**2018 MJF Summer Clerkship Program**

**Application Process and Contract**

**OVERVIEW**

Each year MJF raises funds and solicits agencies to support student summer clerkships. This year, they are pleased to offer 17 clerkships, as further set forth on the addendum to this posting and at [www.mnjustice.org](http://www.mnjustice.org).

**COMMITMENT**

Each clerk performs 400 hours of legal service with the agency between the end of the spring semester 2018 and the first day of fall semester 2018 on a schedule that will be determined between the clerk and agency. (See Contact and Responsibilities section below.)

Either the clerk or the agency may end the clerkship at any time, with or without cause. If a clerkship should end prior to completion of 400 hours, both parties must notify MJF immediately, and the total stipend will be reduced and prorated based on hours of legal service performed against the 400-hour requirement.

**STIPEND**

MJF provides to the agencies a stipend of $4,500 for Metro Clerkships or $5,000 for Greater Minnesota Clerkships. The stipend is paid by the agency to the law clerk over the course of the summer. **This is taxable income to the student.** The agency will withhold and forward employee payroll taxes and will issue a W-2 tax form at the end of the year. MJF is NOT the employer, the agency is.

**ELIGIBILITY**

For their applications to be considered, law students must be:

* Enrolled at one of the three law schools in Minnesota, and
* Scheduled to graduate no earlier than January 2019.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

* The online application process will **open** on **Friday December 8, 2017**
* The online application process will **close** on **Friday January 19, 2018**
* The clerkship applications will be posted in your school’s Symplicity system.
  + For purposes of the application process, Minnesota Justice Foundation will be the employer name, and the job title will be “MJF Summer Clerkship – [agency name]. “ There will be a separate posting for each of the 17 agencies. See attached list of all opportunities. Address the cover letter to “Dear Supervising Attorney,”
  + Contacting the agency directly is not allowed, although thank you notes are permitted following interviews.
* This is a grade-blind application process. Applicants **cannot** include GPA and/or class rank for law school **or** undergraduate school, or any other academic honors –see list below
  + **Note:** Applications that include GPA and/or class rank for law or undergraduate school or any other academic honors (such as Dean’s List, Latin honors, etc.) **will be rejected.  After the deadline to apply passes, there will be no opportunity to revise and resubmit.  Please carefully review each resume and cover letter to**

**ensure that prohibited information is not included. If you are uncertain, ask your MJF staff attorney.**

It is **not OK** to include for either law school or undergraduate school:

* Summa Cum Laude
* Magna Cum Laude
* Cum Laude
* References to graduating with “High Distinction” or similar phrasing
* Dean's List
* References to being in the top X% of class
* Grade information, including
  + Grade Point Average
  + Dean’s Awards
  + Allusions to excelling academically or similar phrasing (i.e. I worked 20 hours/week while excelling academically; I received a scholarship based on my grades; I did very well in the first semester of my 1L year/ my legal writing class etc.)
* Students may bring a writing sample or list of references to the interview, but they are not accepted online or prior to interviews.
* By virtue of applying, students affirm that they have read the attached Contract and List of Responsibilities and agree to comply should they be offered and accept a clerkship as an MJF 2018 Summer Clerk.
* Each agency makes its own interviewing and hiring decisions. Each is required to interview multiple applicants from all three schools and at least one first-year student.
* Applicants will receive notice of interviews and sign-up instructions via email from Mara Pederson in the Mitchell Hamline Career and Professional Development Office ([careers@mitchellhamline.edu](mailto:careers@mitchellhamline.edu)) on Wednesday, Feb 7th to sign up for slots. Interview slots are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.
* Interviews will take place at Mitchell Hamline School of Law February 20, 2018, February 21, 2018, and February 22, 2018. There is a surface parking lot on Summit Avenue (do not park in reserved spots), on-street parking and a reserved lot on the corner of Summit and Grotto (2 blocks east of the school). Parking can be challenging in the area, so please plan accordingly and allow yourself extra time.
* Offers will be made via email from Janine Laird ([janine@mnjustice.org](mailto:janine@mnjustice.org)) the week of February 26, 2018. An agency’s first-choice candidate will have 2 days from the time of notification to accept or decline the position. Subsequent offer recipients will also have 2 days to accept or decline. Final notification for applicants who do not receive an offer will be delivered by email from Janine Laird ([janine@mnjustice.org](mailto:janine@mnjustice.org)) after all offers have been accepted.
* Those selected for summer clerkships will attend a training and orientation at Mitchell Hamline School of Law the third week in May 2018.

**Minnesota Justice Foundation Summer Clerkship Program**

**Contract and List of Responsibilities**

**2018**

Should I receive and accept an MJF Summer Clerkship, I understand and agree to the following. I will:

* Attend the mandatory training session at Mitchell Hamline Law School the third week of May 2018.
* Perform 400 hours of service for a public interest agency during the summer of 2018.
* Complete and return the Final Evaluation before the Fall 2018 semester begins, or by August 31, 2018.
* Write a reflection article about my experience before August 31, 2018. I understand this article may be used in the MJF newsletter, in letters or grant evaluations for funders of the Summer Clerkship Program, and/or in an MJF Annual Report or for the 2019 Summer Clerkship Program.
* Write a thank you letter to the law firm or foundation that has provided support for my summer clerkship.
* Try to attend the 2018 MJF Annual Awards Celebration.
* When invited, speak about my experience as a clerk to interested students and MJF Supporters.
* Contact MJF to discuss any problems that may arise in the course of my clerkship.

I understand and agree that:

* The clerkship relationship is between the agency for which I clerk and me.
* MJF does not supervise me or control the details of my job duties during my clerkship. There is no employment relationship between MJF and myself.
* The stipend is taxable income to me.
* The agency or I may end the clerkship at any time, with or without cause.
* If my clerkship should end prior to completion of 400 hours, I will notify MJF immediately.
* If I do not complete the 400-hour commitment for any reason, whether voluntary or involuntary, the total stipend paid to me will be reduced and prorated based on service hours provided against the 400-hour requirement.

**I agree that by virtue of submitting my application for the MJF 2018 Summer Clerkship Program I have read the above Contract and List of Responsibilities, and I agree to comply with them should I be offered and accept a clerkship as a MJF 2018 Summer Clerk.**

ADDENDUM – LIST OF POSTINGS

MJF 2018 Summer Clerkship Agency Hosts

**Metro Area**

Central Minnesota Legal Services

Housing Justice Center

Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

Legal Assistance of Dakota County

Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid-Minnesota Disability Law Center

Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid - Family Law Unit

Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid - Youth Law Project

Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights

Minnesota AIDS Project

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

Office of the Public Defender - 10th Judicial District

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services-Gov. Benefits

Tubman

**Greater Minnesota**

Anishinabe Legal Services

Legal Aid Service of Northeastern Minnesota

Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, SW Region

**Job Descriptions**

**METRO AREA AGENCIES**

**Central Minnesota Legal Services** provides legal services to low income persons at our downtown Minneapolis office. CMLS delivers legal services in accordance with its mission statement: to advocate for access to the civil justice system for low income people by providing high quality legal services and to improve the lives of people living in poverty by empowering self-advocacy skills through legal education.

The law clerk will assist the 10 staff attorneys in the Minneapolis office in a variety of family law cases, housing cases including eviction defense, government benefits cases which establish or preserve the basic income of families or individuals and possibly employment and consumer cases depending on what cases are accepted during the time of the clerkship. Most of the full representation work at CMLS is in family law and housing.

Our goal is to provide an experience where our law clerk would experience the range of work in a civil legal aid office and be given work assignments that help us meet the high demand for our services. The clerk will receive an orientation to our client intake process and do some initial intakes with clients in order to understand our procedures but the emphasis is on client contact. This will include more extensive fact gathering interviews, drafting pleadings, research and court appearances when appropriate. We would like our clerk to have the experience of at least one court appearance in family court and one in housing court during the summer.

**Housing Justice Center**- is a nonprofit law firm dedicated to preserving and expanding the supply of affordable housing, as well as increasing access and opportunity for low income renters. We work with advocates, grassroots organizers, and decision makers to address the pressing need for safe, affordable and equitable housing through changes to local policy, coalition building, and legal advocacy. The clerk will assist with advocating for broader policy changes at the state and local level at public hearings and/or writing public comments; researching progressive tools like inclusionary zoning, just cause eviction, and anti-discrimination ordinances; and helping to craft innovative strategies for pressing housing issues like displacement and segregation.

**Immigrant Law Center**- ILCM ensures that our clerks receive the full experience of practicing immigration law, and of working with clients from a variety of countries. S/he will take cases off the waitlist, do initial screening, fill out immigration forms and explain the immigration process to the client, all under the supervision and training of an experienced attorney. We also give our clerks the chance to observe deportation hearings to better understand the administrative law process. Fluency in Spanish, Somali or Karen preferred.

**Legal Assistance of Dakota County, Ltd.-** LADC provides free legal services to low-income residents of Dakota County, primarily in the area of family law. We are a small, team-focused office. Our law clerk will be exposed to all aspects of law practice, from intake to case closure. The law clerk will interview potential clients to identify their needs and whether they meet our eligibility guidelines; screen for domestic and sexual violence; participate in case acceptance decisions; and provide litigation support. Law clerks will have opportunities to conduct legal research; draft internal memorandum and court documents; and observe court proceedings. If the law clerk is a certified student attorney, he or she may get court experience. The law clerk may be assigned special projects, based on the needs of the office and our community. LADC is committed to experimental learning and will provide timely feedback and mentoring.

**Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid -The Minnesota Disability Law Center** (MDLC) is a statewide project of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, which is the designated agency to protect and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities in Minnesota. The mission of MDLC is to advance the dignity, self-determination and equality of individuals with disabilities. MDLC serves people with all types of disabilities on legal issues that arise from their disabilities.

MDLC’s law clerk will work on a wide variety of disability law topics including: discrimination claims under state and federal law; legal issues relating to abuse and neglect; assistive technology; access to Medical Assistance; special education; and integrated employment. The MJF Clerk will be involved in a variety of tasks including: legal research, interviewing clients, investigating facts on current cases, assisting staff in investigating abuse and neglect, assisting with hearing preparation, assisting attorneys at hearings, and possibly representing a client in a hearing. Learn more about MDLC at www.mndlc.org.

**Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid- Family Law -** Clerk would work with experienced attorneys handling divorce, child custody, and related proceedings. Work responsibilities typically include client interviews, preparation of pleadings, legal research, and courtroom observation. Students certified to practice may represent clients in court on motion or default proceedings. This clerkship provides flexibility for students to practice a range of legal work, according to their interests.

**Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid - Youth Law Project-** The YLP represents Hennepin County youth in connection with civil legal matters including: child protection issues; independent living and emancipation; school suspension; and access to education. Our clients range from very young children facing inappropriate and unnecessary placement in foster care to older teenagers who left home due to abuse and who need help establishing their legal right to safe housing, public benefits, medical and mental health care, and an education. Clerks are assigned a variety of tasks, depending on the interests of the clerk and the current case load of the YLP. The clerk works as part of the YLP team that includes three lawyers and two advocates.

**Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights/Complaint Investigations Division** The Law Clerk Intern will provide services to the City of Minneapolis Civil Rights Department in the Complaint Investigations Division, including intake, investigation and development of cases, drafting legal determinations, policy research, and community outreach.

The Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights’ clerkship provides opportunities for law school students to develop the essential skills of an attorney. The duties of a law clerk with our office includes: 1) assisting the attorney investigators in fact finding (through investigative interviews, RFIs &c.); 2) researching and analyzing discrimination complaints under the Minneapolis Civil Rights Ordinance and state and federal civil rights laws; 3) drafting Determinations-the final case resolutions; 4) assisting and participating in conducting community outreach; and 5) assisting in data gathering to help support the office in its collection efforts to inform internal and external stakeholder of the discrimination landscape and potential areas of targeted programming and outreach.

**Minnesota AIDS Project Minnesota Aids Project** MAP's legal program is a general civil practice that focuses on needs of people living with HIV and those most affected by HIV. Our major areas are disability planning and Individual Rights. Our legal program does not duplicate other legal services but can serve as a safety net if other agencies are unable to help.

Because the program is small (1 attorney, 2 half time law clerks) the MJF clerk will handle a wide variety of cases. Although, there is a lot of independence within the position, the clerk will work collaboratively with not only legal staff, but with HIV case managers and other advocates.

The MJF Law clerk will responsible for

1) addressing 15-20 client matters such as estate planning, debt representation, privacy or discrimination complaints, immigration, and social security disability appeals.

2) assist staff and volunteer attorneys in weekly legal advice clinics.

3) shared client intake responsibilities with other MAP staff and volunteers.

4) drafting educational materials as needed.

**Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women-** Summer clerkship will have two focuses: 1. Appellate Advocacy 2. TANF Policy Work.   
Appellate advocacy specific to protective order cases. Protective order laws in Minnesota are strong but poor court application can weaken the effectiveness of protective orders. Work to include updating research and create memo bank; working with MCBW volunteer attorneys, assess cases for possible direct appeal and/or amicus curiae briefs; provide representation for any case selected for appeal.   
TANF policy work to gather information on TANF/MFIP and develop policy strategy for increases financial supports to families living in poverty. MFIP/TANF funds are essential for families living in poverty but are set at extremely low amounts. Attempts to increase MFIP assistance grants for families have been unsuccessful. Work to include gathering information from organizations working with TANF/MFIP families & issues; interviews with MFIP recipients; research on Minnesota's allocation of federal TANF dollars and restrictions on these allocations; development of policy strategy for increasing assistance to families.

**Office of the Public Defender - 10th Judicial District-** The 10th Judicial District Public Defender's Office represents indigent individuals charged with criminal offense. This position will be based in Stillwater, Minnesota. Law Clerks conduct interviews with clients, represent them in district court at varies types of proceedings ranging from bail hearings to jury trials, conduct legal research and writing, assist in the review of discovery in serious and complex criminal matters, and will be a part of a team of attorneys and support staff dedicated to helping individuals who are often at their lowest points in their life. Law Clerks will be provided periodic training and assist in the training of other fellow law clerks. The 10th Judicial District Public Defender's Office has a client-centered approach which is accomplished through effective client communication, a team defense approach, and assisting clients in obtaining services to assist them.

**Southern MN Regional Legal Services - Government Benefits-** This clerk will work with the Public Benefits unit on cases involving MFIP, General Assistance, Emergency Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, Social Security Disability, Medical Assistance, MNCare, SNAP (a/k/a Food Stamps), Child Care Assistance, Utility Shut Offs, Criminal Expungements, Background Study Disqualifications, and other public benefit type issues. Responsibilities may include, but will not be limited to: client intake, interviewing and factual investigation, drafting pleadings, legal research and writing, court appearances, and obtaining documents. SMRLS is a non-profit law firm which provides free legal assistance to low income and elderly people. The clerk will work with clients mostly from Ramsey and Washington counties. Our office is located in downtown St. Paul, MN.

**Tubman-**Tubman helps women, men, youth and families who have experienced relationship violence, elder abuse, addiction, sexual exploitation or other forms of trauma. Tubman legal services provide quality legal services to low income clients with cases in the metro area.

The clerk will have the opportunity to assist in family law and order for protection cases. The clerk’s duties will include all aspects of client services including: client screening and intake, client interviewing, legal research and writing, drafting pleadings, hearing and trial preparation. Additionally, Tubman will work to have the selected clerk certified for student practice before the State of Minnesota to allow the clerk to practice under the supervision of licensed program attorneys.

In addition to hands on experience in the practice of family law, the clerk will be invited to attend legal team meetings, CLE trainings led by Tubman attorneys and participation in community/systems response groups.

**GREATER MINNESOTA CLERKSHIPS**

**Anishinabe Legal Services-** Clerkships at Anishinabe Legal Services entail providing civil legal services directly to our eligible low-income client community under supervision of program staff. Assigned duties include meeting directly with clients through intake applications and providing initial intake interviews, shadowing advocates at hearings before Courts and Administrative Forums, legal research, writing, as well as providing legal advice and forms assistance to eligible Program clients.

ALS works to have the selected clerk certified for student practice before the State of Minnesota, and works with the Tribal Courts, Tribal Legal Departments and Bands within our service area to allow clerks to practice before the Tribal Courts under the supervision of licensed program attorneys.

While clerks will receive a variety of civil legal matters to assist on, a significant amount of work will involve Housing, Family/DV, Indian Child Welfare, Consumer and Government Benefit appeals with emphasis on Indian Law, Tribal Law and policy.

**Legal Aid Service of Northeastern Minnesota**- LASNEM received Bank of America Settlement Funds for a community economic development project to improve the rental housing stock in Northeastern Minnesota. LASNEM recently hired a Housing Quality (HQ) attorney to focus on representing tenants in negotiations with landlords to make repairs, and, when necessary, in rent escrow and tenants remedies actions. The summer clerk will assist the HQ Attorney with client interviews, drafting court forms for rent escrow and tenant remedies actions, assisting in negotiations with landlords, create community education information for tenants about their rights regarding housing quality, and observing, and striving to eventually represent clients in tenant remedies actions. The clerk would work primarily out of the Duluth office. The office is located in downtown Duluth, a short walk from Lake Superior. Duluth’s climate and recreational opportunities make it a destination for many in the summer.

**Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota-** A summer MJF Clerk with Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota can expect a rich experience which includes direct client contact and opportunities to work on special projects impacting poverty. There will be considerable opportunities to focus on a Clerk's areas of interest and use individual skills while assisting some of the most vulnerable Minnesota residents. A clerkship at LSNM is never boring, and is guaranteed to provide challenging and meaningful public law practice. We have 3 offices to choose from - Moorhead, Alexandria or Bemidji, MN

**Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS) - Southwest Region** Mankato- (SMRLS) provides free legal assistance to low income and elderly persons with civil legal problems. The SMRLS Southwest Region, with offices in Mankato and Worthington, serves 17 counties and is staffed by 11 attorneys and 8 other staff. The area has sizable Hispanic and Somali populations, and numerous other immigrant/refugee populations including Sudanese, Lao, and Hmong. Of the 9 rural Minnesota school districts where more than 20% of the parents speak a language other than English, 7 are in southwestern Minnesota.  
  
We attempt to provide law clerks with experience in a variety of practice areas, including family law, housing law, government programs, and elder law. The law clerk’s responsibilities include virtually the entire spectrum of lawyering tasks - client interviewing, fact investigation, legal research, writing and analysis, negotiation, case planning, drafting pleadings, and court appearances, under the student practice rule.