

Community Law Project

2014 Year in Review

It has certainly been a big year for the Community Law Project! The Downtown / Lemon Grove project and the City Heights project have started working together so we can better serve our California Western students and the San Diego client community. We have also recently opened up another site in Solana Beach. The Community Law Project now proudly provides clients top-notch legal services in six sites across San Diego County. As our program continues to grow dramatically, we have increased the number of students participating in the legal clinic. The Community Law Project was fortunate to have 26 California Western Students working with our clients during the 2014 calendar year. Over 40 volunteer attorneys, along with our staff, undergraduate administrators, and dedicated law students worked together to serve over 750 individuals through one-on-one legal services and informative community education presentations.

As a program of California Western School of Law, ensuring that the program continues to be a valuable one for our law students is a priority. Our students consistently rate the Community Law Project, and the accompanying clinical course, as a highlight of their law school career.

CLP gave me a unique opportunity to work on a variety of legal issues while interacting with an incredibly diverse community of clients. The experience I gained from interacting directly with clients and working with the attorneys has given me a foundation of skills and knowledge that I rely on every day as I continue my legal education and look forward to my legal career. Beyond gaining invaluable practical skills and knowledge, I found an amazing sense of satisfaction in knowing that I was helping clients who often had no other resources and no one else who would listen. Working with CLP was the best way to jump-start my experience working in a legal environment. " – Joe Hallare, CLP Legal Intern, Summer 2014

In addition to student learning, another measure of an excellent law school legal services program is client satisfaction. Our clients continue to express a very high level of satisfaction with the services we provide. One client recently noted in our anonymous survey, "The [Community Law Project] gave me some hope. Words cannot describe how much better I feel about things."

The Community Law Project is always striving to improve and expand our services to meet client demand. During the 2014 year, in addition to providing advice, consultations and high quality referrals to our clients, we successfully launched a pilot project to provide full representation to qualified clients in the area of bankruptcy law. We hope to replicate this project in other substantive legal areas in the months to come. We are also proud to have hosted 12 community education presentations at our sites during the year. These presentations covered a great variety of topics including employment law, disability rights law and estate law, to name a few. Our clients have left these presentations with the knowledge and tools necessary to help resolve their own legal problems.

Finally, our development and fundraising efforts have continued to thrive. We are thankful to Price Philanthropies and the North County Immigration and Citizenship Center for their generous support of our City Heights clinics and Solana Beach clinic respectively. We were the lucky recipients of funds from the Race Judicata and Giving Tuesday campaigns coordinated by California Western School of Law. The financial and in-kind support of the greater San Diego community has been critical in keeping our clinics successful.

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

Dana Sisitsky, Executive Director

Linda Morton and Tim Casey, Co-Presidents of the CLP Advisory Boards