



## California Western Community Law Project 2019 Year in Review

*“Awesome customer/client service provided. Thank you for your time, help and consideration. Your kindness, understanding and compassion are very much appreciated.”*, Community Law Project Client

A gathering of low-income seniors, listening to a story about how Frank Sinatra’s estate was divided while enjoying hard butterscotch candies; A dozen deaf and hard of hearing community members participating in a writing exercise to identify instances where each had fallen prey to consumer scams; a classroom full of urban high school students role-playing the various types of interactions that may occur between teenagers and police officers. During the past year, our Community Law Project students used these effective strategies and more to educate diverse groups of people on a variety of legal topics. The students’ efforts to acquaint themselves with the needs of each audience and their willingness to think outside of the box in their teaching methods are what put our community education programs in a class of their own. This education, together with regular one-on-one assistance in our clinics, helped the Community Law Project to serve 1,400 individuals during the 2019 calendar year. The approximately 150 law students, undergraduate students and attorneys who volunteered their time to our program in 2019 were critical to these efforts.

The Community Law Project’s mission remains two-fold, providing high quality legal assistance to vulnerable individuals throughout San Diego while supporting the clinical education of California Western School of Law students. The thirty-three law students who worked with CLP this year demonstrated a commitment to our program and a passion for helping those in need. They learned the importance of confidentiality, how to identify complex legal issues within a client’s narrative, and how to build trust with individuals who are often distrustful of the legal system. Perhaps most importantly, they learned about the paucity of resources available for low-income individuals and the vital role that pro bono attorneys and non-profit legal services play in making the American legal system a fairer one. Our CLP students truly recognize the value of our program and the skills they are gaining while helping our clients:

*“Working for CLP has been a wonderful, eye-opening experience and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a great organization...to see the problems and how they affect people is such an important thing to acknowledge so we can help make a change for the better. I have learned a great foundation of skills to apply in my career and I look forward to being able to volunteer for CLP again sometime in the future.”*, CLP Fall 2019 Student Amanda Levinson

*“A huge part of being successful as an attorney is building trust and relationships with our clients. I feel like CLP has added [this] essential tool to my legal utility belt [and this will] benefit me for the rest of my life.”*, CLP Fall 2019 Student Tri Luu

The most significant development of this past calendar year has been the sharp increase of housing related legal problems that our clients have faced. The Community Law Project saw a 33% increase in the number of clients requiring assistance in getting their security deposits returned, defending an

eviction case, fighting an illegal rental increase and other issues related to housing law. Recognizing the scarcity of resources available for low-income and immigrant tenants in San Diego and the increasing need for assistance, our students and staff put together a series of community education presentations focused on tenant rights and responsibilities. These innovative workshops, aimed to educate various constituencies in a manner and style best accustomed to their specific needs, have proven effective. An attendee from a presentation at the Southern Sudanese Community Center of San Diego commented that “this information will help me improve my knowledge [of] what to do when tenant issues arise in the future. I enjoyed the presentation so much.”



Services offered at our Downtown clinic site



Services offered at our Solana Beach clinic site



Presentation on Housing Law at Karen Organization



CLP Staff with our 2019 Outstanding Volunteer Winners

The Community Law Project is able to provide these crucial services in our community through the generosity of our funders and commitment of our volunteers. Yet, despite the strides our program has made to ensure access to justice for all and an untethered commitment to public service in California Western School of Law students, there is always so much more to accomplish. We regularly field requests for services that we are unable to fulfill due to a lack of resources. We remain passionate about our mission and hopeful that one day we can fully meet the demand for legal services across our county.

To learn more about the Community Law Project, our services, and our clinics, please visit our website ([www.cwclp.org](http://www.cwclp.org)) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CommunityLawProject>). To make a donation to CLP, please visit <https://cosmos.cwsl.edu/giving/communitylawproject/>.

Thank you for your continued support!

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