

**“COMMITMENT TO SERVICE” AWARD PROGRAM  
FOR PRO BONO LEGAL WORK**

**POLICY & REQUIREMENTS**

*"I don't know what your destiny will be, but the one thing I know; the only ones among you who will really be happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve..."*

-Albert Schweitzer, doctor, philosopher and Nobel Prize winner

**I. Purpose**

- a. Albert Schweitzer's quote speaks to one of society's greatest human values: to serve and empower those who are unable to do so for themselves. This sentiment has been echoed by many of the great humanitarians of our time.
- b. In an effort to acknowledge and encourage students to form a habit of providing pro bono legal services, Chapman University School of Law, in partnership with the Public Interest Law Foundation ("PILF") and Externship Program, has created the "Commitment to Service" award to recognize the public interest work of Chapman law students.
- c. The importance of using our law skills to provide for the underprivileged is articulated in ABA Rule 6.1, which states, "every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay. A lawyer should aspire to render at least (50) hours of pro bono publico legal services per year."

**II. Criteria for Award**

- a. Students must complete 50 hours of pro bono legal service.
- b. Work may be completed at non-profit organizations or governmental entities.
  - i. Government entities include the district attorney, public defender, city attorney, and other federal, state or local agencies. They do not include the judiciary. In this regard the award conforms to PILF's policies regarding summer grant eligibility.
- c. Students may complete hours at multiple locations.
- d. The award will be given annually during the Spring Semester. However hours will "roll over" to successive years until 50 hours are completed.
- e. Students will not receive hours for existing for-credit externships, clinic courses, or paid internships. But students may elect to complete extra hours at an appropriate externship/internship, with supervisor approval, to earn hours for the award.
- f. Summer pro bono legal hours will be credited for toward the award. Hours completed in the summer will be counted toward the following year's award.

- g. Students are eligible to receive an award for every 50 hours completed according to these guidelines. For example, a student who completes 50 hours of work at a government agency and 50 hours at a non-profit organization would earn both awards described in Part V below.
- h. The award will be administered by Chapman University School of Law, through the Externship Director, and with support from the Chapman chapter of the Public Interest Law Foundation.

### III. Paperwork Required

- a. Students must complete and sign a timesheet verifying that they have worked 50 hours.
- b. Multiple timesheets may be used.
- c. The timesheet must be signed by the supervisor(s) of their work.
- d. The timesheet(s) should be sent to the Externship Director.
- e. Alternately, hours worked may be verified in an email sent from the supervisor(s) directly to the externship director.
- f. Additionally, students and supervisor may be asked to complete an evaluation/survey.

### IV. Pre-Approved Organizations

- a. Students should work with an organization from the pre-approved externship list of government organizations and non-profit entities, compiled and updated by the Externship Director.
- b. Judicial internships are not recognized as pro bono work. In this regard the award conforms to PILF's policies regarding summer grant eligibility.
- c. Students wishing to work with another organization or pro bono legal opportunity should seek pre-approval from Externship Director. If pre-approval is not sought, there is no guarantee that the hours a student works will be counted toward the award.

### V. Types of Awards

- a. Students who complete the majority of the 50 hours of pro bono legal work with an appropriate non-profit organization will be recognized for their work in *Public Interest*.
- b. Students who complete the majority of the 50 hours of pro bono legal work with an appropriate governmental entity will be recognized for their work in *Government Service*.

### VI. Presentation of Award

- a. The Law School Dean or his designee will present the award to the student at the Graduation Banquet or other appropriate function.