

Name of Your Organization: Blue Mountain Action Council Pro Bono Legal Aid Program

Proposed Hours of Work/Days of Week: 10 hours (M-F, 2 hours per day, flexible depending on fellow's academic commitments)

Supervisor's Name and Title: Katharine Nyden, Pro Bono Program Coordinator

Mission of Organization: The BMAC Pro Bono Program serves individuals at or below 200% of the federal poverty level in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties by providing civil legal aid services. The program provides assistance to clients in completing their court forms and coordinates clinics with local (and long distance) attorneys, who offer legal advice to clients. The Pro Bono Program offers services to clients with cases regarding divorce, custody/visitation, landlord/tenant issues, wills and estates, debt collection, bankruptcy, adult guardianship, and emancipation.

1. Explain how your organization can support the intellectual and professional interests of a Fellow for one academic year, approximately mid-September – mid-December, and mid-January – early May. *Note: Fellows will not be available during school breaks: week of November 25th; winter break December 16th-January 21st; spring break March 17th-28th.*

This program is well suited for students interested in pursuing work in either the legal or social work fields. The fellowship offered through the BMAC Pro Bono Program will allow the chosen fellow to serve clientele in a direct capacity. This individual will have the opportunity to obtain knowledge of multiple areas of the law, primarily family law. This position offers the opportunity for the fellow to interact with local attorneys, allowing for the development of a more rounded understanding of the application of the law. The fellow will also learn about local non-profits and the resources (outside of the legal realm) available to our clients. The fellow may attend court with the program coordinator and AmeriCorps member, which will continue to enhance their practical understanding of court procedures.

This line of work is inherently intellectually rigorous and will challenge the fellow to seek solutions in complicated cases. The fellow will have the opportunity to grasp vital concepts in the legal and social work fields, including client confidentiality, professional boundaries, and stress management. Additionally, the fellow will have the opportunity to work in a structured and supportive environment, under the auspices of a respected and well-established local non-profit organization.

2. Describe the role of the supervisor and how they will enhance the Fellows learning experience? How much time will be spent with the Fellow?

The first month of the fellow's time with the Pro Bono Program will be spent in orientation. A portion of that orientation will consist of the fellow directly observing the pro bono coordinator working with clients for at least 20 hours. This time is allocated to allow the fellow to become familiar with the client process, which entails assisting clients in completing their court forms using instructions provided by the Northwest Justice Project. After the observation phase, the pro bono coordinator will observe the fellow for at least 20 hours, during which the fellow will work in a direct service capacity with clients. If the coordinator feels that additional observation or

training is necessary, more time may be allocated to ensure the fellow is prepared to serve clients.

Additionally, the coordinator will always be present to answer any case-related questions that arise during the fellow's time in the pro bono office. The pro bono coordinator will review all completed court forms, to ensure that they are thoroughly and properly completed. Close interaction between the fellow and the coordinator will ensure an in-depth learning experience for the individual chosen for this position.

3. Approximately what percentage of work time will be on site? What percent of work will be remote? Please explain what "on site" and "remote" means for this project.

95% of the fellow's work will be on site, at the Pro Bono office. Because the program sees clients only in the BMAC office, the vast majority of the fellow's time will be spent on-site. Any additional projects that the fellow may assist with will also be completed at the BMAC office. The only "remote" opportunity will be court attendance, which will allow the fellow to develop a more extensive understanding of court procedure.

4. Explain the project or tasks you have for the Fellow. What does it entail?

The fellow will be responsible for directly serving clients of the BMAC Pro Bono Program. The fellow's primary role will be to act as a supplement to the coordinator and AmeriCorps member, enhancing the program's ability to see clients. This requires the fellow to not only work closely with the coordinator, but also to do independent research using the resources identified by the coordinator. The fellow must become familiar with the paperwork associated with various kinds of cases and must learn how to properly complete these forms. Additionally, the fellow may assist the coordinator in related responsibilities, including maintenance of the Legal Aid Wall, website updates, and general organizational tasks. In order to better understand the court system and outcomes related to our clients, the fellow may go to court and observe family law dockets.

Skills Required: Attention to detail, timeliness in completion of assigned tasks, understanding of client confidentiality, ability to conduct independent research, ability to work well with diverse populations

5. What will the Fellow contribute to your organization's mission and work?

The fellow will expand the Pro Bono Program's capacity to provide direct service to clients in need of assistance with their court forms. The fellow's supplemental role will offer support to both the coordinator and AmeriCorps member. Because the present need in the community far exceeds the Pro Bono Program's ability to provide services, the fellow will endow the program with necessary assistance.

How to Apply: Email a resume and cover letter to program coordinator Katharine Nyden at KatharineN@bmacww.org