

Create Change

Levin Center Honors Public Service Award Winners, Inaugural Miles L. Rubin Award Established

The Levin Center honored two outstanding public interest attorneys on Monday, November 10, 2008.

Shannon Price Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, received our National Public Service Award for his historic advocacy as lead counsel for same-sex couples in *In re Marriage Cases*, which declared marriage a constitutional right for everyone in the state of California, regardless of sexual orientation.

Julia Wilson, JD '98, executive director of the Legal Aid Association of California and the Public Interest Clearinghouse, was named the inaugural Miles L. Rubin Public Interest Award winner for her efforts to improve low-income Californians' access to legal services.

The Alumni Public Service Award was renamed the Miles L. Rubin Public Interest Award this year, thanks to a gift from Rubín's children, Jon, Kim, Richard, and Todd.

Miles L. Rubín, BA '50, JD '52, chairman and founder of Miles Electric Vehicle, has a long history of supporting efforts in the



PHOTO: MISHA BURK

Julia R. Wilson, JD '98, Dean Larry Kramer, and Shannon Price Minter pose after the Fall Public Service Awards reception. Wilson received the inaugural Miles L. Rubin Public Interest Award and Minter received the National Public Service Award.

public interest—from his role integrating Reliance Manufacturing's factories in the Deep South in the 1950s to his work now developing electric vehicles that produce zero emissions. He has remained active in the law school, and together with his wife, Nancy, established the Miles and Nancy Rubín Stanford Loan Repayment Assistance Fund for law graduates entering public service. The program recently celebrated its 21st anniversary.

Dean Larry D. Kramer joined nearly 150 guests, including the Rubín family, faculty, alumni, staff and students, to honor the award recipients and pay a special tribute to Miles Rubín and his lifelong commitment to social justice. Speakers included Miles' classmates, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, BA '50, JD '52, and Victor Palmieri, BA '51, JD '54. ■

Executive Director's Note



"To all those who have hunger, give bread. To all of those who have bread, give the hunger for justice."
Native American Prayer

The Levin Center has enjoyed another fruitful semester, replete with public interest programs, a growing pro bono roster, and a host of new initiatives.

Our pro bono roster continues to grow and now includes rural legal services, low-income tax, and mediation pro bono projects. The ever-increasing level of student participation in our Pro Bono Program is highly encouraging and we are so grateful to the lawyers and organizations who continue to assist the Levin Center in our mission to create a broader ethics of service both at Stanford and in the broader legal community.

SLS's Public Interest Career Development Program has also expanded to include a series of new programs. On September 11, 2008, we co-sponsored a Criminal Justice Forum, featuring SLS Professors Robert Weisberg and Jeff Fisher, with the Stanford Criminal Justice Center.

On October 4, 2008, we hosted a Skadden Fellowship Reunion, which celebrated the work of SLS's Skadden Fellows over the past twenty years and invited all 46 SLS Skadden Fellow alumni to campus. In collaboration with the Shaking the Foundations Conference, the Skadden Fellows provided individualized counseling and mentoring to nearly 40 SLS students. In addition, the Skadden Fellows assisted the Levin Center in seeding the new SLS Connect website, a soon-to-be-launched social networking resource for the SLS community which includes practice area overviews to advise current students.

That same weekend, as a kick-off to the annual Shaking the Foundations conference, the Levin Center co-sponsored the first annual Bay Area Public Interest Career Fair with more than 20 employers representing many diverse fields.

The capstone of the semester came on November 10, 2008, when we hosted our Annual Public Service Awards Dinner, which is featured as this issue's cover story. More exciting programs are planned for next semester, as outlined in the News Briefs on this same page.

We eagerly look forward to working together in our mission to deepen and broaden the culture of service at Stanford Law School in the coming year.

Susan J. Feathers

News Briefs

Save the date! Trina Grillo Retreat February 20 and 21, 2009

On Friday, February 20, and Saturday, February 21, the Levin Center will host the 11th Annual Trina Grillo Retreat. The Grillo Retreat, co-sponsored by the Society of American Law Teachers and a consortium of West Coast law schools, honors the memory of Trina Grillo, a dedicated social activist and justice advocate who died in 1996.

This year's Retreat, entitled "Global Social Justice Lawyering: Across Boundaries and Disciplines," will promote an informative exchange among practitioners, students, and academics about a broad range of themes. Topics include the interrelationship of human rights, environmental degradation and international economic development, the emerging international disability rights movement, and the application of international human rights law to civil legal services. In addition to substantive panels, the Retreat will include a panel on pro bono and career opportunities in the realm of public international law, as well as a free training on Freeing Political Prisoners.

Please contact Susan Feathers at feathers@law.stanford.edu for more information. A registration website will be available soon.

SPILF Auction Set for March 7, 2009 Postgraduate Fellowship Applications Due February 2, 2009

The 16th Annual Stanford Public Interest Law Foundation (SPILF) Bid for Justice Auction will be held on March 7, 2009. Since its inception in 1993, SPILF's Annual "Bid for Justice" Auction has been an important part of its fundraising activities and a valued event for the law school community. Organized entirely by students, the Auction offers an exciting evening of competitive bidding. The affair includes a silent auction and a live auction emceed by Stanford law professors. Proceeds help support multiple programs, including the new Stanford Law School/SPILF Postgraduate Fellowship. The application deadline for the Fellowship is February 2, 2009. For more information, please see <http://spilf.stanford.edu/>

Fall Semester Events: A Select Photo Review



PHOTO: JESSICA PARK

Faculty, alumni, and staff pose at the end of the evening reception on October 4 celebrating a reunion of Stanford Law School's 46 Skadden Fellows. L to R (standing): Professor Michael Wald; Stephen Carpenter, JD '03; David Onek, JD '99; Richard Klawiter, JD '90; Juliette Steadman, JD '90; Marc Tafolla, JD '07; Michael Kaufman, JD '08; Karie Lew, JD '04; Brian Dimmick, JD '01; Keith Cunningham-Parmeter, JD '02; Shakti Belway, JD '05; Lauren Brady, JD '06; Brian Blalock, JD '07; Sharon Terman, JD '04; and Professor Miguel Mendez. (Front row): Executive Director Susan Feathers; Tracy Labin Rhodes, JD '94; Susan Wooley, JD '88; Corene Kendrick, JD '03; Professor Barbara Babcock; Leigh Goodmark, JD '94; Sabrina Adler, JD '08; and Deputy Director Anna Wang.

Miles (BA'50, JD'52) and Nancy Rubin met with a small group of Public Interest Fellows for lunch during their visit to campus for the November 10th Public Service Awards Dinner. The Rubins spoke with them about their career aspirations and learned more about these future participants of the Miles and Nancy Rubin Loan Repayment Assistance Program. L to R (standing): Megan Karsh, JD '09; Geoff King, JD '09; Alexa Van Brunt, JD '09; David Owens, JD '09; and Ling Lew, JD'09. (Front row): Rachel Zwillinger, JD '09; Joe Gorman, JD '09; Miles Rubin, BA '50, JD '52; Nancy Rubin; and Sarah O'Farrell, JD '09.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CA BAR FOUNDATION

Five Stanford Law School students, all of whom are serving as Public Interest Fellows, were awarded generous scholarships of \$5,000-\$7,500 by the California Bar Foundation (CBF) in September. L to R: CBF Board President Scott Wylie, Jessica Oats, JD '09, Rachel Zwillinger, JD '09, Yara Lomeli-Loibl, JD '09, Alexa Van Brunt, JD '09, Eunice Cho, JD '09, and Vivian Kral, Foundation Board member and Scholarship Committee Chair.

Alumni Spotlight:

Nonprofit Executive Leads National Advocacy on Disability Rights

Roll up your sleeves if you're going to shadow Andy Imparato, JD '90, as he goes about his day as President and CEO of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Founded in 1995, the AAPD is a national non-profit, non-partisan membership organization of people with disabilities, their family members, and supporters.

Imparato's work involves a wide range of duties that rarely fall into the same pattern. For example, one week he appeared on CSPAN for a half-hour nationally aired show, gave a keynote speech to 400 people about technology to help people with disabilities function at a higher level, participated in intense meetings on the Hill with Republican staffers on a civil rights bill, met with higher education advocates to work out disagreements, talked to a grassroots disability leader who thought AAPD was not consulting with its constituency enough, and then handled some internal management duties within his office.

Imparato enjoys the fact that his job is unpredictable and that no two days look alike. He explains, "If you look at my resume, I was never in any job more than 3 years. Most jobs were for 2 years and part of that is that I would get bored. I have bipolar disorder and easily get bored or antsy when I'm in one place for a while. I've stayed here 9 years, as it changes every day. Every week is different and the job itself has changed a lot, so there really isn't a typical day."

Imparato's path to leading the largest cross-disability membership organization in the U.S. is unique. Prior to joining AAPD, Imparato was general counsel and director of policy for the National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency advising the President and the Congress on public policy issues affecting people with disabilities. Imparato has also worked as a special

assistant to Commissioner Paul Steven Miller at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; as Counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy, chaired by Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa; and as a Skadden fellow/staff attorney at the Disability Law Center in Boston.

Yet Imparato knew early on that he was more suited to working on policy than litigation or administrative advocacy. "My biggest frustration with traditional lawyers is that they approach problems with a limited tool kit so they try to make problems fit their toolkit instead of



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDY IMPARATO

expanding the toolkit to come up with the most effective, efficient, and sustainable way to deal with the problem."

After graduating from Stanford Law School, Imparato received a Skadden Fellowship to provide advocacy for low-income disabled children in Supplemental Security Income disability cases and Medicaid appeals. His two years at the Disability Law Center in Boston working on disability rights was prompted by personal circumstances, as his wife was pursuing her Ph.D. in Boston so Imparato spent his last year of law school in Boston. While there, he did an externship at Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and a summer internship in Cambridge at Somerville Legal Services (now part of Greater Boston Legal Services) in between law school and a judicial clerkship. Somerville Legal Services put him in disability benefits,

as Imparato expressed an interest in representing clients and since he hadn't taken the Bar yet, he was only able to appear in federal SSI hearings. During his internship, Imparato learned about the *Zebley v. Sullivan* Supreme Court decision that made it easier for children to apply for disability benefits. He then applied for a Skadden Fellowship to implement the decision in Massachusetts and the best lawyer working on the issue was at the Disability Law Center.

Imparato's Skadden Fellowship work led to an interest in health policy and Medicaid issues. He led a statewide coalition on that issue during the second year of the fellowship, and then went to D.C. and did policy work, as his health background was attractive to Senator Harkin. Shortly after starting his Skadden Fellowship, Imparato had an experience that shaped the course of his career. The Skadden Fellowship program brings all of the fellows together three times. When he went to the first retreat at the beginning of his fellowship, a Skadden Fellow who was finishing the second year said, "Never let your law degree prevent you from helping someone." Imparato took that to heart.

He says, "A lot of lawyers get to the point in their career where they say, 'I'm a lawyer. I didn't go to law school to do this,' which might be licking envelopes or spending two hours on the phone with someone who is crying or mad at you. You need to understand that a law degree, in some ways, doesn't matter. If you're doing public interest work, you're trying to help constituencies get in touch with their own power. Generally, that's not by pretending a law degree is what matters. My biggest pet peeve with public interest lawyers is that it tends to be all about the, not about the clients. you have to find ways to listen to your clients, put them in the driver's seat, (Continued on page 6)

Co-Curricular Programs Continue to Grow: New Mediation, Rural Legal Services, and International Opportunities Expand Options for Students

The Levin Center's co-curricular programs have undergone a dramatic expansion over the past year. The sixteen current Pro Bono Program projects, representing clients on a wide range of issues like guardianship law, housing, domestic violence, and Social Security Disability benefits, draw more than 200 students each year.

In an effort to further diversify the options and appeal to an even broader cross-section of students, the Levin Center is pleased to announce several new projects slated to begin this year.

Through our newly launched mediation pro bono project, Stanford Law School students will assist in mediating a broad range of disputes for the County of Santa Clara. Following intensive training, students will learn communication skills, foundation problem solving, and theories of conflict management, diversity and understanding biases, negotiation skills, and power balancing. Partnering with practicing attorneys, students will then co-mediate disputes on a wide range of disputes, including disturbing the peace, landlord/tenant, real estate, business, and small claim disputes.

On December 19th and 20th, approximately ten Stanford Law students will travel to Fresno, California, to volunteer for the Rural Education and Access to the Law (REAL) Project. The REAL Project is coordinated by Salena Copeland, JD '07, an Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellow at the Public Interest Clearinghouse.

The students expect to spend a day at a Fresno County courthouse at the Office of the Family Law Facilitator and the Self-Help Center. They will have the opportunity to help self-represented litigants fill out court forms and file them properly. On Saturday, they will work with pro bono attorneys from Fresno at a special Simple Wills and Power of

2008-2009 Co-Curricular Opportunities

Alternative Spring Break Trips:
Borders Trip
Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
Rural Education and Access to the Law (NEW)
Student Hurricane Network

Domestic Violence Pro Bono Project
Equality Pro Bono Project
Fresh Lifelines for Youth
Guardianship Pro Bono Project
Housing Pro Bono Project
Immigration Pro Bono Project
International Human Rights Pro Bono Project
Language Bank Pro Bono Project
Low Income Tax Preparation Aid Pro Bono Project (NEW)
Mediation Pro Bono Project (NEW)
Medical-Legal Collaborative Pro Bono Project
StreetLaw
Social Security Disability Project
Student Animal Legal Defense Fund
Volunteer Attorney Program

International Professional Development Projects:
Practicing Law in Emerging Markets: Opportunities to Promote Social Change - Brazil (NEW)
Civi Participation and Sustainable Development - El Salvador (NEW)

Attorney Clinic for Seniors, hosted at the offices of Central California Legal Services in Fresno. While in Fresno, the students plan to meet with a local judge and attorneys to discuss the special circumstances of practicing law amidst the rural communities outside of Fresno.

In the spring, low-income clients will receive assistance with their tax returns when our newest pro bono project is launched. Law students will work with Stanford University undergraduates, tax experts from the around the country, and the United Way of the Bay Area to prepare and file tax returns.

The Levin Center is also hosting an International Professional Development Project with Global Imprints, "Practicing Law in Emerging Markets: Opportunities to Promote Social Change," in San Paolo and Valencia, Brazil. Students will work with a host of NGOs to explore a broad

range of matters relating to sustainability, including issues of conservation, carbon offsetting, and eco-tourism, collective action as a means of promoting gender and race equality, and issues surrounding the ownership of land and economic empowerment.

Finally, the Levin Center, in partnership with the DC based New Voices, is organizing a delegation of students to study human rights in El Salvador. Students will engage in a week-long service project designed to promote civic participation and sustainable development in the rural communities of Morazan and Usulután. Students will have the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects including promoting alternative agricultural practices, facilitating micro-lending programs, and assisting El Salvadorean on obtaining land rights. ■

Pro Bono Effort Secures Visa for Immigrant Victim

On July 29, 2007, undocumented immigrant Jose Suarez was severely beaten during a robbery in San Mateo. The attack left him with a scarred lower lip, severe headaches, temporary vision loss, dizziness, earaches, and emotional distress. In years past, those like Suarez—non-citizen victims of crime—have been reluctant to report what had happened to them out of fear of being deported. Suarez, however, with the support of a new type of visa and the help of two SLS students, Katrina Eiland, JD '10, and Jacqueline Silva Sanchez, JD '10, faced his assailants in court without worrying about his immigration status.

This August, Suarez became the second person in the nation to be granted the

special visa, called the “U visa” under the regulations issued in 2007. Recognizing the vulnerability and hesitation of immigrant crime victims to contact and cooperate with law enforcement,

Suarez became the second person in the nation to be granted the “U visa.”

Congress created the U visa in 2000 to encourage undocumented immigrants to report crimes and to work with police to get criminals off the streets. To qualify

for a U visa, non-citizens must have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse resulting from certain enumerated crimes and must have been helpful, are being helpful, or are likely to be helpful with the investigation or prosecution of the crime.

Suarez did just this after he was attacked. His court testimony led to the felony assault conviction of a San Mateo man who served six months in county jail and was sentenced to three years' probation.

With the new visa, Suarez is able to remain and work legally in the United States for three years. After three years, he can apply to become a permanent resident. *(Continued on page 7)*

Social Justice Advocate Marshals Multiple Tools to Succeed

(Continued from page 4)

and make them stronger than they were before they interacted with you. Often, that's the exception rather than the rule.”

Imparato has embraced that philosophy and spent his time working to advance social justice on behalf of Americans with disabilities. The most memorable case or campaign of his career has been the issue he is working on now: the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act, which overturns four Supreme Court decisions that resulted in protections under ADA being narrowed in a manner that excludes people with epilepsy, diabetes, depression, cancer and other controllable medical conditions.

Imparato states, “It's memorable because we've been working on it for a very long time and it looks like it's going to happen in this Congress. We have the support of the employer community and spent lots and lots of hours working with them on this. It's been a good test of my ability to work in the middle and get compromise. I've worked with high

level Democrats and Republicans on it, explained the need for the bill on CSPAN, NPR, and in the Wall Street Journal, and worked on building and holding together a large and diverse grassroots coalition. We've been juggling business interests, the Hill, media, and trying to make it all keep moving forward. It's been a great learning experience and is very satisfying, as the vote in the House was a 402-17 vote, and that only happens once in a career. It's a better vote than the original ADA vote, as we had a ton of bipartisan support in the House and are now trying to replicate it in the Senate.”

For students who wish to follow in his footsteps, Imparato has some valuable advice. He suggests, “First, it helps to get to know yourself well in a professional context. Pay attention in your first few jobs to what are the tasks that you do that you find energizing and what tasks suck the energy out of you. Most of the tasks associated with law firm practice sucked energy from me and I didn't get any energy from it, either. Keep trying until you find things that energize you, so that

you come home with more energy than you had when you left for work in the morning.”

He adds, “Second, be entrepreneurial. If you have natural social entrepreneurial tendencies, you can create your own job. Most of the jobs I have had since law school, I created myself. Some people are good about coming up with reasons why they can't follow their own dreams. Don't listen to that part of you. Keep trying until you find the job you were put on the planet to do. I feel like I've done the exact same job in every job, as I'm a soldier in a movement. Job title doesn't matter that much to me.”

Imparato concludes, “I backed into disability rights work. I knew I wanted to use my law degree to represent people who didn't have easy access to lawyers.” Fortunately, fate set him upon the right path. ■

Editor's note: Imparato was interviewed in the summer of 2008, a few months before publication. The ADA Amendments Act passed the Senate and was signed into law by President Bush on September 25, 2008.

Client Granted Second “U Visa” in Nation

(Continued from Page 6)

The Department of Homeland Security recently issued four other U visas to undocumented immigrants in Chicago and New York City.

Immigrant rights advocates have hailed the U visa as an important step forward in protecting the basic civil liberties of undocumented immigrants.

“The U visa is of great significance to immigrant communities,” Mary Dutcher, Supervising Attorney in Immigration at Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA), said. “[It] is also an important tool for law enforcement as it develops immigrants’ confidence that law enforcement wants their help in solving crimes.”

This breakthrough in immigrant rights legislation has been a long time coming. Though Congress established the U visa in 2000, the law sat unused until this summer because of bureaucratic delays in writing the regulations that govern its application.

Two SLS students, Katrina Eiland, JD ’10, and Jacqueline Silva Sanchez, JD ’10, played a critical role in helping Suarez apply for and secure his U visa under the new regulations.

Silva Sanchez first met Suarez while volunteering at CLSEPA through the Stanford Law School Immigration Pro Bono Project. When conducting an intake interview with Suarez, she learned that he had been a victim of a violent crime the previous summer.

“I thought he might be a candidate for the U visa,” Silva Sanchez said.

Eiland then took up Suarez’s case as an intern with CLSEPA through an Equal Justice America grant. Eiland served as Suarez’s primary CLSEPA contact and handled all aspects of his case, from meeting with him initially to drafting and filing his U visa petition.

Eiland described working with CLSEPA as a “fantastic experience.” For her, it truly reinforced her belief in the significance of immigration work and of public interest law more generally.

“Without organizations like Community Legal Services,” Eiland said, “thousands of people would have no access to immigration remedies. People are entitled to immigration benefits, but they just don’t know about it or [know] where to go. They’re scared about how much it’s going to cost or don’t trust people.”

She continued, “Immigration law is an area where there are many shady practitioners. It’s important to have attorneys that know the law well and are competent, upright, and available free of charge for people who have issues.”

Perhaps mostly importantly, Eiland and Silva Sanchez’s experiences with Suarez highlight the importance of pro bono work.

“Organizations like Community Legal Services depend on volunteers like those provided by the pro bono program here,” Eiland said. “A volunteer can make such a difference.”

Susan Feathers, Executive Director of the Levin Center for Public Service and Public Interest Law, affirmed the transformative power of pro bono work. “Pro bono and service are at the core of the legal profession,” she said. “It has the capacity to not only make equal justice a reality, but also to transform the legal profession.”

And Suarez? Not only has his U visa allowed him to stay in the United States legally, but after Eiland and CLSEPA filed derivative petitions for his family, it has enabled his wife and children to do so as well. “I’ve no words to say how grateful I am,” he told the *San Jose Mercury News*, “to God and to people who have helped me.” ■

About *Create Change*

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