

California Western Community Law Project 2016 Year in Review

"This project is really a blessing," Community Law Project client.

Thanks to the support of our generous donors and foundations, the diligence and commitment of our students and volunteers, and the cooperation and dedication of our partners and California Western School of Law (CWSL), the Community Law Project (CLP) has truly been a blessing for hundreds of clients during the 2016 calendar year. Last year, we celebrated financial support from several new sources and continued support from many others. This financial support, along with help from **over 100 volunteer attorneys and students**, allowed us to serve **more than 1,000 individuals** through one-on-one legal services and regular community education presentations.

The Community Law Project is fortunate enough to have enthusiastic CWSL students working with our clients each week. These students enter our program eager to learn about their community's needs and to make a difference in the lives of others. The clinical course provides these students with the tools they need, and their sensitive interactions with clients and thoughtful presentations in the community allow the students to engage in positive change in their community. Our students consistently describe their CLP experience as transformative and a cornerstone of their law school careers.



"To say that CLP has positively affected my personal and professional character is an understatement. While I like to think that I have always been a compassionate individual who has tried to make a positive difference through periodic volunteer work, CLP has really exposed me to the vulnerable members of the San Diego community. Consequently, merely sympathizing with individuals who face issues like homelessness is no longer enough for me. My experience at CLP has fueled my desire to understand and educate my friends in the legal community to the difficult challenges low income or even homeless people encounter." – Don Ohnoki, CLP Student, Fall 2016

Throughout the years, CLP's community education programming has become a larger component of our overall project. This year was no exception as our students, volunteer attorneys and partners in the community together provided information on consumer rights, employment rights, immigration rights and beyond to hundreds of individuals during a record 18 community workshops in locations across San Diego County. Whether our clients receive key legal information during a presentation or one-on-one consultation, over 90% indicate leaving the Community Law Project with a better understanding of their legal issues and how to resolve them. Clients have recently told us that CLP is a "great benefit to the community", that our students are "great listeners...[who] put [them] at ease," and that our staff is "friendly, respectful, professional and non-judgmental."

This past year has not only been one of accomplishment for CLP, but also one of change. Professor Linda Morton founded the Community Law Project eleven years ago and formally served as the head of our Advisory Board for the past several years. Informally, she has served as CLP's biggest supporter and cheerleader. Professor Morton is retiring this year and has stepped down from her official role as President of CLP's Advisory Board.

We are immensely grateful for her years of service to the project, our students, and our clients. Professor Morton will be missed, but we know that CLP will continue to prosper and be a blessing for those that we serve under the capable executive leadership of Professor Tim Casey, who is serving as the new President of CLP's Advisory Board, and Professor William Aceves, who is serving as our Faculty Liaison. We are delighted that Professor Morton will continue to be engaged with CLP in retirement.

We expect the coming year to be both a challenging and exciting one for us. As the world becomes a more difficult place for many of our clients, our work becomes even more crucial. We are certainly proud of our accomplishments during 2016, but know that 2017 will be a year where we will need to strive even harder to ensure equality and justice under the law for every member of the community we serve.

To learn more about the Community Law Project, our services, and our clinic locations and times, please visit our website (www.cwclp.org) or our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CommunityLawProject>).

If you wish to make a donation to CLP, you can do so at <https://cosmos.cwsl.edu/giving/communitylawproject/>.

And, thank you for your continued support!

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