



Fellowship Opportunities

1. Organization Name:

The Legal Aid Society

2. Are you a 501 (c)(3)? If not, what is your tax exempt status?

Yes

3. Are you an IOLA grantee?

Yes

4. Contact information including name, telephone number and email address for applications.

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5. How many interns can your organization use?

A substantial number in each of our three primary practices:

- Civil Practice
- Criminal Defense Practice
- Juvenile Rights Practice

6. Please fill in specific job descriptions for all internships below along with minimum time frame (e.g. 4, 6, 9 or 12 months). You may use the form to list all internships you wish to offer.

Name of Internship (e.g. Family Law Project)	Job Description	Number of Months
1.	** PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED SUPPLEMENT FOR ALL FELLOWSHIP DESCRIPTIONS**	Each 12 month positions

7. Any other perks of working in your program? (e.g. great coffee, the most compelling clients, fun colleagues etc.)

Training. Externs will have the opportunity to participate in The Legal Aid Society’s extensive new lawyer training program, which will provide the essential tools to become knowledgeable advocates. Working in an of counsel capacity to The Legal Aid Society, externs are mentored by our experienced attorneys to further enhance their professional development. Under the leadership of the Directors of Training in each of our three core Practices, ongoing professional training is conducted throughout the year in the form of inhouse courses, online resource materials, use of brief and form banks, simulations, “shadowing” senior staff, moot court, and other means. Externs at all levels of experience can participate fully in our training, and receive CLE credits without charge for attending the Society’s CLE training programs.

Integration into the practices of the Legal Aid Society. Externs benefit from the Legal Aid Society’s long-established pro bono partnership with major law firms in New York that emphasizes integration of volunteers into our practices. Externs participate fully with staff in all aspects of the legal work. They uniformly express appreciation of the collegial environment that enhances their personal experience and accelerates their professional development.

8. Is there any other information you would like us to have regarding potential fellowships in your organization?

Practice Order and Liability Coverage. Subject to the terms of the Legal Aid Society Practice Order, law graduates who have sat for the New York bar may represent Legal Aid Society clients under supervision of our staff. Externs assisting clients of the Legal Aid Society are covered by our professional liability policy.

Please return to ekocienda@nycbar.org or by fax at (212) 398-6634



The Legal Aid Society

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Alan Levine
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Theodore A. Levine
President

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Externship Opportunities with The Legal Aid Society May 2009

The Legal Aid Society is the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit provider of legal services for low income families and individuals. Our Civil, Criminal Defense, and Juvenile Rights Practices make the Society a uniquely diverse public interest law firm—providing advice and counsel, “know your rights” community education, trial, appellate, and law reform work in each Practice and in all five boroughs of the City through a network of neighborhood offices and special city-wide initiatives. Last year our professional staff of 850 lawyers and 600 social workers, paralegals, investigators, support, and administrative personnel provided comprehensive legal services in more than 295,000 cases and legal matters for individuals and families who cannot afford counsel.

Pro bono counsel play a crucial role in the Society's mission to provide equal access to justice to all New Yorkers in need of legal representation. Last year, 1,750 volunteer attorneys and paralegals – primarily from New York's leading law firms and corporate law departments – joined with our staff in representing the Legal Aid Society's clients across the full range of our legal work.

In the present economic climate in New York City, there is an even greater, compelling need for additional pro bono attorneys to partner with our legal staff, including a wide array of externship opportunities in each of our practices.

In the Civil, Criminal, and Juvenile Rights Practices, associates at all levels can work with Legal Aid Society supervising attorneys to establish specific externship projects. In the Civil area, for example, we can develop externships to provide a full range of civil legal services for senior citizens, survivors of domestic violence, disabled children and adults, immigrants, low wage and unemployed workers, families and individuals who are homeless or who face imminent evictions or foreclosures, low income taxpayers, abused prisoners and ex-offenders re-entering society, and persons living with HIV/AIDS. In the midst of this severe economic downturn, increasing numbers of New Yorkers are turning to us for help to avert homelessness which is at record levels in the City, and to obtain unemployment benefits, food stamps, Medicaid, and other subsistence level benefits. Because of our limited resources, we can only help one out of every seven potential clients who seek our help. Externs—corporate attorneys as well as litigators—can enable us to expand our civil legal assistance to help meet this exponentially increasing need for legal aid at this critical time.

Unlike in the Civil area, there is a constitutional right to legal representation in the Criminal and Juvenile Rights areas. Externs can play a crucial role in enhancing these constitutionally mandated client services. For example, in the Criminal Practice, externs can work alongside our staff to represent clients at arraignments, in trial court proceedings, in appellate and other post-conviction

cases, including filing writs of habeas corpus. In the Juvenile Rights Practice, externs can work with Legal Aid staff to represent children who are the victims of abuse and neglect in Family Court cases and who have been placed in foster care as well as adolescents who are charged with juvenile delinquency.

Training. Externs will have the opportunity to participate in The Legal Aid Society's extensive new lawyer training program, which will provide the essential tools to become knowledgeable advocates. Working in an of counsel capacity to The Legal Aid Society, externs are mentored by our experienced attorneys to further enhance their professional development. Under the leadership of the Directors of Training in each of our three core Practices, ongoing professional training is conducted throughout the year in the form of in-house courses, online resource materials, use of brief and form banks, simulations, "shadowing" senior staff, moot court, and other means. Externs at all levels of experience can participate fully in our training.

Below is a brief description of some representative externships in which the presence of associates at all levels will address a significant legal need for expanded assistance to vulnerable clients in New York City. These examples illustrate the breadth of available externships that we can develop for externs.

I. CRIMINAL DEFENSE PRACTICE

Criminal Defense Externship

The Legal Aid Society is the primary public defender in New York City, annually handling nearly 227,000 cases for indigent clients accused of crimes. A criminal defense extern will engage in all aspects of this practice, gaining a unique opportunity to develop criminal defense trial skills and contribute to ensuring fairness in the criminal justice system. Under the mentorship of experienced Legal Aid Society trial counsel, externs will receive extensive training, work arraignments, engage in research and conduct criminal investigations, draft motions and memorandum, prepare witnesses, handle misdemeanor cases, and be part of litigation teams on complex felony matters.

Criminal Appeals Externship

The Criminal Appeals Bureau is the largest provider of post-conviction services to indigent criminal defendants in New York City, achieving significant impact on criminal law and procedure including on constitutional issues in New York and nationally. Externs will receive intensive appellate training mentored by senior appellate counsel in the Bureau on all aspects of the appellate process including reviewing the record, issue selection, and drafting the appeal of trials, hearings, and pleas. The externs also may be exposed to Court of Appeals practice through the leave application process. Appeals may be argued as of right. Externs will have opportunities to argue appeals and, as cases approach oral argument, will be prepared with moot courts.

II. CIVIL PRACTICE

Community Development Project Externship

The Community Development Project (CDP) provides legal assistance, education, advocacy, and other support for grassroots community and economic development in Upper Manhattan, the Bronx and, in cases of special merit, in other low-income areas in New York City. We strengthen communities and resist the displacement of low-income residents by promoting entrepreneurship by low-income persons, representing nonprofit organizations that provide essential services, and supporting tenant groups that work to develop and preserve affordable housing. Externs will provide transactional legal services to low-income small business, nonprofit organizations, and tenants working to develop or preserve low-income housing. Our practice includes a wide range of corporate work, tax, real estate, commercial leasing, intellectual property, employment law, and all aspects of creating and representing tax exempt organizations. Externs will have opportunities to draft and negotiate contracts, corporate documents, leases, and financial instruments, and to make submissions to state and federal regulatory agencies. Externs will also be given an opportunity to make presentations as part of our community education workshop series.

Consumer Law Externship

Externs will represent low-income New Yorkers in the consumer law practice area, including debt collection, identity theft, wage garnishment, bank account freezing, affirmative state and federal litigation involving consumer protection laws, and related policy advocacy for consumers. Working alongside our law reform and housing lawyers, externs will bring affirmative litigation against various private equity companies engaging in unlawful consumer practices in their role as major owners of rental properties.

Elder Law Externship

Externs will participate in the Elder Law practice's diverse work with a primary focus on eviction prevention, government benefits (such as Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, Section 8 and Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemptions), advance planning and consumer law matters for low income seniors.

Employment Law Externship

Externs will represent low-wage and immigrant workers who have been unfairly denied unemployment insurance, have had back wages illegally withheld, have been denied employer insurance or pension benefits, or have been unfairly denied Family and Medical Leave Act benefits. Working alongside our lawyers and paralegals specializing in this practice, the externs will have the opportunity to handle individual cases before the Unemployment Insurance Board as well as in State and Federal Court.

Family/Domestic Violence Unit Externship

Externs will provide legal services to women and children, most of them survivors of domestic violence. In collaboration with seven community-based domestic violence advocacy partner

agencies, the externs will work alongside lawyers in this practice area and provide coordinated legal and social services to these families, including the filing of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) petitions to legalize immigration status. These services help clients to achieve stability, autonomy, and economic self-sufficiency in a safe environment.

Foreclosure Prevention Project Externship

This project serves victims of predatory lending practices in the mortgage industry, particularly through community outreach, education, and legal assistance. Working with senior staff lawyers in this practice area, externs will provide direct representation and advice to clients and advocates regarding mortgage foreclosures, deed theft and fraud, to benefit homeowners as well as tenants in foreclosed properties.

Housing Development Unit Externship

The Housing Development Unit (HDU) of the Harlem Community Law Office is seeking externs to assist in its anti-displacement, anti-gentrification, community outreach, and community education work. The HDU represents low-income tenant associations and their members, and low-income housing cooperatives in complex litigation, organizing, and advocacy to fight displacement, neglect and gentrification in upper-Manhattan. In addition to litigation in Housing and Supreme Courts, the HDU conducts trainings and clinics in collaboration with local community groups, and advocates on behalf of low-income tenants with local elected officials. Externs in HDU develop litigation skills, grassroots organizing experience, and knowledge of state, local and federal agencies.

Health Law Unit Externship

Externs will provide advice and representation to individuals in need of health insurance and health care services. Issues engaging the externs include Medicaid, managed care, denials of benefits/services, access for the uninsured, reproductive health care, immigrant access, access for those with limited English proficiency, disability rights, and discrimination. The Health Law Unit also works with more than 30 community based organizations across the city providing training, technical assistance and advice on health access issues. The externs will be fully integrated into the work of the Unit.

HIV/AIDS Representation Project (H/ARP) Externship

H/ARP provides comprehensive civil legal services to low income individuals living with HIV/AIDS throughout New York City. We work in collaboration with HIV medical and social service providers in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn, and conduct intake at community partner sites in all three boroughs. We offer advice, referrals, document preparation, advocacy and representation in administrative proceedings and litigation including but not limited to the following areas: benefits, housing, family, consumer and advance planning. H/ARP also conducts legal workshops and training for HIV service providers and consumers on legal rights of persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as housing, benefits, family, consumer and advance planning. The Extern will work alongside H/ARP attorneys and paralegals to provide these services.

Homeless Rights Project Externship

The extern will work closely with Homeless Project lawyers and paralegals on issues relating to the City and State's plan to discharge homeless families and single men and women from shelter for alleged misconduct. The work will include reviewing case records, interviewing clients, developing evidence (particularly relating to physical or mental impairment), representing clients at State administrative hearings, and preparing post-hearing briefs. The extern will also work to enforce payment of \$5 million in fines still owing to formerly homeless families with children who were denied shelter by the City and forced to sleep overnight in offices or sent to unlawful placements. Duties will include interviewing clients, researching their entitlement to fines, researching related legal issues, identifying class-wide problems, drafting memoranda, and negotiating with the City.

Housing Eviction Prevention Externship

This project provides critical eviction prevention legal services to the most vulnerable clients in New York City in our effort to prevent thousands of families from becoming homeless each year. In joining with our housing lawyers throughout the City, the externs not only keep low income New Yorkers in affordable housing, but also correct unsafe housing violations, obtain rent subsidies and fight illegal rent overcharges, prevent homelessness and displacement, as well as preserve the New York City housing stock and stabilize entire neighborhoods.

Immigrant Defense Externship

Every year thousands of immigrants with long-term residency and family roots in New York face removal from the United States because of old and minor convictions and other immigration violations. These immigrants and their families "have the privilege of being represented" in immigration proceedings, but "at no expense to the government." The externs will assist with representation of immigrant clients in removal proceedings in immigration court. Responsibilities include interviewing clients and witnesses, preparing immigration applications, researching country conditions in asylum cases and other applications for relief, preparing witness statements, compiling and submitting extensive supporting documents, preparing experts and witnesses to testify at merits hearings, and drafting pleadings and memorandum of law.

Law Reform Externship

The Law Reform Unit is seeking externs to work on complex litigation involving public benefits, subsidized housing and predatory lending. Externs will assist in monitoring compliance with a consent decree that requires the provision of public benefits to eligible recipients and the payment of retroactive benefits to certain class members. Externs will assist in representing class members with disabilities who are seeking reasonable accommodations. Externs may be asked to work on litigating other class action cases in the public benefits area, as litigation tasks and deadlines require. Externs will work on litigation on a variety of cases challenging landlords' refusal to accept Section 8 subsidy payments in violation of a new NYC anti-discrimination law. Externs may also work on cases brought to preserve federally subsidized housing or to enforce public housing rights. Externs will be assigned to a specific subject area for the term of their externship.

Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic Externship

This specialized practice provides legal representation and advice to low-income taxpayers, many with limited English proficiency, in disputes with the IRS and/or the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. The Clinic operates a hotline and conducts community outreach and neighborhood workshops in English, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. The Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic externs will assist in all aspects of the practice.

Prisoners' Rights Project/ Re-Entry Externship

The Prisoners' Rights Project seeks to remedy unconstitutional conditions and illegal practices in the New York City jails and New York State prisons through class action or test case litigation. In addition, the Project replies to prisoner requests for assistance through the provision of self-help materials, and, on a limited basis, through administrative advocacy. The Prisoners' Rights Project's docket includes cases addressing brutality, deficient medical and mental health care, education, sexual abuse, and treatment of the disabled. The Re-Entry practice focuses on advocacy for ex-inmates' transition and reintegration into their communities with their families in obtaining employment, housing, health and other benefits, in resuming their education, and in re-gaining their civil rights. Externs can participate in all aspects of legal advocacy for this under-represented and "hidden" population.

Project FAIR/Public Benefits Externship

Project FAIR provides access to information for pro se public benefits recipients about their legal rights in the New York State administrative "fair hearing" process. It also dispenses information about community services and acts as a resource for organizations working with low-income and homeless individuals and families. Externs will have the opportunity to engage in advocacy work in conjunction with this unique initiative that reaches individuals facing loss of subsistence economic support and who are not otherwise able to access legal services.

Special Education and Disability Advocacy

The City-wide Disability Practice advises and represents individuals and groups on issues related to obtaining and/or retaining disability benefits administered by the Social Security Administration. Our staff represents claimants for SSA benefits at all phases of the application process, from the local field office level through to federal court appeals. Externs will work with us to provide Special Education advocacy services for children for whom we are litigating SSI claims with the Social Security Administration.

III. JUVENILE RIGHTS PRACTICE

Juvenile Rights Externship

The Juvenile Rights Practice, established concurrently with New York State's Family Court in 1962, is one of the country's leading legal organizations in the field of child advocacy. Externs may represent children in child protective, termination of parental rights, PINS, and juvenile delinquency proceedings, and remain on cases through the appellate process. Externs also may engage in initiating class action lawsuits and other litigation as part of the Special Litigation and

Law Reform Unit that addresses systemic problems aimed at system-wide abuses within the juvenile justice, child welfare, and educational systems.

Early Intervention and Pre-School Special Education Externship

Externs will assert the legal rights of New York’s foster children to social and educational resources that can be critical for their healthy development and educational success. Working with the project supervising attorney, externs will represent young clients in obtaining legally-mandated services being denied to children who need them through multiple levels of legal advocacy—factual development and documentation of the case; negotiating an appropriate service plan; monitoring its lawful implementation; and representing the child’s interests at an administrative hearing. Both corporate and litigation associates work effectively in this practice.