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PILI Public Interest Law Initiative

September/October 2011 | Issue: 16

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.

With a new fiscal year underway and our summer Internship and Fellowship programs completed, we have been busy with several Alumni and Pro Bono Initiative Programs. In fact, our second-ever Alumni Reunion Reception is less than a week away! We hope you'll be able to join us. In this newsletter, we also shine a spotlight on some exciting new pro bono efforts. And did you know that pro bono now has an app?

This and more below! We hope you find this e-newsletter informative and we appreciate your involvement in and support of PILI.

Yours truly,

The Staff of the Public Interest Law Initiative
Michael G. Bergmann, Executive Director
Shana Heller-Ogden, Development & Communications Associate
Julia Kepler, Office Administrator
Sheila Simhan, Program Manager

PILI News

New Fiscal Year for PILI
PILI's new fiscal year began on September 1, as our summer Internship and Fellowship programs closed and amidst several Alumni and Pro Bono Initiative programs. We have so many plans for the upcoming year - won't you help us make a strong start by donating to PILI today? Visit our website for more information. We thank you for your support!

Sponsorships Available for the PILI 2011 Annual Awards Luncheon
PILI celebrates the best aspects of the legal profession every year at our Annual Awards Luncheon: *Celebrating Service: The Legal Profession at its Best.* This event brings together hundreds of members of the Illinois legal community to pay tribute to the people and organizations whose exemplary pro bono work has inspired us and made us proud. This year, the Annual Awards Luncheon will be held on **Thursday, December 1 from 11:30am-1:30pm** at the Renaissance Downtown Hotel Chicago. PILI offers three levels of sponsorship for our Annual Awards Luncheon. Contact PILI Executive Director Michael Bergmann or visit our website to learn more about how you can become involved in supporting this event.

PILI Law Student Internship & Graduate Fellowship Programs

PILI Interns (first or second year law students) and PILI Fellows (recent

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New Illinois Supreme Court Rule Permits Retired, Inactive and Corporate Attorneys to Perform Pro Bono Work
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PILI & ILAO Pro Bono Matching System

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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.

PILI Interns and Fellows Complete Summer at Chicago Legal Service Agencies

PILI Interns and Fellows at an educational program this summer

This summer, 35 PILI Interns and 40 PILI Fellows together contributed thousands of hours to Illinois legal service agencies. Interns spent their summers drafting pleadings, interviewing clients, writing briefs, and going to court, among other activities. One PILI Intern at Chicago Volunteer Legal Services told us, "I strongly believe the work of CVLS and the mediation program is absolutely vital to the continued health of Chicago, and I am honored to have been a part of that work." Fellows, for their part, conducted legal research and document reviews, in addition to discussing strategies and other legal work. Said one PILI Fellow, "This was a fantastic use of my post-law school, pre-law firm time!" Supervisors reported that PILI Interns and Fellows increased the number of clients they are able to serve, increased the quality of their representation, increased their capacity to take on complicated cases, expanded the range of services they were able to provide, and reduced their waiting lists. Congratulations to all of you on completing your Internship or Fellowship, and thank you for your contributions to legal aid!

Upcoming Application Periods

Application periods for PILI 2012 Spring and Summer Internships are opening soon:

- the application period for Spring 2012 PILI Internships will open on November 1 for all applicants, and
- the application period for Summer 2012 PILI Internships will open on October 15th for 2Ls and on December 1st for 1Ls.

Applicants must register on IllinoisProBono.org and submit a resume and cover letter. Visit our website for more information.

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 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 Reunion Reception - Last Chance to Buy Tickets!

PILI's second annual Alumni Reunion Reception is coming up in less than one week on October 5! The reception will be an International Wine and Cheese Tasting at Bin 36, 339 North Dearborn Street from 5:30-7:30 pm. Reconnect with your fellow PILI Alumni and help us celebrate PILI's Internship and Fellowship Programs with drinks, appetizers and great company! Proceeds from the event will support a PILI Alumni Named Internship for the summer of 2012. Tickets and individual sponsorships are available, and PILI is pleased to offer a special discounted ticket price for Alumni who are currently in law school, recent grads, or working in public interest. Visit our website or contact PILI Development & Communications Associate Shana Heller-Ogden for more information. We hope to see you there!

Keeping in Touch with PILI Alumni

As another class of PILI Summer Interns and Fellows completes their work at legal service agencies, PILI would like to remind you to make sure we have your most recent contact information. By staying in touch with PILI, you can ensure that you get information about

Find Assistance With A Pro Bono Matter

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upcoming programs and events, like the "Serving on a Nonprofit Board of Directors" program we held in August, or the Reunion Reception coming up next week. You can fill out this form online or send us an e-mail to make sure our records are up-to-date. Thank you!

PILI Hosts Alumni Evening Program and Networking Reception: *Serving on a Nonprofit Board of Directors*

PILI Alumni at the Board Service program on August 23

On August 23, PILI hosted a program for our Alumni entitled "Serving on a Nonprofit Board of Directors." Attorneys from The Law Project did an interactive segment on the dynamics of board service for attorneys, and Brian Whitlock, Tax Partner at Blackman Kallick, presented a segment on understanding nonprofit financial statements. The event, hosted by Kirkland & Ellis, wrapped up with a networking reception. We also distributed a list of the latest board service and pro bono opportunities available within Chicago's public interest law community to attendees. If you are a PILI Alum interested in nonprofit board service, or if you are interested in learning about upcoming PILI Alumni programs, contact PILI Program Manager Sheila Simhan or visit our website.

PILI Alumni Spotlight: Kate Pomper, 2006 Intern

Kate Pomper's career has been marked by a commitment to public interest law at every stage. A current Assistant Attorney General with the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, Kate got her first experience working in public interest law as a PILI Intern at the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. She spent most of her summer there working on a lawsuit to enforce a contract for Section 8 housing for elderly and disabled individuals. The following summer she interned at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago in their South Side office, and in 2008, after receiving degrees from the University of Michigan's Law School and Ford School of Public Policy, she was awarded a Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship at Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI). *Click here to read the rest of Kate's spotlight*.

PILI Alumni Spotlight: John Thurmond, 2002 Fellow

John Thurmond was a PILI Fellow at the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago in the summer and fall of 2002. Working with Richard Wheelock in LAF's Housing Law Initiative, he helped provide high-quality civil legal services to low-income and disadvantaged people and communities. "The highlight of my time at the LAFMC was helping a single mother move from the Cabrini Green housing project to 'scattered site' housing elsewhere in the city," recounts John. "It was a wonderfully educational and rewarding experience!" After completing his PILI Fellowship, John worked in private practice with a specialty in transactional real estate law for several years at Kirkland & Ellis LLP and SNR Denton LLP; he is now a legal recruiter for Lateral Link, placing highly qualified associate and partner level attorneys in law firms and corporate legal departments. *Click here to read the rest of John's spotlight*.

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.

Law Students Explore Possibilities in Public Interest Law

Over 80 law students and

recent graduates from around the Chicago area gathered on September 24 to learn about opportunities in public interest law and pro bono service. PILI and the Chicago Area Law School Consortium (CALSC) co-sponsored the event, which was hosted by Chicago-Kent College of Law. Law students ranging from 1Ls to recent graduates were introduced to the public interest landscape. The program began with a panel discussion on finding public interest law placements and incorporating pro bono/public interest law into law school and a legal career. Mentors from different areas of public interest then conducted group mentoring sessions with the participants, and the program closed with a presentation on writing resumes and cover letters and developing networking and interviewing skills. Thanks to all of our panelists, mentors and presenters for making this event such a success! More pictures can be seen on PILI's Facebook page.

Mentor and PILI Alum Sean Ginty speaking with law students

PILI Illinois Forum on Pro Bono held September 14

PILI and the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service co-sponsored the Illinois Forum on Pro Bono on September 14. Pro bono leaders from law firms, corporations, legal aid agencies and law schools from around the state explored ways to improve the pro bono delivery system. The Forum was an opportunity to share and address pro bono concerns state-wide while lending a voice to the national discussion on pro bono. The ideas and strategies generated at this Forum will contribute to the ABA Pro Bono Summit's ultimate goal of developing a nationally coordinated action plan to improve the pro bono legal services delivery model. The ABA's Pro Bono Summit will be held on October 24-25 in Washington DC.

John Bourke from Aon with other participants at the PILI Illinois Forum on Pro Bono

New App for Pro Bono from Illinois Legal Aid Online

The new Illinois Pro Bono App will put pro bono in the palm of your hand. Illinois Legal Aid Online will release a free mobile app just in time for National Pro Bono Week, October 24 - 28. The Illinois Pro Bono App is designed for legal professionals who wish to volunteer with a legal aid organization. The app can be used to search for volunteer opportunities, view upcoming MCLE trainings and community events, and access legal reference guides. Resources include 25 in-depth articles on discrete areas of civil law to supplement one's pro bono work. So, take a break from your New York Times and Words with Friends Apps and try something new that will be rewarding both for you and the people you serve. The Illinois Pro Bono Mobile App will first be available for iPhone and iOs devices, and will be released on Android and Blackberry devices in the near future. A great volunteer opportunity and reliable support will soon be a click away! Visit IllinoisProBono.org for more information.

Illinois Legal Aid Online
Improving access to justice through technology

ILAO Call for Nominations: Sing About Your Unsung Heroes!

Honor a colleague or volunteer in the legal community by nominating them as a Volunteer- or Advocate-of-the Month! Volunteer- and Advocate-of-the Month honorees are featured in a 3-4 minute video that highlights their contributions to improving access to justice and making a difference in the lives of Illinois residents. The video is posted to www.IllinoisProBono.org (for pro bono volunteers) or www.IllinoisLegalAdvocate.org (for legal aid advocates) and also to Illinois Legal Aid Online's (ILAO) YouTube channel. The videos are ILAO's way of recognizing the unsung or under-sung heroes in the Illinois legal community. To nominate a legal aid advocate, please complete the brief online form HERE. For pro bono nominations, please go HERE. If you wish to watch the videos for past honorees,

view the advocate archive here or the volunteer archive here. Honorees are chosen from recent nominations by a committee of people who work in the legal aid community. Nominators are interviewed about the honoree and their work as part of the video. This is a free and innovative way to recognize your colleagues and volunteers, so please nominate a deserving professional today!

Pro Bono Spotlight: West Cook and North Chicago Pro Bono Networks

Donna Peel, an attorney who had formerly worked for the US Department of Justice, wanted to use her legal skills and background do pro bono work and help her community. But as a stay-at-home mother of two, Donna quickly learned that identifying good pro bono opportunities and finding legal resources for attorneys who had to fit their schedule around school-aged children was easier said than done. She also learned, however, that she was not alone in her situation. In December 2010, Donna started the West Cook Pro Bono Network to provide pro bono opportunities to attorneys who wanted to give legal services to their community, but had limited availability due to family or other obligations. "It pained me to think that there were all these unused resources," said Donna. Click to read more about the West Cook and North Chicago Pro Bono Networks.

Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)
321 North Clark Street, 28th Floor
Chicago, IL 60654
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