Child Advocacy Externship Program – Fall 2016

Consider applying to the Child Advocacy Seminar & Externship. The goal of this program is to train law students on child welfare issues so they are prepared to advocate on behalf of children in Colorado’s courts. An information session on this program will be held on March 2 at 12pm in room 270. The deadline to apply is March 22.

There are many different ways to become involved in this program:

A) Enroll only in the 2-credit in class Introduction to Child Advocacy seminar for fall, which is taught by Betsy Fordyce, a child welfare lawyer with experience both at the National Association for the Counsel of Children and the Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center. This semester focuses on the laws surrounding advocacy for children in dependency & neglect, delinquency, civil protection order, and education cases. In the spring, students could then enroll for a 2-credit Advanced Child Advocacy seminar to expand on the fall semester with topics such as the overlap of child welfare and family law, immigration advocacy, appellate advocacy for children, trial practice in the child welfare context, ethical issues in the representation of children, and a variety of other hot topic child advocacy issues.

OR

B) Enroll in the 2-credit in class Child Advocacy seminar AND a corresponding externship/field placement that is focused on child welfare. Most placements can be one semester long OR last both fall and spring semesters. Please note: students can do a combination of one semester placements in order to have exposure in child welfare fieldwork for a full year. For example, you could work at a county attorney’s office below for fall, and then another group for spring. You do not have to apply for spring placements, however, at this point. You can enroll in the externship fieldwork for 2 to 6 credits – it will depend on your interests and your supervisor’s needs. Rising 2Ls and 3Ls are eligible to apply, unless otherwise specified. Placement options include:

1. **Adams County Attorney’s Office-Human Services Division located in Denver**: The office engages in child protection law, prosecutes Dependency and Neglect cases, initiates and enforces child support orders, and initiates adult protection guardianships and conservatorships. 2Ls welcome to apply and students who have completed 60 credits by fall 2016 can be admitted to practice under the Student Practice Act. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.

2. **Colorado Legal Advocates PC**: This is a private entity that receives contracts to engage in guardian ad litem work. The work is across the metro Denver region. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.

3. **Colorado Office of the Child’s Representative**: OCR is a state agency charged with improving best interest representation for Colorado's children. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.

4. **Denver City Attorney’s Office-Human Services Legal Section**: The office handles prosecution of child neglect and abuse; termination of parental rights and adoption; establishment and collection of child support obligations; and juvenile delinquency, among other issues. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.

5. **National Association of Counsel for Children**: The NACC works to ensure that children are provided with well resourced, high quality legal counsel when their welfare is at stake and to enhance the quality of legal services affecting children by establishing standards of practice and providing training, education, and technical assistance. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.

6. **Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center**, 2 different program options available; indicate in a cover letter whether you are interested in one or both units.
   i. **Dependency and Neglect**: This unit serves as guardian ad litem for children who have been abused and/or neglected. Only students who have completed 60 credits by fall 2016 can apply for this program and then be admitted to practice under the Student Practice Act. Due to the nature of the cases, students must commit to 2 semesters to work in this unit.
   ii. **Domestic Violence**: This unit advocates for children in civil protection order hearings; in each of these cases, children have experienced domestic violence in their home. 2Ls and 3Ls welcome to apply. Students who have completed 60 credits by fall 2016 can be admitted to practice under the Student Practice Act. This can be a 1 or 2 semester placement.
Visit the Legal Externship Supervising Attorney database to find out more about each of these placements. All of them with the exception of Colorado Legal Advocates PC also fulfill Denver Law’s Public Service Requirement.

**Students only interested in the in-class option should waitlist for the seminar during fall registration and email lsteele@law.du.edu to indicate interest in the class only. We will then remove you from the waitlist.**

**Students interested in the externship component in addition to the class should send an application packet to Alexi Freeman at afreeman@law.du.edu by *March 22* and also waitlist for the in-class seminar.** Applications for the fieldwork should include a resume, writing sample, list of 2 references, and cover letter. Students should write a separate cover letter for each organization they are interested in working with. **Supervisors may interview you and either way, will notify you of their decisions by April 12 for the upcoming semester(s).** You must submit all required paperwork by the Legal Externship Program in order to have your externship be eligible for academic credit. Once the Legal Externship Program has received your required paperwork, you will be enrolled in the fieldwork and removed from the waitlist for the seminar.

This is a great opportunity to learn about working on behalf of children and get to know the range of options available. Contact Alexi Freeman at afreeman@law.du.edu with any questions.