

HIGHLIGHTS: 2016-17 Cases & Accomplishments

ALL CLINICS

Students from all clinics cover the Domestic Violence docket every Thursday morning in the Monongalia County Family Court. They assist petitioners requesting service on those days. On average, five to seven clients seek assistance every session, for a total of more than 200 hundred clients a year. Their cases range from assaults to stalking to child abuse. The students interview the clients and then assist them in presenting their cases to the Judge.

GENERAL PRACTICE, TAXPAYER ADVOCACY AND IMMIGRATION

The General Practice clinic is preparing an amicus brief for the West Virginia Supreme Court on the application of the West Virginia Consumer Protection Act to residential leases. The clinic had provided representation to approximately 84 domestic violence petitioners this year.

The Taxpayer clinic has submitted a brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and will appear this spring on behalf of a taxpayer in the United States Tax Court.

The Immigration clinic won a deportation case under the Convention Against Torture before an Immigration Law Judge. The clinic also won three grants of asylum and achieved a partial victory in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (Chicago). With other WVU Law clinics, the Immigration clinic is also providing education to the bar and residents of the area concerning current immigration issues.

CHILD AND FAMILY ADVOCACY with MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

The Child and Family Advocacy Law Clinic is collaborating with the Community Pediatric and Advocacy Rotation for Pediatric Residents at WVU Medicine to educate pediatric residents about legal problems facing their patients in the areas of child custody, adoption, education, juvenile drug court, and domestic violence.

In the fall, students began clinical rotations with Chestnut Ridge Center, a WVU Medicine mental health illness and addiction facility in Morgantown.

VETERANS ADVOCACY

Students in the veterans clinic have successfully represented two U.S. Air Force veterans in different cases before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. The work was done through an ongoing partnership with the Washington, DC-based Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program, which recently gave the clinic \$10,000 to support veterans' legal assistance in the state.

Clinic students successfully represented an Army Ranger's appeal of the denial of his vocational rehabilitation benefits (Post 9/11 GI Bill). Now a medical student at Georgetown University, the veteran had served as a medic in six deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

WEST VIRGINIA INNOCENCE PROJECT

A fourth client of the Innocence Project received presidential clemency in December 2016. Another client was freed from prison last summer after the clinic obtained reversal of his wrongful conviction based on Shaken Baby Syndrome — a now debunked scientific theory. The clinic is partnering with Jones Day in Pittsburgh in case of a retrial of the case.

The Innocence Project and the Veterans Advocacy Clinic recently began serving on the U.S. District Court Drug Court Team for the Northern District of West Virginia, and students participate in bi-weekly meetings in Clarksburg.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

The EILC was awarded a \$105,000 grant from the Claude Benedum Foundation to provide legal services for student entrepreneurs at West Virginia higher education institutions. The clinic provided nearly \$300,000 in billable services last year.

The clinic is also working with Legal Aid of West Virginia to create free transactional legal services and educational materials in the state's economically distressed and flood impacted counties, including Charleston, WV, and Greenbrier County.

LAND USE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Students in the LUSD Law Clinic assisted the flood-impacted community of Rainelle by conducting title examinations, drafting title opinions and counseling clients as needed to secure funding for the redevelopment of over 20 properties. The clinic's work on a comprehensive plan for the City of Richwood helped that community win a \$650,00 grant to help rebuild after last summer's devastating floods

The clinic also advised several local governments on land use law and policy including the communities of Alderson, Fayetteville and Moundsville. More than 30 communities across the state benefited from the clinic's pro bono work in land use law and writing comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances. The clinic is also helping protect over 6,000 acres of valuable forest and agricultural land in West Virginia.

The LUSD Law Clinic recently received a \$843,000 grant to assist with affordable housing and community revitalization efforts in the state.

40 West Virginia University
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