

## Law Student Pro Bono Opportunities in Eugene

Updated: Spring 2008

### **1. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Oregon**

[www.aclu-or.org](http://www.aclu-or.org)

Contact: Claire Syrett at the Eugene Office

PO Box 50426

Eugene, OR 97405

(541) 683-9277

The ACLU supports the Bill of Rights, particularly the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments, through litigation, legislation, advocacy and education, in addition to defending the state constitution. The ACLU is virtually in constant need of volunteers to research legal issues, some taking as few as 1-2 hours, others of longer duration. This is ideal for someone who wants to pick up short projects on an availability basis. May also provide opportunities to work with volunteer attorneys on larger cases.

**NOTE:** Office has no attorney currently on staff to supervisor legal volunteers, although they are in the process of hiring an attorney for the Portland office.

### **2. Child Advocacy Center**

[www.co.lane.or.us/ChildAdvocacyCenter/default.htm](http://www.co.lane.or.us/ChildAdvocacyCenter/default.htm)

Contact: Erin Nightingale 2560 Frontier Dr.

Eugene, OR 97401

(541) 682-3938

The Child Advocacy Center helps to lessen the trauma experienced by child victims of abuse as they go through the legal system. Volunteer victim advocates serve children who have been victims of physical or sexual abuse or have witnessed domestic violence. Advocates welcome children and their families as they arrive at the Center, offering warmth, comfort and support. Advocates provide families with referrals to community agencies to meet their legal, financial, mental and physical health needs. Advocates also inform and educate families about the criminal justice process, provide case management and follow up and keep families updates on the status of their cases.

- Requires advance training; call to determine next training schedule

### **3. Lane County Public Defender**

Contact: Greg Hazarabedian

1143 Oak St.

Eugene, OR 97401

(541) 484-2611 x101

Provides criminal defense to indigent clients. Volunteers handle a variety of tasks, such as interviewing witnesses, researching and writing motions, gathering factual information, and communicating with defendants.

#### **4. Victim Services, Lane County District Attorney (District Attorney Victim Services)**

[http://unitedwaylane.org/home/uw1/volunteer\\_solutions\\_frame.html](http://unitedwaylane.org/home/uw1/volunteer_solutions_frame.html)

Contact: Erin Kevin

125 E. 8th St.

Eugene, OR 97401

(541) 682-4523

Erin.Kevin@co.lane.or.us

Law students may volunteer with three units:

- 1) **The Court Advocacy Unit:** As the foundation of the program, students in this unit provide comprehensive services to crime victims involved in the criminal justice system through the prosecution of offender(s). Working from prosecutors' files, advocates identify and directly contact victims, and can do any or all of the following:
  - Advising victims of the status of the case
  - Documenting, for restitution purposes, any financial loss the victim suffered as a direct result of the crime
  - Providing accurate information and education about the criminal justice process
  - Accompanying victims to court hearings
  - Referring victims to community resources
  - Advocating within the criminal justice system
  - Assisting with the application, when appropriate, for Crime Victim Compensation benefits
  - Providing emotional support.
- 2) **The Family Violence Unit:** Students will provide services mentioned above and advocacy to victims of intimate partner violence.
- 3) **The Protective Order Unit:** Students in this unit will assist victims seeking a restraining, stalking, or elder/disabled protective order. Services include the following:
  - Greeting protective order petitioners and providing assistance in completing the necessary forms for obtaining an order
  - Providing accurate information and education regarding the criminal justice system, specifically the protective order process
  - Accompanying petitioners to the court hearing to provide emotional support
  - Making referrals, when appropriate, to community resources and for case management through the Family Violence Unit
  - Each unit requires three days of training as well as a minimum commitment of 4-8 hours per week for one year.

#### **5. Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (E-LAW)**

[www.elaw.org](http://www.elaw.org)

Contact: Jennifer Gleason

1877 Garden Ave.

(541) 687-8454 x15 Eugene, OR 97401

E-LAW is an international alliance of public interest environmental attorneys and scientists which provide assistance to attorneys worldwide in terms of legal research, scientific support, technological support, expert witnesses and help locating experts and more. Volunteers conduct legal research, communicate via email with attorneys seeking assistance on cases, etc.

#### **6. Federal Public Defender**

Contact: Craig Weinerman  
151 W. 7th Ave  
(541) 465-6937 Eugene, OR 97401  
Fax: 465-6975

Provides criminal defense to indigent clients charged with federal crimes. Volunteers conduct legal research and writing, prepare motions, write briefs and help with factual investigation.

- This office prefers to be contacted first in writing
- Must strongly support defense work and right of the accused to be defended

#### **7. Lane County District Attorney's Office**

[www.co.lane.or.us/da/](http://www.co.lane.or.us/da/)  
Contact: Alex Gardner 125 E. 8th Ave., Room 400  
(541) 682-4261 Eugene, OR 97401

Prosecutes misdemeanors and felony cases in Lane County. Volunteers conduct legal research and write memos and motions/oppositions to motions, interview witnesses, collect legal and factual information and observe court proceedings. Volunteers who continue with this office after their second year and become certified to appear in court can handle arraignments, sentencing, and trials. **There are often openings in victim's assistance unit, as well.**

- This office receives a lot of volunteer requests; being persistent helps.

#### **8. Lane County Legal Aid / Lane County Law & Advocacy Center**

[www.lanecountylegalservices.org](http://www.lanecountylegalservices.org)  
General Inquiries: Ralph Saltus  
Phone: (541) 485-1017 x124  
Fax: 342-5091

The following 5 legal aid programs accept volunteers; general inquires should be directed to the contact above while specific inquires should be directed to the appropriate contact person listed below.

#### **A. Intake clerk -Legal Aid /Advocacy Center**

Contact: Ralph Saltus 376 E. 11th St.  
(541) 485-1017 x124 Eugene, OR 97401

Both the Advocacy Center and Legal Aid provide legal services to indigent people living in Lane County, including outreach to rural areas. Volunteers interview and help screen potential legal aid clients. Meet with people seeking services, conduct interviews, review facts, convey information to staff attorneys, check eligibility guidelines and conduct occasional legal research. Practice areas include immigration, family law, housing, elder, consumer, domestic violence restraining orders, public benefits and health law.

- Students can work in the Eugene office or outreach offices in Florence or Cottage Grove

### **B. Senior Law Services**

Contact: Jean Beachdel 376 E. 11th Ave.  
(541) 485-1017 x131 Eugene, OR 97401

Senior Law Services provides free legal services to indigent elderly clients throughout Lane County. Staffed by volunteer lawyers at local senior citizen centers on Saturday mornings from 9:00 – 12:00, volunteer lawyers accept walk-in appointments from low income elderly individuals. Subject matters include: housing, estate planning, consumer issues, public benefits and more. Student volunteers work alongside the volunteer lawyers, help with/observe intake, write brochures and do follow-up legal and factual research as agreed with the volunteer lawyer. A great way to get experience and possibly mentoring from a local attorney.

### **C. Domestic Violence Clinic**

Contact: Cindy Hirshner 376 E. 11th Ave.  
(541) 485-1017 x150 Eugene, OR 97401

The Domestic Violence Clinic provides third year certified law students to represent survivors of domestic violence in seeking restraining orders against their batterers. The clinic also has law student volunteers assist as advocates, doing intake, being present at interviews, accompanying clients to court to provide support, helping clients interface with other social service agencies and more.

- Volunteers may need additional training from WomenSpace or Sexual Assault Support Services prior to volunteering

### **D. Tuesday Night Legal Clinic**

Contact Ralph Saltus 376 E. 11th Ave.  
(541) 485-1017 x124 Eugene, OR 97401

Similar to the Senior Law Project, this is staffed by volunteer attorneys attending the needs of pre-screened walk-in clients. Volunteer lawyers give on-the-spot legal advice in various areas: housing, consumer law, domestic relations, social services issues and more. Law student

volunteers observe and participate in intake and handle follow-up legal and/or factual research as agreed upon between the attorney and student.

### **E. Self-Help Classes: Divorce & Custody Arraignment for Unmarried People**

Contact: Anita Engiles 376 E. 11th Ave.  
(541) 485-1017 x137 Eugene, OR 97401  
anita@efn.org

Volunteers assist low income individuals with filling out paperwork for divorces. This includes attending class series, reading forms with clients and helping fill out information.

- Background in family law helpful, but not necessary
- Law students with Spanish fluency are also needed for classes taught to Spanish-speaking clients

### **9. Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides**

www.pesticide.org info@pesticide.org  
Contact: Megan Kemple PO Box 1393  
(541) 344-5044 x17 Eugene, OR 97494  
Fax: 344-6923

This organization litigates against federal and state agencies regarding pesticide use and registration, occasionally represents individuals injured through pesticide exposure and researches pesticide exposure and its effects at specific locations, such as in public schools.

- Prior to volunteering, students must submit a Pro Bono Verification
- Form and secure advance approval for their project. This is because some of NCAP's work may be non-legal in nature and may not qualify as "pro bono" under the current definition

### **10. Sexual Assault Support Services**

www.sass-lane.org  
Contact: **Shanta Kamath**  
591 W. 19th Ave.  
Eugene, OR 97401  
(541) 484-9791

SASS provides services to survivors of sexual assault including: crisis line, support groups, and a **youth** outreach program. Law students can receive pro bono credit for participating in the Domestic Violence Clinic after SASS training, or through working in the SASS Advocacy Program.

SASS trains advocates to meet assault survivors at hospitals, accompany them to court and explain the process to survivors. SASS advocates also go to family court on Monday mornings and help individuals fill out applications for restraining orders.

- All programs requires training & at least a 6 month commitment
- Training is provided approximately **three** times per year

### **11. Womenspace Domestic Violence Advocacy Center**

*\* see also Domestic Violence Clinic*

Contact: Margo Schaefer PO Box 50127  
 (541) 485-8232 ext. 102 Eugene, OR 97405  
 Fax: 284-4255  
 Communityed@enddv.org

Womenspace provides shelter services and legal advocacy for survivors of domestic violence. Although law students may volunteer for a number of Womenspace programs, pro bono credit will be given only for work performed with the legal advocacy program. Legal advocates are needed to help with the Domestic Violence Clinic (described above). Volunteers may also assist with managing the shelter and providing administrative assistance.

- Client work requires advance training
- Womenspace prefers at least a 6 month commitment

### **12. Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA)**

www.casa-lane.org  
 Contact: Vicki Martz 174 Deadmond Ferry Rd.  
 (541) 984-3132 Springfield, OR 97477  
 Fax: 984-1407

CASA volunteers represent the interests of children who have been neglected, abused and/or abandoned. Advocates are appointed by a judge to advocate for the child's best interests in court proceedings. Once appointed, it is the advocate's responsibility to get to know as much as possible about the child. Volunteers search for information by reviewing records, interviewing parents, talking to teachers, neighbors, friends, social workers, etc. As a case proceeds through the court system, the advocate ultimately recommends to the court what is in the child's best interests.

- CASA volunteers undergo a rigorous 3 step interview process, must take 40 hour training and may still be denied admission to the program following the training
- Due to the sensitive nature of the work, CASA volunteers **MUST** commit to following through on any accepted cases – Third year students who plan to leave the area after graduation are not advised to apply to serve as an advocate

### **13. Community Mediation Services**

www.communitymediationservices.com  
 Contact: Sherisa Aguirre 769 Monroe St.  
 (541) 344-5366 Eugene, OR 97402  
 Fax: 687-8392  
 mediate@efn.org

Community Mediation Services (CMS) is a non-profit organization providing mediation to people in conflict throughout Lane County. In order to participate, volunteers must first complete the state-required 30 hours of mediation certification. This training is offered through the Law School's ADR program several times per year for a very nominal fee or through CMS. CMS offers a variety of different types of mediation and relies on a large pool of trained mediators who volunteer their time. Mediators assist parties in reaching an agreement, addressing the concerns of both parties.

- Best option for volunteers: Victim/Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice.

**A. Peer Mediation Training:** CMS provides 8-10 hour trainings throughout the county for elementary, middle and high school students as well as other youth organizations. Interns are involved in the trainings and an ongoing series of follow-up trainings and debriefs throughout the year. Potential hours of volunteer time: 170 hours/year.

- No additional training required.

**B. Parent-Youth:** These mediations follow a faster track than community cases, as youth cases are often crisis-related. Similar mediation process to community cases with sensitivity to behavioral and personal issues for youth.

- Additional training suggested.

**C. Community Program:** Mediations involve community problems: neighborhood, landlord-tenant, workplace and business-merchant issues. Covers basically everything except family disputes involving divorce or custody issues.

- No additional training required.

**D. Victim/Offender Mediation / Restorative Justice:** This program allows youth offenders to meet with their victims and work toward a more restorative type of justice where the offender actually sees the impact of his/her actions on the victim. The victim is also able to put a face on the crime and have his or her needs directly address through dialogue and restitution plans. This program also handles adult offender cases occasionally, as well as school-referred cases.

- Requires 16 additional training hours (provided every April).

#### **14. Oregon Clean Water Action Project**

[www.oregoncleanwater.org](http://www.oregoncleanwater.org)

Contact: Doug Quirk 212 Pearl Street #1

(541) 686-3027 Eugene, OR 97491

[dquirk@ocwap.org](mailto:dquirk@ocwap.org)

Oregon Clean Water Action Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to enforcing the Clean Water Act in Oregon and to educating Oregonians about water quality issues in Oregon. Law student volunteers will conduct research aimed at identifying Clean Water Act violators and assist in actions (including litigation) aimed at bringing violators into compliance.

#### **15. Eugene Teen Court**

Contact: Bruce Steinmetz 870 Berntzen Road (Peterson Barn)

(541) 682-6376 Eugene, OR 97401

Teen Court meets on Wednesday and Thursday nights. It is comprised of high school and middle school students who conduct peer hearings for first time juvenile offenders. Law school volunteers can either oversee deliberations in the jury room or evaluate and critique the performance of the high school case presenters and defendant advisors.

### **16. Neutral Observer Program**

<http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/programs/crs/index.htm>

Contact: Annie Bentz Conflict Resolution Services

(541) 346-0617 Office of Student Life

annhb@uoregon.edu 164 Oregon Hall

The Neutral Observer Program provides trained observers at rallies, demonstrations, protests, and other events that take place on the University of Oregon campus. The presence of trained observers at these events allows for the availability of unbiased witnesses should there be any form of escalation. Neutral observers identify themselves by wearing yellow armbands. If a situation arises that presents potential damage to people or property, the observer writes a report describing their obligations. This report may be used in the event that action is taken that result from the escalation. A 5-hour training is offered once each year.

- Volunteers must complete training, call to determine training schedule