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## Pro Bono Honors Program

### Career & Professional Development Office

#### What is the Pro Bono Honors Program?

The Pro Bono Honors Program was established in 1991 by the Faculty and Administration of California Western School of Law in cooperation with the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program. The Program provides law students the opportunity to gain valuable legal experience while simultaneously helping to address the unmet legal needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented individuals and the nonprofit organizations that serve those individuals.

California Western's Career & Professional Development Office (CPDO) facilitates the Pro Bono Honors Program in which participating students gain career shaping legal training in multiple organizations around San Diego in a wide variety of law fields, along with deriving satisfaction from serving the public. The Pro Bono Program recognizes two types of volunteer legal service: (1) pro bono legal service *dedicated to the needs of persons of limited means* with nonprofit organizations, government agencies, or private interests; and (2) pro bono legal service with nonprofit organizations working in other areas of the law. As well, participating students establish their commitment to the American Bar Association Model Rule 6.1 and the State Bar of California, which encourages all lawyers to provide at least 50 hours of pro bono service annually.

Pro bono opportunities are available with the agencies listed below and can include other organizations as well. Before working with any organization not listed, first check with the CPDO for approval. Please email Bhashini Weerasinghe, Assistant Director of Pro Bono & Public Service at [bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu](mailto:bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu).

#### How Does It Work?

1. Meet with the CPDO to discuss pro bono opportunities. Students are eligible to participate in the Pro Bono Honors Program after completion of their 1L year.
2. Select qualified organizations and apply for a law related position.
3. Once pro bono work is arranged, obtain [Pro Bono Tracking Instructions for Track It Forward](#) from Canvas Modules or email Bhashini Weerasinghe, Assistant Director of Pro Bono & Public Service at [bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu](mailto:bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu).
4. Keep careful track of pro bono time and services you provide to the organization on the online tracking program, Track It Forward.
5. Upon completion of pro bono work with the organization, submit verification via Track It Forward. Verification must be done at the end of each semester and/or after a minimum of 50 hours are met by exporting the hours and having the Supervising Attorney sign off on the hours.

**NOTE: Students are not eligible for recognition if they receive pay or academic credit for their service. If you have any questions, please email Bhashini Weerasinghe, Assistant Director of Pro Bono & Public Service at [bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu](mailto:bweerasinghe@cwsl.edu).**

### **What Is the Time Commitment?**

Students must complete a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono work with a qualifying employer and submit the verification within the deadline of March 1 of each year.

### **What Do I Get From This?**

In addition to practical legal training and high levels of personal and professional satisfaction, the law school officially recognizes students who complete the Pro Bono Honors Program with:

1. Induction into the Pro Bono Honors Society at the annual recognition ceremony, honoring students who completed at least 50 hours of pro bono service during the proceeding year;
2. Official notation on their transcripts and certificate of completion and appreciation signed by the Dean;
3. Eligibility for the California Lawyers Association's Wiley W. Manuel Award for pro bono legal services; and
4. Graduation regalia (cord).

### **What Should I Do Now?**

1. Review the participating organizations in this handout to begin to get a sense of where you might like to do your first pro bono work.
2. Meet with the CPDO to start the process. It is best to schedule an appointment on Canvas. When scheduling your appointment, please reference the Pro Bono Honors Program.

### **Additional Resources for Students Pursuing Public Interest Opportunities and Funding Sources Available at:**

1. Students who have a Federal Work Study (FWS) award may be able to use that award at a Pro Bono employer. In order to apply for FWS you must follow the procedures and timelines set by the Financial Aid Office. For more information on FWS, contact the Financial Aid Office at [finaid@cwsl.edu](mailto:finaid@cwsl.edu).
2. Limited grant money may be available for students working with a nonprofit organization during the Summer. Search "Scholarship" on Symplicity.
3. <http://www.psjd.org/>  
PSJD, formerly PSLawNet, is *the* online clearinghouse for law students and lawyers to connect with public interest job listings and career-building resources.
3. <http://equaljusticeworks.org>  
Equal Justice Works (EJW) is a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit organization with the mission of creating a just society by mobilizing the next generation of lawyers committed to equal justice. EJW provides leadership to ensure a sustainable pipeline of talented and trained lawyers are involved in public service.
4. <https://onejustice.org/>  
OneJustice works with lawyers and law students to empower California's most vulnerable people, people who need legal help just to gain their most basic civil rights and to meet essential human needs.
5. OPIA (Office of Public Interest Advising) [Job Search Toolkit](#) published by Harvard Law School on finding the right fit, preparing your materials, and application process.



**Participating Organizations**

Organization	Location	Description
<p><b>ACLU FOUNDATION OF SAN DIEGO &amp; IMPERIAL COUNTIES</b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.aclusandiego.org">www.aclusandiego.org</a>  P.O. Box 87131 San Diego, CA 92138</p>	<p>Research, writing, and fact investigation for cases involving constitutional and civil rights.</p>
<p><b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATES</b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.affordablehousingadvocates.org">www.affordablehousingadvocates.org</a>  427 C St., Suite 304 San Diego, CA 92101</p>	<p>Legal services program providing representation to indigents in affordable housing impact litigation and advocacy. Legal interns will assist attorney with impact litigation and advocacy, as well as special projects. Responsibilities will include legal research and writing, document review and analysis, investigation, and may include deposition and trial preparation. Minimum requirements: Completion of Legal Skills and Civil Procedure, excellent organizational skills, computer proficiency. Preferred: Completion of Evidence and Real Property, prior internship experience, ability to work independently.</p>
<p><b>CALIFORNIA RURAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INC.</b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.crla.org">www.crla.org</a>  640 Civic Center Drive, Suite 108 Vista, CA 92084</p>	<p>Nonprofit statewide law firm primarily providing services in the area of employment law to agricultural workers, as well as other low-wage workers. Spanish competency is preferred but not required, and assignments will vary based on the intern's availability and level of Spanish language proficiency. Besides legal research, throughout the internship, we may have varying opportunities for field monitoring to identify any health and safety violations and drafting of Cal-OSHA complaints, as well as preparation of wage claims and unemployment insurance appeals. Legal interns with Spanish proficiency will have the opportunity to interview clients. It may also be possible to represent our clients in Labor Commissioner or California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board proceedings. We are generally able to accommodate students to work remotely.</p>

Organization	Location	Description
<b>CALIFORNIA WESTERN COMMUNITY LAW PROJECT</b>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.cwclp.org">www.cwclp.org</a></p> <p><u>Downtown Site:</u> First Lutheran Church 1420 Third Ave. San Diego, CA 92101</p> <p><u>North Park Site:</u> St. Luke's Church 3725 30<sup>th</sup> Street San Diego, CA 92104</p> <p><u>City Heights Sites:</u> Hoover High School 4474 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego, CA 92115</p> <p>Rosa Parks Elementary School 4510 Landis St. San Diego, CA 92105</p> <p><u>North County Sites:</u> St. Leo's Mission Church 936 Genevieve St. Solana Beach, CA 92075</p>	<p>The Community Law Project (CLP) is a collaboration between California Western School of Law and several other organizations, including UCSD Medical School, the UCSD School of Pharmacy, the UCSD Pre-Dental Association, the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine the Third Avenue Charitable Organization, and the City Heights Educational Collaborative. The collaboration provides free medical, dental, acupuncture, pharmaceutical, legal and social services to low income residents of San Diego. CLP's mission is to provide sustainable and competent legal services to low income and indigent members of the local community while advancing the profession of law by instilling a commitment to public service in California Western School of Law students. CLP offers legal services in collaboration with its professional partners to offer holistic problem-solving solutions to its clients.</p> <p>The Project has five sites: Downtown, Lemon Grove, Solana Beach, and two locations in City Heights. The Project addresses all areas of law related to the indigent client, including family, consumer, criminal, bankruptcy, public benefits, housing, estate and immigration law. Clients are provided with advice, brief services, free legal consultations with specialty attorneys and referrals for full representation.</p> <p>Students volunteering at the clinics will work directly in a multidisciplinary context with the other clinics to provide legal services to the client. Student volunteers will gain the following skills and experiences: knowledge in a variety of legal areas affecting the poor and disabled; client counseling skills, including a greater awareness of cross-cultural issues; experience with the administration of legal services; essential advocacy skills learned directly from distinguished practicing attorneys; experience working in a multidisciplinary environment with the other clinics operating at the site; direct contact with clients; and satisfaction in making a sincere contribution to the community. All students, especially those bilingual in Spanish, are encouraged to apply.</p>
<b>CALIFORNIA WESTERN INNOCENCE AND JUSTICE CLINIC</b>	<p>Website: <a href="https://www.cwsl.edu/experiential_learning/clinics/california_western_innocence_and_justice_clinic.html">https://www.cwsl.edu/experiential_learning/clinics/california_western_innocence_and_justice_clinic.html</a></p> <p>350 Cedar St. San Diego, CA 92101</p>	<p>The California Western Innocence and Justice Clinic (formerly known as California Innocence Project) is a clinic established in 1999 at California Western School of Law. The clinic is dedicated to freeing the innocent, training law students to be advocates for their clients, and changing laws and procedures in the state of California. Since its inception, the clinic has helped free 40 wrongfully convicted clients.</p>
<b>CASA CORNELIA LAW CENTER</b>	<p>Website: <a href="http://casacornelia.org">http://casacornelia.org</a></p> <p>525 B Street., Suite 1800 San Diego, CA 92101</p>	<p>Assist attorneys in case preparation, including trial work. Conduct legal research, prepare pleadings, and participate in client outreach for this nonprofit immigration law firm. Programs focus on immigrant victims of serious crimes, including domestic violence, unaccompanied detained and non-detained children, and asylum.</p>

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<b>CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.ccssd.org">www.ccssd.org</a>  4508 Mission Bay Dr. San Diego, CA 92109	Center for Community Solutions (CCS) assists victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and stalking. We assist those trying to escape from abusive relationships, those trying to break the cycle of violence and those trying to access legal and social justice for themselves and their children. CCS provides confidential assistance with restraining and civil harassment orders, safety planning, family law matters (divorce, paternity, child custody/support, etc.), court accompaniment (for emotional support), direct representation in complex cases, California Safe at Home confidential address program applications, assistance with battered immigrant spouse petitions (VAWA applications), U-Visa applications, employment law assistance for victims of sexual assault and general legal consultations and referrals. Additional office locations are in San Marcos at the North County Family Violence Prevention Center and at the TRO clinic located at the El Cajon Courthouse.
<b>DISABILITY RIGHTS CALIFORNIA</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.disabilityrightsca.org">www.disabilityrightsca.org</a>  530 B Street, Suite 400 San Diego, CA 92101	Disability Rights California is a nonprofit public interest law firm that operates under federal mandates to protect the legal, civil, and service rights of persons with disabilities. Legal interns at Disability Rights California will gain experience in disability rights law, interviewing and advising clients, legal research and writing, and occasional representation of clients at mediation and administrative hearings.
<b>ELDER LAW &amp; ADVOCACY - SENIOR LEGAL SERVICES</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.seniorlaw-sd.org">www.seniorlaw-sd.org</a>  <u>Main Address:</u> 5151 Murphy Canyon Rd, Suite 100 San Diego, CA 92123  <u>Imperial County:</u> 939 W. Main St., Box #19 Basement El Centro, CA 92243	Senior Legal Services provides free legal services to any resident of San Diego and Imperial County who is 60 years of age or older. Brief service and legal counseling is available to clients at over 40 community sites. Legal interns will have many options and opportunities to help with client intake, legal issue assessment, research, drafting and contact with adverse parties concerning issues such as: nursing home rights, consumer problems, age discrimination, wills, family legal issues, fraud, abuse, neglect, landlord-tenant disputes, lawyer referrals/litigation, powers of attorney for health care, social security/public benefits.
<b>FEDERAL DEFENDERS OF SAN DIEGO, INC.</b>	Website: <a href="http://fddsdi.com">http://fddsdi.com</a>  <u>San Diego Office:</u> 225 Broadway, Suite 900 San Diego, CA 92101  <u>El Centro Office:</u> 1699 W. Main St., Suite D El Centro, CA 92243	Federal Defenders is a nonprofit organization representing indigent defendants charged with federal offenses. Legal intern duties include: research and writing motions and appeals, client interaction, assisting with trial preparation, and observing court proceedings and new arraignments. Spanish helpful, but not required. 10 hours per week commitment desired during the school year; full time during the summers; 2Ls and 3Ls preferred.

Organization	Location	Description
<b>IMMIGRATION CENTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN</b>	Website: <a href="http://icwclaw.org">http://icwclaw.org</a>  600 B Street, Suite 2040 San Diego, CA 92101	<p>ICWC is a non-profit legal organization providing immigration services to underrepresented women and children in San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. ICWC strives to provide security and stability for children who are abused, abandoned or neglected and for women and children who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Interns will work with Staff Attorneys and Legal Assistants and will attend regular supervisory meetings. Interns will primarily work with four federal immigration law: the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), U Nonimmigrant Status, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and Special Immigration Juvenile Status (SIJS). Interns will also work with restraining orders, criminal law, and probate law. Interns will assist with legal research, client intake, completing legal form, drafting pleadings, and making court appearances.</p>
<b>JFS CITIZENSHIP &amp; IMMIGRATION PROGRAM</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.jfssd.org">www.jfssd.org</a>  8804 Balboa Ave San Diego, CA 92123	<p>The JFS Citizenship &amp; Immigration program provides assistance to immigrants with immigration-related applications including: green cards, travel documents, employment authorization, and citizenship. Additionally, JFS is a member of the San Diego Naturalization Collaborative and works closely with several local legal service providers including the International Rescue Committee, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, UURISE, the Employee Rights Center, and Catholic Charities to naturalize eligible immigrants. Students will be completing a variety of hands-on duties with this legal service provider and the other legal service providers in the collaborative, including assisting in preparing immigration applications. JFS resettles refugees from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United States State Department. Their services include work assisting JFS's refugee clients as well as the various refugee communities in San Diego.</p>
<b>LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO, INC.</b>	Website: <a href="http://lassd.org">http://lassd.org</a>  <u>Main Office:</u> 110 South Euclid Ave. San Diego, CA 92114  <u>Midtown SD Office:</u> 1764 San Diego Ave., Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92110  <u>North County Office:</u> 100 E. San Marcos Blvd, Suite 308, San Marcos, CA 92069	<p>The Legal Aid Society of San Diego is a nonprofit law firm providing free legal services out of three office locations throughout San Diego County to low-income individuals who qualify. The areas of law range from family, housing, immigration, government benefits, health, consumer, and other areas of law that fit Legal Aid's priorities. For a full detailed description of the areas of law, please review the website for more details. Legal Aid provides legal services ranging from advice to full representation in litigation. Legal Aid also provides community education and outreach throughout San Diego County.</p> <p>Legal interns may have the opportunity to interview clients, write various legal documents or community education materials, observe attorneys in court appearances, and research. The type of work will depend on the area of law in which the intern is working. The intern will be supervised by an attorney at all stages of work. Specific qualifications will depend on the area of law in which the law student wants to work. Legal Aid requests a cover letter detailing the area of law in which the student is interested and the location preference, so that the student's application materials can be forwarded to the appropriate interviewing attorneys.</p>

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<p><b><u>NEW MEDIA RIGHTS</u></b></p>	<p>Website:  <a href="http://www.newmediarights.org">www.newmediarights.org</a></p> <p>225 Cedar St.  San Diego, CA, 92101</p>	<p>New Media Rights is a nationally recognized, independently funded program of California Western School of Law. We provide one-to-one legal services, regulatory comments, and educational resources in the areas of internet, media, intellectual property, and public interest law. CWSL students assist clients including independent filmmakers, website operators, software developers, and journalists.</p> <p>CWSL students receive hands-on experience in “new media-related” practice areas that they might not otherwise get in San Diego. Regardless of whether students plan to become Internet or media attorneys, they will certainly encounter some of the issues they are exposed to at NMR in modern legal practice.</p> <p>Students help clients with an array of issues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Copyright, trademarks, rights of publicity and online publishing</li> <li>● Responding to and drafting DMCA takedowns, DMCA counter notices, cease and desist letters, account terminations</li> <li>● Creative Commons licenses and Open source software licensing questions</li> <li>● Drafting / Analyzing agreements including Terms of Use, Privacy Policies, Assignment Agreements, and Independent Contractor agreements</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>SAN DIEGO COASTKEEPER ENVIRONMENTAL LAW &amp; POLICY CLINIC</u></b></p>	<p>Website:  <a href="http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org">www.sdcoastkeeper.org</a></p> <p>8305 Vickers Street,  Suite 209  San Diego, CA 92111</p>	<p>San Diego Coastkeeper is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to protecting and restoring San Diego’s waters for the communities and wildlife that depend on them. San Diego Coastkeeper’s offers a variety of environmental internships that provide hands-on experience and skill development for future careers in the environmental realm specifically, and the non-profit sector in general. Coastkeeper interns are a valued part of our team, contributing to our environmental education and marine debris programs, communications and social media efforts, and overall organizational management.</p>

Organization	Location	Description
<p><b><u>SAN DIEGO COUNTY OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER</u></b></p>	<p>Website:  <a href="http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/public_defender">www.sdcounty.ca.gov/ public_defender</a></p> <p>451 A St., Suite 900  San Diego, CA 92101</p>	<p>The San Diego County Office of the Public Defender gives law students an unparalleled learning experience through a variety of internships. Legal interns assist skilled attorneys in all aspects of case preparation and courtroom advocacy. Interns will find a supportive environment with a true mentor system. The Public Defender pairs novices with knowledgeable practitioners to give interns real world experience while ensuring the clients receive the best representation possible.</p> <p>Interns should possess a passion for representing those whose civil liberties are at risk, an impeccable work ethic, and strong research and writing skills. The Public Defender’s Office affirmatively seeks interns and attorneys of varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds, as well as those with bilingual skills.</p> <p><b><u>Adult Criminal Divisions</u></b>  <b>The Primary Public Defender (PPD):</b> PPD is the primary agency appointed to represent adults charged with misdemeanor and felony cases.  <b>The Alternate Public Defender (APD):</b> APD represents clients accused of felonies with whom the Primary Public Defender has a conflict of interest.</p> <p><b>Multiple Conflicts Office-Major Cases (MCO):</b> MCO accepts court appointment on cases the PPD and APD cannot accept due to a conflict of interest. MCO is a small office with five attorneys and three investigators who specialize in only the most complicated and serious homicide and special circumstances cases. Its only office is located in downtown San Diego.</p> <p><b>Office of Assigned Counsel (OAC):</b> If the court finds that the PPD and APD have a conflict of interest, then OAC will provide the indigent defendant with a qualified, private practitioner who has been pre-screened and placed on a panel managed by the OAC. Legal interns will assist the Pro Per Coordinator in the active management of the Pro Per caseload.</p> <p><b><u>Juvenile Divisions</u></b>  <b>The Primary Public Defender (PPD):</b> PPD is the primary agency appointed to represent juveniles charged with misdemeanor and felony petitions.  <b>The Alternate Public Defender (APD):</b> APD represents juveniles accused of felonies and misdemeanors with whom the Primary Public Defender has a conflict of interest.</p>
<p><b><u>SAN DIEGO VOLUNTEER LAWYER PROGRAM</u></b></p>	<p>Website:  <a href="http://www.sdvlp.org">www.sdvlp.org</a></p> <p>707 Broadway,  Suite 1400  San Diego, CA 92101</p>	<p>Visit their website for more information. Programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Family Law &amp; Domestic Violence</b></li> <li>• <b>Restraining Order Clinics</b></li> <li>• <b>Guardianship Program</b></li> <li>• <b>Education Law Advocacy</b></li> <li>• <b>Landlord/Tenant</b></li> <li>• <b>HIV/AIDS Legal Services Project</b></li> <li>• <b>Special Immigrant Juvenile Status</b></li> <li>• <b>Microbusiness and Nonprofit Support Program</b></li> </ul>



Organization	Location	Description
<p><b><u>UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES AND EDUCATION, INC. (UURISE)</u></b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://uurise.org/">http://uurise.org/</a></p> <p>1600 Buena Vista Dr. Vista, CA 92081</p>	<p>UURISE is a nonprofit organization providing immigration counseling and representation in family petitions, family unity, political asylum, VAWA, U-Visas. Legal intern duties include: conduct client intakes and initial assessments; perform legal research; case preparation; and maintain client files.</p>
<p><b><u>UTILITY CONSUMERS' ACTION NETWORK (UCAN)</u></b></p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://ucan.org/">http://ucan.org/</a></p> <p>404 Euclid Ave, Suite 377 San Diego, CA 92114</p>	<p>UCAN has represented the interests of San Diego County consumers of telephone, water, and electric/natural gas services since 1983. UCAN focuses its efforts on the rates and services of San Diego Gas and Electric Company, telecommunications utilities and the City of San Diego. We do this by intervening in legal proceedings before the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), by supporting litigation in court cases, and by helping individual consumers with problems they are having with their utility bills and services.</p> <p>Interns with UCAN will gain experience in administrative law, consumer advocacy and litigation. UCAN deals extensively with customer/consumer issues through direct contact and interaction with clients, case investigation, and presenting consumer concerns to companies seeking resolution of problems. UCAN also examines SDG&amp;E filings with the California Public Utilities Commission and files legal briefs, protests, and complaints challenging unwarranted requests that may raise customer rates.</p> <p>A typical day for an intern would be fielding calls from consumers who dispute bills and services from telephone, cable or internet service providers, and then calling company representatives trying to obtain relief for consumers with disputes. Then an intern would help prepare and write protests, responses and/or briefs in UCAN cases before the California Public Utilities Commission, and then perhaps end the day by helping draft a Public Records Act request to a local governmental agency seeking information on rates and charges billed to their customers.</p>