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PILF, Alumni Donations Fund 78 Summer Public Interest Stipends

Boston College Law School

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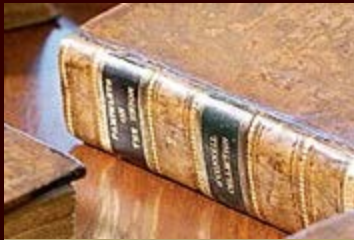
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PILF, Alumni Donations Fund 78 Summer Public Interest Stipends

2014 NEWS ARCHIVE

06/18/14

Newton, MA--BC Law's Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) auction proceeds, along with generous donations from alumni, have resulted in 78 summer public interest placements for BC Law students this year. Students are interning in places such as Public Defender and District Attorneys' Offices, Federal, State, and local government agencies legal services organizations, and with Judges.

The PILF Auction is an annual sell-out event that brings together alumni, faculty, students, and members of the community to celebrate BC Law's strong commitment to public interest law and to honor a graduate who has made an extraordinary contribution to the field of public interest law. More than 300 BC Law alumni, students, faculty and staff attended this year's auction. Over 400 items were auctioned off, raising over \$40,000 for summer stipends, allowing PILF to provide stipends to 70% of applicants.

Two PILF stipends are being supported this year by the Ingrid Hillinger Public Interest Legacy Fund, created by longtime faculty member Professor Ingrid Hillinger, who has raised nearly half a million dollars to date in alumni donations ([see related story](#)).

Many first-year students do legal work in the summers. While second-year summer jobs are often seen as try-outs for permanent placements, first-year summer jobs are an opportunity for students to sample areas of practice just for the experience. A number of first-year students opt for public service work after their first year of law school, including direct provision of legal services to the poor, government service, or advocacy and policy work in non-profits relating to particular issues, such as environmental protection, or particular populations, such as the elderly or the homeless. Often, this experience results in a decision to pursue a public interest career, or in a long-term commitment to pro bono work and charitable giving by BC Law graduates who take jobs in the private sector.

About 50% of funding for these opportunities comes from federal work-study grants that provide summer stipends to law students doing public interest jobs. However, federal law requires that non-profit employers pay the other half of the total summer stipend. That contribution is beyond the means of many organizations, but given the financial demands of school and living expenses, few students can afford to work as volunteers.

Bridging the gap are the two equally essential means of support: the fundraising efforts of the student-run PILF with their auction, and the contributions of BC Law alumni who recognize the value of law students performing public interest work, both for their own professional development and as a significant community benefit provided by the law school, consistent with its Jesuit mission.