture Victims Protection Act (ATS), under which foreigners may sue other foreigners for international law violations that occurred abroad. Given that CCR was at the forefront of reviving the ATS, legislated as part of the 1789 Judiciary Act, as a tool to litigate human rights abuses, it was a privilege to be able to work on several such cases.

Two of the cases for which I conducted factual and legal research were appeals in suits against Israeli officials involved in attacks on Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, in violation of international humanitarian law. The other two were against corporations, the first against two U.S. contractors in Iraq for the torture that occurred at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and the second against Caterpillar for its complicity in extrajudicial killings in the process of demolitions of Palestinian homes. These cases represent important efforts to hold accountable individuals and corporations that otherwise continue in their illegal actions with impunity. The plaintiffs in these cases are individuals and families whose lives have been destroyed and who have no other redress in the world.

My experience at CCR is certain to guide me in the future in a career geared towards helping those whose voices are unheard and whose interests go unrepresented. I was able to work with lawyers whose conviction and dedication to social justice drives them to continue fighting against all the odds. While CCR's work is less based on client contact than other practice areas, I was able to witness and contribute to the cases of numerous individuals whose unspeakable stories I became familiar with and whose hopes hang in the balances of our justice system.

CSI Connects Students to Meaningful Volunteer Opportunities

Part of DePaul's Center for Public Interest Law, CSI serves as a liaison between students looking for volunteer opportunities and local organizations that need volunteer help. CSI opportunities this year include:

ACORN Housing Closure Foreclosure Avoidance Program assists borrowers currently in foreclosure to deal with their situation and identifies instances of illegal or unscrupulous mortgage lending activities.

Chicago Coalition for the Homeless By volunteering with CCH you can join the fight to end homelessness by meeting with local legislators about initiatives, utilizing methods of community organizing, spending a day lobbying in Springfield.

Midwest Tax Clinic is a resource for Illinois residents who face a controversy with the Internal Revenue Service.

CGLA Expungement Help Desk provide assistance at the Daley Center to clients seeking to have their records expunged or sealed, or petition for an executive clemency.

Centro Romero is a legal aid clinic for the Hispanic community of Edgewater, Rogers Park and Uptown, providing citizenship and immigration services.

Lawyers in the Classroom is Coordinated by Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC). The Lawyers in the Classroom program partners

volunteers with elementary classes at a Chicago Public School to help students understand the U.S. Constitution and our legal system.

DePaul Student Legal Services provides high quality, free or low-cost legal advice to DePaul students on a wide range of common problems, including contract disputes, misdemeanor criminal offenses and more.

The Employment Project attacks the problem of homelessness by providing employment. Volunteers with TEP can assist with case coordination, employment preparation training, life skills workshops, and job search.

Family Law Court Watching Program uses law students to observe the proceedings at the nearby Domestic Violence Courthouse, When their presence is known, immediate improvements in court functioning are apparent.

First Defense Legal Aid offers free 24-hour legal representation and advice to any individual taken into Chicago Police Department custody. FDLA volunteers will interview the arrestee, inform the arrestee of his/her constitutional rights, provide the arrestee with bond information

and serve as a link between the arrestee and his/her family.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights educates and organizes immigrant and refugee communities to assert their rights; promotes citizenship and civic participation; monitors, analyzes, and advocates on immigrant-related issues and informs the general public about the contributions of immigrants and refugees.

Latino Union of Chicago through consistent organization and advocacy, seeks to improve the wages and working conditions of the Latino community in Chicago.

The Louise Project asks Students to work with Jones College Preparatory High School students as mentors or tutors. Subjects with the greatest need include math, physics, and grammar/composition.

Marjorie Kovler Center for the Treatment of Survivors of Torture coordinates comprehensive pro bono health services to survivors of state-sponsored torture from more than 40 countries. The center is seeking volunteer clinical social workers and licensed therapists interested in providing mental health services to

survivors of torture.

Metropolitan Tenants Organization strives to educate, organize and empower tenants. Volunteers assist with the Tenant Rights Hotline, informing tenants about state law and making referrals to lawyers or public interest agencies.

Safer Foundation provides a road map from prison to productivity for ex-offenders, their families and communities. Students are needed primarily to tutor students studying for their GEDs, but may be asked to assist with testing, or light administrative tasks,

Student Hurricane Network addresses challenges that still exist post-2005 hurricane season, such as criminal processing, housing, and the need to rebuild. Students can travel to affected areas and provide support for legal projects related to criminal justice, environment, housing, voting rights, safety & welfare, and others.

West Suburban PADS offers emergency shelter, a daytime support center, specialized case management in the areas of mental health, substance abuse and medical treatment.

Since 2005, CSI has helped students give to the community while gaining valuable experience. Not only do many of the organizations provide legal or legal-related experience to the volunteers, they also expose students to struggles facing many people in our communities. If you are interested or if you have questions, please contact Meredith Schmitt or Justin Hansen at depaulcsi@gmail.com.