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Chicago Bar Foundation Report



CBF Fellowships & Scholarships Make it Possible for Dedicated Advocates to Pursue and Remain in Legal Aid Careers

Helping Those Who Help Others

By **Ryanne Easley**
Director of Grants

Enabling dedicated lawyers to pursue and remain in careers in legal aid is one of the core elements of the CBF's larger strategy to ensure equal access to justice in our community. Today's law school graduates have an average of more than \$100,000 in law school debt, while the average starting salary at pro bono and legal aid organizations in Chicago is only \$49,000. The CBF has created a number of scholarship and fellowship programs designed to help make it possible for committed attorneys to carry out this important work amid what can be significant financial challenges and, in doing so, help ensure that the most vulnerable people in our community have access to the protections of our justice system.

On October 29th, the CBF presented the 2012 Sun-Times Public Interest Law Fellowships to five attorneys who have dedicated their careers to legal aid, and the 2012 Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Public Interest Law Scholarship to a first year law



Five dedicated legal aid attorneys were awarded the 2012 CBF Sun-Times Fellowship. From left, Bob Glaves (CBF Executive Director), Sarah Baum, Adela Carlin, Natalie Spears (CBF President), Amy Sample, Jill Roberts, Catherine Alin, David Mann (Chair of the CBF Sun-Times Fellowship Selection Committee)

student who is committed to pursuing a career in public interest law. In addition to these programs, the CBF awards the Kimball R. Anderson and Karen Gatsis Anderson Public Interest Law Fellowship, as well as the Moses Scholarship.

CBF Sun-Times Public Interest Law Fellowship

Through a generous \$2 million cy pres award from a case involving the Chicago Sun-Times, the CBF created the Sun-Times Fellowship to provide significant loan repayment assistance to legal aid and

public interest attorneys. The CBF awards five annual fellowships of up to \$50,000 per fellowship to attorneys who demonstrate a commitment to public interest work, academic achievement in law school, and outstanding character and integrity.

The CBF's 2012 class of Sun-Times Fellows all are providing critical services to low-income and disadvantaged members of our community. These exceptional attorneys have made enormous personal financial sacrifices to do this important work, and this Fellowship will help alleviate some of these financial concerns and make

For more information about the CBF's fellowship and scholarship programs, visit www.chicagobarfoundation.org or contact Ryanne Easley, CBF Director of Grants, at reasley@chicagobar.org or 312/554-1247



Jarrett Adams (left) was presented with the 2012 Marovitz Public Interest Law Scholarship by Andrew Marovitz, Chair of the Scholarship Selection Committee.

it more manageable for them to continue their careers in legal aid.

Catherine Alin has been a staff attorney at **LAF** for eight years, representing clients in pre-decree and post-decree divorce cases through LAF's Children and Family Practice Group and Family Law Project. Most of Alin's cases involve clients who are attempting to dissolve long-term marriages and need assistance securing a fair distribution of marital assets and income, and a number are survivors of domestic violence. Alin's critical legal advice and representation help her clients and their

children achieve personal safety and financial stability.

Sarah Baum has served as a staff attorney at **LAF** since she graduated from law school in 2008. Currently in the Immigrants and Workers' Rights Practice Group, Baum brings claims in federal and state court on behalf of individuals who have been subjected to discrimination or retaliation in the workplace or whose employers have violated laws governing the workplace. Particularly in this difficult economy, Baum is providing critical services to help her clients maintain employment and

obtain the vital benefits and compensation to which they are entitled.

Adela Carlin began her legal career at **LAF** in 2000. She currently serves as the Director of LAF's innovative Community Engagement Unit (CEU), which was built upon a model Carlin had employed in her casework. The CEU is charged with mobilizing outreach and working with community organizations throughout LAF's service area to ensure that the organization is accessible to people in need across Cook County. Under Carlin's leadership, the CEU has enlisted hundreds of community partners in the cause of equal access to justice and touched the lives of thousands of people living in poverty.

Jill Roberts joined **Cabrini Green Legal Aid (CGLA)** as a staff attorney in 2010. She currently holds a unique position with dual roles in CGLA's family law and criminal records programs. Her work includes managing a high-volume caseload of divorce, order of protection, custody, visitation, parentage, expungement, sealing, and clemency cases. Roberts is the only Spanish speaking attorney on staff, and her language abilities have enabled CGLA to serve a broader population of clients.

Amy Sample has worked in **Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation's (LOLLAF)** East St. Louis, Illinois office since she graduated from law school in 2006. Sample began her career at LOLLAF as a domestic violence attorney, where she daily represented victims of domestic abuse who were seeking orders of protection against their abusers. In 2011, Sample transitioned into the role of Development

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Associate, providing essential development services that help LOLLAF build and sustain support to effectively advocate for its clients.

CBF Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Public Interest Law Scholarship

The CBF Marovitz Scholarship is awarded annually to an incoming first-year law student who is deeply committed to public interest work and plans to attend one of the

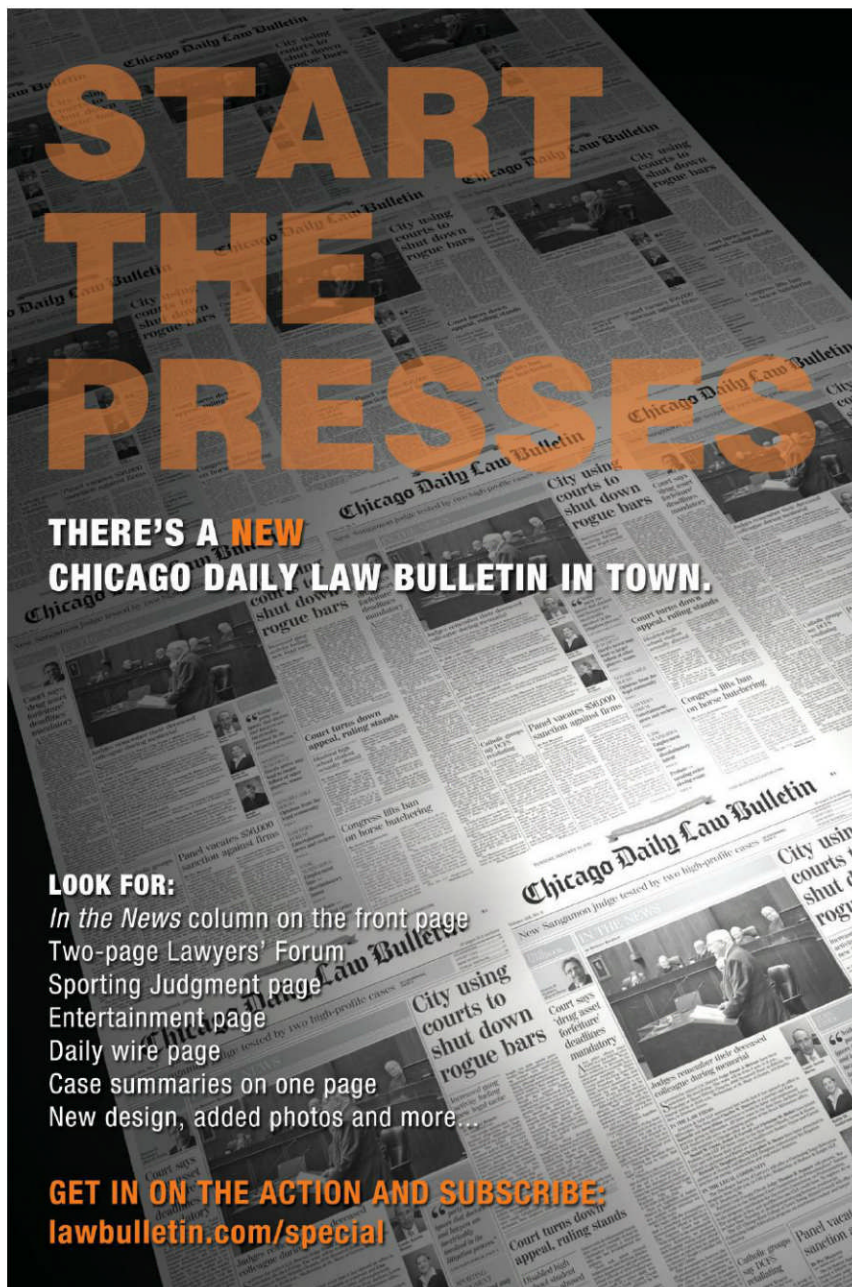
nine Illinois law schools. The Scholarship provides \$40,000 in tuition assistance to help ease the financial burden of law school and enable the recipient to pursue a career in public interest law. This Scholarship was made possible through a generous planned gift from the late Judge Abraham Lincoln Marovitz.

Jarrett Adams, a first-year law student at Loyola University Chicago School of

Law, was awarded the 2012 CBF Marovitz Scholarship. Adams has an acute appreciation of the critical role public interest attorneys play in ensuring access to justice. When he was 17 years old, Adams was wrongfully convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to 28 years in a maximum security prison. After serving nearly ten years of his sentence and filing multiple appeals, Adams was exonerated with the assistance of the Wisconsin Innocence Project at the University of Wisconsin Law School. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ultimately vacated his conviction and, upon remand, the State of Wisconsin dismissed all charges.

Adams used the injustice he endured as fuel to achieve his goal of attending law school. Upon his release, Adams paid his way through junior college and then enrolled at Roosevelt University, where he graduated with highest honors. While in school, Adams began working full-time as an investigator with the Federal Defender Program for the Northern District of Illinois, where he continues to assist in the representation of indigent defendants facing felony charges. Adams plans to dedicate his legal career to advocating for indigent defendants and working to prevent wrongful convictions.

"Jarrett's story is remarkable," said Andrew Marovitz, Chair of the Selection Committee. "The Selection Committee was impressed and inspired by Jarrett's intelligence, resolve, compassion, and unwavering commitment to public service, particularly in light of the enormous adversities he has faced and overcome." ■



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