Law Students' Commitment Benefits Everyone - A View on Law Student Participation

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Law Students' Commitment Benefits Everyone

A View on Law Student Participation

by Pamela A. Daiker-Middaugh

The years during law school are usually hectic for law students. Attending classes, studying for exams, law clerking and meeting family demands leave little time for community service. As the faculty adviser to Cleveland-Marshall's Student Public Interest Law Organization (SPILLO), I am careful to remind the student officers to offer pro bono and volunteer opportunities that are valuable, but not especially time-consuming.

Last fall, when we were designing the law student component of the Cleveland Bar Association's Education Initiative, we were attentive to those issues. During the training session at Cleveland State and at the law firm of Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue, instructors were quite clear in reminding the student officers to offer pro bono and volunteer opportunities that are valuable, but not especially time-consuming.

In spite of their hectic schedules, the law student component of the Cleveland Bar Association's Education Initiative, we were attentive to those issues. During the training session at Cleveland State and at the law firm of Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue, instructors were quite clear in describing the Initiative model as one of teamwork. Law students would be part of "teams" at each of Cleveland's high schools. A team would be comprised of a Street Law teacher, one or more law students, and one or more lawyers.

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In spite of their hectic schedules, the law students turned out to be the most committed team members at many of the high schools. More than 60 law students from Cleveland-Marshall and Case Western Reserve took part in the Education Initiative during the 1996-97 school year. Most not only fulfilled their commitments to the Initiative but also contributed extraordinary amounts of time and effort. If the law students who volunteered for the Initiative are indicative of the future of the legal profession, then, as the following students' experiences demonstrate, we are in very good hands.

Amy Altomondo is a third-year law student at Cleveland-Marshall who taught Street Law at Cleveland-Marshall during the 1996-97 school year. Her students have a story. Her students who took part in the Education Initiative is indicative of the future of the legal profession, then, as the following students' experiences demonstrate, we are in very good hands.

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