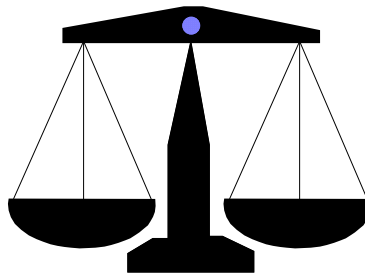


# Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

## STUDENT INFORMATION PACKET

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### **Office of Public Interest**

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American University Washington College of Law  
4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Suite 122  
Washington, DC 20016  
Phone: (202) 274-4099  
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# American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

## STUDENT PLEDGE AGREEMENT

Pursuant to WCL's long tradition of support for the legal profession's responsibility to work towards equal justice and human rights for all people, and to provide significant pro bono hours in that endeavor, I agree to volunteer a minimum of:

- 75 hours (J.D.): Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ Full-time \_\_\_\_\_ (please check one)
- 25 hours (LL.M.)

with a law-related non-profit, public interest law firm, and/or a community service organization serving disadvantaged or underrepresented populations during my time at WCL.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduation Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Today's Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred e-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

Please indicate any language proficiency or special skills:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any pro bono preferences:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative/Regulatory      | <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Law                   | <input type="checkbox"/> National Security          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AIDS/HIV+ Issues               | <input type="checkbox"/> Education Law               | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Tribal Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Dispute Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental               | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organizations   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Rights                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Law                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Injury            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts/Entertainment             | <input type="checkbox"/> First Amendment/Free Speech | <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty Law                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy/Debt                | <input type="checkbox"/> Firm Pro Bono               | <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners' Rights          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Rights              | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Control-Pro             | <input type="checkbox"/> Probate/Trusts & Estates   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Liberties                | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Control-Con             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pro-life                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Rights                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medical              | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Benefits            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Economic Dev.        | <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/Ethnic Justice      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Law                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate/Property       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal-Prosecution           | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Freedom          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal-Public Defender       | <input type="checkbox"/> International Development   | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunications         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death Penalty                  | <input type="checkbox"/> International Human Rights  | <input type="checkbox"/> Reproductive Rights        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability-Related             | <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Justice            | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee Rights             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Recovery              | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative/Policy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence              | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT Rights                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran's Issues           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Policy                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Libertarian/Conservative    | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Issues             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/Labor               | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____               |

Check here if you participated in IMBY

Which year(s) did you participate in IMBY? \_\_\_\_\_

Completed forms can be faxed to 202-274-4096, e-mailed to publicinterest@wcl.american.edu, or brought to the Office of Public Interest, Suite 122, in the Office of Career & Professional Development.

## American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

*"Our law school is uniquely dedicated to creating and sustaining an educational culture that emphasizes the power of the law as a tool to achieve social justice and basic human rights. Our faculty, our alumni, and our students fully recognize that a law degree confers not only special responsibilities to the community, the nation and the world, but also provides tremendous opportunities to bring about positive change for humankind. **The recognition of these responsibilities is found in our commitment to pro bono and public service. This commitment is an essential component of the educational mission of our law school.**"*

- Dean Claudio Grossman

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW INFORMATION

#### What is the Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program?

Washington College of Law was founded on the principle of advancing the causes of low-income and underrepresented people. The Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program furthers this goal by recognizing the voluntary, uncompensated work on behalf of low-income and underrepresented populations undertaken by WCL students while at the law school. The program is also designed to encourage students to continue carrying out pro bono service in their careers as attorneys after graduation, and is a great way to get experience in a field in which you may be interested.

Through the program, students pledge to complete a minimum of 75 hours of pro bono and community service projects at organizations working on behalf of low-income and underrepresented populations. At least 50 hours of the pro bono work completed must be with an organization engaged primarily in law-related or legal work. However, students may complete up to 25 of their 75 hours in non-legal community service work. This allows first year students to participate immediately.

LL.M. students who volunteer for the pledge must complete a minimum of 25 hours of law-related or legal work. Due to the special difficulty of non-U.S. LL.M.'s securing a traditional law-related pro bono placement, all 25 hours of their pledge may be completed in non-law related community service placements.

There are no negative consequences for students who do not meet their pledge.

## **American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

### **What type of work counts towards the Pro Bono Honors Pledge?**

**Community Service Placements:** Students fulfilling the community service portion of their pledge may volunteer with any nonprofit engaged in work on behalf of low-income or underrepresented people.

**Pro Bono Placements:** Students completing the pro bono portion of their pledge may volunteer with qualifying nonprofit organizations, government agencies or WCL Programs. A list of possible pro bono placements in the DC Metro Area is available on the resource table outside the Office of Public Interest (located in Suite 122, in the Office of Career and Professional Development) and on the web at <http://www.wcl.american.edu/publicinterest/probono.cfm>

In order to qualify as a pro bono placement, an organization must be engaged primarily in law-related work on behalf of low-income or underrepresented populations, and the work must be substantially legal (not administrative) in nature. The participant may not receive remuneration of any kind, including: academic credit or financial compensation, grants or stipends. The work must be performed under the supervision of an attorney and may be local, national or international in scope.

**Identifying Placements:** The list of suggested pro bono placements is a “living document.” If you are familiar with an organization that appears to meet the pro bono honors pledge criteria, but is not on the list, please convey the information to the Public Interest Coordinator for review. If the organization meets the criteria, it will be added to the suggested placement list. Students may work for on-campus organizations or faculty programs doing pro bono work as long as the placement fulfills all the criteria described above. Qualifying WCL activities include:

- Genocide Teaching Project
- Marshall-Brennan Teaching Hours
- Students United
- Election Protection
- LINK
- Clinical Program Translators
- Alternative Winter or Spring Break Trip Participation
- Volunteering with the WCRO
- Volunteering with CHRHL
- Volunteering with the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project

## American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

### **IN SHORT: What Counts Toward the Pledge?**

- ✓ **For community service placements (up to 25 hours), volunteer work with a nonprofit on behalf of a low-income or underrepresented population.**
- ✓ **For pro bono placements, (50 or more hours), work with a nonprofit organization, government agency or WCL program, faculty or staff member engaged primarily in law-related work on behalf of low-income or underrepresented populations that is not for pay or academic credit.**

### **What happens when I meet the Pledge?**

Students who complete the pledge prior to the end of their final year at WCL will receive special notation in the graduation bulletin. They will also receive a certificate of achievement signed by the Dean indicating the different level of honors based on the total number of hours completed: Honors (75-124 hours), Outstanding Service Honors (125-174 hours) and Exceptional Service Honors (175+ hours). Additionally, students will be recognized at the Cicchino Public Service Awards Dinner each spring.

There are no negative consequences for students who do not meet their pledge.

### **I'm interested, what do I need to do now?**

**Fill Out the Pledge Agreement Form:** To participate in the Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program, students must turn in a Student Pledge Agreement form to the Office of Public Interest. If you need help getting started, the Public Interest Coordinator is available to meet with students to discuss their interests and available options.

**Selecting a Placement:** Several resources are available to help you select a pro bono placement:

- ✓ The Office of Public Interest maintains a list of suggested pro bono placements with brief descriptions of the organization and its work, <http://www.wcl.american.edu/publicinterest/probono.cfm>;
- ✓ There is also a binder of student evaluations of various placements;
- ✓ The Public Interest Coordinator and the Pro Bono Dean's Fellow are available to meet with you on an individual basis to talk about your interests and suggest placements.

## **American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

After you have identified possible placements, call or email the contact person at each placement to find out how to get started. Some may wish to meet you for an interview or interview you by phone. Others have well-established student pro bono programs with regularly scheduled orientations or trainings

**Reporting Pledge Hours:** Students are responsible for tracking and reporting their hours each semester. For community service placements, students must complete the Community Service Time Verification form, including the signature of a supervisor.

For pro bono placements, the student's attorney supervisor must sign the Student Time Log attesting to the hours completed and work undertaken. Students must also complete an evaluation of their placement experience upon completion of the placement. Copies of student evaluations are kept in a binder and are available for review by other students.

The supervisor must also complete a short evaluation of the student at the completion of the placement. Supervisor evaluations are kept confidential, but will be shared with the individual student if the supervisor so desires.

**Completing the Pledge:** As soon as the date for the Cicchino Public Service Awards Dinner is scheduled, graduating students will be notified of the final deadline for turning in time logs. All required forms and documents related to the student's participation in the program must be received by the Office of Public Interest prior to that day in order for the student to remain eligible for recognition at graduation. Students who turn in required documentation late will still receive an honors certificate from the law school for their participation, but due to time considerations, cannot be recognized at the awards or graduation ceremonies or in the graduation bulletin.

### **What Kind of Work Will I be Doing?**

Pro Bono work will give you exposure to fields that interest you and allow you to practice legal skills such as client interviews, accompanying clients to court, fact investigation, legal research and drafting documents. Also, many organizations need students with foreign language proficiency to interpret or translate, so the Program is an excellent way to improve your language skills.

## **American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

### **Benefits of Participation in the Pledge**

- Gain experience in areas of interest
- Expand your professional network by working with practitioners, faculty and other students
- Experience what you learn in the classroom by assisting clients, conducting outreach and participating in the research and writing of legal documents
- Provide assistance to members of the community with the greatest need and the least resources
- Build upon your existing leadership skills and ability to work as a team member
- Learn about career opportunities in a variety of legal topic areas
- Build a resume or enhance existing credentials
- Improve/refresh foreign language skills
- Get out of WCL and into the larger local, national and international community around you
- Feel good about applying your knowledge and skills to help others
- Get recognition from WCL, your peers and supervisors
- Be inspired by your clients!

## **American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

### **IN SHORT: How do I get started?**

- 1. Come by the Office of Public Interest in Suite 122 (inside the Office of Career Services) and fill out a Student Pledge Agreement. Or print and complete the form from the web at <http://www.wcl.american.edu/publicinterest/probono.cfm>.**
- 2. Review a list of suggested pro bono placements and/or meet with the Public Interest Coordinator to discuss your interests and options. (There is also a binder of student evaluations from previous placements to help students choose a placement).**
- 3. Contact selected placements to find out how to get started.**
- 4. Track Pledge hours on the Student Time Log (or on the Community Service Time Verification sheet for non-legal community service).**
- 5. Obtain appropriate supervisor signatures and turn in the Student Time Log to the Office of Public Interest by the last day of classes each semester. Community service placements require a supervisor signature. Pro bono placements require a supervising attorney signature.**
- 6. Complete your student evaluation at the end of each placement and ask your supervisor to complete his or her evaluation as well.**
- 7. Once you complete the pledge, you will be recognized at the Cicchino Public Service Awards Dinner and graduation.**

**Questions?** For more information, contact Jarrod L. Shirk, Public Interest Coordinator, at [publicinterest@wcl.american.edu](mailto:publicinterest@wcl.american.edu) or call 202-274-4099.

# American University Washington College of Law Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program

## STUDENT TIME LOG

(Attach additional pages if necessary, return to Suite 122 or fax to 202-274-4096)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Week:	Hours:

Week:	Hours:

**Total Hours** \_\_\_\_\_

This is an accurate and complete log of my hours:

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

The number of hours reported on this time log is an accurate account of the time worked and the tasks performed:

Supervising Attorney's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Attorney's Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

*(Pro Bono hours should be reported no later than the last day of class each semester. Graduating students should complete all 75 hours by the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> week of their final semester.)*

**American University Washington College of Law  
Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

**SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION**

To be completed by supervisor and faxed to American University,  
Washington College of Law, Office of Public Interest at 202-274-4096.  
This will be kept confidential

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please rate the quality of work that the student performed.  
 Excellent       Good       Fair       Unsatisfactory

Did the student complete assigned tasks in a timely and professional manner?  
 Yes  No    Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you supervise another student in the Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program from the Washington College of Law (WCL)?  
 Yes  No    Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any upcoming projects in your organization for which WCL students can volunteer for?  
 Yes  No    Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What feedback, if any, have you received from clients and co-workers regarding the volunteer?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to share this information with the student?  
 Yes  No

**Supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thanks for your participation!!!!**

**American University Washington College of Law  
Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

**STUDENT EVALUATION:**

(Your evaluation will not be shared with your supervisor, but instead, will be accessible for other interested students.)

Please remove my name before making my evaluation accessible to other students: \_\_\_\_\_

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Evaluation Questions**

How would you rate your placement in terms of supervision (i.e., guidance, feedback and evaluation)?

Excellent       Good       Satisfactory       Poor

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you assess the training and orientation provided by the placement?

Excellent       Good       Satisfactory       Poor

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate the kinds of assignments given to you?

Excellent       Good       Satisfactory       Poor

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

How much client interaction did you have?

Constant       Substantial       Frequent       Little

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the issues you worked on at this placement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the type of work (i.e., intake, research, writing, outreach and education, etc):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**American University Washington College of Law  
Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

What was the size of your placement office or organization?

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How would you describe the (working and social) atmosphere at your placement?

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Would you recommend this placement to another student? Why or why not?

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Do you feel your commitment to doing *pro bono* work after law school was strengthened by this experience?

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What have been the primary benefits to your participation in the Pro Bono Honors Pledge?

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Please provide any feedback or additional comments regarding the Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program at WCL:

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Would you be willing to share your experience with other students?

No

Yes, have students  e-mail or  call me.

Completed forms can be faxed to 202-274-4096, e-mailed to [publicinterest@wcl.american.edu](mailto:publicinterest@wcl.american.edu), or brought to the Office of Public Interest, in Suite 122, in the Office of Career & Professional Development.

**American University Washington College of Law  
Pro Bono Honors Pledge Program**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE  
TIME VERIFICATION**

**(To be used for non-legal volunteer hours in place of Student Time Log)**

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Contact Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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Project Information

Total Hours Volunteered: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Tasks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**The student whose name appears above has completed the reported number of volunteer hours:**

**Supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Completed forms can be faxed to 202-274-4096, e-mailed to [publicinterest@wcl.american.edu](mailto:publicinterest@wcl.american.edu), or brought to the Office of Public Interest, in Suite 122, in the Office of Career & Professional Development.