



MAKING THE CASE FOR HUMANITY

# An Invitation To Law Students



## Starting A Career As An Attorney At The Legal Aid Society

*The Legal Aid Society, the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services organization, is more than a law firm for low-income New Yorkers. It is an indispensable component of the legal, social and economic fabric of New York City – passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform.*

New lawyers have a unique opportunity at The Legal Aid Society to work for social justice and law reform, all while refining professional skills they will use throughout their careers. Joining Legal Aid means working with attorneys who have distinguished reputations for excellence and devotion to low-income clients. Our advocacy runs from community-based work to impact litigation to individual cases. Our attorneys serve as public defenders and as counsel for children in child protective and delinquency proceedings. They also provide legal assistance in civil matters including housing, benefits, family law, immigration, health law and consumer law. In all practices, Legal Aid uses a comprehensive, innovative approach that results in effective, cutting edge representation.

*The Legal Aid Society has provided this caliber of advocacy in city, state and federal courts since 1876. It does so by harnessing the diverse expertise, experience and capabilities of nearly 1,200 lawyers and approximately 750 social workers, investigators, paralegals, support and administrative staff. Through a network of 27 borough, neighborhood and courthouse offices, Legal Aid supplies a broad range of services in every New York City borough for clients who cannot afford to pay for their own lawyer.*



Summer Interns in Training Session



The Legal Aid Society was a sponsor of the Northeast Region of the National Black Law Student Association (NEBSA) 48th Annual Convention, held January 27 to January 31, 2016, in the Renaissance Newark Airport Hotel, in Elizabeth, NJ.

Nine members of the Attorneys of Color Caucus at Legal Aid (ACLA) and the Recruitment Office provided information to students about The Legal Aid Society during the Convention's Job Fair and served as judges in the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition and the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition.

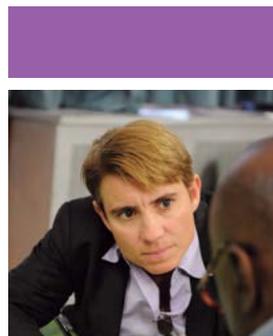
Participating in the event were: Eugene Deronn Bowen, Staff Attorney, Criminal Appeals Bureau; Shashwat Dave, Staff Attorney, Juvenile Rights Practice, Staten Island; Bernette Carway-Spruiell, Recruitment Administrator; Rebecca Chevalier, Staff Attorney Criminal Defense Practice, Community Justice Unit; Virginia Cora, Staff Attorney, CDP Bronx; Antoinette Kirwan, Staff Attorney, JRP Bronx; Catherine Sam, Staff Attorney, CDP Manhattan; Zaida Scott, Staff Attorney, CDP CJU; and Jared Trujillo, Staff Attorney, JRP SI.

Appeals Bureau; Shashwat Dave, Staff Attorney, Juvenile Rights Practice, Staten Island; Bernette Carway-Spruiell, Recruitment Administrator; Rebecca Chevalier, Staff Attorney Criminal Defense Practice, Community Justice Unit; Virginia Cora, Staff Attorney, CDP Bronx; Antoinette Kirwan, Staff Attorney, JRP Bronx; Catherine Sam, Staff Attorney, CDP Manhattan; Zaida Scott, Staff Attorney, CDP CJU; and Jared Trujillo, Staff Attorney, JRP SI.

Lawyers and staff are spread across three practice areas: Criminal, Civil and Juvenile Rights. Our capacity to represent low-income New Yorkers is strengthened by our Pro Bono Practice, which coordinates volunteer work from law firms, corporate law departments and expert consultants. Every year, Legal Aid handles more than 300,000 individual cases and legal matters. Our attorneys bring an unmatched depth and breadth of perspective to each case. No other legal services organization in the United States takes on more cases for more clients.

The Legal Aid Society's unique value lies in the ability to go beyond any one case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals and broader, more powerful systemic change for society as a whole. In addition to our individual cases, Legal Aid's law reform work benefits over two million low-income families and individuals in New York City. The landmark rulings secured in many of these cases have affected precedents and policies across the state and the nation.

*The Legal Aid Society is the largest, most diverse legal employer in the metropolitan New York City area. In fact, the New York City Bar Association has recognized Legal Aid's enhanced efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, deeming Legal Aid a "Diversity Champion." Accepting the award, Legal Aid stated, "this designation distinguishes the joint efforts of the Society's management and staff from those at other legal services organizations and will thereby help the Society to continue to make progress in recruiting, hiring and retaining diverse law students."*





Members of The Legal Aid Society's Brooklyn Criminal staff were on hand to help hundreds of New Yorkers resolve outstanding warrants and other legal issues at Begin Again, sponsored by the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office.

During three sessions of Begin Again last year, nearly 2,400 New Yorkers were helped and more than 1,600 outstanding summons were cleared. The participants received consultation with Legal Aid attorneys on how to resolve their warrants. These open warrants weigh down an overburdened courts system and can hold back individuals who have them on their records.

## Career Development

New attorneys have a special chance for professional growth at The Legal Aid Society. They receive rigorous training and extensive courtroom experience in order to become skilled and tested advocates.

For example, within two years of joining Legal Aid's staff, the Criminal Practice's trial attorneys can be certified to defend felonies and the practice's appellate lawyers may be arguing cases before the state's highest court. Likewise, Juvenile Rights Practice attorneys in that same two-year span will be representing children in complex child protective proceedings or delinquency cases. Meanwhile, Civil Practice attorneys will be handling a wide variety of legal matters in state and federal courts. The combination of intensive initial and ongoing training, early client contact and broad litigation experience has enabled Legal Aid to recruit the best lawyers and retain them on staff.

To ensure our clients receive effective advice and counsel in line with the highest standards of the legal profession, Legal Aid places great emphasis on the coordination, development and expansion of staff training programs.

*The Legal Aid Society is an accredited Continuing Legal Education provider. Each practice has a comprehensive, full-time training program for incoming lawyers, which is complimented by regular, ongoing training for new and experienced attorneys. Our training programs are renowned and Legal Aid staff members are sought-after trainers for national programs. Legal Aid's in-house training program for new lawyers has been cited as a national model.*



## Opportunities for Fellowships and Law Student Internships

The Legal Aid Society has long been a successful sponsor for individuals in some of the profession's most competitive fellowships, such as the Skadden Fellowship Program, Soros Justice Fellowships, Equal Justice Works and Yale Law School's Arthur Liman Public Interest Program. While at Legal Aid, fellows receive a rewarding, challenging and meaningful experience helping New Yorkers who are most in need.

Law students can find a wide array of internships in Legal Aid's Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Rights Practices. Indeed, many staff attorneys themselves are former law school interns.

The Attorneys of Color Caucus (ACLA) of The Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (ALAA) established a Mentoring Project for Law Students of Color. The project aims to enhance our recruitment of diverse law student interns and staff attorneys. ACLA pairs law students with staff attorneys of color who mentor participating interns, supporting them during their internship and in the recruitment process.

Legal Aid also offers an Investigator Intern Program that gives an exciting, hands-on, in-the-field experience to undergraduate and graduate students who are considering a career in law.

## Alumni

Legal Aid Society alumni can be found in a broad range of positions, from the judiciary and government to private law firms, businesses and law schools.

Currently, more than 40 alumni are judges in the federal and state court system. These judges sit in courts including Federal District Court, State Supreme Court, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, and the New York Court of Appeals as well as New York City's Civil, Criminal, Family and Housing Courts. Apart from the bench, individuals who once worked for The Legal Aid Society have also served, or are serving, as legislators and counsel or commissioners for governmental agencies. Others have become senior officials in New York City and New York State administrations, as well as the state Attorney General's Office. A significant number of alumni are serving in academia in law schools throughout the country as deans and professors.

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## The Legal Aid Society

serves

**In the Courtroom**

**In the Community**

**Across the City**

**and**

**Across the Nation**



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[www.legal-aid.org](http://www.legal-aid.org)

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