

EQUAL JUSTICE WORKS

2008 CONFERENCE AND CAREER FAIR

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

FRIDAY 10.10.08

WORKSHOPS

8 – 9:15 a.m.

TIMELY TOPICS AND ACTIVISM

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM A

Juvenile Injustice: Fighting for Our Youth

Sixteen states deny young people legal representation on important legal matters such as the termination of parental rights, juvenile delinquency courts and incarceration, and immigration issues. In this session, a panel of national experts from the public and private bar discuss these situations and others where legal representation is needed to guide, advise, counsel and fight to give young people a voice in the courts. This panel will discuss what legal strategies are being used and what will be needed from the entire legal community to improve the lives of youth.

PRESENTERS:

Angela Vigil, Baker & McKenzie

Frank Cervone, Support Center for
Child Advocates

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM B

Progressive Community Lawyers: Supporting Grassroots Mobilization, Community Organizing and Sustainable Social Justice

How can lawyers support grassroots mobilization and struggles in a community-based practice? What are their approaches to achieve sustainable social justice? In this interactive session we bring together community organizers and lawyers to discuss how new lawyers can work with community organizations in dynamic ways to achieve sustainable justice.

PRESENTERS:

Delia Aguluar, CASA de Maryland

Guy Johnson, CASA de Maryland

Kerry O'Brien, CASA de Maryland

Brittany Scott, Fordham Law School

ROADMAP TO PUBLIC INTEREST CAREERS

CABINET ROOM

Public Interest Certificates: Determining their Worth

Law schools across the country recognize public interest students in many ways. Some schools have public interest certificates that are given to students who complete a certain number of hours or certain public interest courses. Beyond acknowledging the work of the student, what impact do these certificates have in the law school or in a job search? Come to this session to learn why law schools are choosing to give or not to give these certificates and what impact they can have on law school culture and the workplace.

PRESENTER:

Cybele Smith, The Ohio State University Michael E. Moritz College of Law

PLENARY

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Civil Rights Renewed: Changes in the Rights of LGBT Individuals

Today, as in 1968, our country is invigorated and resolved to change. Public interest lawyers are advancing justice on many fronts.

Earlier this year, Shannon Minter played a central role in changing the lives of millions of Americans. As lead counsel in the landmark case *In re: Marriage Cases*, Mr. Minter successfully argued before the California Supreme Court that same-sex couples have the fundamental right to marry, and that laws that discriminate based on sexual orientation are inherently discriminatory and subject to the highest level of constitutional scrutiny. As a lifelong advocate of LGBT rights, Mr. Minter is a nationally recognized leader and advocate on LGBT issues. He has argued cases such as the Michael Kanteras child custody case and the Sharon Smith wrongful death suit.

During his talk, Mr. Minter will share his reflections on this historic civil rights case. He will also discuss how LGBT law has transformed from 1968 to 2008 and what issues we might face next.

PRESENTER:

Shannon Minter, Legal Director, National Center for Lesbian Rights

Introduction by Judith Schaeffer, People for the American Way Foundation

WORKSHOPS

11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

TIMELY TOPICS AND ACTIVISM

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM A

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project: Continuing the Change

In 1964, students came to Mississippi to register African American voters who were being denied their constitutional right to vote. In that same spirit of justice, students are returning to the South joining a national campaign to spur civic engagement, long-term economic development, and sustainable communities. Under the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project, 100,000 Gulf Coast residents will rebuild the Gulf Coast, and then will work on other infrastructure projects such as housing and workforce development that will bring back neighborhoods and community services to people in the region. In this session, you will hear about this new and exciting project and how you can become involved.

PRESENTERS:

Jeffrey Buchanan, Gulf Coast Civic Works Project and RFK Memorial Center for Human Rights

Stephen Bradberry, ACORN Louisiana

Jonathan Rhodes, Gulf Coast Civic Works Project and Chicago-Kent College of Law

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM B

“Talk to Me”: Building credibility and Trust During Difficult Conversations

Communication and relationship building are two skills vital to good lawyering. They help not only with clients but in the community as well. This workshop will help participants identify their personal communication style and learn how to parlay that style into building credibility and trust with others. Exercises will focus on having difficult conversations about topics such as race, gender and class.

PRESENTERS:

Cassandra Adams, Cumberland School of Law

Marcia McCormick, Cumberland School of Law

ROADMAP TO PUBLIC INTEREST CAREERS

CABINET ROOM

Connecting Outside the Bubble: Finding your Public Interest Peers During Law School

Many public interest students feel isolated and unsupported in pursuing a public interest career, but they are not alone. This workshop explains how and where to connect with other students in similar situations. It will also explore what public interest events either currently exist or are being established around the country (e.g. Rebellious Lawyering, Shaking the Foundation, virtual conferences and regional retreats) and how to get an event like this at your school or region.

PRESENTER:

Riddhi Mukhopadhyay, Seattle University School of Law

SPECIAL SESSIONS

4 – 6 p.m.

What's New: Federal Legislative Policies and Student Debt

CONGRESSIONAL ROOMS A & B

National student debt expert Heather Jarvis explains how to qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness under the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. Find out about qualifying employment, eligible loans, eligible repayment plans and tax implications. Heather will also break down the new federal loan forgiveness programs for civil legal services attorneys, prosecutors and defenders under the Higher Education Reauthorization and College Opportunity Act of 2008. Details will include updates on the regulatory process and issues of funding and appropriations for the new programs

PRESENTERS:

Heather Wells Jarvis, Equal Justice Works

Jeff Hanson, Access Group

Transparency and Equity: What Can Law Students Do to Push for More Diversity in Law Firms

DIPLOMAT ROOM

Building a Better Legal Profession (BBLP), a new organization, wants to urge law students to push the private bar to go further with their diversity efforts. BBLP takes its inspiration from the law-student movement of the late 1960s that led to the development and institution of pro bono programs. Students then, as now, began to question the values of Wall Street firms and demanded that firms open “community law” offices to serve poor clients. This led to the development of modern pro bono programs.

Now, BBLP seeks to harness the market power possessed by today’s law students to press for racial and gender equity in firm leadership positions, workplace practices that do not discriminate against women with children (such as billable hours requirements), and increased pro bono commitment. This workshop will highlight the issues, the reasons for the project, the way BBLP supports efforts of public interest students to promote reform of law school career counseling offices, and other issues related to professional reform.

PRESENTERS:

Michele Landis Dauber, Stanford Law School

David Brooks, Stanford Law School

SATURDAY 10.11.08

WORKSHOPS

8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

TIMELY TOPICS AND ACTIVISM

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM A

Who Has a Right to an Education: A Look at Educational Rights of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Communities in the Americas

Collaborating with the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center, students at legal clinics at Cornell Law School and University of Virginia School of law conducted fact-finding missions and authored a report on educational conditions in the Americas. Come to this workshop to learn more about the educational conditions facing Afro-descendant and indigenous communities in the Americas, including communities in Colombia, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, and what needs to be done to improve them.

PRESENTER:

Jocelyn E. Getgen, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Cornell Law School

Deena Hurwitz, University of Virginia School of Law International Human Rights Clinic

Sital Kalantry, Cornell Law School

Fernanda Katz Ellenberg, RFK Memorial Center for Human Rights

Gabriel Walters, University of Virginia School of Law

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM B

Speaking with Impact: Presentation Skills 101

If you thought moot court was tough, try talking to the press, in front of a community meeting or to the mayor of your city. Come to this workshop to find out how to “take the legalese” out of your speech and make your messages accessible and persuasive. This workshop will feature author and communications consultant Andrew Gilman. Mr. Gilman has trained hundreds of senior executives and will share tricks of the trade for effective public speaking to enhance your project.

PRESENTER:

Andrew Gilman, CommCore Consulting

ROADMAP TO PUBLIC INTEREST CAREERS

CABINET ROOM

Medical-Legal Partnerships: An Innovative Approach to Providing Services to Low-income Individuals

The goal of medical-legal partnerships is to bridge the gap between health care professionals and attorneys in providing services to low-income children and their families. While children and their families need access to health care and related services, in some situations they also need access to public benefits, safe housing conditions, and special education and related services. Come to this session to find out how these partnerships provide a host of advocacy services that can have a systemic impact.

PRESENTER:

Maureen van Stone, Project HEAL at the Kennedy Krieger Institute

DISCUSSION FORUMS

10 – 11:15 a.m.

Fighting for the Civil Rights of Others: Advocacy Groups Discuss their Role in the California Marriage Equality Case

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM A

Representatives from organizations that submitted amicus briefs to the California Supreme Court in *In re: Marriage Cases* will discuss the legal arguments in this landmark case and what their reasoning was in supporting the argument making same sex marriage legal.

Having Public Interest Spirit in a Non-Public Interest Environment

CABINET ROOM

Come to this forum to meet students from all types of academic settings and learn how to connect to public interest support in your law school environment. Find out how to get and stay connected to public interest issues and get the support you are looking for.

Leadership Programs at Law Schools: What are Law Schools Doing?

CONGRESSIONAL ROOM B

Many public interest lawyers develop leadership skills early in their careers. Come to this open forum to talk about what your school is or should be doing to prepare students for leadership roles in their fields and their communities.