

Community Legal Aid

A non-profit law firm serving the legal needs of low-income individuals and families in central northeast Ohio



www.communitylegalaid.org

2020 Summer Associate Information

Volunteer Opportunities for Law Students

2020 Summer Associate Program

Community Legal Aid is a private non-profit law firm which works to bridge the gap between poverty and justice for those in need. Legal Aid is the primary provider of free civil legal representation to low income and elderly residents of central northeast Ohio, concentrating its efforts on legal work that makes a difference in the lives of those it serves.

Legal Aid has Summer Associate openings for Law Students in four (4) of our Northeast Ohio offices. Job descriptions for the various positions are listed below.

Legal Aid is looking for dedicated, hard-working, and public-interest minded students for its Summer Program. Legal Aid has opportunities available for 2L's (with or without intern certificate) and 1L's. Law Students who are applying to participate in the Summer Associate Program are expected to work unpaid for at least 10 weeks.

Overview

Applicants must list their top two project preferences in their cover letter (see 2020 Summer Associate position descriptions) and describe why they are interested and what they hope to experience. Cover letters which do not indicate preferences may not receive full consideration.

Law Students will work in different areas of the law and have different experiences. Generally, Law Students may expect to interview clients, draft client letters, draft court pleadings, research relevant legal issues, attend and assist with court hearings, assist with discovery, analyze evidence, and complete various other tasks as assigned.

All Law Students will receive training in substantive areas of poverty law, meet with judges involved and may observe court hearings. There may also be brown bag lunches with current Legal Aid lawyers and community members. Past participants have included judges, a civil rights attorney and leaders of local non-profit agencies.

Funding

Due to limited financial resources, Legal Aid's Summer Associate positions are unpaid. Applicants are encouraged to apply for summer funding through the following sources.

- Summer grants / fellowships through individual law schools
- Equal Justice Works, AmeriCorps JD Program, may be offered in 2020. In the past fellowships were not cash awards, but were a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award which could be applied to educational debt or future education costs. These were awarded on a first come, first served basis so check the web site and be sure to apply as soon as the application is available on line—they go quickly. www.equaljusticeworks.org or e-mail: americorpsjd@equaljusticeworks.org. This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it
- Equal Justice America - Visit www.equaljusticeamerica.org for application details.
- Work Study Funding - Some universities offer work study funding for summer positions. Please check with your law school financial aid office for particulars at your law school. Please note that work-study money may reduce the amount of loans available to you for the following two semesters. Talk with your financial aid office to determine how work-study money may affect you.

These are just a few of the many funding possibilities. For more funding opportunities, visit the "Funding Sources" page under "Resource Center" at www.psjd.org.

Course Credit / Externship Credit

Community Legal Aid often supervises students working for externship or other credit. Please indicate in your cover letter if you intend to work with your law school to receive course credit for your summer associate position. Please keep in mind that Law Students who apply through the Summer Associate Program are expected to work unpaid for at least 10 weeks. If you are not interested in interning with Community Legal Aid in a full-time capacity for the summer, but are interested in volunteering your time outside of the Summer Associate Program, please complete and submit the volunteer application that is available on the website at <https://www.communitylegalaid.org/community> . Please note that this is a separate application from the Summer Associate Program Application.

Applications Procedure and Student Qualifications

Summer Associate Program applicants should have completed their first year of law school by the time they commence work in the summer of 2020. We give special consideration to students with a demonstrated commitment to serving disadvantaged people and communities. Law

students who speak Spanish are strongly encouraged to apply. Please submit the following:

- Cover Letter*
- Resume
- Contact Information for Three References
- Writing Sample
- Completed Summer Associate Application [HERE](#)

*Remember to include your top two projects / unit preferences (see Summer Associate Positions below) and whether you are willing to volunteer, will be receiving credit, are work-study eligible or are applying for a public interest summer grant / fellowship

Send application materials to: volunteer@communitylegalaid.org with 'Summer Associate' in the subject line of your email. Note that applications will only be accepted by email. Do not send hard copies of the forms. All submissions will be acknowledged. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 1 week of sending your application, call (330) 983-2575 to verify its receipt.

We plan to conduct on-campus interviews at The University of Akron School of Law and Case Western Reserve University but law students from other law schools are strongly encouraged to apply. Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis, and will continue to be accepted until the available positions are filled.

Deadlines for submission may be earlier due to law school interviewing schedules.

Please contact your law school’s career services office for more information.

Virtual interviews are available for applicants who are unable to participate in person.

Community Legal Aid is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate because of age, race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability.

Important Dates

Application deadline.....Open Until Filled

Offers extended (must be accepted within 72 hours)Rolling basis

Orientation Session May 26, 2020

Summer Associate SessionMay 26 – July 31, 2020

If you have a compelling reason for a different start date, e.g., military service, please provide an explanation on the Summer Associate Application

2020 Summer Associate Positions

Health Education Advocacy and Law Project (HEAL).....2 positions (Akron)

The Summer Intern can expect to be engaged in the following activities:

- Under supervision, maintain a small caseload of client cases, with patients referred to HEAL through our medical-legal partnership with Akron Children’s Hospital, Summa Women’s Health Center, and other community partners
- Conduct factual investigations including interviewing client; requesting and reviewing medical, school, and other records; searching public records, etc.
- Attend education and housing hearings, community meetings, and outreach events
- Conduct legal and policy research
- Develop education self-help materials for parents and non-legal advocates to use in special education settings
- Draft pleadings / research memoranda / policy papers / correspondence
- Such other tasks as may be assigned

Specific Qualifications: This internship is best suited for a JD or JD/MPH student who is interested in health law, health policy, and/or education law.

Other helpful qualifications include:

- Having taken a health law course; having an understanding of the health care system
- Having taken an education or school law course
- Demonstrated interest in and sensitivity to the legal needs of the poor as well as motivation to improve the condition of the poor
- Interest and experience in health law and/or policy issues
- Interest and experience in education law and/or policy issues
- Strong research/writing skills.

Personal characteristics include: excellent interpersonal skills, first-rate oral and written communications skills, professional attitude, discretion, diplomacy and tact, ability to relate to professionals, strong analytical and organizational skills, and high dependability.

Proficient in Microsoft Word and Internet research tools

Ability to speak a foreign language is highly desirable

Neighborhood Law Project1 Position (Youngstown)

The Neighborhood Law Project (NLP) is a neighborhood revitalization project that uses a community lawyering approach to improve health, education, economic opportunity, and quality of life for residents of the City of Youngstown through transformation of their neighborhoods.

Focus 1: Taft Promise Neighborhood (TPN) Working with approximately 40 community partners and residents of the neighborhood surrounding Taft Elementary, the NLP team is working to

increase education outcomes, improve housing stock, remove barriers to employment and improve the health and wellness of residents.

Focus 2: Working in neighborhoods identified by Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation, the NLP team is working to improve the quality of housing stock, to reduce the number of land contracts that are predatory and to support the start-up of small businesses.

The summer associate on this project may, under attorney supervision, assist with the following casework: evictions, foreclosures, housing conditions, land contracts, consumer debt and bankruptcy cases, record sealing, reinstatement of driving privileges, custody matters relating to school enrollment, public benefit matters, and special education/IEPs for residents in the neighborhoods served. In the course of this work, the summer associate will have hands on experience in preparing cases for trial, interviewing clients, issue spotting, case work-up and drafting of pleadings, memorandums, etc.

The summer associate will also assist with the development of community education materials and case protocols, attend community meetings, work with resident organizations and TPN councils and conduct legal and policy research.

Specific Qualifications: This position is best suited for a student who is interested in poverty law, urban development, or education.

Personal characteristics: Excellent interpersonal communication skills, strong oral and written communication skills, ability to relate to and work with both professionals and residents of a community with one of the highest poverty rates in the country.

Coursework that would be helpful include: Administrative Law, Advanced Legal Research, Bankruptcy, Basic Business Associations, Civil Litigation, Contracts, Property, and Problem Solving Workshop.

The summer associate should be proficient in Microsoft Word programs, Google Docs, and legal and internet research tools. Ability to speak Spanish is a plus.

**Pro Bono Bankruptcy Project/VLSP.....1 position
(Akron)**

Student Goals:

Students will understand the basics of Chapter 7 bankruptcy law and basic lawyering skills involved in working with clients in the VLSP/CLAS setting.

Students will interview all Summit County (and perhaps other counties) clients requesting bankruptcy assistance (approximately 135 clients) and do public records research to complement the client's intake interview. Upon completion, the case is evaluated by the VLSP Attorney.

Students will draft client specific advice letters to provide clients with advice regarding their options.

Students will assist at the Peace of Mind Clinics (for clients who receive our uncollectable letters)

Students will prepare at least one bankruptcy petition.

Students will attend at least one 341 bankruptcy hearing.

Students will attend and observe at least one call day at bankruptcy court.

Students will make contact with volunteer attorneys by assisting in the case placement process, assisting volunteers on an as-needed basis, and assisting in the preparation of the annual bankruptcy CLE that is co-sponsored with the Akron Bar Association.

Students will attend bar association meetings with the VLSP Managing Attorney.

Students will be invited to attend the annual bankruptcy CLE at the Akron Bar Association and may be invited to be a speaker at the CLE (providing a 5-minute overview of the work they do on the project for volunteer attorneys).

Specific Tasks:

Interviewing clients, Informal research (public documents), Legal research, Drafting client letters, Meeting with clients, Document review, Case management, Bankruptcy petition preparation, attend hearings, speak with private attorneys, attend bar association meetings and/or events, Draft pleadings, memos, etc.

Skills, Experience, Interests Needed: Law Student needs to be self-motivated and able to work on their own and in a team. Student must be able to follow directions. Student must be responsible and reliable, as they will be meeting with clients. Student must be professional, as they will be meeting with clients and private attorneys. No prior bankruptcy, evidence, litigation or research and writing experience is needed. Interest or background in poverty law and/or bankruptcy law is helpful, but not required.

**General Practice Pro Bono Project/VLSP.....1 position
(Akron)**

Student Goals:

Case Interviewing and Development: Students will interview clients in all areas of civil law. The client's legal problems include family law, bankruptcy/consumer law, probate, housing, and other. Students will work with an attorney to develop client case files (gather appropriate documents, identify appropriate parties, etc.), develop case profiles, and prepare basic pleadings (as appropriate) in each client's case. Students will communicate with private attorneys and assist them with case work, as requested.

Clinics: Students will work with clients to prepare for legal clinics and attend legal clinics. The

clinics are primarily in the areas of divorce, custody, visitation, collections/consumer, estate planning, and general. Students will prepare draft wills, powers of attorney, living wills, and transfer on death affidavits for the estate planning clinics. Students will assist client with the preparation of a variety of family law pleadings. Students will assist clients in the preparation of letters to creditors.

Pro Bono/Professional Development: Students will assist in recruitment, on-going communication and case support for pro bono attorneys and training of pro bono attorneys. Students will attend bar association meetings with the VLSP Managing Attorney.

Specific Tasks:

Interviewing clients, public records research, legal research, drafting letters, meeting with clients, document review, case management, speak with private attorneys, attend bar association meetings and/or events, draft legal pleadings and other legal documents, memos, and possibly bankruptcy petition preparation and attendance at hearings.

Skills, Experience, Interests Needed: Law Student needs to be self-motivated and able to work on their own and in a team. Student must be able to follow directions. Student must be responsible and reliable, as they will be meeting with clients. Student must be professional, as they will be meeting with clients and private attorneys. No prior substantive law, evidence, litigation or research and writing experience is needed. Interest or background in poverty law and/or bankruptcy law is helpful, but not required.

**Immigration Law Project..... 1 position
(Youngstown)**

The intern will increase the capacity of the program to serve clients seeking naturalization, initial or renewal of spousal “green cards” which are the three most labor-intensive routine services we typically provide.

The intern will also specifically work on the following projects.

- Prepare Immigration court briefs on removability of protected domestic violence victims.
- Naturalization/citizenship eligibility reviews, with regard to removability risk factors.

Specific tasks to be completed by this intern include developing checklists for clients, collection of necessary documents for particular routine immigration services, and drafting of USCIS applications, and briefs on removability risks.

**Housing/Consumer Litigation.....3 positions
(Akron/Canton/Youngstown)**

The intern will have immediate contact with clients, will draft documents and will shadow attorneys at hearings. The intern will be assigned an attorney with an ongoing caseload. The

intern will gain valuable litigation experience and will know that he/she has assisted vulnerable populations facing eviction, foreclosure or consumer debt litigation. Work will be required assisting individual representation for eviction, collections, bankruptcy and foreclosure matters as well as systemic matters related to fair housing and fair debt collection matters. The attorney and managing attorney will evaluate the intern.

The Intern can expect to be engaged in the following activities:

- Conduct screening and client interviews with clients seeking legal assistance with eviction, foreclosure or consumer debt.
- Conduct factual investigations including client interviews, requesting and reviewing court, medical, and other records, searching public records, etc.
- Attend hearings, trials and outreach events
- Conduct legal research
- Draft pleadings / research memoranda / correspondence
- Such other tasks as may be assigned

**Court Debt Collection Project.....1 position
(Canton)**

Summer Intern will work directly with the Housing and Consumer Team with addressing the systemic issue of equitable treatment of the low-income population within our eight-county region municipal court systems. Specifically, the associates will seek to identify and compare the experience our clients face within the municipal court system with the collection of unpaid fines and fees; allocation of court costs and availability of using poverty affidavits permitting access to justice; the varieties of acceptable methods of service of process, notice, and differing procedures of default judgments; procedural differences within eviction courts including availability of continuances, right to counsel, time allotted before hearings and set outs, procedures for damages hearings and level of proof or verification required; and the implementation of the expungement process considering what barriers are imposed beyond those statutorily implemented.

Data will be compiled and reviewed by online research, direct phone calls and personal meetings with court personnel, in person audits of hearings and assistance with staff attorneys conducting hearings within the region; a final report will be compiled emphasizing best practices for our clients; trends and highlighting disparities.

Re-entry Project1 position (Canton)

Summer intern will work with the re-entry team to represent clients with re-entry cases and draft a statewide resource for advocate use in record-sealing and certificates of qualification for employment.

Specifically, the intern will search dockets, interview clients, draft memos, pleadings, and

correspondence, and appear in court on behalf of clients (if possible); all under the supervision of an attorney. The intern will also work on drafting a resource guide with current case law and the relevant statutes for use by advocates in the re-entry field. The intern will also attend re-entry events and coalition meetings.

No prior experience is required; however, an interest in poverty law, criminal law, and/or the re-entry movement is helpful.

Family Law Project.....4 positions (Akron/Canton/Warren/Youngstown)

The intern will have immediate contact with clients, will draft documents and will shadow attorneys at hearings. The intern will be assigned an attorney with an ongoing caseload. The intern will gain valuable litigation experience and will know that he/she has assisted victims of abuse and those needing custody/visitation and divorce assistance. The attorney and managing attorney will evaluate the intern.

The Intern can expect to be engaged in the following activities:

- Conduct screening and client interviews with clients seeking to obtain civil protection orders against abusers.
- Conduct factual investigations including client interviews, requesting and reviewing court, medical, and other records, searching public records, etc.
- Attend hearings, trials and outreach events
- Conduct legal research
- Draft pleadings / research memoranda / correspondence
- Such other tasks as may be assigned

Qualifications:

- Demonstrated interest in and sensitivity to the legal needs of the poor as well as motivation to improve the condition of the poor
- Strong research/writing backgrounds
- Personal characteristics include: excellent interpersonal skills, first-rate oral and written communications skills, professional attitude, discretion, diplomacy and tact, ability to relate to professionals, strong analytical and organizational skills, and high dependability
- Proficient in Microsoft Word and Internet research tools
- Ability to speak a foreign language is highly desirable

Impact Litigation Work & Professional Development..... 1 position (Akron)

Under the supervision of an attorney, the intern will assist in the provision of legal services to eligible clients in accordance with Program priorities and guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Assist in the development of a comprehensive project plan to promote and grow impact litigation, policy advocacy, and leadership development efforts at Legal Aid.
- Assist in building our training program, including developing training curricula, identifying and recruiting attorney faculty, coordinating with faculty to ensure learning objectives are clear and met, executing trainings, and evaluating training effectiveness.
- Assist in building a system to track and support impact litigation and policy advocacy efforts, including complex litigation, appellate work, public comments to proposed legislation and other advocacy efforts.
- Identify and build a resource library to support impact litigation and policy advocacy efforts.
- Such other tasks as may be assigned.

Qualifications:

- Demonstrated interest in and sensitivity to the legal needs of the poor as well as motivation to improve the condition of the poor
- Ability to represent Community Legal Aid and to advocate for its mission
- Professional attitude, excellent interpersonal skills, dependability, and a high desire to contribute to an effective and collaborative work environment
- Independent worker with excellent analytical and organizational skills who can think systemically, who has the ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines, and who can plan projects, manage their execution, and document results
- First rate oral and written skills
- Thorough working knowledge of all computer programs and office machines used by the firm and ability to learn new programs and machines as required
- Ability to speak Spanish is highly desirable.

 [2020 Summer Associate Application Fillable.pdf](#)

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<http://www.communitylegalaid.org/2020-summer-associate>

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