

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF LAW



*Promoting a Culture of Public Service Commitment*

**Report on Program Development and Performance**  
**March 4, 2004 - June 30, 2008**

## I. Executive Summary

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Students for Access to Justice (SATJ) is a student-driven pro bono program at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. Since its inaugural event on March 4, 2004, more than two hundred law students have volunteered over ten thousand hours of law-related services to a wide range of public service placements. Student volunteers provide valuable services to underfunded offices and enhance access to justice. At the same time, students come away from these experiences enriched with new legal skills, relationships with respected lawyers and judges, and appreciation for the role lawyers play in society. They work in state and federal agencies, judicial offices, public interest non-profits and organizations dedicated to serving the legal needs of low and moderate income Oklahomans. Dean Andrew M. Coats and the College of Law faculty and staff have provided financial and moral support to the program.

SATJ aims to create a culture of commitment in which students learn early on that public service is a hallmark of being a member of the legal profession. As Governor Brad Henry said at the college's 2006 commencement service, "Public service is the rent you pay for the space you occupy."<sup>1</sup> By getting law students in the habit of regularly donating some of their time to law-related services, SATJ hopes to create a public service orientation that will continue throughout their professional careers.

At the strategic planning session held each spring, SATJ's student administrators and faculty sponsor reflect on the past year's achievements, areas needing improvement and goals for the coming year. We are acutely aware that new programs can falter or fail if they pay insufficient attention to program design and implementation.

Throughout SATJ's evolution, we have used a child development metaphor. In a program's infancy, the parent lovingly cares for the dependent child, tending to its needs with novice enthusiasm. Ashley Tate (Class of 2005) worked for two years with Professor Judith Maute and Kyle Buchanan, Director of Career Services, to generate placement opportunities and create an initial structure for matching students with non-profit, governmental or judicial offices.

Paola Alvarez (Class of 2007) served as the first student coordinator, paid a few hours per week to administer placements. At the 2006 strategic planning session—the start of the second year of operation—we recognized that the program was in the toddler stage of childhood. We were learning to walk, starting to establish an identity, and sometimes stumbling from inexperience. Student coordinators Sarah Weldon (Class of 2007) and Alicia Currin-Moore (Class of 2008) ably took us to the next stage. The program was re-named Students for Access to Justice (with SATJ as acronym). We designed a mission statement, core values and goals, and developed a logo and annual cycle of activities.<sup>2</sup> In our third year, we realized the potential pitfalls of the organizational equivalent to teen years: we had enough experience that we could soar, or we could get tripped up from overconfidence. We looked critically at our paper forms and cumbersome procedures. It was time to streamline, fine-tune and go online through the College of Law homepage.

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<sup>1</sup> Gov. Brad Henry, *A Profession of Service*, 77 OKLA. B. J., Sept. 2, 2006, at 2500.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A.

We now consider SATJ a young adult, on the way to a successful future, ready to spread our wings, expanding our reach and future goals. Because Professor Maute will be on leave of absence for the 2008-2009 academic year, Ronald L. Ripley has graciously agreed to come on board as Co-Director. Mr. Ripley comes to the program with a rich background in corporate legal practice. Starting its fourth year of operation in spring of 2008, SATJ aims to increase student participation, to develop business-related pro bono opportunities, to create an advisory board and to develop an outreach program to the practicing bar that will provide financial support for student volunteers and generate more pro bono work by partnering our students and graduates. Senior Coordinators, Suma Ananthaswamy and Brad Wilson (both class of 2009), and Junior Coordinator, Amy Kamp (Class of 2010), are dedicated to fine-tuning program administration, with improved follow-up on placement assignments, means to assess qualitative and quantitative outcomes and a user-friendly website.

Student enthusiasm for doing meaningful pro bono work is at an all-time high at the College of Law. Since 2005, SATJ has been a member of Equal Justice Works (EJW), a national organization dedicated to encouraging law student pro bono work. With the generous support of Dean Andy Coats, seven students attended the 2006 EJW Conference and Career Fair in Washington, D.C.; eleven students attended in 2007. Until 2007, we did not offer placements to first year students out of concern that they might be disadvantaged academically. Amy Kamp worked diligently to create local semester break opportunities. Suma Ananthaswamy, in conjunction with the Black Law Students Association, organized a trip to New Orleans in January to work with the Student Hurricane Network. The five students who participated found the experience transformative—seeing what a difference a little law student help could do in helping persons whose lives were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Amy, Suma and Brad started fund-raising for a spring break trip. Those efforts, aided by a grant from the Oklahoma Bar Foundation, funded a week-long trip for eleven students, including seven 1Ls.<sup>3</sup>

Much has been accomplished in four years with minimal costs. To date, the program has incurred \$36,691 in expenses, mostly for EJW membership and travel, the two New Orleans trips, minimal compensation for the student coordinators and refreshments for various events, including the annual pro bono fair and spring recognition reception. The spring fund-raising efforts brought in \$6,365.<sup>4</sup> See Appendix C, SATJ/Pro Bono Program Expenses (March 2, 2004-June 30, 2008). Dean Coats has given the program unwavering support, although there is no designated budget for its expenses and staffing by student coordinators. This minimal investment has yielded great returns: the priceless value of services and ongoing intrinsic benefits to students and new graduates.

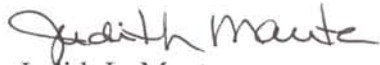
As we look to the future, we know that the program needs to become more established as part of the College's institutional culture, with paid professional administrative staff working with the student coordinators and under the supervision of Co-Directors Maute and Ripley. We need to develop closer relationships with our alumni, who can provide some financial support for

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B, Renée DeMoss, *OBFL Helps Oklahoma Students Gain Experience in Democracy and the Law*, 79 OKLA. B. J., April 12, 2008, at 876.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix C, SATJ/Pro Bono Program Expenses (March 2, 2004-June 30, 2008).

small stipends for law students who spend their summers doing pro bono public service work. We need to get the word out to the practicing bar, encouraging them to take on pro bono work with the help of law student volunteers.



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## II. System Design

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### A. Mission Statement

“Promoting a culture of public service commitment by connecting students with meaningful pro bono volunteer opportunities.”

### B. Core Values

1. *Create a Culture of Commitment*: Develop a sustaining culture of commitment to public service that is widely embraced by the law school community, practicing lawyers and the judiciary.
2. *Establish Meaningful Pro Bono Opportunities*: Connecting students with qualified volunteer placement opportunities which confer valuable and competent legal services to those in need while providing students with intrinsically rewarding professional work experiences.
3. *Foster Pro Bono Partnership*: Match students with practicing attorneys and judges to work on matters to improve the legal system or access to justice enhancing professional development in areas of interest.

### C. Cyclical Calendar

1. *Fall Semester (August - December)*: Academic calendars have a predictable cycle. At the start of the new school year in August, upper division students return from their summer activities. First year students go through orientation, anxious but excited about their future prospects. Someone speaks at first year orientation about lawyers' pro bono responsibilities as a hallmark of professionalism. The student packet includes a glossy published description of SATJ<sup>5</sup> and the student coordinators staff a table to discuss pro bono opportunities with the incoming students.

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix D.

SATJ asks all students who volunteered in the summer to submit their hours, as verified by the supervisor, and to write a qualitative assessment of the placement. Because our students are high-level volunteers, we want to make sure that they did law-related work with proper supervision by a licensed attorney. When we receive negative feedback from a student, we assess whether the problems encountered are “fixable” or whether we should decline to make further placements until the problems are resolved. We also obtain qualitative evaluations from the supervisor, so that we can be aware how well that student worked out—both for future placements of that student and to identify administrative issues that need to be corrected. Because we seek to create ongoing partnerships with our placement opportunities, we are attentive to fostering candid and effective working relationships.

Early in the fall we host the Pro Bono Orientation at which students and organizational representatives speak about the placements (“what I did on my summer vacation”) and the personal and professional benefits to doing this kind of work. Upper division law students are recruited and matched with placements. (The number of student placements and hours tend to be fewer in the fall semester, as opposed to spring and summer.)

In early December we make initial plans for the January pro bono fair, setting the date to come shortly after students receive their grades. This is timed so that students who may be disappointed with their grades receive prompt affirmation about their decision to attend law school and opportunities for gaining professional experience while serving the public interest. Potential placement offices receive a “save the date” letter.

2. *Spring Semester (January – April)*: Spring semester is our most active time during the academic calendar. After grades are released, the on-campus interview process with major legal employers begins. Many of these employers require a high GPA, which can cause some students to despair about their future career prospects. The Pro Bono Fair is held on the following Wednesday in the first floor student lounge. About 25 representatives of placement opportunities sit at tables around the perimeter, speaking with students about the type of volunteer work available either for the spring or summer. Good food is available at the tables. Two mottos guide the planning: pro bono work is “doing well by doing good” and students must “pay to play”—that is, they cannot consume the food without visiting the tables.

A new addition to the fair in 2008 was the inclusion of spring break opportunities. After the success of the winter break trip to work with the Student Hurricane Network in New Orleans, SATJ decided to organize a spring break trip. The Student Hurricane Network (SHN) is a student-created organization of law students across the country dedicated to advancing the cause of social justice in communities affected by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. SHN works with student representatives to plan volunteer trips to affected areas. This spring break was SATJ’s first time organizing this sort of project. With help from Professor Maute and Dean Evans, SATJ was able to raise enough money to pay for transportation to and housing in New Orleans. SATJ raised some of the money by organizing events (a Mardi Gras party and a bake sale); individual faculty members and law firms made donations; the OU College of Law provided funding; and the Oklahoma Bar Foundation awarded a \$2000 grant. In addition to the grant money, the OBF also featured a write-up of the trip in the April 12th issue of the Oklahoma Bar Journal.

Some students request immediate placements for the spring semester; the student coordinators tend to the matches shortly after the fair. Professor Jon Forman heads the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA), which staffs a table at the Norman Public Library every Wednesday and Thursday evening from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. In the spring of 2008, eleven students volunteered a total of 249 hours with the program.

In March, shortly after spring break, SATJ holds the Annual Pro Bono Recognition Reception and selects a Junior Coordinator from the first year class. Scheduling reflects the reality that April is packed with end of the year activities for other organizations and that students need to shut down their extracurricular activities to study for finals.

The reception honors students who have done at least twenty-five hours of qualifying pro bono legal work since May 1 of the prior year.<sup>6</sup> Because students appreciate the recognition and want to get invited, this provides them an incentive to substantiate their activities. Each student receives a formal certificate. Following preliminary formalities, awards are distributed and pictures taken. We have now refined the program format to recognize the outstanding student volunteers from each class. Students and placement representatives may address the group speak about their experiences and the relationships formed. In the spring of 2008, SATJ recognized 53 students. Altogether, these students had volunteered 3,779 hours in the past year.

The student coordinator design contemplates selection of a Junior Coordinator from among the first year class. We expect a two-year commitment, with the successful candidate learning the ropes of program administration during his or her second year of law school and then “rise up” to be Senior Coordinator during their third year. Because of the program’s growth, two student coordinators (Brad Wilson and Suma Ananthaswamy) were hired in spring 2007; by consensus they now share the title and responsibilities of Senior Coordinator. Amy Kamp was hired as Junior Coordinator for 2008-2009.

As the semester draws to a close, graduating third year students submit documentation to establish eligibility to be listed in the graduation program by having volunteered 50 or more hours during law school and to wear a special cord signifying their participation. Since 2006, 92 students have been listed. In his 2006 Commencement Speech, Governor Brad Henry was impressed that the graduating class donated over 2800 hours to law-related services: “[t]hat is a wonderful testament to your level of commitment to public service . . . You cannot practice law in a vacuum. You must reach out. You must be connected to your community. You must practice a *profession* of service, rather than a *business* solely for profit. You must pay your rent of service to others.”<sup>7</sup> Starting in 2008, SATJ recognized different levels of involvement, signified by one crimson cord for 50 hours or more, and two cords—one crimson and one cream—for 100 hours or more.

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<sup>6</sup>Faculty approved policy to recognize law students’ pro bono activities with annual reception and in graduation program (December 5, 2005). Copy attached as Appendix E.

<sup>7</sup> Gov. Brad Henry, *supra* note 1.

Students who expressed interest in summer placements are contacted to confirm their continuing interest, their location and subject-matter preferences and their time availability. Understanding that student plans are subject to change, we want to avoid making placements that will fall through, where students do not follow up on their commitment.

Promptly after final exams end, the annual strategic planning meeting is held and summer placements finalized. This year we intensified efforts to confirm with students and supervisors that appropriate connections have been made and that the work is satisfactory to all involved.

### III. Output

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SATJ continues to build interest and involvement with pro bono activities. This past school year marked the largest number of volunteer hour over the course of a year: 3,779. Since inception, OU Law students have volunteered approximately 10,411 hours.

PERIOD	STUDENTS	OFFICES	HOURS*
Summer 2004	19	8	760
Fall 2004	11	9	550
Spring 2005	17	9	850
<b>Totals for 2004-2005 School Year</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>2160</b>
Summer 2005	27	13	1350
Fall 2005	14	11	700
Spring 2006	22	9	612
<b>Totals for 2005-2006 School Year</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>2662</b>
Summer 2006	40	15	800
Fall 2006	21	22	410
Spring 2007	33	23	600
<b>Totals for 2006-2007 School Year</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1810</b>
Summer 2007	22	17	2274
Fall 2007	9	5	494
Spring 2008	29	8	1011
<b>Totals for 2007-2008 School Year</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3779</b>
<b>Total Hours Since Inception (March 4, 2004-April 30, 2008)</b>			<b>10,411</b>

\* all hours are approximate  
 \*\*exact numbers unavailable

SATJ works to create a variety of option for students, from group projects like VITA; discrete, short-term projects like the SHN volunteer trips; work with traditional public interest organizations such as Legal Aid and the ACLU; and work with governmental organizations, including the DA's Office, the courts, and state and Federal offices.

Because it is important for law students to realize that being a lawyer means being part of a community, SATJ works to create relationships with as many components of the legal system as possible. Students are given the opportunity to work in the courts with judicial clerkships: SATJ has continuing relationships with judges at all levels of the Oklahoma court system. SATJ also regularly places students with the DA's office and the Public Defenders. By experiencing the day-to-day workings of the justice system firsthand, OU students develop practical skills. Mark Myles (class of 2008) worked with the capital division of the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System. "I consider my pro bono work for the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System an enormously invaluable experience where responsibility is instantly conferred and the work product inspired, no matter the scale, of awesome import . . . especially when one realizes that the bottom line is whether a person ultimately lives or dies."

Another consistent source of placements is traditional public interest organizations. Students work at the various branches of Legal Aid, including its offices in Norman, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa. These placements allow students to become directly involved in the often difficult, yet rewarding work, of ensuring access to justice to those who cannot pay for it.

As SATJ expands, we have become increasingly aware of the importance of actively soliciting individual lawyers and law firms for placement opportunities. This winter, 1L students Madison Carey and Aaron Pembleton worked with lawyer AD Sanderson on assisting her clients with consumer financial issues such as bankruptcy. These placements provide both an opportunity for SATJ to increase the variety of its offerings, and for lawyers to take on projects they might not be able to without the resource of free, skilled research. As OU diversifies, the importance of developing national contacts increases. To this end, SATJ has begun to work on creating distance research opportunities. Caleb Brown (class of 2010) spent his summer traveling, but was still able to get legal experience through his work with the North Carolina Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts. "It allowed me to pursue something I was interested in, but that wasn't available in my local community."

Eleven students, including seven 1Ls, went to New Orleans for the week of spring break to work with local legal organizations. Most volunteered with the Louisiana Justice Institute (LJI), a non-profit legal advocacy organization created to address the urgent needs poor and minority communities have in rebuilding their neighborhoods. LJI routinely works with SHN to create discrete projects that law student volunteers can do during the course of a week. The students went door-to-door in the Hollygrove neighborhood, gathering information about each house and the legal problems the residents face in rebuilding. This project allowed the students a chance to interact directly with people in need of pro bono legal assistance. Mary Walters (class of 2010) says of the experience, "The little bit that I was able to give was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. If everyone gave one week, it would make a huge impact." Two of the students, Mike Davis and Brad Wilson, worked at the Orleans Public Defenders. Brad "hope[s] the work we did will not only help the inmates get fair and just legal treatment in the legal system but will also get them the help they need to stay clean and out of the system."

Chase Schnebel (class of 2010) will be VITA's student coordinator for the upcoming school year. He appreciated the opportunity to help local taxpayers, most of them elderly,



navigate the intricacies of their tax returns and, in many cases, save them hundreds of dollars. “They wouldn’t have been able to figure out the rebates and credits on their own, and if they had paid someone, all of the money they saved would’ve been eaten up paying for the accountant.”

The students are not the only members of OU Law to have made significant contributions of their time to pro bono. Many members of the OU faculty are also actively involved in pro bono projects. The time they have spent in the past year, while not precisely recorded, exceeds 1000 hours. Much of the professors' work involves litigation and participation on Bar Association committees to improve the law and access to justice.

#### **IV. Goals and Future Projects**

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As SATJ matures, we recognize that many of our procedures will need to be redesigned to accommodate our expansion. We will work to develop a system that will be sufficiently institutionalized to perpetuate itself as its directors and coordinators change hands.

##### **A. Advisory Board**

SATJ has begun planning for the creation of an Advisory Board, which will be composed of faculty members, lawyers and judges from the community, and law student representatives. Thus far, Professors Peter Krug, Cheryl Wattlely and Emily Meazell have agreed to serve on the board, as have Katie Griffin, Director of Career Development, and prominent Oklahoma attorney and McAfee & Taft partner, John Hermes. Mr. Hermes will be the Chairman of the Board. The Advisory Board will provide SATJ's directors and coordinators with guidance and valuable connections to the legal community.

##### **B. Financial Development**

In conjunction with the Advisory Board, SATJ will focus its efforts to expand opportunities for its volunteers by working to establish an endowment. The goal of such an endowment would be to generate a sufficient amount to provide small stipends for a select number of student volunteers. This would mitigate transportation costs and basic living expenses, making public service affordable.

##### **C. Fostering Connections**

SATJ will strive to partner with individual lawyers and firms who are interested in pro bono, but are unable to find the time or resources to devote to the sort of work that a student volunteer would be able to do. Because several members of the OU College of Law faculty have demonstrated a commitment to pro bono, SATJ will work more closely with these professors to find areas where students could provide assistance. In addition SATJ will recruit professors who may have the inclination to volunteer their expertise, but not the time.

#### **D. National Contacts**

SATJ will further develop its national contacts, so that students interested in working in various parts of the country or doing distance research will have more options.

#### **E. Recognition**

SATJ will refine its recognition system, continuing to have its annual reception, but also adding additional levels of recognition for those students who have gone above and beyond.

#### **F. Documentation**

Recognizing that what SATJ does is important to the College of Law, we will continue to document our work through the annual report. SATJ will also create a master list of organizations and volunteer alumni to help future directors and coordinators. SATJ will provide documentation in a format that can be useful for future ABA pro bono peer consultation, should this be something the administration decides to pursue.

#### **V. Conclusion**

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Students for Access to Justice has developed a solid foundation to promote a culture of public service commitment for new generations of lawyers. Law students are being exposed to a wide range of career options and the means to develop professional skills during their time at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. We are poised to expand, increasing students' opportunities to partner with public service law offices, private practitioners, government and judicial offices in enhancing the quality of and access to justice. We welcome your support – in new public service opportunities, in your gifts and pledges to create stipends, in your participation on our advisory board, and in any other ways you can aid fulfillment of our mission.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith L. Maute, Founder, Co-Director

Ronald L. Ripley, Co-Director

Suma Ananthaswamy, Student Coordinator,  
2007-2009

Brad Wilson, Student Coordinator,  
2007-2009

Amy Kamp, Student Coordinator,  
2008-2010



## Students *for* Access to Justice

*Promoting a Culture of Public Service Commitment*

### CORE VALUES

- (1) Create a culture of public service commitment that is widely embraced by the law school community, practicing lawyers, and the judiciary
- (2) Establish meaningful pro-bono opportunities, by connecting students with qualified placements, conferring valuable and competent legal services for those in need while providing students with intrinsically rewarding professional work experiences
- (3) Foster pro bono partnership, by matching students with practicing attorneys and judges to work on matters to improve the legal system or access to justice, while enhancing professional development in areas of interest.

### ***What kind of work is considered pro bono?***

Activities that qualify as "pro bono service" for purposes of this program are as follows:

- Providing assistance to attorneys delivering legal services to persons of limited means or to charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations
- The provision of legal assistance to individuals, groups, or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights; or
- The provision of legal assistance to charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental or educational organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes

Work for which a student is compensated, either with pay or with academic credit, is not eligible for inclusion in pro bono hours.

### ***How do I participate?***

Students for Access to Justice is open to all OU law students who have completed their first semester of classes. First year students have the opportunity to participate in semester break opportunities, and may be placed during their second semester. Placements with participating agencies provide students a chance to gain valuable practical experience working on real cases with real clients. A key aspect of the program is its flexibility. Some placements require only a few hours of work per week while others may require more hours dedicated to the project.

Students who wish to participate in the program need to do the following: Fill out and turn in a registration form, indicating which areas of law are of interest to you, along with a resume to be forwarded to possible placements.

***What are the requirements for receiving recognition for pro bono work?***

Students are eligible to receive graduation recognition if 50 hours of pro bono work are completed during the course of their law school career. Students must turn in a Time Log (with supervisor's signature) at the completion of each project as well as an Evaluation Form. The law school will recognize program participants who achieved 50 or more hours of service during their law school careers by listing their names in the graduation program. Please note that only those students who turn in their Time Log and receive approval will be mentioned in the graduation program.

***What are my responsibilities during a placement?***

Once you have signed up to participate in the program and have received notification from us, certain responsibilities are assumed. Please remember that your performance matters not just to your client and supervising attorney, but also to other OU law students who want a chance in the future to work for the same supervisor or agency!

**Student responsibilities include:**

- **Stay in regular communication with your supervising attorney.** It is important the agency know what hours you will be working and that you honor your commitment to those hours (unless unforeseen circumstances arise, in which case you should notify your supervisor). You must notify your supervisor and SATJ immediately if you realize that you may not be able to complete the project as planned.
- **Stay in regular communication with SATJ.** SATJ will contact participants periodically, but please let the office know if you have any concerns or questions regarding your agency placement. You must notify the office immediately if you are not able to complete the project as planned. Remember, at the completion of each pro bono project you must turn in your Evaluation form and Time Log.
- **Maintain confidentiality and act in a professional manner** in all interactions with clients and staff members at your placement agency/organization.
- **Keep track of hours and other important paperwork.** You are required to keep daily time logs and obtain your supervisor's signature periodically. You must turn in to the SATJ office your completed time logs and evaluation forms at the completion of your project and/or 50 hours of pro bono service.

# OBF Helps Oklahoma Students Gain Experience in Democracy and the Law

By *Renée DeMoss, OBF President*

Who was president when the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed? What year was the Constitutional amendment enacted that gave women the right to vote? These are the types of questions that an alarmingly high number of young Americans students cannot correctly answer. Indeed, the lack of knowledge American students have about U.S. history and the democratic process has been termed a "crisis."

Another "crisis" said to be facing our country is the enormous need for pro bono service from lawyers. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of the legal needs of persons in the United States with limited income are currently unmet.

Recently the OBF agreed to fund two grant requests that may help address these crises — one that encourages Oklahoma students to learn more about the American democratic process and

another that enriches the legal educations of Oklahoma law students by helping them provide pro bono services to those in need. Under an OBF policy that supplies funding in certain circumstances outside the usual grant cycle, the foundation awarded funds to support Norman High School students and law students from the University of Oklahoma College of Law, with projects designed to aid them in learning more about our laws and legal system.

## FIRST OBF GRANT AWARDED TO NORMAN HIGH SCHOOL

Norman High recently outscored other Oklahoma

schools to become state champions of the "We the People: the Citizen and the Constitution" competition. The "We The People" program is a nationally acclaimed curriculum that focuses studies of middle and high school students on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. A recent nation-wide study of the program confirms that students learning this curriculum display significantly greater "political tolerance" and commitment to principles enunciated in the Constitution and Bill of Rights than do students learning through traditional textbooks and teaching methods.

Based on their studies of the "We the People" materials, students first compete in their own classrooms and then with other area schools in simulated congressional hearings, where they evaluate, take and defend positions on historical and contemporary political issues. During the competitions, the students prepare oral presentations and field ques-



tions from judges designed to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how democracy works in the United States.

The Oklahoma state competition was held at the State Capitol Building and competing teams were ranked by Oklahoma judges. The Norman team advanced to represent Oklahoma in the national competition to be held in Washington, D.C. in May, where they will compete against teams from the other 49 states and the District of Columbia. OBF funding will help send the Norman students to the national competition.

#### **THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF LAW PRO BONO PROGRAM "STUDENTS FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE" RECEIVES SECOND GRANT**

The "Students for Access to Justice" program provides OU law students with volunteer opportunities to work on legal issues through internships with Oklahoma organizations, government agencies and courts at every level.

In January 2008, five students from the OU SATJ program traveled to New Orleans to volunteer with the Student Hurricane Network. The Student Hurricane Network is a national network of law students dedicated to advancing the cause of social justice in communities affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

While there, the students worked with the New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation by helping attorneys with bankruptcy issues. They also worked with the Louisiana Justice Institute, a non-profit legal advocacy organization created to address the urgent needs poor and minority communities have in rebuilding their neighborhoods. The students completed surveys and informed displaced residents living in Federal Emergency Management Agency trailer parks about rights they have to receive assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Deeply moved by the pro bono work they did in New Orleans, the five OU students returned from New Orleans with a real appreciation for the impact that quality legal assistance can make in the lives of others. With great enthusiasm, those five



students motivated 15 more students to forego their spring breaks and go back to New Orleans to continue their pro bono work in this devastated area. The OBF

helped fund this worthwhile educational experience for the OU law students.

During this trip, many of the students worked on another project designed by the Louisiana Justice Institute. The students went door to door to every house in the Ward 27 neighborhood to gather information about each house and the legal problems the residents face in rebuilding.

Law students Walt Cromwell, Toby Frisen and Joanne Lafontant had the opportunity to assist an 80 year old gentleman who had worked as a mechanic for the Tuskegee Airmen. He was still living in a FEMA trailer and was battling ailments caused by formaldehyde in the trailer. He was struggling to rebuild his home of 45 years where he had raised his children, and was dealing with rising costs for building materials and the endless red

tape involved in obtaining government assistance. Other students helped similar clients negotiate through the myriad roadblocks they faced in obtaining assistance to rebuild their homes. The students were glad for the opportunity to participate in the program, and the lessons learned will serve them

well in their future legal careers. Student Mary Walters stated, "The little bit that I was able to give was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. If everyone

gave one week, it would make a huge impact."

OU law students Brad Wilson and Mike Davis were among those who worked with the Orleans Public Defender's Office, which represents people accused of committing crimes in the Orleans Parish and who cannot afford private attorneys. Mr. Davis assisted the office in updating files, organizing case loads and ensuring that no one slipped through the cracks by failing to be assigned an attorney. Mr. Wilson conducted interviews with five inmates at the Orleans Parish Prison to obtain information about the facts of their cases and their criminal histories and to familiarize them with the procedures followed by the



Orleans Public Defenders Office. He also worked with a student studying social work to conduct psychosocial assessments to determine if the five inmates required treatment for post traumatic stress, substance abuse or other health related problems. Mr. Wilson is interested in criminal defense work and enjoyed learning the holistic approach of the Orleans

Public Defenders Office. "I hope the work we did will not only help the inmates get fair and just treatment in the legal system but will also get them the help they need to stay clean and out of the system."

You can be a part of the initiative to help Oklahoma students gain valuable experiences like these through membership in the OBF

Fellows program and through other general contributions. Join with other Oklahoma attorneys and help us to make a real improvement in the lives of others by completing the Fellow enrollment form that follows. Annual Fellow payments of only \$100 still go a long way and help many diverse law-related programs!

**www.okbar.org**

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**At Home**



**At Work**



**And on the Go**

**SATJ/PRO BONO PROGRAM EXPENSES**

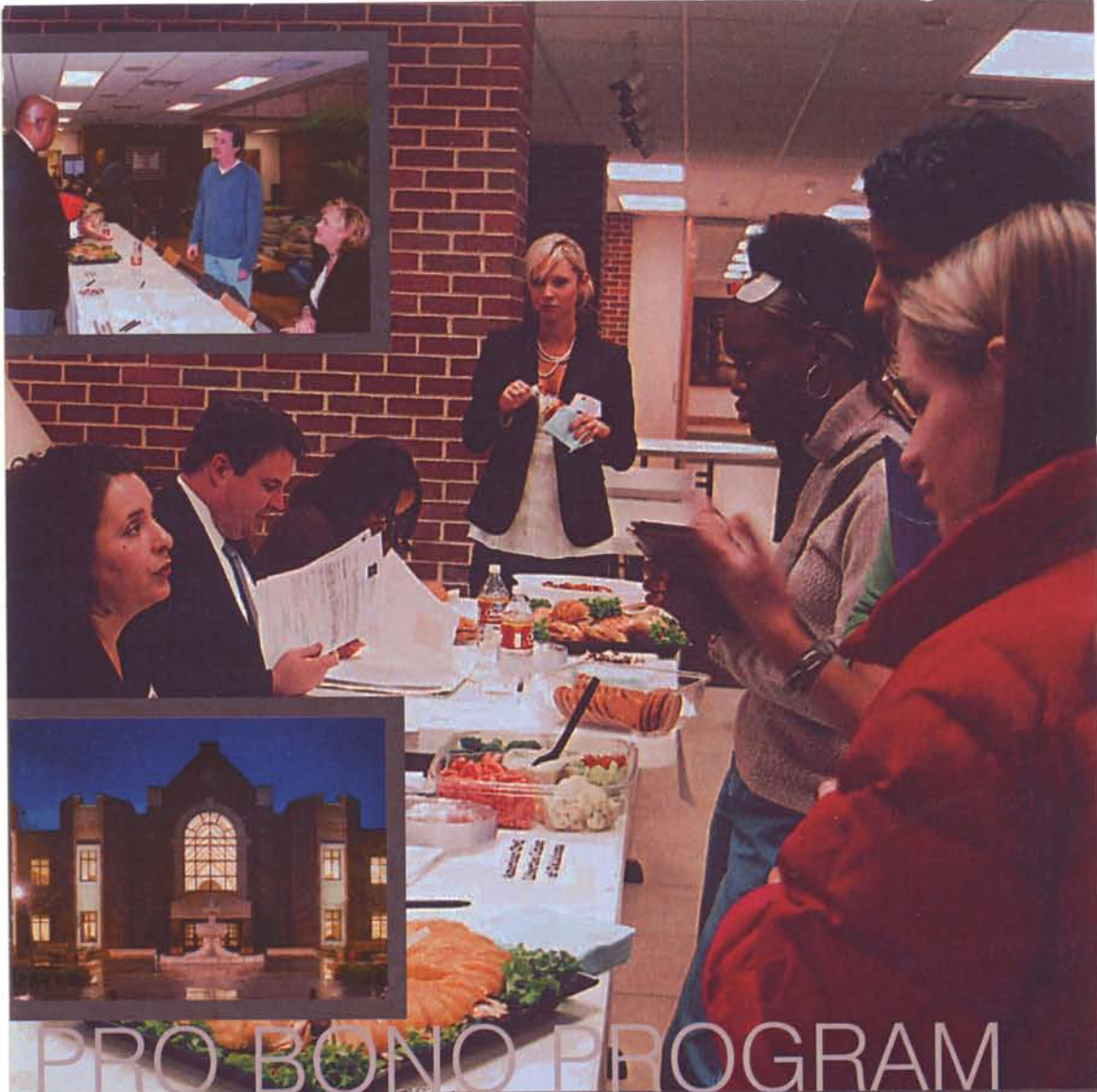
PAYEE	DATE	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
<b>FY04</b>				
OU Account 147-7421	02-Mar-04	177-9240	\$574.44	Pro Bono Referral Program Kickoff
<b>FY04 Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$574.44</b>	
<b>FY05</b>				
Buchanan, Kyle	21-Sep-04	30186	\$65.80	Reimbursement for Pro Bono Referral Program orientation and kick-off luncheon
Housley, Karen	27-Jan-05	30186	\$77.09	Snacks for Pro Bono Fair
OU Account 177-9240	02-Feb-05	30186	\$283.75	Pro Bono Fair luncheon
FY05 RA's			\$2,771.87	
<b>FY05 Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$3,198.51</b>	
<b>FY06</b>				
Alvarez, Paola-Marie	28-Sep-05	30186	\$118.75	Purchased food for Pro Bono Informational meeting
Maute, Judith	08-Feb-06	30186	\$421.24	Reception for Pro Bono Fair
NAPIL - Equal Justice Works	14-Jul-05	272714200	\$1,000.00	Institutional membership-Pro Bono Referral Program
OU Account 177924000	04-Apr-06	30186	\$1,009.94	Pro Bono Reception 3/29/06
Printing Services-OU	25-Jan-06	272720100	\$15.00	Business cards for Student Pro Bono Coordinator
Sooner Trophies & Awards	29-Mar-06	41175	\$50.00	Plaque for Pro Bono Program
OU Account 177924000	19-Apr-06	30186	\$488.00	Pro Bono Luncheon 4/19/06
FY06 RA's			\$3,521.96	Through 6/30/06
<b>Fy06 Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$6,624.89</b>	
<b>FY07</b>				
Communication Services	01-Sep-06	272752300	\$75.00	Graphic artist design fee for Pro Bono



Corporate Express	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$14.96	Office supplies
Corporate Express	18-Sep-06	272752300	\$104.92	Office supplies
Currin-Moore, Alicia	26-Oct-06	272752300	\$220.39	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
Durrett, Jessica	27-Oct-06	272752300	\$107.25	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
John, Laura	26-Oct-06	272752300	\$1,208.45	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
Journey House Travel-Currin-Moore, Alicia	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$403.70	EJW Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Killian, Asher	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$443.20	EJW Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Nash, Emily	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$443.20	EJW Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Weldon, Sarah	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$403.70	EJW Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Williams, Michelle	16-Oct-06	272752300	\$403.70	EJW Conference in Washington, DC
Maute, Judith	15-Dec-06	41175	\$20.61	Lunch with student ProBono coordinators and filmmaker
Maute, Judith	15-Dec-06	272752300	\$184.48	Banner for ProBono program
NAPIL-Equal Justice Works	01-Dec-06	272752300	\$1,000.00	Institutional dues-moved from 272714200
OU Account 177924000	14-Mar-07	272752300	(\$415.94)	Repayment of airline charge
OU Account 177924000	27-Apr-07	41175	\$828.63	Pro Bono Reception
Park, Shelby	27-Oct-06	272752300	\$107.25	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
Postage	20-May-07	272752300	\$8.58	Postage
Printing Services	01-Apr-07	272752300	\$470.00	Pro Bono stationery
RA's	30-Sep-06	272752300	\$76.43	Salary
RA's	31-Dec-06	272752300	\$113.12	Salary
RA's	31-Oct-06	272752300	\$371.55	Salary
RA's	30-Nov-06	272752300	\$918.52	Salary
RA's	31-Jan-07	272752300	\$227.46	Salary
RA's	28-Feb-07	272752300	\$189.57	Salary
RA's	31-Mar-07	272752300	\$379.12	Salary
RA's	30-Apr-07	272752300	\$227.46	Salary

RA's	31-May-07	272752300	\$189.56	Salary
RA's	30-Jun-07	272752300	\$165.30	Salary
Telephone Services-OU	30-Jun-07	272752300	\$10.00	Telephone charges
Weldon, Sarah	27-Oct-06	272752300	\$172.25	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
Williams, Michelle	27-Oct-06	272752300	\$1,069.99	Equal Justice Works Conference in Adelphi, MD
<b>FY07 Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$10,142.41</b>	
<b>FY08</b>				
PAYEE	DATE	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
RA's	31-Jul-07	272752300	\$820.77	Salary
RA's	31-Aug-07	272752300	\$559.48	Salary
RA's	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$154.37	Salary
RA's	31-Oct-07	272752300	\$81.33	Salary
RA's	31-Dec-07	272752300	\$188.25	Salary
RA's	29-Feb-08	272752300	\$425.44	Salary
RA's	31-Mar-08	272752300	\$112.95	Salary
RA's	30-Apr-08	272752300	(\$1,065.49)	Salary
RA's	31-May-08	272752300	\$165.66	Salary
RA's	30-Jun-08	272752300	\$244.74	Salary
Printing Services-OU	31-Aug-07	272752300	\$513.27	Postcards
Journey House Travel-Ananthaswamy, Suma	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$274.10	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Blohm, Erin	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$340.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Bragg, Leon	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$274.10	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Hale, David	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$310.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Janoe, Henry	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$274.10	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Kamp, Amy	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$310.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Lauth, Laura	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$340.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Owoso, Olusunmike	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$340.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Thomas, Elizabeth	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$340.70	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Journey House Travel-Wilson, Bradley	30-Sep-07	272752300	\$274.10	Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington, DC
Maute, Judith	16-Oct-07	30004	\$57.03	Food and drinks for SATJ student dinner
Ananthaswamy, Suma	19-Oct-07	272752300	\$1,890.54	Equal Justice Works 2007 Conference in Washington, DC
Maute, Judith	31-Oct-07	30186	\$204.70	Meal with students attending the Equal Justice Works Conf.
Denecke, Raymond	01-Nov-07	272752300	\$30.70	Equal Justice Works 2007 Conference in Washington, DC
Anantnaswamy, Suma	31-Oct-07	30186	\$42.45	Food and drinks for Students for Access to Justice Orientation meeting
NAPIL - Equal Justice Works	01-Aug-07	272752300	\$1,000.00	Institutional membership dues

Maute, Judith	07-Feb-08	272752300	\$286.85	Food for Pro Bono Student recruitment
Currin-Moore, Alicia	11-Feb-08	272752300	\$47.71	Reimburse for pizza for SATJ meeting
Printing Services-OU	29-Feb-08	272752300	\$95.00	Postcards
Journey House Travel-Maute	02-Apr-08	272752300	\$571.10	Catholic U conf; Equal Justice Works Conf. in Washington, DC
Maute, Judith	02-Apr-08	272752300	\$1,047.87	Law & Social Justice Initiatives Conf. & Equal Justice Works Conf. in Washington
OU Account 177924000	10-Apr-08	30186	\$620.47	Pro Bono Reception on 4/2/08
Alvarado, Tyler	01-Apr-08	30004	\$36.51	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Bell, Kathryn	01-Apr-08	30004	\$113.41	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Carey, Madison	01-Apr-08	30004	\$40.58	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Friesen, Toby	01-Apr-08	30004	\$182.84	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Kamp, Amy	01-Apr-08	30004	\$3,325.20	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Lafontant, Joanne	01-Apr-08	30004	\$218.06	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Myles, Mark	01-Apr-08	30004	\$432.90	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Schnebel, Chase	01-Apr-08	30004	\$34.44	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Sine, Jessica	01-Apr-08	30004	\$61.30	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Walters, Mary	01-Apr-08	30004	\$370.04	Students for Access to Justice group trip to New Orleans
Ananthawamy, Suma	25-Mar-08	30186	\$69.92	SATJ meeting for Student Hurricane Network trip to New Orleans
Maute, Judith	10-Jun-08	30004	\$66.11	Food for SATJ Planning meeting
Maute, Judith	18-Jun-08	30004	\$24.55	Food for SATJ Planning meeting
<b>FY08 Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$16,151.65</b>	
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>			<b>(\$36,691.90)</b>	
<b>Total Cash Received</b>			<b>\$6,365.28</b>	
<b>Total Program Cost to date</b>			<b>(\$30,326.62)</b>	



# PRO BONO PROGRAM PRO BONO PROGRAM

The University of Oklahoma  
COLLEGE OF LAW

Appendix D

# The University of Oklahoma

## COLLEGE OF LAW



"Promoting a culture of public service commitment by connecting students with meaningful pro bono volunteer opportunities"

### ***Core Values of SATJ***

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- **CREATE A CULTURE OF COMMITMENT**  
Develop a sustaining culture of commitment to public service that is widely embraced by the law school community, practicing lawyers and the judiciary.
- **ESTABLISH MEANINGFUL PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES**  
Connecting students with qualified volunteer placement opportunities which confer valuable and competent legal services to those in need while providing students with intrinsically rewarding professional work experiences.
- **FOSTER PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP**  
Match students with practicing attorneys and judges to work on matters to improve the legal system or access to justice enhancing professional development in areas of interest.

### ***Organizations We've Worked With***

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ACLU  
Catholic Charities Immigration Assistance Program  
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma  
Oklahoma Corporation Commission  
Oklahoma County Public Defenders  
Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals  
Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry  
Oklahoma Department of Human Services  
Oklahoma Indigent Defense System  
Oklahoma Lawyers for Children  
Oklahoma Supreme Court  
Private Attorneys Handling Pro Bono Legal Matters  
United States District Court for the Western and Eastern Districts of Oklahoma  
United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

### ***Comments About the Program***

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"The pro bono project at OU is such a great contribution to the students, the school, and the community. It allows the eager student to learn about the law with hands-on experience and enjoy the importance of giving back to the community..."

—André Caldwell, 3L

The entire staff at Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma appreciate the volunteer efforts of law students who help make justice for all more a reality. Legal Aid is committed to finding ways to improve and expand our services to the community, and working with OU law students makes this more feasible."

—Sharon Ammon, Volunteer Coordinator, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma

For more information, come by our office or visit us at [www.law.ou.edu/satj](http://www.law.ou.edu/satj) and fill out a registration form!

#### **Students for Access to Justice**

University of Oklahoma College of Law  
Office # 3080  
300 Timberdell Road  
Norman, Oklahoma 73019

Phone: (405) 325-5256  
Fax: (405) 325-0502

Proposal for OU Law Pro Bono Program  
“Students for Access to Justice”

Agenda Item for December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005 Faculty Meeting  
[Moved and passed as made]

December 5, 2005

Dear Faculty & Colleagues:

The OU Law Pro Bono Program began in April 2004. Since then, over 90 students have volunteered with 24 non-profit, governmental or judicial offices in Oklahoma City and surrounding counties, providing about 3,500 hours in pro bono legal services. The program, now named Students for Access to Justice (SATJ), has achieved a great deal in its infancy, and has been enthusiastically received by attorneys and students involved in volunteer placements. Noteworthy projects have included preparation of a legal memorandum and proposed recommendations to the OBA on ethical issues of “unbundled” legal services; a brief in support of aliens’ rights in the United States; and a presentation to promote anti-bullying legislation in Oklahoma. Other students have helped to represent children in abuse or neglect cases, worked as CASA volunteers, or as unpaid judicial law clerks. SATJ was featured in a workshop at the Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington D.C. held on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

The program plans to expand the opportunities for students to volunteer, and would like to offer recognition for these students’ public service, law-related activities. These ideas are drawn from positive experiences at other law schools around the country, and are designed to promote and honor a culture of public service, a traditional hallmark of the legal profession.

Adoption and implementation of these recommendations will provide favorable evidence for accreditation purposes, as well as for the university’s departmental review. ABA Accreditation standards now require that each law school afford students with substantial opportunities for participation in pro bono activities. Standard 302(b)(2). The University of Oklahoma Campus Departmental Review Recommendations, and Provost Mergler’s discussion of those recommendations specifically focused on the need for expanded service learning, embedded into the curriculum, and for other curricular changes that recognize the importance of ethics in the legal profession.

It is therefore proposed that the faculty approve the following three mechanisms to recognize and honor law students’ participation in volunteer legal services.

- § *Recognition at Graduation for Law Students:* notation by name or designation with asterisk(\*) in graduation program identifying students who have volunteered a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono legal services during their law school career, either through the SATJ, or through other verifiable pro bono legal service

projects. These students will also be eligible to purchase a cord to wear at commencement that visibly signifies their contributions.

- § *Reception Celebrating Pro Bono Spirit*: hold a public reception in the spring semester to honor the volunteer legal work done by students and faculty, and to recognize the various programs which have benefited from this collaboration. Students who volunteered a minimum of 25 hours in law-related services since May 1 of the prior year will receive Service Certificates. Certificates of High Distinction will be awarded to those who volunteered between 26-49 hours in a year; and certificates of Highest Distinction will be awarded to those who volunteered 50 or more hours in a year.
- § *Transcript*: Explore the feasibility of transcript notation for different service levels; there may be applicable State Regents Policies.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith L. Maute  
Faculty Sponsor and Director  
Students for Access to Justice  
William J. Alley Professor of Law

Kyle L. Buchanan, Esq.  
Director of Career Services  
Placement Office Sponsor & Director  
Students for Access to Justice

Paola Alvarez  
Senior Student Coordinator  
Students for Access to Justice

Sarah Weldon  
Junior Student Coordinator  
Students for Access to Justice