Civil Rights Clinic receives CLEA Award for work on prisoner’s rights cases

On Friday, April 15, 2016, the Clinical Legal Education Association (CLEA) Board of Directors announced that the University of Denver Sturm College of Law Civil Rights Clinic is one of two recipients of the 2016 CLEA Award for Excellence in a Public Interest Case or Project. The award will be presented at the AALS luncheon at the Clinical Conference on Monday, May 2nd, 2016.

*University of Denver Sturm College of Law, Civil Rights Clinic, Decoteau v. Raemisch*

This class action lawsuit, litigated by student attorneys and professors with the University of Denver Sturm College of Law Civil Rights Clinic, as well as attorneys at the Civil Rights Education and Enforcement Center (CREEC), resulted in the provision of outdoor exercise for prisoners at Colorado State Penitentiary. For over twenty years, the close custody prisoners who occupy CSP – the vast majority of whom were held in conditions of solitary confinement – were only permitted to exercise in a cell similar to their living cell, with a narrow slit of a window that opened directly to the outdoors. As a result, these prisoners went months, years, or even decades without feeling the rain or sun. As a result of this case, which arose from an earlier individual lawsuit also litigated by the Civil Rights Clinic and CREEC (Anderson v. Colorado), the Colorado Department of Corrections will construct three outdoor exercise yards at CSP. The outcome in Decoteau has meaningfully contributed to the advancement of civil rights, because a group of students, their clinic professors, and a small civil rights nonprofit – along with the incarcerated men who served as named plaintiffs and constituted members of the class - took on the Colorado Department of Corrections, ultimately obtaining for some 500 prisoners the ability to exercise outdoors.

Congratulations to Denver Law students, supervising faculty and co-counsel who worked on the Decoteau case (class action re: outdoor exercise) as well as the Anderson case (individual outdoor exercise):

*Decoteau v. Raemisch*

**Supervising Faculty**  
Asst. Professor Lindsey Webb, Clinical Fellow Lauren Fontana, Visiting Professor Lisa Graybill

**Co-Counsel**  
CREEC Co-Executive Director Amy Robertson (Lauren Fontana joined the staff of CREEC after her fellowship) [www.creeclaw.org](http://www.creeclaw.org)
**Student Attorneys**

2015-2016: Casey Shea, Michael LaGarde, Kevin Benninger
2014-2015: Jenny Vultaggio, Kevin Benninger
2013-2014: Ryan Burchell, Rachel Martin, Amelia Blyth
2012-2013: Kim Smith, Carrie Mohr, Stuart Rubenstein, Tracy Ostlie

**Anderson v. Colorado**

**Supervising Faculty**
Professor Laura Rovner and Clinical Fellow Brittany Glidden

**Co-Counsel**
CREEC Co-Executive Director Amy Robertson [www.creeclaw.org](http://www.creeclaw.org)

**Student Attorneys**

2011-2012: Maha Kamal, Katherine Hartigan, Brenden Desmond, Lauren Carboni, Lindsey Dusti
2010-2011: Courtney Longtin, Lee Knox, Matthew Court, Keenan Jones
2009-2010: Patrick Curnalia, Ashley Wheeland
2008-2009: Rachel Proctor, Katie Stevens