

New fellowship to help fill legal services void

Earlier this spring, Georgia Law announced the establishment of the Cousins Public Interest Fellowship program.

This initiative, which seeks to foster the creation of projects that provide civil legal services to indigent Georgians, will offer experienced practitioners the opportunity to focus on these needs, with support from the fellowship and the law school. Additionally, this program will expand clinical experiences for students at Georgia Law.

“We are thrilled to be able to offer such a unique opportunity for legal professionals to initiate a program that will fill a void in the legal services currently provided in our state,” Georgia Law Associate Professor and fellowship coordinator Alexander W. Scherr said. “The fellowship has the potential to affect many future generations of Georgians.”

The first Cousins Public Interest Fellow will begin his or her work this August and will operate under the auspices of the fellowship for two years. A second fellow will be selected in the spring/summer of 2007.

Each fellow must identify a project and a host organization. Scherr said a “project” is a carefully designed initiative that will meet the civil legal needs of indigent Georgians and could include new programs or the expansion and refinement of existing services.

“Some examples are: representation in court on specific legal issues, legal help for personal or small business planning, improved access to the courts and targeted legal education. The possibilities are really only limited

by one’s imagination,” Scherr said.

“Another important feature of the fellowship is that law students will assist with the service delivery of the project under the direction of the selected fellow.”

A host organization is defined as the entity at which the fellow will be based when working with the community. “Host organizations may be either nonprofit or for-profit organizations, but they must be willing to provide office space and resources during the latter part of the fellowship and must be willing to work with the fellow to assure the long-term viability of the project,” Scherr said.

Fellowship applicants must be experienced attorneys, who have practiced law for at least three years.

“The applicant’s prior practice need not relate to the proposed service,” Scherr said. “However, applicants must articulate how their experience will contribute to the success and durability of the project.”

Each fellow will work for two years. Initially, the fellow will work at the School of Law, focusing on preparation and project development. In addition, fellows will teach and work with students in the law school’s clinical programs. Fellows will be expected to start service delivery under the project, working out of the host organization, within one year after beginning the fellowship.

For more information, please contact Alexander Scherr at scherr@uga.edu or (706) 542-6510.

Georgia Law moves up in U.S. News rankings

The School of Law moved up two places in *U.S. News & World Report’s* “America’s Best Graduate Schools” rankings that are released each spring.

Currently ranked 34th in the nation, Georgia Law shares this position with the law schools at Brigham Young University and the University of California at Davis.

Georgia Law Dean Rebecca H. White said that while she takes all rankings with a

grain of salt, she was pleased with the move. “We don’t need *U.S. News & World Report* to tell us that the University of Georgia has one of the country’s best law schools. However, it is nice to be recognized by an independent source as such.”

In terms of public law schools, Georgia Law is ranked among the top 13 schools in the nation and is one of the top four in the Southeast.

Externship program becomes one of UGA’s largest

The International Externship Program has continued its phenomenal growth. The initiative, which began in 2001 with two students working abroad in one country, grew to 11 students working in eight countries last year. This summer, approximately 20 Georgia Law students will work for four to eight weeks in 10 countries on four continents, making this the largest international program, in terms of geographic reach, on the UGA campus.

María Eugenia Giménez, Rusk Center associate director who oversees the program, is pleased with the growth. “Students report their participation among the most personally and professionally rewarding of their academic careers. Additionally, the host institutions continue to hail the results of the program, and several have allowed for permanent future summer positions in their offices.”

With the increased popularity of the program, Giménez said she is working to have more of the “permanent summer positions” established in private firms, government agencies and non-governmental organizations throughout the globe. “We have been successful in making arrangements with 20 organizations in nearly as many countries. This summer, our students will be working in countries such as Brazil, Guyana, Belgium, Hungary, China, India and New Zealand.”

To help offset travel and living costs, each student receives between \$1,500-\$3,000, with the law firm Kilpatrick Stockton providing \$3,000 to three different students working in the Attorney General’s Office in Guyana.