



## Alumni-funded Summer Service — An Opportunity to Serve, An Opportunity to Learn

For the students who benefited from the summer 2001 Alumni-funded Summer Service projects, the experiences at community-service or public-policy agencies across the country gave them an opportunity to turn their scholarship, their legal education, into service. But the students also had the opportunity to learn more about the practice of law, as these summer positions provided student interns with direct contact with clients and with interesting work on significant public-policy matters. Their experiences will certainly help these students as they decide on a career path and work to integrate service to others into their daily lives.

Kristina Campbell, a member of the Class of 2002, spent her second consecutive summer as a participant in the program, working this past summer at Community Legal Services (CLS) in Phoenix, Arizona. In expressing her gratitude to the Notre Dame Club of Phoenix for their \$2,500 grant in support of her work, Kristina noted: "My experience at CLS was even more rewarding than I imagined it would be. As a law clerk in the Housing Unit, I was able to assist the attorneys who supervised me in representing low-income people in Phoenix facing eviction and dealing with consumer-fraud issues. Although the

outcomes were not always successful for our clients, I derived a great deal of satisfaction from helping people with their legal problems. I also learned a great deal about the reality of practicing law in a public-interest setting, and about practicing law in Arizona."

Nelson Ropke, a member of the Class of 2003 from Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, spent the summer of 2001 working at the Legal Aid and Defender Association in Detroit, supported by a gift from the Notre Dame Club of Detroit. He appreciated "the ability to help people and learn a great deal" through his position,

where he "helped provide legal services to low- and moderate-income individuals." His experience was rewarding as well as educational. "The appreciation of the staff attorneys was evident as they were able to relieve some of their caseload by having me perform all of the duties for clients, including going to court. I primarily assisted tenants in disputes with landlords. I also did work for clients involved in bankruptcy, Social Security and family-law issues. The learning experiences and courtroom time are something I could not have obtained anywhere else." He further noted that the organization appreciated his work as well. "Legal Aid and Defender is very grateful to the club for providing students two years in a row. They eagerly await the summer service student for next summer."

Suzi Prchal, a member of the Class of 2003 from Huntington Beach, California, had a different experience as an intern at the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (LCHR) in Washington, D.C. As she explains, she "learned a great deal about asylum law, sat in on congressional hearings and thoroughly enjoyed living in Washington, D.C., for the summer. The LCHR staff was very friendly and supportive, and I especially benefited from working with [two members] of the Asylum Representation Project." She further comments that her experience at LCHR helped her to decide on immigration law as her practice area after graduation.

And Chrissy King, a member of the Class of 2003 from Scott Depot, West Virginia, enjoyed her summer opportunity at the Hamilton County, Ohio, Public Defender's Office. Her experience has helped her to decide to continue working in the public-interest arena, and she hopes to return to Cincinnati in the summer of 2002, possibly to experience the other side of criminal law practice with the prosecutor's office.

For these and the other students drawn to service work and drawn to Notre Dame because of a commitment to working for justice, alumni support is critical to achieving these successful learning experiences. Thank you to all who supported these programs through your gifts of time, money and prayers.

## OUR MISSION OF SERVICE



statement adopted by the University of Notre Dame in August 1997 regarding the Spirit of Inclusion at Notre Dame states that the “social teachings of the Catholic Church promote a society founded on justice and love, in which all persons possess inherent dignity as children of God.” I read this sentence for the first time in the sum-

mer of 2000 in the Law School’s *Bulletin of Information*, and realized that it succinctly expressed my world view, forged from growing up Catholic, attending Notre Dame as an undergraduate and my real-world experience. At the same time, it articulated why I was about to begin my legal education at Notre Dame Law School. Today I thank you for establishing the Alumni-funded Fellowship Program, because my summer spent working with Colorado Legal Services (CLS) has shown me that being a Notre Dame lawyer means not only having certain beliefs about justice and the inherent dignity of all persons, but more importantly, about substantiating these beliefs with action.

CLS is a state-wide legal aid organization that operates to provide meaningful access to high-quality legal services for low-income residents of Colorado. Those who seek help from CLS include particularly vulnerable populations such as immigrants, Native Americans, non-English speakers, and disabled or institutionalized individuals. With a very small budget, despite the efforts of a very dedicated and hardworking staff, CLS is able to handle only approximately 25 percent of their clients’ legal problems.

I spent my summer with the Statewide Advocacy Support Staff (SASS), working closely with three very experienced attorneys — Manuel Ramos, Linda Olson and Joel Hayes. Besides handling their own caseloads, the SASS unit acts as a legal resource for all of the CLS attorneys across the state by providing litigation support, case strategy and general mentoring. They also put on training programs for CLS staff and do some policy work in an attempt to improve the lives of our clientele. My time at CLS was spent gaining valuable experience researching and writing on issues involving Medicare/Medicaid, Social Security, housing, contract revocation and deceptive trade practices under the UCC. I also took on a policy project examining the availability of interpreters in state courts, which allowed me to look into questions of due process and constitutional rights. The highlight of my summer

was the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA) training course. Before the training, I researched and wrote for some of the trainers. I was then allowed to participate in the training, taking part in the lessons and drills and receiving feedback from the litigation experts. The NITA training not only affirmed my decision to be a litigator, but fueled my excitement as well.

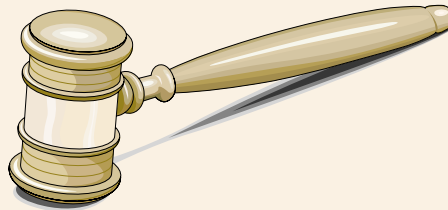
Enjoying my job was not the only thing that made this an excellent summer experience. In addition to the wonderful people with whom I worked, I was incredibly impressed with the Notre Dame Club of Denver (NDCD). I have been involved with other ND clubs, but NDCD is by far the most welcoming, active and enthusiastic club of which I have ever had the privilege of being a part. In a city in which I have no relatives, NDCD members made me feel like part of their families.

In addition to giving my sincerest thanks for the Alumni-funded Fellowship, I write you today to encourage you to continue offering this opportunity. Dollar for dollar, you cannot get much

more out of an investment. The AFF benefits Colorado Legal Services by providing an intern that would otherwise not be available to help carry the overburdening workload, allowing the CLS staff to do their jobs better and, most importantly, help the poor and the powerless residents of Colorado. Additionally, the AFF was a great learning experience for me, as it would be for any student who follows. The

AFF is an asset to the Notre Dame Law Association, the Notre Dame Club of Denver, and the greater Notre Dame community in that it actualizes the high ideals taught by the University and held by donors regarding service, justice and the inherent dignity of each person. Finally, the AFF benefits the City of Denver, as it builds a reputation in the community that Notre Dame lawyers care about service and do their part to ensure that legal services clientele will not be denied justice.

My special thanks go to Bill Webb ’88, ’91 J.D., Annette Quill ’90, Mike Gleason ’91, ’97 J.D., and Casey and Laura Tighe ’84, whose investment in me included not only contributions to the AFF but also their time, advice and valuable contacts — not to mention quite a few delicious meals. And of course, I am incredibly grateful to Brian Bates ’79, ’86 J.D. for being the driving force behind the Alumni-funded Fellowship in Denver and for turning it into a reality. I only hope to be able to repay him someday — or, more likely, to pay the fellowship forward and do my part to promote and perpetuate the noble values and ideals of Notre Dame men and women.



— Jeremy Ramp ’99  
NDLS Class of 2003  
Indianapolis, Indiana