

Community Law Project 2011 Year in Review

During the 2011 calendar year, the Community Law Project has undergone some major changes to improve and expand the services that it provides to both clients and CWSL students. With these changes, we have successfully doubled the number of clients that we serve, increased the name recognition and reputation of the Community Law Project within the greater San Diego community and enhanced the range and quality of services we are able to offer our clients. While there is always much room for growth and further improvement in the months and years to come, we are proud of the fantastic work we have done in the last year. Some of our larger accomplishments are highlighted below.

For the first time, we conducted a survey of our clients to gauge satisfaction with our services. Client feedback over the last year has been overwhelmingly positive. Feedback from clients has been overwhelmingly positive with comments ranging from “great job” to “this is a great benefit to the community”. We will continue to solicit client feedback as we grow and adapt our program to best meet the needs of our clients.

Our client numbers have skyrocketed over the last calendar year. The following is some statistical information about CLP clients:

- Total number of client visits for calendar year 2010 – 164 client visits
- Total number of client visits for calendar year 2011 – 496 client visits
- Total number of new clients in 2011 – 352 new clients
- Top three subject matter areas for 2011 – family law, immigration law, personal injury and employment law
- Historically, approximately 70% of our clients speak English and approximately 30% speak Spanish

During 2011, we increased our fundraising efforts, including a focus on grant applications and solicitations from private donors. We successfully secured both a grant and several private donations. Most importantly, we have established protocols to secure the continued receipt of donations in the future.

One of our main focuses during the 2011 year was to generate increased publicity for CLP among the San Diego legal community and area residents in need. We accomplished this through the publication of a brochure, one on one meetings with area legal service providers and the establishment of relationships with various public relations entities in San Diego to assist us in spreading the word about our program.

We have increased the range and quality of services available to clients by adding the specialty areas of bankruptcy, consumer law (specialists), personal injury, and employment to our specialty rotations. We have increased the number of volunteer attorneys who assist our clients from 10 (in 2010) to 18 (in 2011). We have overhauled our referral information, which has led to a more streamlined referral process for our clients.

Finally, we continue to work to improve the student experience and student interest in CLP. We have increased student involvement in activities outside of clinic hours, including staffing of the pro bono fair and assistance in the training of new students. Interest in the clinic has increased among CWSL students, as evidenced by the increased number of resumes we receive for open student intern positions. We have also instituted an evaluation process for our students in order to provide them with feedback on their work.