For instance, can you recall learning that a fellow attorney was terminated or even criticized for doing too much pro bono work? We hesitate to volunteer as if we need to hide our pro bono efforts from supervising attorneys. Or, we act as if pro bono work will slow down the quest for a raise, promotion, or partner status. Please remember that volunteering your time for others in need will not divert you from your career goals. Rather, devoting time to pro bono work will boost your sense of identity as an attorney, build confidence, and ultimately earn you greater respect with all but the most cut-throat co-workers.

Beyond the obvious sense of satisfaction (and guilt relief) derived from performing pro bono work, you’re also assured to feel like a more capable and well-rounded attorney. I look at pro bono work as an investment in a career. Through legal aid experience I’ve had the opportunity to acquire at least some level of proficiency in social security, unemployment compensation, and protection from abuse laws. There are many other areas of law which I’ve acquired an equally dangerous proficiency, such as real estate and landlord tenant law. And don’t think you’ll never again come across these fields of law outside the venue of legal aid. Time and time again you’ll apply what you learn doing pro bono work to a legal issue confronting an important client of your practice.

I have not felt and cannot image feeling overwhelmed by pro-bono work. First, no organization expects you to commit more time than you can afford. Second, if you approach a pro bono client like a client of your regular practice, you will have no difficulty prioritizing pro bono casework like any other casework. Whether one big case spread over several months or a handful of small cases over the course of four-hours one morning, the nuts and bolts of pro bono legal work steadily come together over time just as any client’s file moves toward completion. Weaving pro bono files in among the other files on your desk should come as easily as weaving your favorite T.V. series into a fall evening. And, lest they forget to remind me, I always consider pro bono clients and their issues equally important as the firm’s clients. Naturally, we prioritize the work of our employers, but it never hurts to remember the people you’ll encounter through pro bono work depend on you just as much if not more than the major clients who help pay our bills. And another reason why pro bono work does not overwhelm: compared to what many attorneys deal with each day, pro bono is not tremendously difficult.

Performing pro-bono work always takes less time and effort than I anticipate. Compared to long, drawn-out litigation, many pro bono cases resolve within a relatively short time frame. The commitment to pro bono work might involve little more than two to three hours one evening per year fielding basic legal questions with groups like the Uptown Legal Clinic. In a profession that often makes you feel like you’re spinning your wheels, pro bono work offers a chance to bring about and appreciate timely results. I’m driven by the prospect of doing a world of good for somebody in a short amount of time.

An experience that will impact the lives of others in the community can push back the four-walls that surround you and the desk you sit at every day. Pro-bono work can make your day less stifling and mundane, renewing the drive that will help you stay on top of the work that piles before you. Remember, the work is going to pile-up whether you volunteer your time or not. So take a distraction that will help you keep the focus you’ll need to chisel down the tower of files accumulating around you. It is well worth the time.
STATE OF THE CLINICS

by Professor Martha Mannix

The clinical program at Pitt Law is quickly approaching its 20th anniversary. Formally initiated in 1990, when the faculty hired David Herring to create a Child Welfare Clinic and write grants to expand the clinical program, the clinics have expanded from that modest beginning to the six in-house clinics we have today and three Practicums. The Community Economic Development Clinic, Elder Law Clinic, Environmental Law Clinic, Family Law Clinic, Health Law Clinic and Taxpayer Clinic now find their homes in-house on the fifth floor of the University's Sennott Square Building. The three Practicums - the collaborations with NLSA and SPLAS (in Washington County) and the brand new Unemployment Compensation Practice - are located outside the law school and staffed by practicing attorneys acting as adjunct faculty members. All of these clinical experiences provide students with a rich opportunity to develop and refine their practical lawyering skills by representing individuals who would otherwise go unrepresented.

The initial growth of the clinical program was fueled by federal grant funds from the Department of Education. When those grant programs ended, the Clinics were fortunate recipients of Pennsylvania IOLTA funds, which currently support in part the operations of the Health and Elder Law Clinics and our partnerships with the local legal services agencies. The IRS, recognizing the unmet legal need of the working poor, has funded the Taxpayer Clinic for almost 10 years. Private foundations have generously supported the work of the Family Law, CED and Environmental Law Clinics. We are following with interest the proposed federal Civil Access to Justice Act of 2009, which would authorize the Department of Education to again make grants to expand law school clinics while at the same time increasing funding for LSC. This year we were able to expand the Clinical offerings by creating the Unemployment Compensation Practicum, which relies on the talents of adjunct faculty members John Stember and Steve Pincus.

This year we were fortunate to add to our Clinic faculty Professor Emily Collins, who supervises students in the Environmental Law Clinic. Professor Collins cut her clinical teeth as a student at Pace Law School's highly regarded Environmental Litigation Clinic, and went on to work in the Office of Public Interest Counsel of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, where she practiced in the areas of water, air, and waste permitting. Professor Collins has drawn on unparalleled and continued support from the Heinz Endowments to design a truly interdisciplinary clinic that teaches students to work effectively in cross-disciplinary teams that provide legal and technical assistance to groups and individuals with environmental and community health concerns in the region.

During the Clinics’ almost 20 years of service, law students have represented thousands of clients. For many students, legal clinics are a first step towards careers in public service, or professional lives that embrace pro bono. Please look for our email message linking you to our survey of clinical graduates on their pro bono activities. If you did not receive an email and would like to participate, please email Jane LeHew at jel4@pitt.edu and she will send you the link.

If you would like to support the on-going work of the clinics, you can “earmark” your annual giving to the law school by indicating on the giving form that you would like your donation to support the Legal Clinics. You may also write in the Legal Clinics or a particular Clinic in the online giving form at http://www.giveto.pitt.edu/giving/give.php

Participating in the Innovation Economy

by Max Miller, Director, Innovation Practice Institute

A fundamental market shift is afoot that is causing many industries to rethink themselves. As you read this article, the financial regulatory system is being overhauled; major law firms are closing and restructuring; massive amounts of capital are exiting the market and sitting on the sidelines waiting for confidence in other ventures. As all of this is happening, emerging is a true innovation and knowledge-based economy that will place as much value on intellectual assets as was once placed on physical assets. It is necessary to understand all of this in order to get an appreciation for just how exciting a time it is here at Pitt Law as we develop a premier program that will help students navigate and participate as business-savvy legal advisors in this evolving marketplace.

At Pitt Law we are uniquely situated amidst some of the leading innovation advances from regenerative medicine at the Pitt School of Medicine, to robotics for autistic children at Project Olympus at Carnegie Mellon University, to social and commercial infrastructure design and development downtown and in the Hill District. Amongst all of these advances is the need for attorneys who understand the marketplace and can guide their clients to solutions for growth and advancement; who have the confidence to interact with young start-up executive teams and senior executive teams alike; who have the substantive legal skills to identify the risks associated with innovation activities.

Against this canvas of opportunity we have begun to paint the foundations of the Innovation Practice Institute where we are developing experiential learning, cross-disciplinary learning, and immersion opportunities for students to participate in the innovation economy. Put simply, Pitt Law students and faculty will be a part of the project teams for various innovations including, but not limited to: the creation of cutting edge technologies and the development and commercialization of medical innovation; and even the study of the legal services strategies and culture. All of this will be accomplished through project-based learning, case studies and extra curricular experience that will allow students to be immersed into the innovation dialogue.

As Director of the Institute, and as a Pitt Law ’93 graduate, I am honored to be a part of this forward-thinking movement initiated by Dean Crossley’s dialogue with funding sources as far back as 2007. Since joining Pitt Law in November 2008, I’ve been speaking with various stakeholders including: the foundation community, the Venture Capital community, practicing attorneys, faculty across Pitt and CMU, law students, and the economic development community. The fundamental query to them was “Is there an unmet need for legal services for early stage companies and innovation ventures?” The answer was a resounding “Yes.” But this “yes” was far more than just the demand for basic business formation and contracting needs; at the heart of the demand is the need to have attorneys who are problem solvers, connectors and value added team members.

In this regard, this Institute is committed to providing opportunities to our students to build these skill sets as a complement to the already outstanding curricular offerings here at Pitt Law. In our first efforts to address these demands, I am excited to be introducing two new curricular offerings in the Fall of 2009 - Commercializing New Technologies and Understanding the Legal Services Marketplace. The first is a project based course that partners law students with MBA students to evaluate the technology and business model of real tech companies that have offered to be a part of the course. The student teams will be graded on their term-end presentations. The latter course is the law school’s first foray into studying legal services market forces from a macro-perspective and helping students shape their thinking of value-creation as attorneys. As programming content for the Institute evolves, we will add curricular offerings each term. Courses being evaluated include Joint Venture and Alliance Strategies, Venture Financing, Crisis Management, and IP Strategies. We will also continue to build alliances with various members of the innovation stakeholder community to create learning, internship and immersion opportunities.

Last, but certainly not least, it is important to note that the Institute’s development is being funded via a grant from the Heinz Endowments’ Innovation Economy Program. This grant was initially for one year and has now been renewed for an additional two years. This funding shows the confidence that the Endowments have in Pitt Law being a key resource for the innovation economy. Universities play a vital role in every regional development strategy, and at Pitt Law we are in position to be a key part of building a pipeline of legal resources and talent to service the innovation economy and to play a critical role in the region’s growth.
Family Law Clinic Roundup

by Professor Harry Gruener

The academic year 2008—2009 saw near record productivity for the Family Law Clinic. Over a seven month period the students interviewed and prepared pleadings on behalf of approximately 370 indigent clients and argued approximately 70 motions before judges of the Family Court of Allegheny County. As in previous years, the bulk of the cases involved contested issues in the areas of child custody, child support and paternity. Other miscellaneous family law issues were also handled by the students.

This year witnessed an uptick in the number of interstate and intrastate custody cases. These cases are by definition complex and provided a strong challenge to the students who had to master the nuances of interstate and intrastate substantive custody law as well as learning the necessary court procedures peculiar to that area of the law. In one interstate case the issue was proper custody jurisdiction between Allegheny County and Crawford County. A mother had been murdered. The night of the murder the maternal grandmother appeared in Pittsburgh and took the child back to her home in Crawford County without notice to or consent of the natural father. At the instance of grandmother the Crawford County court entered an interim order granting custody to the grandmother. As in previous years, the court procedures peculiar to that area of the law. In one interstate case the issue was proper custody jurisdiction between Allegheny County and Crawford County. A mother had been murdered. The night of the murder the maternal grandmother appeared in Pittsburgh and took the child back to her home in Crawford County without notice to or consent of the natural father. At the instance of grandmother the Crawford County court entered an interim order granting custody to the grandmother. Father attended the hearing set by the interim order and challenged the jurisdiction of the court to hear the case under Pennsylvania law. Notwithstanding father’s objection the court entered the interim order. The student began an action in Allegheny County and filed a motion requesting that court find that Allegheny County had exclusive jurisdiction and proper venue in the matter. The student wrote a comprehensive brief outlining the facts and the law. After argument and review of the brief by both courts, the student prevailed and the case was transferred to Allegheny County for further action. Although it was originally thought that father was a suspect in the murder, another man was later arrested and charged.

This academic year students also settled a record number of cases before their scheduled argument. It is always a plus when students can add negotiating experience to their clinical skill sets, given that most of their cases in private practice will ultimately settle prior to trial and the ability to craft settlements, reduce their terms to written orders and present them to the judges is excellent experience.

At the end of the spring semester the judges of the Family Court held a reception to honor the students for their work during the year. Each judge individually expressed his or her appreciation for the excellent work the students had done during the year.

In addition to the skills the students learn, just as valuable has been the opportunity for the students to network with the Bench and Bar of the Family Court, as well as the court administrators. Historically, the training they receive as well as the networking they can and have done all year has led to excellent employment opportunities with premier family law firms in the city and as law clerks to judges in the Family Division of the court.

While it is always bitter sweet to see such a productive class graduate, we look forward to the fall when new students will begin their exciting journey through the clinic experience on their way to building a career in the challenging field of family law.

Health Law Clinic Students Are Changed By Client Service

by Professor Stella Smetanka

At the end of each semester, I ask the students to reflect on their particular experiences in the Health Law Clinic. The students’ insights enrich my understanding of what our clinics offer our budding lawyers. Here are some samples from Spring 2009 semester student alumni.

Yaaserwah Arhin: “The clients were more than just the contents of their files. I liked interacting with the clients.” One of Yaa’s clients was the victim of a gunshot that entered through her front window and into her back as she slept. The client was appealing the denial of supplemental security benefits. Because she is unable to walk, Yaa and I visited the client at home for an interview. The client was the age of a typical law student, but her life was permanently altered by this tragic event. Yaa conducted the interview, procured all of the evidence, and drafted the brief that was eventually submitted to the judge with updates by Myle Nguyen, the summer student who represented the client when the hearing was scheduled in June. We still await the decision.

Jeremy Brown: “The initial interview was the most challenging part of all. Clients are needy!” Jeremy’s client’s hearing also came up in June and his thorough interview uncovered the psychiatric issues that formed the theory of her case. He also wrote the brief based on all of the evidence he retrieved and the decision was favorable.

Nick Fiske: “I was surprised at how much the clients relied on us and respected us. Almost all of our clients were significantly older than Mike and me, but they valued what we had to say and really relied on us to take care of things.” Mike is Michael Della Vecchia and this team traveled to Indiana County in January and represented a client seeking guardianship of her 51 year old mentally challenged daughter. Mike and Nick represented another client in Allegheny County Orphans’ Court and Mike and Jen Knops represented a

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2009 CLEA Outstanding Clinic Student Award: Lauren Hoye

by Professor Martha Mannix

Congratulations to Lauren Hoye (09), the Pitt recipient of the 2009 Outstanding Clinics Student Award. In nominating her for the award, the clinic faculty noted that Lauren distinguished herself by the consistent high quality of her work, her dedication to public service law and her adherence to the highest ethical standards. Lauren participated in the Elder Law Clinic and the new Unemployment Compensation Practicum.

With regard to her work in the Unemployment Compensation Practicum, her thoroughness and commitment is typified by the following example. Her supervising attorney wrote:

In one case, Lauren represented a male nurse who had worked over 25 years at a local hospital. The nurse was terminated after an elderly patient accused him of physically abusing her while putting in an IV. The Hospital was represented by a partner at a large Pittsburgh law firm. The Hospital’s attorney did not call the patient to testify but instead tried to get the information about the incident into the record in a variety of ways, including business records. Lauren made a series of hearsay objections that resulted in exclusion of the evidence the Hospital needed to prove its case. She then put on the Claimant who testified that the patient was disoriented at the time as she had just been sleeping and that after inserting the IV he stopped as soon as the patient complained of pain. The Referee granted benefits to the Claimant. Afterwards, the Hospital’s lawyer commented to one of our colleagues... that the Pitt law student did a great job and had “kicked his butt.”

In addition to her clinical skills, Lauren has shown extraordinary leadership and public interest commitment by acting as co-chair of Pitt Law School’s Pitt Legal Income Sharing Foundation (PLISF), an organization of students committed to public interest law which raises money to provide grants to Pitt law students for summer work at public interest organizations.

Community Economic Development Clinic News

by Professor Dan Friedson

Fighting Foreclosures

The Community Economic Development Clinic (CED) at Pitt Law has been dedicated to fighting foreclosures since we opened our doors in 2004, thanks to the Heinz Endowments. We continued our work with Irene McAulaglin, the Office of the Mayor and Regional Housing Legal Services this year helping families in Southwestern Pennsylvania keep their family homes.

This otherwise cumbersome title-work and counseling of complex property law issues was superbly executed by our CED 3rd Year law students. Many thanks to all the title companies that provide services to our clients pro bono!

Student Safety and Fairness re Landlords

In past years the CED assisted the City of Pittsburgh in reviewing nuisance and blight reduction legislation in other jurisdictions. Unfortunately, the CED was never consulted on the final versions of the bills and they may pass into law this year. Subsequently, a landlord association sued the City to prevent the passage of the Landlord-Tenant Registration Act. We reviewed apartment registration legislation for constitutionality issues.

While the CED clinic fulfilled about 60 requests for counseling and lease review and/or altering, we went to court (or are in court) for 6 Pitt students whose landlords either jeopardized their safety or dealt harshly with student tenants. For more resources about this, visit the Office of Off Campus Living at http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/ for downloadable practical guides for student renters.

Green Businesses

Green Business Forum – Students elected to be part of the CED “Green Team” and executed a presentation with community partners, Councilman William Peduto, Grow Pittsburgh, Sustainable Pittsburgh. One student said he learned the following lessons: “The forum allowed me to gain some experience in public speaking, and trying to arrange a presentation in a neat, organized, and effective manner. I gained some valuable business knowledge while conducting research and answering questions, and learned some tips on how to professionally communicate to a small group.” The CED went on to serve the needs of 5 “green” start-up businesses this year.

Arts & Entertainment (A&E)

The CED, along with East Liberty Development, Inc. took a former PNC Bank site and created ArtDimensions Pittsburgh, a local arts and entertainment industry business incubator which offers low cost gallery and teaching space for artists, legal literacy classes for artists and offices for A&E companies. This was a blight reduction strategy for vacant buildings in Pittsburgh’s East End, currently reclaiming 6000 Penn Avenue at Highland in East Liberty. To reclaim this property the students obtained permits and negotiated safety tests for the building including, private mold inspection and building inspections. The Director of the CED Clinic, Dan Friedson and one other volunteer, Owen Vandivier, abated the mold problem at their own expense. Follow up inspection showed significant abatement, thus going above the legal requirements for safety. Currently with 30 members since opening in the end of January 2009, ArtDimensions has produced 3 art shows, which in turn raised money for local nonprofits. The CED clinic’s produced two community seminars for Musical and Visual Artists. Attendees of these seminars were offered one free legal service, such as copyright registration, LLC formation or contract review. The CED provided these services to 12 local artists or A&E companies.

Environmental Law Clinic Focuses on Collaborative Approaches to Complex Problem-solving

by Professor Emily A. Collins

Representing ten clients, the Environmental Law Clinic handled a diverse caseload and conducted its first mock administrative hearing during the Spring semester of 2009. On several complex cases, Clinic law students enjoyed the collaborative efforts of six graduate students in public health. Ten third-year law students participated in the Clinic, including Jessie Boyle, Sarah Clark, Patrick Greuter, Carly LaBuff, Ned Mulcahy, Ruchi Sadhir, Bradley Schmalzer, Jon Schneider, Sarah Strauss, and Curtis Sullivan.

In total, the Clinic worked on two administrative petitions, two administrative appeals to the Environmental Hearings Board, one land use appeal in Common Pleas Court, one submission to an international environmental commission, four cases in which we evaluated client options and the state of the law to counsel clients, two outreach/public presentation projects, one municipal ordinance-drafting project, and comments on a proposed water quality permit.

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In April 2009, the Commission to Build a Healthier America, a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, produced its recommendations entitled “Beyond Health Care: New Directions to a Healthier America.” The report calls for substantial collaboration among leaders across all sectors of our society, with some, as of yet, not fully comprehending the importance of their roles in improving health.

At least since 1993, the role that the legal community can play in contributing to healthy outcomes has been recognized in the model of health care delivery known as the “medical-legal partnership” (MLP). This model was developed at Boston Medical Center and arose from the frustration of doctors who cared for low income patients whose health was diminished by social determinants. Their solution in solving this difficult public health problem was to train lawyers to work as part of the health care team to enforce laws and regulations that are intended to protect public health.

In the Fall of 2008, Dr. Marie Clark completed her pediatric residency at Boston Medical Center and joined Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh (CHP) in the division of General Academic Pediatrics. That department services the low income pediatric population in three different primary care centers, one of which is located at 3420 Fifth Avenue, across from Montefiore Hospital. Dr. Clark worked intensely with the MLP at Boston Medical Center and believes in its efficacy to achieve a better level of health for patients. She found Professor Smetanka soon after she arrived in Pittsburgh. Along with all law school health law clinic supervising attorneys, Professor Smetanka had been watching the MLP model as more and more health clinics and hospitals in the United States partnered with legal aid agencies, pro bono lawyers and law schools to advocate for patients whose needs are not being met.

In fact, a MLP between UPMC Braddock and Neighborhood Legal Services Association (NLSA) has been in the planning for a year and will be launched soon. So, Professor Smetanka and Dr. Clark formed an informal partnership committed to making this happen between Pitt Law School and the Primary Care Center of CHP. They sought out NLSA to create a three way partnership, given NLSA’s breadth of experience and capacity for serving the low income community of Pittsburgh.

How will it look?

Provided this three way collaborative finds the funding and all three partners approve, beginning in January 2010, 8-10 law students will enroll in the Medical Legal Collaborative for Children Practicum for four credits. Two credits will be attributed to a classroom component that will focus on the importance of the public health aspect of medical care, social determinants of health care, and substantive, procedural and practical instruction in the kinds of cases the students will encounter at the Center. Medical residents and perhaps medical students will also participate in the class. The remaining two credits will be satisfied with “hands-on” work at the Primary Care Center, office work on behalf of clients who are served at the Center. Students will conduct interviews, collaborate with the NLSA on site attorney on whether the issues presented warrant referral to the lawyers, and follow the case to the NLSA lawyer, the legal clinic, or the pro bono attorney who will be responsible for the case. The kinds of cases that the students will probably encounter include issues related to poor living conditions (environmental concerns, utilities shutoffs), immigration, domestic violence, education issues, and benefits advocacy.

What do the law students think of this initiative?

In the Spring 2009 semester, Dr. Clark attended a Civil Practice Clinic office meeting with Elder and Health Law Clinic students. She explained the concept of the Medical-Legal Partnership, and her experience with it in Boston. The law students who were present grasped the unmistakable logic in the approach to medical care. Students in the Health Law Certificate had studied the public aspect to individual medical care and saw the project as a natural application of broad societal problems and individual cases. It just made sense to the law students as part of the momentum that has been described by Dr. Alvin R. Tarlov, M.D. as gathering “to explore the worth of joining population and individual health into a unified health production concept with overlap of policies.”

The idea of doctors and lawyers working together in a structured way for the good of patients is a simple concept. It is the simplicity that is so attractive and exciting because it can be achieved.

Health Law Clinic (cont’d)

Other students enrolled in the Health Law Clinic this past year were Evan Lowry, Steve Franko, Ian Pisarcik, Valerie Blake, Jennifer Billett, Chris Haselboff, Andrew Hazi, Kelie Cummins, Beth Goldman, Patrick Best, Elisa Mari, and Mustafa Unlu. Summer research assistant s who contributed yeoman service for our clients, besides Myle, are Anjelica Ruda, Elizabeth Youngkin, and Mike Dirckx. Since July 2008, students have won twenty one cases after court hearings. While the students have been positively changed through their service to their clients, the client’s lives have improved greatly. Thank you to all of the current and past Health Law Clinic students!
Life Lessons Learned in the Elder Law Clinic

by Professor Martha Mannix

Students in the Elder Law Clinic this past year enjoyed a wonderful collaboration with Metowers, an affiliate of Presbyterian Senior Care. Metowers operates two sections 202/8 Federally subsidized apartment building for senior citizens and the mobility-impaired, one in Munhall and the other in Avalon. In the Fall of 2008, three clinic students (Christina Freeman, Michael Finn and Lauren Hoye) made a presentation to the residents of the Avalon building on Estate Planning: Powers of Attorney, Healthcare Directives and Simple Wills. Residents who were interested could then sign up to receive legal services from the Clinic. During the Spring 2009 semester, clinic students assisted nineteen residents of Metowers with their estate planning, crafting individualized documents for their clients.

The students were reminded through their experiences that although it might seem like a “simple” case to them, each case has its own dynamics and nuances requiring attention to detail, a command of the law and an awareness of the ethical rules. Lindsay Weissberg, a spring 2009 student, learned to “always ask questions—ever the obvious ones; some (hopefully not all) of the answers will surprise you.” Another student- Mark Mislavovich- commented, “I was surprised at how difficult and involved the legal problems our clients faced were and how much they really needed our help.”

In one case, student Megan McGovern recruited a student from another clinic to assist with translation services when she became concerned that the client might not understand the details of the proposed documents. The student team researched how they could use a translator and still maintain the confidential and privileged nature of the discussion. By using the translator, the students were reassured that the client understood the broad powers being conveyed on the agent and the pros and cons of utilizing a power of attorney. In another case, students researched how a client might donate her body to science on her death. Throughout the process, students consistently expressed surprise at the “trust and confidence” their clients placed in them- their first experience in the role of an attorney.

Although the Clinic traditionally has relied on guardianship cases to provide the students with their first opportunity to appear before a judge, this year our caseload modeled the real world- few went to hearing. In a number of cases that initially presented as guardianships, students were able to identify less restrictive alternatives that might work as well and in other cases provided substantial counseling about the duties and obligations of a guardian. Spring Student Dan Sammel worked extensively with one client who had a troubled background and might not have been viewed favorably by the court as a guardian. Dan wrote: “I was surprised by the fortitude of some clients. … she is struggling to take care of her father when her large family has pretty much left him and her in the lurch. I get the impression that she has had far less than an ideal life, to be sure, and yet she maintains her priorities when it comes to honoring her parents, and I respect that. Troubled past or not, that’s admirable.”

Finally, students learned tenacity. Two Fall students, Lauren Hoye and Ariel Nieland, worked with a client to transfer title to her deceased mother’s home to her. This disabled client was very gun-shy about getting involved in the legal system and was overwhelmed by the thought of having to pay probate costs and inheritance tax. Through many months and into the spring and summer, Ariel and Lauren worked with this client and gained her trust. They were able to obtain a waiver of interest and penalties on the inheritance tax owed and consulted with a former clinic student with title insurance expertise to draft an heir’s will. Ultimately they succeeded in having title transferred to her. A shout out to Stacie Wagner Patterson for her help with this case.

Thanks to all the students this year: Keith Figgins, Mike Finn, Ariel Nieland, Lauren Hoye, Jonathan Schultz, Jennifer Jara, Elliot Gelfand, Katie Jacobs, Christina Freeman, Amanda Warzel, Dan Sammel, Mark Mislavovich, Megan McGovern, Lindsay Weissberg, Christina Gregg, Sarah McDermott and Jen Bentley.

Environmental Law Clinic (continued)

The Clinic’s inaugural mock administrative hearing involved a permit appeal under the Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act. Appearing before Acting Chairman and Chief Judge Thomas W. Rentwand of the Environmental Hearing Board, Clinic students filed Prehearing Memoranda, participated in a pre-hearing conference, and examined three expert witnesses to present their cases on the Maximum Achievable Control Technology for mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants.

Simply considering the effort that students put into the mock hearing and case work does not, however, reflect the totality of experience that Environmental Law Clinic students shared in 2009. The most exciting aspect of the Clinic’s development involves a focus on complex problem-solving skills and budding collaborative relationships with cross-disciplinary faculty and students. Instead of utilizing experts in the traditional course of litigation, Clinic students involve interdisciplinary team members in the initial stages of factual investigation and theory development to identify key elements of a client’s problem and consider diverse potential actions to achieve client goals.

The Clinic employs a student-governed structure for teamwork that emphasizes rolling team member roles and peer evaluations. Clinic clients ultimately reap the benefits of effective group work, but the incorporation of collaborative learning into the Clinic’s curriculum derives from the goals of allowing students to acquire greater communication skills, identify project and time management techniques, use conflict resolution methods, and obtain a deeper understanding of the complex legal and scientific issues that environmental disputes involve. As you might expect from law students, the Clinic’s focus on teamwork met with initial resistance. End-of-year student feedback, however, identified effective teamwork as one of the most challenging and fulfilling aspects of their Clinic experience. I hope to build on the foundations built by the Spring 2009 Clinic students to structure interdisciplinary student teamwork in longer-term cases and hypotheticals. Peer rating systems will be used as part of this year’s student evaluations and more distinct guidelines will be issued to allow students to establish common expectations of each other.

Finally, the Environmental Law Clinic will be held for a full school year in the 2009-2010 academic year. Students may enroll in the Fall or Spring semesters, but must enroll for a total of two sequential semesters. The expanded Clinic offering will allow environmental law students to work on more typical environmental cases that require prolonged factual investigation and collaboration with experts. In the seminar, students will spend an entire semester honing their factual investigation skills and a second semester on litigation skills.

As a newcomer to the area, I have quickly found that the region has diverse opportunities for students hoping to practice environmental law. The Clinic is well-suited to develop the skills required for our young attorneys to serve clients with complex environmental needs. I am happy to be part of such a wonderful community of environmental and public health professionals. Thank you to my students, my faculty colleagues, and my colleagues in the environmental bar for such a warm welcome and wonderful first semester!
**Clinic Alumni News**

**Dana Adipietro** (Pitt Law 2005) joined the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Pittsburgh District as an Assistant District Counsel.

**Adena (Bernstein) Astrowsky** (Pitt Law 1997) practiced in the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office in Phoenix, Arizona for over five years primarily prosecuting sex offenders. After spending time raising her three children, she accepted a part-time position with the County Attorney’s Office focusing on bond/release hearings for inmates—mainly sex offenders and illegal immigrants. Adena also owns a photography business.

**Aaron Bloom** (Pitt Law 1997) In New York, he served as a criminal prosecutor from 1997 until 2000. He is currently a partner with a multi-state practice including nursing home and assisted living facility matters, complex litigation matters involving products liability, premises liability, medical malpractice, and general liability claims. In addition to New York he is admitted to practice in Florida and the Commonwealths of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Aaron lives in Tampa, Florida with his wife and 5 year old twins.

**Anthony Choe** (Pitt Law 2005) joined the FDA and Health Care practice at Arnold & Porter, along with a group of health care partners and associates from his old firm, Arent Fox. He also moved from the Virginia side of D.C. to the Maryland side. Anthony and his wife, Eunjoo, are expecting their first child, a daughter, this August.

**Wayne Cobb, II** (Pitt Law 2008) was offered and accepted the position of Staff Attorney in the Bridgewater office of Neighborhood Legal Services Association.

**Matthew F. Dolfi** (Pitt Law 2004) was named one of Pennsylvania Super Lawyer’s 2009 Rising Stars. Matt has been accepted into Duquesne’s Post-Baccalaureate Pre-Med program and will be starting classes in the Fall. In addition, Matt will be pursing a Master’s degree in Health Care Administration.

**Mark Esposito** and **Katherine (Carr) Esposito** (Pitt Law 2006) married in October 2006 and are living in Maryland. Mark received an LL.M. in Government Procurement Law on January 31, 2009 from George Washington University Law School. Katherine works at the Department of Justice where she works predominantly on vaccine litigation on behalf of the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

**Grant Hackley** (Pitt Law 2007) joined Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspani as an Associate Attorney in January of 2009. He and his wife, Dana, are expecting their second child, a boy, in mid-August to join their 2 year-old, Hudson. Grant continues to participate in the Allegheny County Pro Se Assistance Program helping indigent clients resolve custody and support disputes. He also ran the 2009 Pittsburgh Marathon.

**Pamela (Ledever) Helman** (Pitt Law 2003) is a litigation associate in the San Francisco office of Low, Ball & Lynch. Her practice focuses on environmental litigation, mainly asbestos and silica defense. Prior to relocating to the Bay Area from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Pam handled all aspects of litigation up to trial, including discovery, law and motion practice, depositions, expert retention, mediation and settlement negotiations for clients in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio.

**Christopher Hildebrandt** (Pitt Law 1998) has recently joined the law offices of Edgar Snyder.

**Karim Husain** (Pitt Law 1997) completed judicial clerkships with the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas and Commonwealth Court, then worked as an associate in two private firms and picked up an LL.M. in taxation along the way. In 2003, Karim started his own firm with offices in Center City, Philadelphia and West Chester. His practice focuses in the areas of tax controversies/litigation, wills, trusts and estates, and business transactions.

**Jennedy Santolla Johnson** (Pitt Law 2006) and **Chris Johnson** (Pitt Law 2006) married in April 2008. Chris and Jennedy live in Mechanicsburg, PA. Chris does appeals work for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Jennedy is an attorney with the Attorney General’s Office of Consumer Advocate where she practices utility law.

**Diane Ryan Katz** (Pitt Law 2007) serves on the Law School’s Law Alumni Association’s Board of Governors. Diane and her husband John welcomed the birth of their first child, Henry, this spring. Diane is an Assistant Counsel at the Office of General Counsel, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

**Pilar Kraman** (Pitt Law 2008) won the ABA Criminal Justice Section’s 2008 William W. Greenhalgh Award, Student writing competition. Her article “Divining the US Supreme Court’s Intent: Applying Crawford and Davis to Multi-Purpose Interrogations by Non-Law Enforcement Personnel” was published in the Winter 2009 edition of Criminal Justice. She is an associate with the Delaware firm of Young Conaway where she practices in their Intellectual Property and Commercial Litigation sections.

**Seohye (Sophie) Kong** (Pitt Law 2008) passed the Michigan bar and has been working at a small consumer’s bankruptcy law firm.

**Erica Lesko** (Pitt Law 2004) continues her fifth year of practice in the area of civil and complex litigation with Strassburger McKenna.

**Mark Martini** (Pitt Law 2003) was recently elected to a three year term on the Allegheny County Bar Association Board of Governors. Mark was named one of Pennsylvania Super Lawyer’s 2009 Rising Stars.

**Heather McAllister** (Pitt Law 2001) founded the Flagship Group, Inc., a “multi-faceted firm specializing in consulting, career management and professional development for law, professional services firms, corporations and their professionals.” The Group recently announced the opening of its Washington and Los Angeles practices.

**Kathy Miehl** (Pitt Law 2004) is working as a staff attorney at the ACBF Juvenile Court Project, where she began interning in the summer of 2002 at the end of her first year at Pitt Law School. Kathy represents indigent parents in Juvenile Court dependency cases. Kathy is in her fourth year as Chair of the ACBA Juvenile Law Committee.

**Ned Mulcahy** (Pitt Law 2009) was recently named the Three Rivers Waterkeeper by the Waterkeeper Alliance.

**Ross Petrini** (Pitt Law 2008) is an associate with MacDonald, Illig, Jones & Britton LLP in Erie, PA.

**Kaitlin Rancier** (Pitt Law 1997) spent three years in Philadelphia at the District Attorney’s Office. For the past 7 years, she has worked in the Child Protection Section in the DC Attorney General’s Office, which is co-located at the Child and Family Services Agency. Kaitlin handles the civil prosecution of child abuse and neglect.

**Elena Rovner** (Pitt Law 2008) practices in the areas of employment law, civil rights, business law, and estate administration as an associate at Goldman Schafer & Spear P.C.

**Carey Scheible** (Pitt Law 2007) practices with Bailey & Thomas, P.A., in Winston-Salem, North Carolina doing insurance law and general litigation. Prior to that, Carey practiced social security disability and workers compensation with Maynard & Harris, PLLC in Winston-Salem.
Clinic Alumni News

Bradley Schmalzer (Pitt Law 2009) accepted an Associate position with Flaherty Sensabaugh & Bonasso, PLLC, in Charleston, West Virginia.

Jessica Sharrow (Pitt Law 2006) recently accepted a position with Eckert Seamans in their Environmental Practice Group.

Monica Singh (Pitt Law 2008) married in December 2008 in Dubai and works as an associate at the law firm of Melvin D. Marx, P.A. in New Jersey. She represents healthcare providers against insurance carriers in arbitration hearings involving New Jersey’s no-fault personal injury protection matters.

Ryan Stewart (Pitt Law 2008) is an associate in the Philadelphia office of Blank Rome LLP.

Linda Tashbook (Pitt Law 1996) created and operates a homeless law Web site at http://www.homelesslaw.info and published an article titled “Aiming High, Reaching Out, and Doing Good: Helping Homeless Library Patrons with Legal Information” in Public Libraries, the peer-reviewed journal of the Public Library Association. In March she served as a Fulbright Specialist at the University of Novi Sad Faculty of Law in Serbia where she trained faculty and law librarians in international and electronic legal research and helped the law library create a research portal.


Acknowledgments

Many volunteers contribute their time each year to the Clinics by participating in mock trials, hearings, and public presentations. We have listed acknowledgments of those individuals below.

Professor Smetanka would like to thank the following people for their contributions to the Health Law Clinic: Hon. Livingstone M. Johnson, Administrative Law Judge David Hatfield, ALJ James Bukes; Dr. William Houston Reed; Dr. Christine Martone; Dr. Alin Severance; Dr. Michael Marcisin; folks at Oasis; Matt Kurpiewski; Jason Walton.

Professor Gruener would like to thank the judges of the Family Division of the Allegheny County Common Pleas Court for their unwavering support of the students both in and out of their courtrooms. Also, the clinic owes a large debt to the efforts of Barbara Clemens, Pro Se Director, whose seemingly unlimited patience is tested every day by the litigants, and sometimes by the students who have learned so much from her about how to be a lawyer.

Professor Mannix would like to thank former clinic students Tom Zumpella, Brian Rosinski, and Matt Dolfi and friends of the clinic Megan Ott (Pitt Law 2004) and Matthew Lenahan (Pitt Law 2004) for acting as judges in the Elder Clinic Mock Trials. Thanks to former Elder Clinic student Stacie Wagner Patterson for providing feedback on drafting a deed. Finally, thanks to Ed Carey for providing his annual lecture on Medical Assistance for long-term care.

Professor Collins would like to thank the Honorable Thomas W. Renwand, Mary Anne Wesdock, and Michael Heilmann for their participation in the Environmental Law Clinic’s first mock administrative hearing. Many thanks to Dr. Conrad (Dan) Vozl and Thomas Anderson for their willingness to explore interdisciplinary teaching models. Finally, a special thank you to the Heinz Endowments for their continued support of the Environmental Law Clinic’s work in the community.

In Memoriam

Our 2008 graduate, Matthew Hicks, died on Sunday, May 17, 2009, from a brain aneurysm. Below is the notice from the Post-Gazette obituary.

HICKS MATTHEW R.
Of Mt. Lebanon, PA, died unexpectedly on May 17, 2009. He was the loving son of Robert and Marilyn Hicks; a great brother to Brianne (Zach) Lowe, Justin Hicks and the best uncle to Bison Lowe; his grandmothers, Mary J. Hicks and Annella Trusz will miss him immensely and all his aunts and uncles have sorrow in their hearts.

Clinical Faculty and Staff

Martha Mannix — Co-Director of Clinical Programs and Elder Law Clinic
Stella Smetanka — Health Law Clinic
Harry Gruener — Family Law Clinic
Dan Friedson — Community Economic Development Clinic
Emily Collins — Environmental Law Clinic
David Herring — Co-Director of Clinical Programs
Nadine Hamlett — Clinic Administrator
Jane Lehew — Clinic Administrator

Adjunct Clinical Faculty

Dixon Rich, Jr. — Low Income Taxpayer Clinic
Tom Arbogast — Low Income Taxpayer Clinic
Leo Hitt — Low Income Taxpayer Clinic
Edward Van Stevenson — NLSA Practicum
Stephen Pincus — Unemployment Compensation Practicum
John Stember — Unemployment Compensation Practicum
Robert Brenner — SPLAS Practicum/Lawyering III

Donating to the Clinics

If you would like to support the on-going work of the clinics, you can “earmark” your annual giving to the law school by indicating on the giving form that you would like your donation to support the Legal Clinics. You may also write in a donation to support the Legal Clinics. You may also write in a particular Clinic in the online giving form at http://www.giveto.pitt.edu/giving/give.php

Pro Bono Survey - We Need Your Response!

We are asking for your help in completing a survey relating to pro bono activities. Even if you have not yet had the opportunity to engage in such work, we would appreciate you spending a few minutes completing the survey. The survey will be available until September 30th, but DON’T DELAY! It will take only a few minutes of your time and can be accessed by clicking here.

Clinical Matters