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PILI Public Interest Law Initiative

February/March 2010 | Issue: 7

Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI): cultivating a lifelong commitment to public interest law

Greetings!

Since its founding in 1977, PILI has cultivated a lifelong commitment to public interest law by creating opportunities for law students and attorneys to provide public interest and pro bono work in Illinois. We hope you will find this e-newsletter informative and we appreciate your involvement in and support of PILI.

Yours truly,

Susan J. Curry, Executive Director
Michael G. Bergmann, Director of Programs
R. Alex Kliner, Development Associate
The Staff of the Public Interest Law Initiative

PILI News

PILI Receives Major Grant from Polk Bros Foundation
A longstanding and major supporter of PILI, the Polk Bros. Foundation recently announced a $40,000 grant to support PILI's Law Student Internship Program. PILI gratefully acknowledges the continued and steadfast support that the Polk Bros. Foundation has demonstrated over the years in support of PILI's mission.

PILI Annual Awards Luncheon a Success
On December 3, 2009, over 400 members of the legal community gathered to celebrate the best aspects of the profession at the Public Interest Law Initiative's Annual Awards Luncheon. A very special thanks to our generous sponsors whose support is critical to fulfilling PILI's mission of cultivating a lifelong commitment to public interest law among law students and lawyers. Read more...

PILI Law Student Internship & Graduate Fellowship Programs

PILI Interns (first or second year law students) and PILI Fellows (recent law school graduates) work in and learn about public interest law, and begin what PILI hopes is a lifelong commitment to public interest law and pro bono work. Below is the latest news about PILI's Internship and Fellowship Programs. Visit PILI's website to learn more about the Internship and Fellowship Programs.

Application Process Continues for PILI's Summer 2010 Law Student Internship Program
The Summer application period opened on December 1, 2009 and will be open through March 31st, or until every eligible agency has completed its hiring. This year, due to the economic crisis and its impact on the legal profession, law firms are sponsoring fewer Fellows as many firms have reduced or eliminated their summer programs. With regard to the Law Student Internship Program, there

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For Law Students
For Corporate Counsel

continues to be more applicants than there are positions available. While there is certainly a need for additional Interns at many of our agencies, PILI is only able to increase its Intern allocations by maintaining existing and securing additional funding. Applications must be submitted online for PILI's Law Student Internship Program. Read more...

PILI Alumni Program

Today, over 3,000 law students and graduates have participated in PILI's Internship and Fellowship Programs. The Alumni Program maintains the connection between these public interest lawyers, PILI and the public interest law community. Below is the latest news about PILI's Alumni Program. Visit PILI's website to learn more about its Alumni Program.

PILI Alumni Program & Reception: Service Opportunities in the Public Interest Law Community
PILI is organizing a program and reception for Alumni on Wednesday, Thursday, April 8th from 5:30 to 7:30 to be hosted by Kirkland & Ellis LLP. The one hour program will focus on providing information to alumni about pro bono, board service and other volunteer opportunities within the public interest law community. Following the program, there will be an informal networking reception for alumni. Advance registration is required. Read more...

PILI Launches Alumni Public Interest Law Training Series
This year, PILI is launching a training series for alumni to learn about specific areas of law and related pro bono opportunities with public interest law organizations. The first program will be hosted by Hinshaw & Culbertson on Thursday, May 20th and will feature Lawyers Committee for Better Housing. The second program will be held on Monday, August 2nd and will feature Chicago Volunteer Legal Services. Advance registration for these complimentary programs is required. Read more...

Get Involved in PILI's Alumni Program and Join an Alumni Project Team
PILI is always looking for former Interns and Fellows to work with us on our Alumni Program. In addition to the Alumni Circle, the program's leadership group, there are also several project teams on which we would welcome your involvement. Our current teams include, Mentoring, Programming and Development. Read more...

Alumni Spotlight: 2004 PILI Fellow, Monica Mosby

As a PILI Fellow at the Federal Defender Program, Monica Mosby was both excited and scared on her first day of work when an attorney sat several large case files in front of her and said, "We go to trial in two weeks; get yourself up to speed." Mosby described her time as a PILI Fellow as "absolutely amazing." During her Fellowship, she was thrown into the mix of the office right away when she was staffed as part of a trial team. Read more...

PILI Pro Bono Initiative Program

Through its Pro Bono Initiative, PILI works collaboratively with law firms, corporations, public interest law agencies and law schools to create and promote work environments, programs and opportunities that help new associates and seasoned attorneys actualize their commitment to pro bono work. Below is the latest news about PILI's Pro Bono Initiative. Visit PILI's website to learn more about PILI's Pro Bono Initiative.

Save the Date: PILI/CBF Pro Bono Forum - Thursday, April 29th
PILI, in conjunction with The Chicago Bar Foundation, organizes and hosts two programs each year that bring together pro bono leaders from law firms, corporations, law schools and legal aid agencies to discuss timely pro bono issues and share pro bono best practices. The Spring 2010 Pro Bono Forum will be held from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 29th at The Chicago Bar Association Headquarters. Information about this program will be emailed to pro bono leaders and available on our website.

For Paralegals

For Senior/Retired Attorneys

For Government Attorneys

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PILI's Annual "Celebrating Pro Bono" Reception: June 17th
The 2010 "Celebrating Pro Bono" Reception will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 17, 2010 at the Ivy Room at Tree Studios, located at 12 East Ohio Street (Ohio & State). This reception is PILI's annual opportunity to spotlight our community's pro bono relationships and successes and the work of PILI's Pro Bono Initiative. This reception includes informal conversation, networking, appetizers and refreshments.For additional information and sponsorship opportunities, contact PILI's Director of Programs, Michael Bergmann, at 312-832-5129 or mbergmann@pili-law.org. Additional information will also be available on our website.

Pro Bono Award Nominations Being Sought
Each year the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service of the American Bar Association presents five awards to individual lawyers and institutions in the legal profession that have demonstrated outstanding commitment to volunteer legal services for the poor and disadvantaged. Nominations are due by March 8, 2010. Click here for more information.

The Illinois State Bar Association Committee on Delivery of Legal Services is seeking nominations for the 2009-2010 ISBA John C. McAndrews Pro Bono Service Award. This Award to honors the extraordinary commitment of individuals, bar associations, or law firm/corporate legal departments to providing free legal services to the income eligible in Illinois or expanding the availability of legal services to the income eligible in Illinois. Nominations are due on March 15, 2010. Click here for more information.

The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Child Advocacy Award is given to an individual, based on an individual's personal achievement and commitment. Any lawyer or judge involved in child advocacy is eligible. Nominations are due by April 30, 2010. Click here for more information.

Pro Bono Spotlight: McDonald's Corporation
McDonald's Legal Department is celebrating the tenth anniversary of the formation of its Pro Bono Program. Over the past ten years, McDonald's lawyers, paralegals and staff have helped hundreds of low-income individuals with their legal needs and educated countless students on the legal system and legal careers. McDonald's was one of the first corporations in the Chicagoland area to get its Pro Bono Program up and running. In fact, it was the Chicago Public Interest Law Initiative that helped McDonald's Legal Department start its Pro Bono Program, by providing it with sample policies and helping to pair it with agencies in need. It also was PILI that first recognized McDonald's leadership in Pro Bono in 2001 with its appropriately titled "Trail Blazer Award." Since that time, McDonald's Legal Department and its attorneys have been recognized by numerous organizations for their outstanding pro bono work. Read more...

Pictured:
Members of McDonald's Legal Department who are active in its Pro Bono Program.

Extended Placement Program

PILI encourages law firms to provide the opportunity for firm attorneys - whether new associates or seasoned attorneys - to be placed at a public interest law organization for an extended period of time in a rotation or fellowship program. PILI provides assistance to firms in developing such programs and in identifying public interest law organizations to host their attorneys. Below is the latest news about PILI's Extended Placement Program. Visit PILI's website to learn more about PILI's Extended Placement Program.

Extended Placement Update
In Illinois, there have been approximately 60 extended public interest law placements from the class of 2009 and graduates from the class of 2010 are now seeking placements. These individuals come from law firms around the country and have had their start date deferred, their employment offer revoked, been laid-off, or opted to participate in their firm's sabbatical program. PILI has been working with The

Chicago Bar Foundations and other public interest groups from around country on this issue and has locally taken the lead in placing many of these individuals with public interest law organizations. Information for candidates, law firms and agencies is available on our website. Read more...

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