

# CENTER FOR ETHICS & PUBLIC SERVICE NEWS

University of Miami School of Law

Volume 8, Issue 1

Fall 2008

## A NOTE FROM DIRECTOR JAN JACOBOWITZ



Director Jan Jacobowitz

It is both a pleasure and an honor to direct the Ethics and Professional Responsibility Program. The students in this program are our future. They apply to this program not only with the short term goal of becoming lawyers, but more importantly with the long term goal of doing so imbued with a sense of ethics and the importance of community service. The Program is a win-win in that the students provide ethics training tailored to the lawyers with whom they visit. The students have to imagine the reality of the practice in order to create a realistic hypothetical problem—in preparing to teach, the students learn. When the students teach they quite often make a difference in both the understanding and protocols of the venues that they visit. Of course, ultimately, the students receive law school course credit and the lawyers receive CLE credit, but in the process the academic world has visited with the practical world and in the moment of synthesis that occurs, no one is thinking about those credits.

## ETHICS TRAINING

### THE ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAM

By Director Jan Jacobowitz

This semester was a busy and rewarding one. The Ethics and Professional Responsibility Program (“EAPR”) expanded its programming, hosted a national CLE audio program and provided the ethics presentation at the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association’s (“NTCA”) Annual Conference at which 160 lawyers from all over the country interacted with our students, **Lewis B. Freeman Fellow Janelle Herrera**, Intern **Bryan Harrison**, and Intern **Paul Juster**. Thanks to **Jeff Mandel** from the Center for Competitive Management for broadcasting the training by **Bankruptcy Bar Association Fellow Rahim West** and Intern **William Wenke**, and to **Sandi Redman** and **Karlen Reid** at the NTCA for featuring our students in the conference materials and on the NTCA website.

Another first was taking our luncheon panel, Spirituality and the Law “on the road” and presenting it to members of the Bar at the Dade County Courthouse. Thanks to **Judge Jennifer Bailey** for both her logistical assistance and participation on the panel with **Professor Charlton Copeland**, **Professor William Blatt**, and **Harley Tropin, Esq.** The panel was moderated by **Neal R. Sonnett Fellow Ingrid Garcia Ruiz** and **Robert Ades Fellow Kevin Harris**. The Public Defender’s Office has requested that we bring the discussion to their office next semester.

Our more traditional ethics trainings were also terrific this semester. Ingrid Garcia Ruiz and Intern **Paul Masdeu** presented “Ethics in the context of Immigration Law” for Catholic Charities. Thanks to **Miriam Mezadieu** for guidance and support. **Ray H. Pearson Fellow Aaron Blynn** and Intern **Lisa Atkins** combined ethics with landlord tenant issues in their visit to Legal Services of Greater Miami. Directing Attorney **Nancy M. Sutton** paved the way for their presentation. EAPR also returned to Greenberg Traurig with a presentation on the “Ethics of Practicing Law in a High-Tech World”. **Greenberg Traurig Fellow David Snyder** and Interns **Rekha Rangachari** and **David Rosenbaum** presented to Greenberg Trauring lawyers listening all over the country. Thanks to **Jeff Gilbert** who always makes it a terrific event and to **Phil Cohen** for his participation from the New York office. **Phil Rothschild**, law clerk to **United States District Judge James I. Cohn**, coordinated with **Robert Ades Fellow Karen Shafir** and Intern **William Wenke** in our presentation to the Federal Court’s law clerks that provided ethical guidance based upon both the Judicial Canons and the Code for Judicial Employees.

## CENTER AWARDS

INNOVATIVE SERVICE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST AWARD, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW, 2007

WILLIAM PINCUS AWARD, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS, 2006-2007

FATHER DRINAN AWARD, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS, 2006-2007

C. CLYDE ATKINS AWARD, GREATER MIAMI ACLU, 2005

CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AWARD, MIAMI DADE COUNTY CHILDREN’S TRUST, 2005

GARY BELLOW SCHOLAR AWARD, ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS, 2004-2005

ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST *ARETE* AWARD, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION, 2001

SEVENTH ANNUAL PROFESSIONALISM AWARD, THE FLORIDA BAR, 2000

FACULTY PROFESSIONALISM AWARD, FLORIDA SUPREME COURT, 1999

GAMBRELL PROFESSIONALISM AWARD, AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, 1998

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**ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Our Center Roundtables stimulated discussion on a diversity of issues this semester. Aaron Blynn and Intern William Nicholson kicked off the series with a discussion of Ethics and Professionalism. Thanks to Advisory Board Member United States Bankruptcy Judge Laurel Isicoff, Florida Bar Counsel William Mulligan, Timothy Ravich, President of the Dade County Bar Association, and D.Culver “Skip” Smith III of Fox, Rothschild for enlightening students as to not only how to practice within the confines of the ethics rules, but how to do



*Ethics and Professionalism Panel (l to r) D. Culver “Skip” Smith III, William Mulligan, Timothy Ravich, Judge Laurel Isicoff, Intern William Nicholson, Fellow Aaron Blynn and Director Jan Jacobowitz*

so with civility and professionalism. The series continued with our annual and always popular Women and the Law discussion. Moderated by Karen Shafrir and Intern Lisa Atkin, this year’s panelists offered terrific insights and advice as to how to balance personal and professional aspirations. Thanks to Judge Leslie Rothenberg, Professor Zanita Fenton, criminal defense attorney Jane Moscowitz and Jacqueline Becerra of Greenberg Traurig. We moved from women’s issues to one of this fall’s hottest topics: Election Law and Politics. Janelle Herrera and Interns Jennifer Malaer and Paul Juster explored election reform with Representative Dan Gelber and criminal defense lawyer Ben Kuehne. Finally, EAPR coordinated with the Environmental Law Society (ELS) to explore ethical considerations in environmental law. Intern Bryan Harrison and ELS member Scott Roberts moderated a lively discussion with John Barkett of Shook, Hardy & Bacon, Julie Hill from the Audubon Society and Thomas Watts-FitzGerald, Deputy Director of the Environmental Crimes Division at the United States Attorney’s Office.

Intern Paul Masdeu reflects that, “This program takes legal ethics out of the theoretical and into the concrete as you interact with attorneys and the real-world ethical issues that they encounter.”

**FROM THE CLIENT’S PERSPECTIVE:**

The Center for Ethics and Public Service has been front and “center” with Greenberg Traurig, PA. (“GT”) since 2003, when the Center and GT started developing together substantive, compelling ethics presentations for GT’s lawyers. During the last six years, GT has sponsored fellowships for law students working at the Center, and together they have created remarkable and relevant ethics seminars to present to GT’s lawyers throughout its 30 offices. Generally, more than 150 GT lawyers throughout the country attend each seminar.

The Center’s Ethics and Professional Responsibility Program challenges the students to research, develop and write the teaching hypotheticals, which are filled with cutting-edge ethics questions and dilemmas. GT lawyers interact with the Professor Tony Alfieri, Jan Jacobowitz and the fellows and interns, engaging in provoking, enlightening 90-minute learning sessions. Seminar topics have included: “Ethical Considerations for the Multijurisdictional Practice of Law,” “Ethical Pitfalls Encountered With Negotiations, Mediations and Settlements,” “Same Client – Multiple Representations and Scope of Representations,” “Ethics and Client Communications – Engagements, Advance Waivers, Conflicts and Consents,” and “Practicing Law in a High Tech World – Outsourcing, Screening and E-Discovery.”

GT’s lawyers truly value the Center’s unique approaches to studying and researching current and evolving ethics issues that affect each GT lawyer’s daily practice.



*Jeff Gilbert, Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig*

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**PUBLIC SERVICE**

**HEALTH AND ELDER LAW CLINIC- TRAINING FUTURE LAWYERS**

By Florida Bar Foundation Fellow Aleksandra Cuprys

The Health and Elder Law Clinic focuses on providing quality legal services to indigent clients while offering practical legal experience to students. The Clinic's students interview potential clients at intake sites, analyze the clients' cases and present the cases to a supervising attorney. Each student handles his or her own caseload.

Upon graduation, the Clinic's students work in varied areas of the law. Despite what path our students decide to embark upon, we have found that they continue their dedication to public service and their support of the Clinic.

**Social Security**

The Health and Elder Law Clinic has successfully represented ten clients in various stages of Supplemental Security Income Claims with the Social Security Administration resulting in over \$130,000 in back pay for these clients, in addition to their ongoing SSI monthly installments of \$637.00. Currently, the Clinic has 53 open Social Security cases. The Clinic represents both adults and minors in their social security claims. Intern **Paige Van Ness** represented a 13 year-old client in front of an Administrative Law Judge. The child was born H.I.V. positive and suffers from a number of serious mental and physical illnesses. Her young life has been filled with traumatic life experiences. In representing her client, **Ms. Van Ness** wrote a comprehensive legal memorandum, prepared her witnesses and presented the case to the Administrative Law Judge.

**Immigration**

The Clinic has successfully represented six clients in naturalization proceedings before a Department of Homeland Security Agent and assisted one client in attaining Lawful Permanent Residence in the United States.

**Family Court/Guardianship/Probate**

**Florida Bar Foundation Fellows Ashi Mehrotra, Larisa Hernandez, and Joy Purcell** drafted and executed last minute permanency planning documents for a dying mother. One of the documents executed was a pre-need guardianship, designating whom the mother wanted to care for her two minor children upon her death. Just one month later, the client passed away. The Clinic has successfully probated the guardianship for the children ensuring a loving continuity of care for them. In the course of the representation, **Larisa Hernandez** has been able to hone her litigations skills with multiple appearances in both family and probate court.

**Appeals**

This semester, **Fellows Jessica Melia and Daniel Whyte** have had the opportunity to work on a case that was argued pro bono before the First District Court of Appeal on November 25th by Clinic Alumna, **Michelle Holmes Johnson** now at **White & Case**. She has been assisted in preparing her argument by Clinic Alumna **Aracely Alicea-Clark**, also at **White & Case**, who originally handled the trial of the matter before the Administrative Law Judge along with Alumna **Sarah O'Dea**, now at **Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge**. **Ms. O'Dea** wrote and filed a pro bono amicus brief on behalf of the National Immigration Law Center, Florida Immigrant Coalition, Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Florida CHAIN and Florida Legal Services.



Aleksandra Cuprys

**CEPS Alumni Spotlight on Former Street Lawyer Camila Tobon**



Camila Tobon

Camila is an associate with the law firm of Shook, Hardy and Bacon, having been with the firm since she graduated from the University of Miami School of Law in May 2005. Camila's practice focuses on environmental, toxic tort, and commercial law. While in law school, she was a member of the Center for Ethics and Public Service's STREET LAW Program, teaching critical thinking and legal issues to students at the

middle school, high school, and undergraduate levels. In 2005, she was awarded the Fellowship Prize for her work as the David P. Catsman Fellow. Camila has continued her commitment to children and education working as a guardian ad litem and Justice Teaching volunteer. Camila is also the co-chair of the Competitions Subcommittee of the Florida Bar's Law Related Education Committee. The subcommittee is responsible for drafting the mock trial and moot court problems for the Florida Law Related Education Association's High School Mock Trial and Moot Court Competitions, which will be held in the Spring of 2009.

## PUBLIC SERVICE

### PERSPECTIVES FROM THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH LAW CLINIC INTERNS

By Visiting Instructor Carolina Guacci

**E**arly in 2005, I began my legal career as a defense attorney with the Legal Aid Society’s Juvenile Rights Division in NYC. Armed with a solid public interest education, I thought I was ready to take part in jurisprudential healing. I had no idea how difficult it would be to practice “emergency room” law. Every young person who walks into court, whether for a dependency case or a delinquency case, is most likely experiencing some type of crisis and is usually regarded (by society) as not having much worth. Everything beyond the young person’s control had placed him or her in this difficult situation. Zealous advocacy became clear and real. With an average of 50-80 open cases at any time and 2-4 trials a week, I was continuously asked, “What keeps you doing this work? What inspires you? What drives you to keep going?” The answer remains constant: the clients, their families, their integrity, their freedom, their right to have a voice, their need for someone who believes them, and believes in them.

In August of this year, I was offered a position to teach at the Children & Youth Law Clinic as a Visiting Instructor. I was given the opportunity to share my passion for working with disenfranchised youth with a wonderful group of smart, passionate, law students. Working at the clinic has exceeded all of my expectations. The CYLC interns have a strong sense of justice. They work hard for their clients, and have become impassioned advocates. They step up to the challenge and have, in turn, inspired me.



Carolina Guacci (seated center) and students in the Children & Youth Law Clinic

**Here are some of their insights:**

**Amanda M. Graham:**

“In the beginning of the semester, I really had no idea what to expect from working in the clinic. In the first few weeks, all of us were thrown into this world of acronyms, agencies, and administrative proceedings we had little to no knowledge about while simultaneously attempting to counsel our clients on things we did not understand. New problems continued to arise throughout the weeks ahead and the stress never subsided. There were many moments when we did not understand why we had decided to participate in a program that added so much stress to our

already crazy law school lives. But for those moments when you were able to achieve something for your client or have the feeling that you know you avoided a crisis for your client, you realize that all of the stressful hours had a purpose-and there’s no better law school experience than that.

**Jennifer C. Pratt-Garces:**

“When I can sense the sign of relief from my clients as a result of my work, that is a rewarding experience that inspires me to continue working zealously for my clients. My clients go through so much that I could never imagine and their sense of hope inspires me to remain positive through it all. Ultimately, my clients inspire me to continue fighting for the welfare and justice of all people.”

**Tim Richardson:**

“My clients in the Children and Youth Law Clinic inspire me because they have been deprived of something I take for granted; however, they do not allow that deprivation to prohibit success. At times, I take my “family” for granted. My involvement with the client has inspired me to be an intimate guidance counselor and zealous advocate for children without a familial connection.”

**Gisela Alouan Ades:**

“My greatest accomplishment as an intern at the Children and Youth Law Clinic was giving my client, a refugee from the Congo, a voice during his juvenile court hearings. What inspired me the most was to see how my other client, who had suffered sexual abuse, neglect, and psychological abandonment at a young age, could have such a positive attitude towards life.”

**Brett Goldblatt:**

“For a lot of these children and young adults in foster care, the CYLC represents the only channel for their voices to be heard. Frequently, they feel as though they are trapped in a system where they are rendered helpless. However, from my personal experience, these children appear empowered just knowing that someone is there to further their interests. I believe that fostering this sense of empowerment through thoughtful and effective representation is one of the greatest services we can provide these children as it will enable them to become better self-advocates later on in life.”

**Christopher M. Branscum:**

“Newt Gingrich said, ‘Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did.’ I have been continuously inspired by the ability of **Professors Kele Williams and Bernie Perlmutter**, and **Instructor Carolina Guacci** to keep doing this job when at times it seems like we lose more than we win. They get up everyday and go to bat for these kids and it inspires us to do the same.”

## ETHICS & PUBLIC SERVICE

### ETHICS IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

By: Sara Neugroschel, LPPE Arts & Sciences Fellow

The students in the Joint Program on Law, Public Policy and Ethics (“LPPE”) hosted a multitude of colloquia, educational panels and guest speakers.

Under the direction of Arts & Sciences Fellow **Christina Cicconi**, the Program continues its work on a documentary about the criminal justice system, primarily the burden the Miami-Dade County Public Defender’s Office faces with its case overload, recent significant budget cuts, and efforts to conflict out of certain non-capital felony cases. The documentary team, comprised of Undergraduate Interns **Erin Anapol**, **Christina Ayo**, **Carla Kerstens**, **Adriana Kiszynski**, **Brittany McFadden**, **Michelle Mills**, and Intern **Patrick Sullivan**, has been hard at work reviewing film footage, writing a script and working towards our spring release. In discussing the documentary process, team leader **Christina Cicconi** noted, “It has been a challenging, yet rewarding semester working towards completion. I am confident we will be proud of the final product.”

The semester began with an Election Forum on Voting Rights moderated by Fellow **Sara Neugroschel** and Phi Alpha Delta **President Allison Janowitz**. Panelists featured were **William Bradwell**, Miami-Dade Department of Elections; **Professor Frances Hill**; **Director Joanne Koren** of the Academic Achievement Program; and **Professor Martha Mahoney**. In keeping with the election theme, Fellow **Kevin McCarthy** and Intern **Scott Roberts** led **Professor Terri A. Hood’s** undergraduate Contemporary Environmental issues class in a discussion on the environmental policies of the 2008 U.S. Presidential candidates, focusing on issues such as nuclear energy, global warming and offshore drilling. In addition, Undergraduate Interns **Marlow Svatek** and **Michelle Mills** assisted Intern **Scott Roberts** to research and distribute literature about the Global Food Crisis which is impacted in part by decisions about monetary policies, trade, global scarcity of resources, and low wages.



At the Panel Discussion on Torture: (Front l to r) Professors **Edgardo Rotman**, **Elizabeth Iglesias**, & **Jessica Carvalho Morris**; (Back l to r) **Aziza Naa-Kaa Botchway**, with LPPE Interns **Christina Zuccaro**, **Lolita Sosa**, **Michelle Mills**, **Marlow Svatek**, **Cristina Ayo** and **Tumpale Ngwira**

conference titled, “Migrants and Migrations: Immigration and Notion of Citizenship in a Changing World.” The conference assembled academics, lawyers, advocates, policy makers, representatives of immigrant communities, and politicians to discuss immigration in the United States.

Intern **Christina Zuccaro** and Undergraduate Intern **Marlow Svatek**, liaised with the UM Model United Nations and the

Center for Victims of Torture in co-sponsoring a “Discussion on Torture” featuring **Professors Edgardo Rotman**; **Elizabeth M. Iglesias**; and **Jessica Carvalho Morris**. **Christina** and **Marlow** were aided by the invaluable assistance of Undergraduate Interns **Lolita Sosa**, **Michelle Mills**, **Tumpale Ngwira** and **Nicole Tukdarian**. The Election Day eve discussion was aptly moderated by undergraduate interns **Cristina Ayo** and **Marlow Svatek**. The panelists shared the vision that America’s actions must reflect our character and values as a nation.

LPPE continued our tradition of bringing in alumni to speak to students about the practice of law. Intern **Helena Livitz** moderated a “Conversation with **Alan Mishael**, J.D. ‘81”. Intern **Thomas Hart** assisted in planning this discussion which was co-sponsored by H.O.P.E., OutLAW and the Center for Ethics and Public Service’s Children & Youth Law Clinic. Students packed the room to hear Mr. Mishael discuss the Key West Circuit Court’s pronouncement that the gay adoption ban was unconstitutional. The Program then partnered with the College of Arts and Sciences and Phi Alpha Delta (PAD) to host a discussion with **Alvin F. Lindsay**, the Former President of the Law Alumni Association and a partner at Hogan & Hartson who discussed how he incorporates pro bono into his career. Intern **Claire Zovko** moderated a discussion on “Ethics and Litigation” with UM alumnus **Stuart Z. Grossman**. The program was co-sponsored by the University of Miami School of Business, Office of Undergraduate Research and Student Support, and the Litigation Skills Program.



After speaking on incorporating pro bono service into one’s legal career, Hogan & Hartson’s **Alvin Lindsay**, Class of ‘91 (4th from left) poses with **Kevin McCarthy**, **Aziza Naa-Kaa Botchway**, **Allison Janowitz**, **Al Lindsay**, **Ashton Freeman** & **Edlyn Hernandez**.

In the spirit of building bridges with the community, Undergraduate Interns **Misbah Farid**, **Carla Kerstens**, **Michelle Mills** and **Ashley Hutt** worked with Intern **Claire Zovko** and the Dade County Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section Pro Bono Committee to arrange a pro bono networking event in Coconut Grove.

Undergraduate Interns **Misbah Farid**, **Tumpale Ngwira**, **Ashley Hutt** and **Joanne Baxter**, worked with Fellow **Erin Powell** to host “Know Your Rights” presentations for students in **Dean Nanette Vega’s** class as well as for students in the Intensive English Program. The Know Your Rights group discussed topics such as how to deal with police encounters, fake identification, and various internet and privacy issues from Facebook to blogging. Intern **Edlyn Hernandez** worked diligently with Interns **Marco Jovovich** and **Zena Melissa Sabell** to plan a program that will help underserved high school students further their academic careers. As the undergraduate intern coordinator, I planned activities such as court observations and jail tours. It was a joy working with the undergraduate interns and our **Director Aziza Naa-Kaa Botchway**.

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

**COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CLINIC  
PARTNERS WITH HISTORIC BLACK CHURCHES**

By John B. Alfieri Fellow Joy Harrison, Greenberg Traurig Fellow Sharif Hannan and Community Fellow David Tropin



*Community Fellow David Tropin speaking to the congregation at Greater Saint Paul church in the West Grove*

**The West Grove Project:**

In its eighth year of development, the Community Economic Development and Design Clinic (“CEDAD”) is proud to announce a rebirth. As CEDAD continues to provide economic development aid, litigation support and self-help advocacy training in the communities of Overtown and Liberty City, the clinic has recommitted itself to Coconut Grove’s West Grove community. In the fall of 2008,

the interns, fellows, and professors of CEDAD launched the Historic Black Church Project to help Miami’s distressed West Grove community. The Project is a joint venture with the University’s School of Architecture and Florida Legal Services which aims to provide multi-disciplinary resources in education, law, and social services to under-served West Grove residents by establishing congregation-based partnerships through the West Grove’s sixteen-church Ministerial Alliance.

CEDAD’s West Grove team, including **John B. Alfieri Fellow Joy Harrison, John Hart Ely Fellow Christopher Jallo, Community Fellow David Tropin**, and interns **Katie Ainsworth, Marya Farah, Shannon Greco, Netali Peles**, and **Kimberly Salamone**, has partnered with Coconut Grove Collaborative Inc., Greater St. Paul’s AME Church, and St. James Baptist Church. The West Grove team presented numerous rights education workshops at Greater St. Paul’s, including Voting Rights and Landlord-Tenant Rights. The Voting Rights seminar presented key election issues, the platforms of the presidential candidates as well as general voter information. The Landlord-Tenant workshop addressed the rights of property owners and lessees. The West Grove team also hosted a resume workshop for Greater St. Paul’s youth and CEDAD members are available for resume consultation every Sunday after services. The West Grove group’s last workshop of the semester followed up on the success of the first “youth Sunday,” presenting information on financing higher education through federal aid, scholarships, and grants.

In addition to educational seminars, the West Grove team partnered with the Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr. Bar Association, formerly known as the Black Lawyers Association, to create a referral network. Through this community based referral network, members of CEDAD’s partner churches who would ordinarily not be able to afford an attorney are given legal representation through the Wilkie Ferguson Bar Association. Each Sunday CEDAD students meet with church members. Those members needing counsel can fill out a form with the assistance of a student. Said Intern Netali Peles, “I have gotten to know a lot of the people in the community who seem appreciative that we are present at their church every Sunday. I look forward to seeing them every week.”



*At the Landlord & Tenants rights seminar at Greater St. Pauls, (l to r) CEDAD Interns Shannon Greco, Katie Ainsworth, Kim Salamone, Netali Peles, and Marya Farah*

**The Overtown/Liberty City partnership with Florida Legal Services:**

Under the guidance of Adjunct Clinical Professors **Charles Elsesser** and **Purvi Shah** of Florida Legal Services (FLS), the CEDAD FLS group, which includes **Greenberg Traurig Fellow Sharif Hannan**, and interns **Daniel Glass, Kelly Childers, Babak Faro, Sara Narkes**, and **Rebecca Sarinsky**, continued to work on a range of projects relating to affordable housing in Miami. Though the group primarily focused on stopping the forces of gentrification in years past, the current economic downturn makes the protection of low-income residents from foreclosure-induced evictions its highest priority.

The FLS group continues to work with Overtown based Power U Center for Social Change (“Power U”) and Liberty City based Miami Workers Center (“MWC”)—two grassroots organizations committed to empowering local residents by focusing on the preservation and creation of more affordable housing and jobs in the community. By adopting the community lawyering model, the FLS group is committed to working with grassroots organizations in order to assess the community’s needs and help the community realize its ultimate goals.

The students have been researching solutions, on both an individual and community level, to fight the growing problem of slumlords on the brink of foreclosure who allow their tenants to live in unsafe and uninhabitable conditions. Tenants often find themselves treading a fine line between having grossly substandard affordable housing or having no housing at all. The FLS projects include: legal research regarding Miami’s code enforcement and ways to compel landlords to repair severe deterioration in their buildings; intake for tenants united to withhold rent in protest of their buildings uninhabitable conditions; legal research on possible policy initiatives that would prevent slum conditions without the brunt of enforcement impacting only tenants; and the collection of data on how evictions move through the Miami-Dade court system. As a secondary goal, the students have also been researching progressive landlord-tenant law from across the country in order to encourage more tenant-friendly policies in the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County.

The CEDAD projects on both fronts are impacting many in unique and powerful ways. CEDAD’s interns aspire to become a known presence in Miami-Dade County’s communities of need, and continue to educate and support those around them.

## ETHICS & PUBLIC SERVICE

### MIAMI STREET LAW: CHALLENGING TEENS TOWARDS ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

By Director Karen Throckmorton

**“ALL WHO HAVE MEDITATED ON THE ART OF GOVERNING MANKIND HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT THE FATE OF EMPIRES DEPENDS ON THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH.” — ARISTOTLE**

This credo inspires twenty-one Street Lawyers to reach out from their busy lives and teach law each week to teens in our community at seven different schools. Law students are challenged to research areas of law thoroughly, conquer anxieties about public speaking, control a room of 20-40 students, and elicit critical thinking. The teenagers benefitting from the STREET LAW program are challenged to learn applicable statutory and case law as well as public speaking through debates, mock trials and oral arguments. At each site, the curriculum is tailored to the needs of the students.

This fall we have expanded to three new schools. The first is W.I.N.G.S. (Women in Need of Greater Strength) for Life, a residential commitment program for 20 pregnant or postpartum females and their babies. **David Catsman Fellow Veena Gursahani** and Interns **Tamara Kosic** and **Sara Mantin** have created a curriculum addressing issues in criminal and family law such as child custody, domestic violence, expungement, and cohabitation without marriage. As Veena explains, “The vision for these lessons is to not only give the young women at W.I.N.G.S. important information about their rights, but to empower them with knowledge, so that they may make informed decisions.”

The second new program is at Coral Gables High School where **Peter R. Palermo Fellow Shabnam Khalili** and Interns **Arye Emert** and **Greg Sconzo** covered a range of topics dealing with the election, criminal law, and constitutional issues. While exhorting the high school students to embrace legal concepts and analysis through discussions and mock trials, the law students found the high school students more than ready to meet these challenges. Arye relates that, “The excitement when we enter the classroom is invigorating. During the class, students fight to speak over each other. The divergent views from the class are remarkable.”



*STREET LAW Interns Greg Sconzo and Arye Emert kneeling in front of the law class at Coral Gables High School*

The third is Palmetto High School where **Kozyak, Tropin & Throckmorton Fellow Shawna Young** states that she and Interns **Eric Reisman** and **Raquel Rodriguez-Albizu** have “tailored the legal teachings towards the students’ preparation for the nationwide ‘We the People’ competition and the Florida High School Mock Trial competition.” In this complex curriculum, the students are studying Constitutional Law and Tort Law as well as writing speeches on issues of federalism and judicial interpretation.

We are in our 12th year of partnership at the Palmer Trinity School where **Palmer Trinity Fellow William Yu** and Interns **Chris Phillips** and **Viki Quintana** taught election law and coached students in trial techniques. In November, the Palmer Trinity students “tried” a criminal negligence case at the law school. Viki states, “During the trial, as I watched our students present their cases and engage in a difficult and adversarial process, I realized how special this experience was.”



*Palmer Trinity Senior David Omachonu pleads for a lesser sentence for his client in a criminal mock trial held at the Law school*

In STREET LAW, we take pride in the curriculum we’ve created for the alternative Bay Point School, a correctional facility for teenaged boys. This semester, **William M. Hoevler Fellow Matt Tannenbaum** and Interns **Marissa Gart**, **Jesse Soffer** and **Carrie Hanson** taught issues in civics, Constitutional Law and Family Law such as the fourth amendment, the juvenile death penalty, and paternal rights. Their semester culminated in a criminal mock trial with scant circumstantial evidence. According to Matt, “The mock trial was designed to show the students the importance of evidence and witness testimony. Many students at Bay Point think a court date equals automatic guilt.” Through this complex trial experience, they are led to rethink their views of due process.

Fine work was done by Interns **Joe Neely** and **Jenna Mennona** in assisting in teaching the freshman seminar, “Law, Public Policy & Ethics” which focuses on contemporary legal issues and explores the breadth of the Bill of Rights.

The impact of STREET LAW is best summarized by the **Hunton & Williams Fellow Nicholas Lewis** who teaches weekly at Miami Senior High with Interns **Tara Mathena** and **Stefanie Phillips**:

The legal knowledge provided to our students at each high school becomes a conduit through which their creative energy affects society. A lesson on government becomes a campaign to contact Senators. Passion for immigration reform transforms into a cross school petition for legislative relief. Knowledge of Constitutional rights and amendments prompts the students to action. We give students the tools they need to enhance their lives, and the lives of others.



*William Hoevler Fellow Matt Tannenbaum and Intern Carrie Hanson coaching students at the Bay Point school before their mock trial.*

**University of Miami  
School of Law  
Center for Ethics  
& Public Service**

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Founded in 1996, the School of Law's Center for Ethics and Public Service is an interdisciplinary clinic devoted to the values of ethical judgment, professional responsibility, and public service in law and society. The Center provides training in professional ethics to the Law School and the University as well as to the Florida business, civic, education, and legal communities. The Center also provides legal representation and economic development training to low-income communities. The Center observes three guiding principles: interdisciplinary collaboration, public-private partnership, and student mentoring and leadership training. Our goal is to educate law students to serve their communities as citizen lawyers.

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*Lawyers in Leadership Award recipient and Director of the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center Cheryl Little (center) surrounded by the moderators of her interview, Interns Victoria Quintana and Chris Phillips*



*After a panel discussion on election law, (l to r) Jan Jacobowitz, Intern Paul Juster, Representative Dan Gelber, Ben Kuebne, Intern Jennifer Malae, and Lewis B. Freeman Fellow Janelle Herrera*



*Street Lawyer Tara Mabena being cross examined by students at the Bay Point School mock trial*



*Criminal defense Attorney Neal Sonnett speaking at the Fall Reception*



*UM President Donna Shalala, Regina A. Bruce-Konuah & her daughter Aziza Naa-Kaa Botchuxy at the Immigration Conference where the president gave opening remarks.*



*Ethics in Environmental Law panelists (l to r) John Barkett of Shook, Hardy & Bacon; Julie Hill of the Audubon Society, and Federal Prosecutor Thomas Watts-Fitzgerald.*



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