LAW STUDENTS IN COURT

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Dan Clark, Melinda Cooperman, Jessie DeStefano, Paul Di Blasi, Jenifer Foster, Lucy Newton, Keeshea Turner Roberts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What do students do</strong></td>
<td>Students represent clients in D.C. Superior Court, primarily in the Landlord and Tenant and Branch. Law students prevent evictions, preserve affordable housing, and secure tenants’ rights under federal and District law.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Semester or year-long</strong></td>
<td>One semester, Fall or Spring</td>
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<td><strong>Open to</strong></td>
<td>All 2Ls and 3Ls (at least 30 credits). Students interview with LSIC faculty on Thursday April 11, 2019-Friday April 12, 2019 at LSIC’s offices at 4340 Connecticut Ave NW, Ste 214, Washington, DC 20008.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisite(s)</strong></td>
<td>All first year courses. There is a strong preference for Evidence and Professional Responsibility. Evidence and Professional Responsibility may also be taken concurrently with the clinic.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Credits</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Requires Student Bar</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Certification</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How many students</strong></td>
<td>10-15/semester from Georgetown University Law Center (other students from area law schools also participate)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conflicts</strong></td>
<td>Students employed by law firms that regularly represent residential landlords are ineligible for this clinic. Please contact the clinic directly for additional information.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average time commitment</strong></td>
<td>25 hours/week, on average.</td>
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<td><strong>Seminar hours</strong></td>
<td>Mondays, 6:00pm-8:00pm</td>
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<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Fall 2019 Orientation is August 12-16, 2019; Spring 2020 Orientation is January 2-5, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Information session(s)</strong></td>
<td>Monday, March 25, 2019, 3:30-4:30 pm, McDonough Room 110</td>
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Please note that Law Students in Court is a consortium program open to students at several D.C.-area law schools. LSIC’s Main Office is located at 4340 Connecticut Ave NW, Ste 214, Washington DC 20008. LSIC’s Courthouse Office is located at 510 4th St NW, Rm 210, Washington, DC 20001.
LAW STUDENTS IN COURT

A joint project of law schools in the District of Columbia, Law Students in Court (LSIC) allows student attorneys to develop practical and fundamental lawyering skills while providing legal representation, assistance, and counseling to low-income clients in the District of Columbia. Students from Georgetown University Law Center participate in the LSIC clinic with students from George Washington University Law School and Washington College of Law. Law Students in Court has two clinical programs, a civil clinic focused primarily on housing law and a criminal clinic representing adults charged with misdemeanors. Georgetown University Law Center participates in the civil clinic.

CASEWORK

Student attorneys in the Civil Division of LSIC represent clients in D.C. Superior Court, primarily in the Landlord and Tenant and Branch. Law students prevent evictions, preserve affordable housing, and secure tenants’ rights under federal and District law. Student attorneys also represent tenants in the Civil Actions Branch of D.C. Superior Court and in administrative proceedings in order to secure tenants’ rights. In the clinic, student attorneys work to fight the consequences of poverty, to prevent homelessness, and to combat the affordable housing crisis in the District of Columbia while learning how to become effective advocates.

Student attorneys are assigned cases throughout the semester. Under the supervision of our faculty, student attorneys are responsible for all aspects of litigation in cases assigned to them: interviewing clients and witnesses, conducting investigations, preparing pleadings, engaging in settlement negotiations, and conducting all motions hearings and trials pursuant to the Superior Court’s student practice rule. Student attorneys will generally have two or more cases assigned to them throughout the semester.

Student attorneys also provide same day counseling and limited representation at LSIC’s courthouse office. LSIC’s courthouse office is located at: Court Building B (The Courthouse that houses the Landlord and Tenant Branch and the Small Claims Branch), 510 4th St NW, Room 210, Washington, DC 20001. Student attorneys are assigned an intake day at the courthouse at orientation. Student attorneys will be required to attend intake at the courthouse every other week during the semester. Student attorneys also go out and meet tenants throughout the District of Columbia at events coordinated with non-profits, tenant organizers, and tenant associations to provide same day counseling. Often student attorneys are assigned cases from the clients they meet at these intakes.

All student attorneys have a primary faculty supervisor. Student attorneys meet with their primary supervisor at least once week to discuss their case work and reflect on their clinic experiences. Student attorneys are also supervised by faculty supervisors whenever they are providing legal services to clients at the courthouse office or at other intakes.
**ORIENTATION AND SEMINARS**

The clinic begins with a one-week orientation, which takes place before the start of the semester. The orientation gives student attorneys the opportunity to practice tenant advocacy in a classroom setting. The orientation consists of seminars, exercises, and simulations that assist student attorneys with developing fundamental lawyering skills in the context of landlord and tenant practice in the District of Columbia. **Fall 2019 Orientation will take place August 12-16, 2019. Spring 2020 Orientation will take place January 2-5, 2020.**

After orientation, weekly clinic classes and simulations are held Monday evenings. Clinic classes during the semester are held at the LSIC office, located a short walk from the Van Ness metro station at 4340 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 214, Washington, D.C. 20008. Clinic simulations during the semester are held at the Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Ave NW, Washington DC 20001. For clinic simulations, student attorneys prepare materials in advance and practice these skills in front of their classmates and supervisors, who critique the students in real-time.

Student attorneys also participate in case rounds throughout the semester. These meetings are opportunities for student attorneys to share challenging experiences with other student attorneys. At case rounds, student attorneys reflect on challenging experiences in their own and others’ cases and brainstorm strategies to address similar challenges in the future.

**TIME COMMITMENT**

LSIC is a one-semester program. Student attorneys can expect to spend an average of 25 hours per week of work on clinic. Student attorneys are expected to participate in orientation, weekly seminar classes, weekly supervision meetings with their primary supervisor, case rounds, and Courthouse and Community Intakes. Students are also expected to spend the time required to advocate zealously for their clients. Students must have one day per week (9:00 am - 5:00 pm) available for court appearances that is not a Monday.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Di Blasi, Director of Clinical Education for the Civil Division, at [pdiblasi@delawstudents.org](mailto:pdiblasi@delawstudents.org).

Please also feel free to stop by to talk with current students and current supervising attorneys regarding any questions about our program. The office is located 4340 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 214 Washington DC 20008.
Dan Clark

Dan Clark is the Co-Director of the Eviction Defense Services of LSIC. Dan earned his LL.M. in clinical teaching and systems change while serving as an instructor in the Housing and Consumer Law Clinic at the David A. Clarke School of Law, University of the District of Columbia. Before joining LSIC, Dan was the Managing Attorney for Housing and Consumer Law at the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program. As Managing Attorney with the Pro Bono Program, Dan oversaw operations of the Landlord Tenant Resource Center and Bankruptcy Clinic while supporting the Advice & Referral Clinic, Advocacy & Justice Clinic, and other programs. He attended law school at American University, Washington College of Law and was awarded a J.D. in 1995. In 1990, he graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Florida.

Melinda Cooperman

Melinda Cooperman is a faculty supervisor in the civil clinic. Prior to joining LSIC, Melinda represented children in abuse and neglect cases in D.C. Superior Court as a Staff Attorney with D.C.’s Children's Law Center. Melinda was also a Clinical Teaching Fellow in Georgetown University Law Center's Street Law Clinic, and the Associate Director of the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project at American University Washington College of Law.

Melinda is a proud graduate of the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law, where she was a Haywood Burns Fellow in Civil and Human Rights. She received her B.A. in Political Communication from The George Washington University. Before attending law school, Melinda directed a youth and family education program at a transitional homeless shelter in San Francisco, served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural El Salvador, and worked as a pension benefits counselor and advocate at Legal Services of New York.

Outside of the office, Melinda is actively involved with Washington, D.C.’s pro bono legal community. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Washington Council of Lawyers and Gifts for the Homeless. She also loves to hike in the mountains, go on urban trekking adventures around the city, and food related travel excursions. Melinda was raised in New York City, Hawaii, and Eastern Long Island, and loves all things related to the ocean.

Jessica DeStefano

Jessica DeStefano is a faculty supervisor in the civil clinic. Prior to joining LSIC, she worked as a Staff Attorney in the Housing Rights Project at Legal Services NYC, where she defended low-income tenants in eviction proceedings. She was also a Staff Attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Rockland County. Jessica is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, where she focused on public interest law. During law school, Jessica clerked for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, The Trevor Project, and Whitman-Walker Health. She also holds degrees from American University (B.A.) and Shepherd University (M.A.). In her spare time, Jessica volunteers for several LGBTQ rights organizations, including Boston Pride for which she manages social media and co-edits the annual magazine.
Paul Di Blasi

Paul Di Blasi is the Director of Clinical Education and a faculty supervisor in the civil clinic. Before joining LSIC as a faculty supervisor in 2014, he represented low-income tenants as a Staff Attorney at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia. He moved to the District from the Rio Grande Valley in Southmost Texas, where he represented low-income tenants, consumers, and workers as a Staff Attorney at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid.

Paul graduated with honors from the University of Texas in Austin School of Law in 2008. At the University of Texas, he was an Articles Editor for the Texas Journal on Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, and also participated in numerous clinics. Paul also organized the University’s first “Pro Bono in January” trip to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Paul graduated from Williams College, where he played trombone in the jazz band and the student symphony. Between college and law school, Paul worked probably too many jobs, including voter registration projects and teaching monolingual Spanish speakers GED math. After a nomadic early childhood, Paul grew up in San Antonio, Texas.

Jen Foster

Jenifer Foster rejoined LSIC as a faculty supervisor in the civil clinic in January 2018. Jen had worked at LSIC from 2007-2012, as “Attorney of the Day,” helping low-income tenants in danger of eviction. She left LSIC to clerk for the Honorable Stephanie Duncan-Peters. Jen has worked at several area legal services agencies, including Our Place DC, University Legal Services and the Legal Aid Society. She is passionate about working with D.C. residents who are struggling and helping give individuals who are frequently overlooked, a voice.

Jen is starting the social work division of LSIC. She loves the interplay of law and social work and thinks that when the two converge, dynamic things can be accomplished. Prior to rejoining LSIC, she worked as Senior Director of the Addiction Continuum at So Others Might Eat. She has a private practice on the side and provides counseling services primarily to veterans and others struggling with trauma and abuse. Previously, Jen has worked at the Veterans Administration Medical Center as a social worker in the emergency room, at a crisis stabilization program for individuals in psychiatric crisis, and as an addiction counselor at a treatment program. She was an Adjunct Professor at Bowie State University for five years where she taught Social Work and the Law.

Jen graduated from the Catholic University of America’s Columbus School of Law and the National Catholic School of Social Services with her J.D. and MSW in 2005. She has her undergraduate degree from Roanoke College, where she majored in sociology, minored in American history and had a concentration in social work. Right after undergrad, she spent a year in the Jesuit Volunteer Corp, where she taught sexual abuse prevention classes.

In her spare time, Jen loves to travel and find adventures. She has bathed tigers, ridden elephants, swam with whale sharks, done a triathlon, hiked to Machu Picchu, swung on a trapeze, and ran a
half marathon. Her dream is to travel the world and then become a diving instructor in the Caribbean.

**Lucy Newton**

Lucy Newton is the Co-Director of the Eviction Defense Services of LSIC. Over the course of her career, Lucy has represented low-income clients in a wide range of housing, public benefits, consumer law and family law matters, including at the Legal Aid Society of D.C., the Neighborhood Legal Services Program of D.C., and the Georgia Legal Services Program. She has also been a legal fellow at the National Women's Law Center and has advised students in the Office of Career Services at Howard University School of Law. Lucy was a member of the steering committee of the Litigation Section of the D.C. Bar from 2009 to 2015, and she currently serves on the board of directors of a D.C. public charter school.

Lucy graduated from New York University School of Law in 2002, where she was a student in the civil rights clinic, and received her B.A., with a major in music, from Emory University in 1996. Before law school, Lucy worked backstage at an opera company. She lives in the District with her husband and two daughters, and she spends a lot of her spare time singing.

**Keeshea Turner Roberts**

Keeshea Turner Roberts is the Co-Director of the Civil Protection Order Project (CPOP) and a faculty supervisor in the civil clinic. Prior to joining LSIC, Keeshea was a managing attorney at Neighborhood Legal Services Program (NLSP). At NLSP, she supervised staff attorneys, legal fellows, legal externs and interns, and on-loan law firm associates in the family law and public benefits practices. In addition to supervising and teaching law students, Ms. Turner Roberts manages and supervises pro bono and staff attorneys at the Civil Protection Order Project at D.C. Superior Court.

Keeshea is a member of the D.C. Bar’s John Payton Leadership Academy Class of 2017. The John Payton Leadership Academy is an intensive training program for members who are interested in developing their leadership skills and learning more about the D.C. Bar and its leadership opportunities. The goal of the Leadership Academy is to identify, inspire, and educate D.C. Bar members to be leaders of the Bar and to encourage them to use their leadership skills in professional settings, local bar associations, and community organizations.

Keeshea received her J.D. from The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law and her B.A. in History from Hollins University (formerly Hollins College). While in law school, she interned at numerous legal organizations including the United States Department of Justice (Violence Against Women Office), ACLU for the National Capitol Area, and the Alexandria and Fairfax Virginia Public Defender Offices. During her third year of law school, Keeshea was a student-attorney at LSIC, where she represented clients with misdemeanor cases. After graduating from law school, she served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorables Janet Albert, Andrea L. Harnett, and Richard Ringell, Magistrate Judges for the Superior Court for the District of Columbia.