



The Legal Aid Society
of Cleveland
Since 1905

2012 Summer Associate Program

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland (Legal Aid) is looking for 12 - 15 dedicated, hard-working, and public-interest minded students to work in Legal Aid's four Northeast Ohio offices for our 2012 summer associate program. Legal Aid summer associates commit to working at least 11 weeks. Legal Aid is a non-profit law firm focused on areas of consumer rights, disability, domestic violence, education, employment, family law, foreclosure, health, housing, immigration, public benefits, and tax.

Summer associates work in different areas of the law but all receive the opportunity to learn how to be excellent poverty lawyers. Generally, summer associates will interview clients, draft court pleadings, research relevant legal issues, attend and assist with court hearings and trials, and gather and analyze evidence. In addition, Legal Aid summer associates will participate in weekly trainings on substantive areas of poverty law and observe oral arguments in the 8th District Court of Appeals, meeting afterward with the judges involved. Brown bag lunches with current Legal Aid lawyers and community members including judges, politicians, and leaders of local non-profit agencies are also held on a weekly basis.

Student Qualifications: Legal Aid summer associate applicants should have completed their first or second year of law school prior to the summer of 2012. Special consideration is given to students with a demonstrated commitment to serving disadvantaged people and communities. If your resume does not reflect a commitment to public service due to personal financial constraints, please provide an explanation in your cover letter. Law students who speak Spanish are strongly encouraged to apply.

Funding: Due to limited financial resources, Legal Aid is unable to pay summer associates. However, traditionally summer associates are able to find outside funding, and applicants are encouraged to apply for summer funding through the following sources:

- Summer grants/fellowships through your law school
- Equal Justice Works, Summer Corps Program: Awards \$1,000 educational grants which can be applied to educational debt or future education costs. These are awarded on a first come, first served basis so be sure to apply the minute the application is available on line at www.equaljusticeworks.org.
- Equal Justice America: Visit www.equaljusticeamerica.org for 2012 award information and application details.
- Work Study Funding: Some universities offer work study funding for summer positions. Please check with your law school financial aid office for particulars at your school.

These are just a few of the many funding possibilities. For more funding opportunities, visit the "Financing a Career or Summer Job" page under "Career Central" at www.pslawnet.org. Please indicate in your cover letter what funding sources you will be applying for, if any.

Course Credit/Externship Credit: Legal Aid often supervises students working for externship or other credit. Please indicate in your cover letter if you are working with your law school to receive course credit for this position.

Application Procedure: Qualifying students should forward a cover letter listing their top three (3) practice group preferences, top two (2) location preferences, a resume, a writing sample, and a list of three (3) references to Amy Schuster, HR Generalist at amy.schuster@laslev.org listing “Summer Associate 2012” in the subject line of the email. Please see pages 3 – 6 of this job posting for a full listing of practice group descriptions and locations. **Application materials must be submitted by Friday, February 10, 2012.** Applications will only be accepted via e-mail. You will receive a confirmation email that your application materials have been received shortly after we receive your application.

Legal Aid is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate because of age, race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability.

Important Dates:

February 10, 2012	Application Deadline
February 13 – March 2, 2012	Interviews*
March 5 – March 9, 2012	Offers Extended**
March 19, 2012	2012 Summer Associates Announced
May 15, 2012	Orientation/Start of 2012 Summer Associate Program

* Telephone interviews will be conducted with applicants who are not able to participate in an in-person interview.

**If offered a position, you must accept/decline within 72 hours.

About Us: Ranked as one of the Plain Dealer’s Top Workplaces in 2011, Legal Aid’s mission is to secure justice and resolve fundamental problems for those who are low income and vulnerable by providing high quality legal services and working for systemic solutions. Founded in 1905, Legal Aid is the fifth oldest legal aid organization in the United States. Legal Aid’s 53 staff attorneys, 90 staff members, and 1,400 volunteer lawyers ensure access to justice for low income people. For more information please visit www.laslev.org.

Why Northeast Ohio: Northeast Ohio has a rich history of diverse cultures. It is home to the nationally renowned Cleveland Orchestra; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame; the Cleveland Browns, Indians, and Cavaliers; an award-winning Metroparks system; vineyards; Lake Erie; and many other arts, recreation, and cultural attractions. Northeast Ohio also has a low cost of living. For more information on living and working in Northeast Ohio please visit [Cleveland+](#).

PRACTICE GROUP DESCRIPTIONS 2012

Consumer Law Practice Group: Legal Aid's Consumer Law Practice Group (CLPG) promotes the economic stability of low-income consumers who have been victimized by fraudulent or abusive business practices. CLPG attorneys defend homeowners against foreclosures and litigate cases involving home improvement scams, foreclosure rescue scams, payday loans, and deceptive business practices. CLPG attorneys also represent clients in bankruptcy and assist some consumers with obtaining and maintaining necessary utility services, weatherization, and energy efficiency for low income families. The CLPG summer associate will work on a variety of consumer issues with a particular focus on foreclosures. Tasks will include interviewing clients, performing legal research, drafting pleadings, and attending mediation and court proceedings. The summer associate may also have opportunities to develop educational materials for use in the community or work on systemic advocacy projects. The summer associate will work with most or all of the attorneys in the CLPG and will be supervised by the CLPG's managing attorney.

Family Law Practice Group: Legal Aid's Family Law Practice Group (FLPG) provides assistance to clients, their families and children who are experiencing safety, financial, and educational problems impacting their daily stability. The FLPG provides assistance in matters such as divorce, domestic violence, custody, and child support. The FLPG's summer associate will assist attorneys, paralegals, and staff by conducting client interviews, compiling and assembling detailed client histories, drafting pleadings and motions, preparing correspondence, attending hearings, preparing pretrial and discovery materials, and conducting research as needed.

Family Law Practice Group – Domestic Violence Project: Legal Aid's Family Law Practice Group (FLPG) provides victims of domestic violence with representation in civil protection orders and divorces as a way to promote safety and economic self-sufficiency and empower these survivors to break the cycle of violence for themselves and their children. The summer associate will interview eligible clients, evaluate available client options, draft pleadings, gather documentary evidence for hearings, research relevant issues, attend court proceedings and accompany clients to obtain civil protection orders. The summer associate will also develop a specialized domestic violence intake questionnaire for use by intake specialists. The ideal candidate will have good communication and writing skills, an interest in domestic violence and family law and must be organized and reliable. This is an intense summer associate position and may require some evening hours.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group – CAP: The Community Advocacy Program (CAP) brings together law and medicine to seek solutions to community problems by providing proactive legal services in community health care settings. A partnership of Legal Aid and The MetroHealth System, CAP seeks to improve health outcomes of low-income children, elderly, immigrants and formerly incarcerated people. CAP is part of a growing national movement of medical-legal partnerships (MLPs). Primary areas of representation include special education, public benefits, disability, immigration, and end of life planning. The summer associate will interview clients, evaluate the merit of potential cases, engage in legal research, develop medical evidence, counsel clients on case options, and write a hearing memo in a disability (SSI) case. Additionally, the summer associate will conduct a training with medical providers on a legal issue impacting patients and participate in the statewide MLP task force. Applicants should be interested in the intersection of law and public health and be comfortable working with individuals with mental health issues. Spanish language skills are a plus.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group – Immigration: Legal Aid’s Immigration practice promotes lawful residence and basic human rights protection for the low-income immigrant community. The immigration practice provides legal services to detainees and individuals who are vulnerable and whose immigration status, if not addressed, would (i) affect family stability, employment, public benefits, or health care, or (ii) place them at risk of removal to a country where health or safety is life threatening. Certain federal restrictions apply. The summer associate will assist in all aspects of the immigration program, including the detention project, from initial client interview and document preparation through adjudication and appeal process. The associate will conduct research on developing immigration issues, and also may prepare written materials and/or organize workshops on specific aspects of immigration law for the detention project and our client community at large. The ideal candidate will have good research and writing skills, an interest in immigration law, and a willingness to work with a diverse immigrant population. Bilingual language skills are a plus.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group – Public Benefits: The goal of Legal Aid’s Public Benefits Work Group is to provide legal assistance to clients and their dependent family members to access public benefits needed to maintain the safety net and become self-sufficient. The Public Benefits Work Group covers all areas of public benefits including but not limited to the following: Cash assistance, including OWF & DFA, Food Stamps, and Medicaid. In addition, this work group also maintains a practice in Social Security law and related areas including overpayments and termination of benefits. The summer program is intended to help a student learn the area of public benefits law and to provide a realistic impression of the practice of law in this area. The summer associate will have the opportunity to sit in and participate in interviews with clients and help develop cases. The summer associate will also have the chance to assist and participate in a client hearing. The summer associate will also work on specific projects or research that may arise in this area.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group – Tax: Legal Aid’s tax practice is a model for other similar programs, and advocacy topics include those related to the tax return preparation industry, domestic violence, and federal income tax collection. Applicants should have an insatiable interest in individual tax and should also have previous exposure to tax, whether in the classroom, clinic, or VITA-type work. The summer associate will participate in and conduct client interviews, research, drafting of pleadings, and advocacy work in which the supervisor engages. The summer associate will be supervised by Legal Aid’s tax attorney who is a national leader on tax issues of concern to the poor, and the tax practice at Legal Aid.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group – Unemployment

Compensation: The summer associate will assist with unemployment compensation cases and issues. Duties will include conducting preliminary interviews of clients and doing an initial work-up of cases. The summer associate will also assist attorneys in preparing for unemployment hearings, legal research, and attending unemployment hearings. The summer associate may also assist with pro bono clinics to help unemployment claimants who cannot otherwise be assisted by Legal Aid and with research on systemic issues affecting unemployment claimants, particularly those with Limited English Proficiency. As time permits, the summer associate will also have the opportunity to work on other public benefit cases and special education issues.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group - The Wage Project – I: The Wage Project is aimed at addressing workplace abuses suffered by low-wage workers in Northeast Ohio. The project engages in rights education and outreach in low-wage worker communities, and engages in litigation on behalf of workers facing wage and hour violations. The summer associate will work on all aspects of the project including developing and presenting know your rights classes to low-wage workers; interviewing

clients; drafting correspondence and pleadings in employment law cases; and researching employment law/policy issues. This is a great opportunity for someone who is interested in workplace justice. The ideal candidate will have good public speaking skills, be able to write well, and be passionate about using his or her legal training to advocate for low-wage workers. Spanish language skills and prior employment law experience is a plus.

Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration Practice Group - The Wage Project – II: The Wage Project is aimed at addressing workplace abuses suffered by low-wage workers in Northeast Ohio. In addition to engaging in rights education and outreach in low-wage worker communities and engaging in litigation on behalf of workers facing wage and hour violations, the Wage Project also represents client to help them remove barriers to employment. The summer associate will work on all aspects of removing barriers to employment including expungements (sealing criminal records), ID and birth certificate issues, and some licensing issues. The associate will have opportunities for presenting to re-entry participants, interviewing clients; drafting correspondence and pleadings for expungement cases, assisting with planning and conducting an Expungement Clinic, and researching law/policy issues with regard to expungements. This is a great opportunity for someone who is interested in workplace justice. The ideal candidate needs to be passionate about using his or her legal training to advocate for low-wage workers whose records either deny or seriously restrict their entrance to the work force.

Housing Law Practice Group: Legal Aid's Housing Practice Group (HLPG) litigation and advocacy seeks to preserve and increase the supply of decent, affordable housing for low income persons, to help low income persons secure and retain rental subsidies and decent, affordable housing, and to secure reasonable policies and practices in the subsidized housing programs. The summer associate will work on at least one non-case project, which may include work on implementing the housing plan of the Greater Cleveland Reentry Strategy Coalition or securing compliance with Limited English Proficiency requirements in HUD-assisted rental housing programs. The summer associate will also work on HLPG cases – principally reentry admission, eviction and termination of subsidy cases. The summer associate will represent clients in housing authority administrative hearings in termination of rental subsidy (voucher) cases. The summer associate will also assist HLPG attorneys in their cases. This assistance will include: legal and factual research; drafting pleadings, motions, briefs, and written discovery; interviewing clients and witnesses; attending depositions, hearings, and trials; and other miscellaneous assistance. The summer associate will be supervised by a HLPG supervising attorney.

Intake & Referral Practice Group: Legal Aid's Intake & Referral Practice Group performs intake services for applicants in Cuyahoga County and throughout Legal Aid's five-county service area. Legal Aid handles a wide range of civil matters for low-income residents including divorces, protection orders, evictions, foreclosures, tort defense cases, unemployment claims, public benefits, Social Security matters, probate, and transactional work such as wills, deeds, powers of attorney and health care directives. The summer associate will assist the Intake attorneys in further implementing the use of information, advice and other pro se materials at intake. Summer associate duties will include drafting, editing and revising letters, forms, motions and pleadings by working with the Intake attorneys, other practice group attorneys who began development of such materials, and the CMS document assembly technician who helps format written materials for staff in all five counties. Additionally, the summer associate will help determine how such information, advice and pro se materials (used by staff in intake) need to be packaged for use at clinics and in substantive practice groups. Applicants should be organized and have good writing skills.

Volunteer Lawyers Program: Legal Aid's Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) works to mobilize the private bar to assist in making legal services more accessible to low income persons and families. The summer associate will assist in creating special focus pro bono projects by client group (such as an elder law clinic at a senior site or a clinic for a particular immigrant community) or by issue area (for example, know your tenant

rights program). Substantively, the summer associate will conduct research and draft “Know Your Legal Rights” guides and community legal education curriculum. The summer associate will interview clients and meet regularly with local law firms and local bar associations. Additionally, the summer associate will assist with ongoing pro bono clinics and work with intake attorneys. Applicants should be organized and have good communication skills. Good research and writing skills are a must. This summer associate position will require regular Saturday hours and some evening hours.

Please list your top three (3) practice group preferences in

LEGAL AID LOCATIONS 2012

Legal Aid provides free legal services on civil matters in the following counties:

Ashtabula County

121 East Walnut St.
Jefferson, OH 44047

Cuyahoga County

1223 West Sixth Street
Cleveland, OH 44113

Lake and Geauga Counties

8 North State St., Suite 300
Painesville, OH 44077

Lorain County

1530 West River Road North, Suite 301
Elyria, OH 44035

Please list your top two (2) location preferences in your cover letter.