



Northern Illinois University

Your Future. Our Focus.

NIU College of Law Clinic Clips

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ZEKE GIORGI LEGAL CLINIC BEGINS SECOND YEAR AT NEW LOCATION IN ROCKFORD

NEW PRISONER'S RIGHTS PROJECT LAUNCHED (ROCKFORD)

The Prisoner's Rights Project is off to a great start. Five students (Alonte Holliday, Jamie Bellah, Loryn Scott, Robert Bulanda and Rebecca McCorkle) are representing three prisoners who have filed excessive force cases in Federal Court. The students have either met with and interviewed their clients in prison or had numerous telephone interviews with their clients. After reviewing documents that have been turned over by defense counsel, the students have drafted interrogatories and requests to produce directed to the defendants. Two of the students successfully moved to reopen discovery on behalf of their client. The students will be conducting depositions in the near future. The students will depose the named defendants, several witnesses as well as medical care providers who treated their clients' injuries. The students are hoping to conduct jury trials in all of their cases by the end of the Spring Semester.

CLINICAL PROGRAM MISSION

Our mission is to provide hands-on learning opportunities for law students to advocate on behalf of real clients under the supervision of clinical faculty, who are experienced lawyers. Through the clinic's commitment to social justice and providing free legal services, our students' advocacy and hard work can dramatically improve the life circumstances of people in need.

CRIMINAL DEFENSE CLINIC (ROCKFORD)

The four students (Michael Biggott, Mason Crosby, Emily Crutchfield, and Avi Fagan) in the Criminal Defense Clinic are representing seven clients with charges including felony theft, criminal damage to property, DUI, disorderly conduct and possession of a controlled substance. One case is currently set for a jury trial. Students have appeared at six bond court hearings and successfully argued for the release of four clients who were released from jail on their own recognizance. Students are drafting and filing motions for discovery as they initiate the discovery process.

CIVIL JUSTICE CLINIC (ROCKFORD)

Our six Civil Justice Clinic students (Justine Alfaro, Brian Fernandez, Jed McClure, Devin Taseff, Aaron Vanagaitis, and Victor Zamora) are hard at work. Devin Taseff and Aaron Vanagaitis drafted and argued their first motion, amended their client's petition for order of protection, drafted Freedom of Information Act requests for police records, and subpoenaed documents and witnesses for their first trial next week. Meanwhile, Victor Zamora and Jed McClure have been drafting estate-planning documents, as well as interviewing and counseling their four elderly clients. At the same time, Justine Alfaro and Brian Fernandez have accepted two related order of protection cases and are busy drafting motions, investigating facts, amending pleadings, and preparing their client for two hearings this week. In the next two weeks, Civil Justice Clinic students will be meeting with seven new potential clients who have applied for our legal services.

HEALTH ADVOCACY CLINIC (AURORA)

Five students (Zeporah Askia, Rachael Clark-McCarthy, Riley Gallagher, Alivia Hatten and Jaclyn Sweeney) are spending a semester at the Health Advocacy Clinic. They are working on nine Social Security disability cases with clients who suffer from various cardiac, musculoskeletal and mental health conditions. Six of these cases are at the initial application level while three clients are appealing the denial of benefits. The students are also helping a client get a student loan discharged due to disability. The students are planning an upcoming “Power of Attorney Day” at Hesed House where they will present on Powers of Attorney (POA) for Health Care and assist clients with completing these forms. Since August 2014, the clinic has completed 45 POAs and secured \$540,000+ in disability benefits for clients.

CLINICAL PROGRAM FACULTY



Professor Paul J. Cain

Clinical Professor and Interim Clinic Director

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