



Host Site: Legal Aid of West Virginia, Inc.

Topic of Project: Employment and Education

Location: Beckley, WV

Description of Fellow Project:

The Bridging Rural Job Barriers Legal Project Fellow will work closely with experienced LAWV attorneys on two types of work. In rural counties served by LAWV's Martinsburg and Beckley offices, the Fellow will:

1. Provide direct civil legal services to clients, focusing on legal barriers to self-sufficiency including driver's license reinstatement pursuant to West Virginia legislative changes effective in 2020 and recently expanded state criminal records expungement law. Fellows will also have the opportunity to work on cases to address other legal employment obstacles impacting rural West Virginians, including domestic violence, housing instability, and professional licensure issues. Fellows will work closely with LAWV staff attorneys to conduct client interviews, research and draft legal memoranda and pleadings, carry out case discovery, and represent clients at administrative proceedings and hearings.
2. Assist LAWV staff in doing targeted rural outreach and legal education for community partners and the public regarding legal issues related to the above topics. In 2021, LAWV plans to strategically focus on spreading the word with regards to West Virginia's new driver's license reinstatement law via an "On the Road Again" outreach campaign that will involve presentations and preparation of outreach materials. Fellows will work with their assigned local offices to design and implement this "On the Road Again" campaign to increase client awareness of how to take advantage of legal changes and access civil legal assistance to regain a license. Fellows will also have the opportunity to author community education materials on topics related to these employment obstacles which will be posted for the public at large on LAWV's website.

Additional Applicant Qualifications:

We are able to provide housing assistance, defined as helping the fellows search for affordable housing in their service areas. While a car is not a necessity for a Rural Summer Legal Corps Fellow hosted by LAWV, it would be very helpful for the Fellow to have a car for outreach activities.

