



the **ADVOCATE** | **The Center for Public Interest Law**

DePaul gears up to award second annual LRAP grant

By Sarah Baum

DePaul has joined the ranks of top law schools around the country with a Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP). Now, it is time to focus on the program's ultimate goal: awarding funds to every eligible DePaul graduate working in a qualifying public interest career.

Last year, DePaul selected Claudia Valenzuela ('02), a supervisory attorney at the National Immigrant Justice Center, as the first LRAP awardee. This year, the school hopes to offer at least five awards.

The LRAP Committee is planning for the future of the program, and expects that funding for the LRAP will dramatically increase in the next several years. Several recent funding developments have contributed to the success of the program. The Class of 1981 has created the Marie Monahan LRAP Fund as a tribute to a classmate who recently passed away. Marie exhibited a life-long commitment to public service, and the class has raised around

\$70,000 for the LRAP program.

In addition, the Tuition Pricing Committee recently approved a \$10 per semester fee for current law students. The student body approved this fee through a referendum on the Student Bar Association ballot in March 2006. The fee is in the final stages of approval by the University, and will most likely be implemented in the fall of 2007. The fee would produce a consistent income stream of approximately \$18,000 per year, enabling the College of Law to fund a significant number of awards per year.

The 2007 applications and guidelines will be posted online at the Center for Public Interest Law website on February 15, 2007. They will be due April 15, and the awardees will be chosen in May. DePaul graduates working in public interest law careers are strongly encouraged to apply.

Public service employment is defined as a nonprofit organization or government service. Priority is given to those who provide legal services to

underserved, low-income or disadvantaged individuals or groups. The application guidelines contain more detailed information about eligibility.

Eligibility for an LRAP award is based on several factors including employment in a qualifying public interest position, financial status, law school educational debt, and a demonstrated dedication to public interest law.

Individuals may receive multiple awards. However, applicants who are selected for an award must reapply for the award every year and are eligible for a maximum of five years of LRAP awards.

LRAP awards are in the form of a forgivable loan, and may only be used to repay law school debt.

The LRAP Committee will make awards to eligible candidates who demonstrate the highest qualifications and the greatest financial need. The merits the Committee will consider include a demonstrated dedication to public interest law as evidenced by summer employment choices, present

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February 15: LRAP applications and guidelines posted at www.depaul.edu under the Center for Public Interest
April 15: Applications Due
Send Applications to:
Professor Len Cavise
25 E. Jackson Boulevard., 722 LC
Chicago, IL 60604

employment, long-term career plans, volunteer experiences, and organizational involvement.

It is time to ensure that excessive educational debt doesn't prohibit students from pursuing careers in public service. The LRAP is an exciting program because it will encourage more students to live out DePaul's commitment to the Vincentian values of service, community, and social justice.

PILA auction assists students in their summer ventures

By Eleni Wolfe-Roubatis

For the last ten years, the Public Interest Law Association (PILA) has hosted a live and silent auction at the law school.

The 11th Annual PILA auction will be on March 9, 2006 at the DePaul Center Concourse from 5pm to 11pm. The purpose of the auction is to raise money for students doing legal work in the public interest sector over the summer. All proceeds from the auction go to the PILA summer stipend account.

PILA is the only student run organization within the law school that provides summer stipends to students doing public interest work. Each year we are able to fund 10-15 students depending on the amount raised. Last year the PILA auction raised a total of \$34,000.

This is the largest event held at the law school each year, and approximately 250-350 students, professors, and community members attend. For a small admission fee (\$10 this year),

PILA puts on an all-you-can-eat-and-drink event. Professors, students, student organizations, and businesses donate items to put in the auction—including dinners, tickets, books, gift certificates, and many other items.

PILA funds this event through our regular organization account and through other donations. PILA solicits many donations to cut back on the costs of the event (e.g., food donations from local restaurants and grocery stores).

PILA also solicited donations from alumni, the Dean, and the University President. PILA is fortunate to have the support of other student organizations, who give money to cover the costs of the auction, or donate food and drinks for the night of the event. This year we have received donations from several student organizations, including the ACLU, SBA, Business Law Society and Law Review.

Although PILA has great support for this event, the budget allocated this year is insufficient to cover the

costs of the auction. PILA asked for \$2,250 for the semester, and received only \$1,000. The auction alone costs more than this (usually \$1100-1200). PILA is an extremely active student organization, and hosts many events and panels throughout the semester. This spring semester alone, PILA has ten events scheduled: six speaking panels, a bake-off, a wine-and-cheese reception, as well as two general meetings. Our budget is already down to \$750 after the first four events of the semester.

PILA auction stipends have allowed students to work at organizations such as Chicago Legal Clinic, Cabrini Green Legal Aid, the National Immigrant Justice Center, Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Defender, Public Guardian, Centro Romero, Legal Aid Bureau, Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, Council on American-Islamic Relations, Life Span and the People's Law Office.

Help make auction a success

1. Help with solicitations for food and item donations.
 2. Come assist in setting up for the Auction on March 9.
 3. Take a shift at the door, collecting the \$10 entrance fee which covers all food and drinks for the evening.
 4. Assist with the live auction by being Dean Rubin's assistant.
 5. Check-out auction guests and collect payment for items won.
- COME TO THE AUCTION
ON MARCH 9 (5pm-11pm at the DePaul Center Concourse)!
- Contact Katie Diggins at katiebrynn@gmail.com with any questions or to get involved.

CPIL receives \$100,000 gift

The Center for Public Interest Law is proud to announce that it has received a gift in the amount of \$100,000 from the cy pres fund of a class action suit pending in the Circuit Court of Cook County. In the case of In Re Chicago Sun-Times Circulation Litigation, the Judge presiding, Judge Bernetta Bush (a DePaul law grad), ordered that the public interest recipients from the class action settlement funds should include the Center, along with several other public interest groups in Chicago.

This distribution of class action funds, along with the support of the College of Law, has enabled the Center to hire Shaye Loughlin as the Assistant Director of the CPIL. A profile of Shaye will appear in the next issue.

Q&A with DePaul Alumnus Bill Cartwright

Name: Bill Cartwright

Title: Country Director for the Riecken Foundation in Honduras

Q: What is the Riecken Foundation?

The Riecken Foundation is dedicated to working with communities in democracy and prosperity.

Q: What does your work entail?

First, we build a modern library with access to information to all and it's free, which is unheard of here. We then insert programming such as youth groups, reading programs, children's programs, computer training, internet training. The libraries are really community development centers. We help the communities to develop their own projects and eventually each library networks with other libraries to work on common development problems. We also work closely with municipal governments. My job is to double the size and presence of the Foundation in Honduras. We will be building up to twenty-four new community centers while at the same time maintaining the high quality programming in our thirty-three open libraries.

Q: How did you become interested working in Honduras?

I have always been interested in working in Latin America and in development and human rights. In

undergrad I did several internships in Latin America. I did my Peace Corps service in Costa Rica. At DePaul, I continued doing internships and working in the summers throughout Central America. Honduras was not a hard choice. I have worked here many times but this is my first time living here.

Q: Why did you choose to attend DePaul Law?



I applied only to law schools with human rights programs. Doug Casel was forming the International Human Rights Law Institute at the time. I saw his work with the Salvadoran truth Commission and came to DePaul. DePaul and my work at the Institute helped me get my first job at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San Jose Costa Rica (OAS).

Q: In preparing to enter the human rights field, did you find participation in specific study abroad programs helpful?

I feel hands on experience is so much better than classroom learning. I did an internship at the U.N.

in New York as well as two summers and one winter break with the Inter-American Court. I also did one Miami Haiti program with the National Lawyers Guild. These internships were very valuable in my training.

Q: What advice would you give to students interested in a public interest career?

Get as much field experience as possible. Don't expect to be rich off of this. Public interest is twice the frustration but at the end of the day you can feel you are doing something for someone else that really makes a difference. The money part can be handled. I still am in regular contact with Sallie Mae after all these years.

Q: What motivates you to continue working in public interest?

I like the concept of public work and volunteerism. I love human rights and development. I come home knowing it was a lot of hours but that it can work and things can change. People have a right to be heard and helped if they want to.

Q: What books are you currently reading?

I currently am reading a strange biography on Hitler, Running with Scissors, The Bonapartes, and a book on the Filibusters.

So you're not in the top 10 percent— now what?

By Jeff Oudsema

Do you feel the weight of the world on your shoulders because your first semester grades did not appease your expectations? You're not alone. The majority of first year law students return to classes unsatisfied with their first semester grades. The good news is that there are plenty of employers out there looking for hardworking law students.

Ashley Corotis and Susan DeCostanza of DePaul University College of Law's Career Service Center both agree grades are not everything.

"No matter what, it seems everyone is disappointed to some degree with their grades after first semester," Corotis said. "However, there are a lot of things students can do to build their tool kit for securing the ideal summer position."

The first step is for students to update their resumes. This usually proves to be the most challenging step in the process to becoming the stellar job applicant. Students should expect to spend a considerable amount of time editing their resume, choosing the right active verbs, and determining their strengths to maximize their potential in the job market. This is no easy task. Fortunately, career services is here to help. Students should take advantage of this valuable resource by meeting with their individual counselor to get personalized advice and critiques. The next step for students is to draft a cover

letter template.

"Students will want a cover letter narrowly tailored to each specific job opening, but there are some aspects of each letter that will remain the same," Corotis said.

Students should be looking for certain stock language in their cover letters to accentuate their positive qualities. Career services is more than willing to help students draft the perfect template.

Students should also be prepared to compile a list of references that can be made available to employers upon request.

"This list should usually be around three to five individuals who are in a unique position to talk about the academic qualities of their work," DeCostanza said.

Professors, specifically legal writing professors, are the best candidates to approach for this task because they know how to emphasize the positive qualities of the students' writing style. Students are also encouraged to seek out professors with a background in an area of law that may interest them.

Students should also focus on meeting with their professors to discuss strengths and weaknesses from their first semester exams. Professors are here to help the student land the perfect opportunity. Approaching

them is the biggest step.

"In many ways the second semester is like getting two bites of the apple," Corotis said. "Much of the course material such as contracts, property, and torts will largely remain the same the next semester. Students can use this opportunity to seek out professors to see what they are looking for, and how to do better next time around."

The last element to the summer applicant tool kit is to draft the perfect writing sample. This writing sample should be around seven to ten pages in length. Writing samples from a legal writing class are encouraged because these assignments will have already been picked over with a red pen. As frightening as it is to receive a paper bleeding with red, it is good because it allows the students to tweak their arguments to make it more selling of the students' analytical potential.

Finally, the career service center recommends researching employers. Networking and outreach are some of the most important aspects of landing the dream job. The career service center is full of resources for students to get out and actively participate in the legal market through job fairs, expositions, luncheons, and workshops. There are plenty of opportunities out there for students who are not in the top 10%, but students must take an active role in putting together the right materials to make them the perfect applicant.

What is Public Interest Law?

Public interest law serves individuals, groups, and social interests that are traditionally underserved by our law and government.

It seeks to empower subordinated persons and communities, redress the imbalance of power between individuals and government, and promote

social justice.

It encompasses working to end discrimination and inequality based on class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability; lawyering on behalf of significant issues, such as the environment, healthcare, consumer protection, free speech, and

voting rights; and representing people who cannot afford or do not have access to adequate legal representation, including children, the poor, criminal defendants, and institutionalized individuals.

Calendar of Events

Hot Topics in Family Law.....	February 20
SBA's Barrister Ball.....	February 24
PILA Auction.....	March 9
17th Annual DePaul Law Review Symposium.....	March 9
Spring Break.....	March 19-24
LRAP application deadline.....	April 15
Final Exam period.....	May 4-18
Commencement.....	May 20
Hang-out lunches for DePaul law students interested in Public Interest work	Mondays throughout the semester

Contributors/editors/coordinators: Rose Rivera, Jeff Oudsema, Jennifer Keys, Leonard Cavise, Sarah Baum, Beatriz Hernandez, Eleni Woulfe-Roubatis.



The Center for Public Interest Law Committee

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STAFF / ALUM

Tom Judge, Chaplain / Michelle Wetzels ('99)

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