

**Willamette University
College of Law**

Pro Bono Honors Program

2011/2012

**Career & Professional Development
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Willamette University College of Law PRO BONO HONORS PROGRAM

What is the Pro Bono Honors Program?

The Program is designed to encourage students to participate in community-based volunteer legal service projects. The Program allows students to enhance their learning experience through hands-on involvement in the community, while providing valuable services to people in need.

In addition, 2L/3L students who participate and provide a minimum of 30 hours (10 hours for 1L students) of not-for-credit and not-for-compensation work during the year (April 1 - March 31) will receive a Pro Bono Honors Program Award and will be honored at a spring reception. Those students from each class who provide the most pro bono hours each year will receive special recognition.

The Rupert E. "Rudy" Park, Jr. Pro Bono Student of the Year Award is awarded to the third year student who has contributed the most hours of pro bono service throughout his or her law school career, and who has participated in the Program in at least the second and third years of law school.

Who is eligible to participate?

All Willamette law students are eligible to participate. Awards will be presented at the end of the year for the prior year's work. For example, an award will be presented in April, 2012, for work completed April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012.

What is considered pro bono work?

There are two kinds of work that can qualify for an award: general pro bono work and legal pro bono work.

General pro bono work may be performed for:

- a public interest or non-profit organization; or
- a government agency.

Work qualifying as general pro bono service could include: volunteering to help with the WUPILP auction or volunteering time with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, SMART or the humane society.

Legal pro bono work includes:

- Work directly related to the delivery of legal services to indigent individuals; OR
- Work for an attorney or attorneys on behalf of organizations, donations to which qualify as deductions under state or federal tax laws; OR
- Law-related work for federal, state or local government, including government agencies, prosecutor or district attorney offices, or courts; OR
- Work for an attorney or attorneys directly related to the delivery of legal services to indigent individuals where the retainer agreement specified the attorney or attorneys are performing the work pro bono and are not to receive a fee from the client.

"Law-related work" and "legal services" include work related to alternative dispute resolution. **If you are involved in providing legal services, you need to be under the supervision of a licensed attorney.** All pro bono work by the student must be performed without remuneration of any kind, either monetary or for credit. Work performed by a student under a stipend, fellowship or work study is not eligible under the Program. However, students who exceed the required number of hours for their fellowship, externship or certificate program may count those additional hours, if they otherwise qualify as pro bono work, as follows:

Certificate in Dispute Resolution - May count up to 10 hours of the 100 hours per year required for the certificate program.

Externship - Hours in excess of the 104 hours (208 hours if taking 6-credit externship) required for the externship.

Civil Practice Clinic - Hours in excess of the 156 hours required for clinic credit (work and class hours).

WUPILP Fellowship - Hours performed for the Fellowship employer in excess of the required 300 hours of service.

How many hours are needed to qualify for an award?

For First Year Students:

To qualify for an award, a student must perform **10 or more hours of pro bono work, all of which may be general pro bono work**, including fundraising or non-profit community service. First year students are encouraged to focus only on their studies during their first semester. Therefore, no hours performed during the first semester will be counted towards an award. Students who wish to qualify for an award may engage in pro bono work during the winter break, and January through March of their first year. Students on academic probation should not participate in pro bono activities during the school term.

For Second and Third Year Students:

To qualify for an award, a student must perform **30 or more hours of pro bono work, 20 hours of which must be legal pro bono work**. Ten hours may be general pro bono work, including fundraising or non-profit community service. Students on academic probation should not participate in pro bono activities during the school term.

Why participate in the Program?

In addition to providing valuable services to organizations serving people in need and feeling great about giving back to the community, you will be helping your career! Pro Bono service allows you to:

- Gain valuable practical legal experience in a real world setting;
- Meet smart and dedicated attorneys who can help mentor you in your career;
- Have client contact and help real people with real problems;
- Learn more about a particular area of practice.

Providing pro bono service is part of being a lawyer. The American Bar Association recommends that attorneys render at least 50 hours of pro bono legal services per year. The Oregon State Bar's aspirational standard is for all attorneys to perform at least 80 hours of pro bono services per year, with 20 to 40 hours of direct legal service to low income individuals. No matter what area of law, no matter what size firm you practice in, pro bono service is an important part of practicing law. This program provides you an opportunity to get involved NOW....and to be recognized for your efforts.

How do I get started?

1. You can find pro bono work in any of the following ways:
 - ▶ Locate an agency, organization or attorney on your own that you would like to work for; OR
 - ▶ Check out *Symlicity* for employers who regularly post externship positions; many of these employers are willing to take volunteers as well; OR
 - ▶ Talk with us to find out if there's an employer or organization that matches your particular interests.
2. Attend a pro bono information session. These sessions will be offered to students seeking pro bono assignments, to help you learn more about the benefits of doing pro bono. Information sessions will be offered in the Fall semester.
3. Next, talk to the prospective pro bono employer. Check with CPDC to make sure this work qualifies as pro bono. Use the attached **Approval Form** or just call/email us.
4. Once you have started, keep track of your pro bono service hours. You can do this with the **Hours Log Sheet**, or with your own recording method so long as you record the date, the employer, the type of work performed, and the number of hours worked. Turn your hours in to Norma Freitas after March 31.

If you have met the minimum number of hours, you will be invited to the Spring awards luncheon. Awards will be presented at that time or can be picked up afterwards from the CPDC office.

Special Note: Willamette participates in the Oregon State Bar Pro Bono Challenge. The OSB has a different definition of what qualifies as pro bono. We will submit information to the OSB for any student whose pro bono hours qualify under the OSB's definition. See www.osbar.org for more information.

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Approval Form**

All students who want their pro bono hours to count towards an award from the Pro Bono Honors Program **should check with Career & Professional Development to determine that the work is qualified.** Use this form or contact Norma Freitas.

Student name: _____ Grad year: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Organization: _____

Supervisor: _____ Bar # (if any): _____

Organization's Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Position Description: _____

Turn in this form to Norma Freitas or Bev Ecklund in the CPDC

For Office Use Only

Approved _____

Not Approved _____

⊙ General Pro Bono

⊙ Legal Pro Bono

Date _____

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Student Evaluation Form

CPDC is compiling information describing pro bono experiences. This information will be made available to other students to help them in their pro bono efforts. Please complete the form below and return it to us. Thanks for your help!

Please complete one form for each pro bono employer

Pro Bono Employer Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Dates of Pro Bono Service: _____ to _____

of Pro Bono hours with this employer: _____

Pro Bono Employer Category (please circle):

Public Interest Government Business Private Practice

Other: _____

How did you obtain this position? _____

What skills/qualities/interests does this employer look for? _____

Please comment briefly on the following aspects of your employment (use another sheet for additional comments):

Type of position (circle): Legal Law related Non-legal

Type of work performed: _____

Areas/legal issues worked on: _____

Training/Supervision: _____

Feedback and Evaluation: _____

Contact with Attorneys: _____

Atmosphere in office: _____

Degree of client contact: _____

What was your impression regarding the mix of people in the office (age/sex/ ethnicity/ etc.): _____

How many hours per week did you work (on average): _____

What, if anything, do you wish you had known about this placement before you accepted the position? _____

Is there any additional information you would like to add?

Optional:

Student Name

Email

(Circle what applies):

- I would be willing to discuss my experience with other students.
- I would be willing to speak on a panel for other students about my pro bono experience.