



2016 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 2016 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 will be assigned to work in one practice area and will 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 observe oral arguments in a variety of courts, meeting afterward with the judges involved.

Student Qualifications: Legal Aid summer associate applicants should have completed their first or second year of law school prior to the summer of 2016. 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 and other languages 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 \$1,200 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 2016 award information and application details.
- Work Study Funding: Some universities offer work study funding for summer positions. Please check with your law school's 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.psjd.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 two (2) location preferences, a resume, a writing sample, and a list of three (3) references to Jennifer Teeter, Executive Assistant at volunteers@laslev.org listing “Summer Associate 2016” in the subject line of the email. Please see page four of this job posting for a listing of office locations. **Application materials must be submitted by Wednesday, January 20, 2016.** 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:

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| January 20, 2016 | Application Deadline |
| February 1 - 12, 2016 | Interviews* |
| February 16 - 19, 2016 | Offers Extended** |
| March 2016 | 2016 Summer Associates Announced |
| May 23, 2016 | Orientation/Start of 2016 Summer Associate Program |

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

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

About Us: 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 42 staff attorneys, 68 staff members, and 2,000 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 www.clevelandplus.com and www.downtownclevelandalliance.com. For information on housing please go to www.csuohio.edu/reslife.

Our Work:

The **Community Engagement Practice Group** works to develop and maintain relationships with low income communities in order to inform our work and accomplish our mission. For example, this group seeks to ensure that Legal Aid identifies and responds to emerging issues, unmet client legal needs, and barriers to accessing legal services and the justice system for vulnerable populations.

The **Consumer Practice Group** promotes the economic stability of low-income consumers who have been victimized by fraudulent or abusive business practices by defending homeowners against foreclosures; litigating cases involving home improvement scams, foreclosure rescue scams, payday loans, and deceptive business practice; and representing clients in bankruptcy, garnishment, property tax, utilities and title loan cases.

The **Family Practice Group** assists clients, families and children who are experiencing safety and financial problems impacting their daily stability in matters such as divorce, domestic violence, custody and child support.

The **HEWII (Health, Education, Work, Income and Immigration) Practice Group** focuses on improving the economic stability of low-income clients.

Health (Community Advocacy Program): A partnership with MetroHealth, CAP seeks to improve health outcomes for low-income children, elderly, immigrants and formerly incarcerated people.

Education: This work focuses on special education and access issues, including homelessness.

Work:

- **Employment:** The Employment practice is aimed at addressing workplace abuses suffered by low-wage workers in Northeast Ohio through education, outreach and direct representation.
- **Tax:** The Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) includes individual representation and advocacy related to domestic violence, identity theft and federal income tax collection.
- **Unemployment Compensation:** This practice includes direct representation in unemployment hearings and systemic issues affecting unemployment claimants.

Income (Public Benefits): This group assists clients and their dependent family members to access public benefits needed to maintain the safety net and become self-sufficient, with particular focus on persons with disabilities.

Immigration: Legal Aid's Immigration practice promotes lawful residence and basic human rights protection to detainees and individuals who are vulnerable and at risk of removal.

The **Housing Practice Group** 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 to secure reasonable policies and practices in the subsidized housing programs.

The **Volunteer Lawyers Program and Intake Group** handles applications for persons seeking legal aid and provides support for the volunteer attorneys who assist Legal Aid in providing legal assistance throughout our service area.

LEGAL AID LOCATIONS 2016

Legal Aid has the following office locations:

Cleveland

1223 West Sixth Street
Cleveland, OH 44113

Elyria

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

Jefferson

121 East Walnut St.
Jefferson, OH 44047

Painesville

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

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