

Brief Descriptions of 2005-06 Law, Culture and Difference Social Justice Projects Northeastern University School of Law

1. **Client:** *Anchorage Youth Court (AYC)*. **Project:** AYC operates throughout Alaska on restorative justice model. Youths in grades 7-12 are trained to serve as judges, jurors, prosecutors or defense. The success of the model has prompted the state to ask AYC to conduct misdemeanor criminal trials. AYC seeks the development of constitutionally sound procedural and evidentiary rules necessary to conduct such trials and implement training for them.

2. **Client:** *Center for Community Health Education Research and Service*. **Project:** A Massachusetts Special Legislative Commission on Health Disparities will issue its recommendation in mid-fall 2005. The client seeks to translate those recommendations into targeted legislation and detailed regulations to benefit marginalized communities. Includes research of current statutory and regulatory law, which can be applied to implement select commission recommendations.

3. **Client:** *Greater Boston Legal Services – Immigration Unit*. **Project:** Helping to frame, support and bolster argument for HIV/AIDS positive asylees who face persecution in their home countries due to their medical status. Research involves multidisciplinary sources and international human rights instruments and practices.

4. **Client:** *Groundwater Emergency Task Force*. **Project:** Boston is losing vital groundwater that protects the pilings supporting much of the city's man-made land-fill. Exposure degrades the pilings quickly and threatens struggling landowners disproportionately. The client seeks to create a legal right to sufficient groundwater. Research includes property, zoning, tort, and environmental laws.

5. **Client:** *Innocence Project of New Orleans*. **Project:** The client seeks to advance access to police records law left out of Mississippi's Freedom of Information Act enacted last in the national in 1999. Recommendations must balance effective access with undue burden on police departments. And, would like a legislative packet.

6. **Client:** *International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Human Rights (ESCR)*. **Project:** Updating and improving an existing international ESCR database created as a tool to make ESCR-related jurisprudence and other resolutions from different parts of the world available to ESCR activists, advocates, and defenders.

7. **Client:** *Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law (NY)*. **Project:** *FRCA Angle:* Further delving into the FTC's authority over employer business necessity justification and certification that it has not violated EEO laws. Involves research of the FTC's process on point and ways to trigger FTC rule promulgation. Field research challenges. *Title IIV Angle:* Feasibility of advancing mixed motive analysis if credit history was part of an adverse employment decision.

8. **Client:** *Massachusetts Attorney General Office (AGO) Civil Rights Division.* **Project:** Metro Boston is one of the costliest places to live in the United States. Consequently affordable housing continues to shrink. The Civil Rights Division of the AGO litigates discriminatory rental practices but seeks to devise a more comprehensive state and federal fair housing law educational program to reach a larger audience of owners, managers and realtors.

9. **Client:** *National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers' Guild.* **Project:** To reduce the deportation and family dislocation exposure of immigrant youth from an increasingly punitive and aggressive immigration and enforcement climate. The Immigration Project seeks to fashion argument that state transfer statutes are broader or dissimilar to provisions under the Federal Juvenile Delinquency Act. The client seeks charting and articulation of strategies between state and federal laws.

10. **Client:** *New England Innocence Project.* **Project:** Examination of the sufficiency of existing internal and external controls on crime laboratories responsible for forensic testing. Involves study of statutory/sub-regulatory and organizations views/guidelines/policies governing and/or accrediting forensic testing labs.

11. **Client:** *Prescription Access Litigation, Community Catalyst.* **Project:** Pharmaceutical reform has been most effective at the state but not federal level. Study of the laws and regulations passed and how/whether prompted by litigation. Comparative effectiveness of different approaches sought as basis for state legislative action on prescription drug pricing and marketing.

12. **Client:** *Public Health Advocacy Institute.* **Project:** Evaluation of self-regulation practices by food industry in advertising directed at children. Further analysis of First Amendment concerns around government regulation of such advertising and FTC regulatory powers in this area.

13. **Client:** *United Steelworkers International Union.* **Project:** Cutting edge human rights case that raises unique legal issues alleging two U.S. companies – Occidental Petroleum and AirScan conspired with Colombian Air Force to bomb a village killing 17 civilians. Research of factual and legal issues arising from State Department Statement of Natural Interest including human rights conventions and Colombian fair hearing laws.

14. **Client:** *Vermont Legal Aid, Inc.* **Project:** Refund Anticipation Loans (RALs) are part of the fringe financial industry that fleeces low to moderate-income citizens whose limited resources and great need make them vulnerable to high-cost short-term loans. Research of pending nationwide cases challenging RALs under the Truth and Lending, RICO, and state UDAP laws. Also, aiming at legislative intervention theories under state credit repair laws, state consumer protection laws and IRS rules.

15. **Client:** *Women are Getting Even (WAGE) Project, Inc.* **Project:** The client seeks additional state and municipal laws to provide specific information about legal protections and avenues of recourse against gender discrimination in the workplace. WAGE seeks one or two law offices to work on six to twelve states to reach a total of the eighteen most populous states in the nation. States proposed for: Illinois, Georgia, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Arizona and Washington, D.C. If a second law is assigned then Washington, Missouri, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Colorado and South Carolina would be included.