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LANC-Winston-Salem Office

Liberty Plaza
102 West Third Street, Suite 460
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
336-725-9162; 866-219-LANC (toll-free)

R. Yvette Stackhouse, Esq.
Managing Attorney



Providing free legal services in civil (non-criminal) matters to low-income people primarily in Davie, Forsyth, Iredell, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties.

LANC-Winston-Salem Office

Reflections of 2010 Summer Law Clerks

by Liza Baron

The LANC-Winston-Salem Office has been a hotbed of activity this summer.

Our clients and their legal concerns generally keep us busy enough, but our summer law clerks kept us on our toes as well.

Our law clerks hit the ground running and performed a wide variety of tasks this summer: combing clients' neighborhoods for witnesses in a mortgage fraud case, conducting client interviews, attending court hearings, drafting pleadings and demand letters, and representing clients (under supervision of an attorney) in unemployment compensation and domestic violence hearings.

During their ten weeks, our seven law clerks rotated through each of our three units:

the Benefits Unit, the Family Law Unit and the HEEC Unit. They spent three to four weeks with each unit, gaining exposure to and hands-on, practical experience in each substantive legal area of our practice. They also had opportunities to work directly with all or most of our advocates as well, which deepened their learning experiences, as they observed how different advocates handle clients, cases and hearings in different ways. In turn, our advocates enjoyed getting to know and work with each of the law clerks.

This summer, our law clerks made us sharper by contributing more in-depth legal research, additional investigation, better evidentiary exhibits for our hearings and extra man-hours of prep time to our cases than we could have otherwise gathered on our own. And they



2010 Summer Law Clerks, LANC-Winston-Salem Office

(l-r): Benjamin Snyder (Elon University School of Law); Brittany Speas (Wake Forest University School of Law); Daniel Joyce (Elon University School of Law); Whitney Butcher (Elon University School of Law); Chelsea Leathers (University of South Carolina School of Law); Bo Caudill (Charlotte School of Law); and Lauren Tozzi (Wake Forest University School of Law).
PHOTOS BY DAVID SOBIE

returned their assignments with such speed (and accuracy) that we barely had time to keep up with them.

"As a direct result of our summer law clerks' efforts, we increased our output and improved our accomplishments for our clients in concrete and valuable ways...."

- Liza Baron

As a direct result of our summer law clerks' efforts, we increased our output and improved our accomplishments for our clients in concrete and valuable ways.

Our summer law clerks

hailed from Wake Forest University School of Law, Charlotte School of Law, University of South Carolina School of Law and Elon University School of Law. We appreciated their hard work and excellent results, as well as their energy and goodwill.

We hope you, too, will enjoy reading their reflections herein.



Liza Baron is the managing attorney of the HEEC (Housing, Education, Employment, Consumer) Unit in Legal Aid of North Carolina's Winston-Salem Office.

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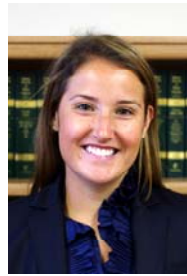
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Whitney Butcher
Rising 2L
Elon Univ. School of Law

Working with Legal Aid of North Carolina's Winston-Salem Office (LANC) was my first full-time legal experience. It was busy, hectic, and challenging; yet it also was rewarding, fulfilling and fun.

I spent most of my time in the Benefits Unit and HEEC Unit. I interviewed clients, drafted memoranda, worked on research and attended court. Every day I saw a new and exciting issue that needed to be resolved.

The attorneys and staff members in the office were wonderful to take the time to counsel and mentor the law clerks, provide feedback and give us words of advice and encouragement.

One of my most memorable experiences was an ongoing awareness I gained from working with the HEEC Unit. Reading about the housing crisis in the news is one thing. However, seeing its nasty side effects on consumers and homebuyers raised a totally new level of understanding and compassion. I helped draft a Motion for Preliminary Injunction to hopefully allow a family to stay in their home while their case was heard. Contact with clients and their real-life stories and problems gave me the chance to put law school theory into practice by helping people.

Many of our clients faced crises involving some of their most very basic living needs: housing, property ownership, health benefits, employment and even their own safety. For example, I drafted a reasonable accommodation request, asking that our client in public housing have another opportunity to get his apartment ready for extermination. Otherwise, his property manager was prepared to evict him. Our client was physically disabled and unable to exert himself to move his furniture as needed for a mandatory extermination. The opposing attorney granted my request for a reasonable accommodation, and our client was given another chance to get his apartment ready instead of being evicted. Knowing that you are helping someone in this most vulnerable situation — being able to stay in his home — has been both motivational and humbling.

In another instance, our client's cars were seized to satisfy a money judgment, but the client needed a car in order to get to work. After the ongoing efforts of staff attorneys and several law clerks, the judgment against the client was discharged through

bankruptcy. However, it was up to me to make sure the Sheriff's Office actually returned his vehicles (a process far more difficult than it sounds). After several days of countless phone calls, our client got his cars back. I tried several different tactics in communicating with the Bankruptcy Trustee's office and the Sheriff's Office. Finally (perhaps so I would stop calling) the Sheriff's Office released the vehicles. Our client was thrilled, and he and his family were able to carry on with their work and their lives.

In short, my summer clerkship with LANC was an invaluable experience. I learned and grew immensely over the past few weeks, and I will always value the importance of helping the underserved.

Watching attorneys and staff members who have so clearly dedicated themselves to helping and empowering others has left an indelible impression on me. After observing a staff attorney fight for a consumer's rights in court, a fellow law clerk and I left court that day remarking to one another, "we are so proud to work for Legal Aid."



Bo Caudill
Rising 2L
Charlotte School of Law

I accepted a summer clerkship with Legal Aid of NC (LANC) in Winston-Salem and immediately flipped it into an externship so I could collect student loans for living expenses and accrue college credit over the summer.

As part of that externship, I was directed to discuss my goals for the summer with my supervising attorney, Liza Baron. When I asked Liza what was the most important lesson a summer clerk could take away from his or her experience at Legal Aid, she responded by telling me that knowledge of the law is power, and that it's amazing how much you can do for someone as an attorney, sometimes by exercising relatively little effort. In the weeks that followed, as I interacted with clients, performed tasks for supervising attorneys, and observed the goings-on at court, I reflected on that lesson and recognized that, along with the experience of this summer, it has changed my perspective of what it means to be a lawyer.

While a fundamental precept of "Liza's Lesson" is that a little work can go a long

(Reflections, continued on page 3)

**Update from Yvette...
Thank you 2010
Summer Law Clerks!**

R. Yvette Stackhouse, Esq.
Managing Attorney, LANC-W/S Office



Wow, what a summer 2010 has been! The summer interns worked so hard on every case they handled, and all we can really offer is our sincere appreciation for the service they rendered on behalf of the clients we serve.

In this special edition, all seven law clerks have written very informative articles about their 10-week experiences. And, after you read the articles

"Thank you summer law clerks for being willing to learn how to give voice to those who appear to be voiceless...."

- Yvette Stackhouse

that they wrote, you may wonder if Legal Aid of NC paid them to say such wonderful

things about working here. I assure you, we did not. In fact, LANC was only able to provide one paid Winston-Salem internship. However, they all gave of their time as though they were receiving a pot of gold at the end of their stay.

I was truly moved by each student's genuine gratitude for having the opportunity to do work that our staff does every work day, 52 weeks a year. And, I am thankful to have a staff that is willing to try to show others how to handle "one heart-wrenching, difficult problem after another" with due diligence, persistence and patience.

I was also moved to read that in the short time the law clerks were here, they found our staff to be hard-working, enthusiastic, compassionate, dedicated fighters for

justice. This is something I see every day, but for "short-timers" to see it, passionately feel it and clearly express it, it was humbling to read.

I was almost brought to tears to learn how much the law clerks have grown to understand now, just 10 weeks later, about the practice of law for the low-income population whom we have the privilege to serve. How it demands that you go beyond the call of duty. How it's never just about "one" legal problem but there's always more to their story. How it matters not just what you say, but how you say it--come good news or bad. How it's not just what you learn in books, but how you translate that

knowledge into real-world solutions. How what seems like a little bit to many, is so very much in the

lives of our clients.

Having the law clerks here this summer, as in past years, has reminded me of why I and our staff stay. In spite of the low pay and the insurmountable odds stacked against our clients, who are voiceless when they walk into our office, we help them find their voice. We make no apologies for it, and every staff member is willing to teach others how to do it.

Thank you summer law clerks for being willing to learn how to give voice to those who appear to be voiceless. Thank you LANC staff for helping to empower our clients 52 weeks per year!

Wow, what a summer! Wow, what a year!!!



(Reflections, continued from page 2)

way, it would be a mistake to think that there is anything "little" about the work of the lawyers, paralegals and support staff at LANC. Clients arrive with no money, little support and no knowledge of what to do to solve their problems. Often, they also arrive with foreclosure papers, a mortgage with a huge balloon payment coming due, an eviction notice or a letter saying the benefits they have relied on have been terminated. This is the tide the people at Legal Aid of NC are pushing back, and doing so is no small effort.

I stepped into that tide as a rising 2L at Charlotte School of Law, and on Day One of the externship I had letters to write to clients. On Day Two, I was conducting research and drafting memos for the HEEC/MFP unit. I interviewed clients, called housing authorities, and searched for possible witnesses for a mortgage foreclo-

sure client's claims against her real estate agents. I drafted motions and observed a variety of court hearings in a variety of court settings.

Most importantly, I received feedback throughout the summer from experienced attorneys, lawyers who were already familiar with the merits of Liza's Lesson. With a simple phone call, a letter or a trip to the courthouse, they helped people through some of the toughest moments of their lives.

The LANC summer internship has offered me experiences that are simply not available at other summer internships. It feels like law school, but exists in the real world, with real clients facing real problems. I knew that knowledge of the law is power. I knew that a good lawyer could help people, but thanks to my summer internship at LANC, I'm starting to see that much help is needed.



(Reflections, continued on page 4)

About Legal Aid of NC

As the only Legal Services Corporation (LSC) funded program in North Carolina, Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) provides free, community-based, civil legal services in all 100 counties of North Carolina to those whose income falls below **125% of the federal poverty guidelines:**



Size of Family Unit	Maximum Income Level*
1	\$ 13,538
2	\$ 15,613
3	\$ 22,888
4	\$ 27,563
5	\$ 32,328
6	\$ 36,913
7	\$ 41,588
8	\$ 46,263

* [The figures in this table represent 125% of the poverty guidelines by family size as determined by the US Department of Health & Human Services.]

LANC provides legal representation and counseling in **civil (non-criminal) cases only.**

Because of limited resources, LANC's cases are generally limited to those that impact clients' basic needs, including housing, access to medical care, protection from domestic violence, consumer protection and subsistence income.

LANC of NC receives **funding** from LSC (45%), the NC General Assembly (27%), and IOLTA (Interest On Lawyers' Trust Accounts) (11%). The remaining funds come from Title II funds for Older Americans, United Way, local governments, individual attorneys, foundations and other grants.

Legal Aid of North Carolina offices also recruit and coordinate private attorney (*pro bono*) volunteers through local volunteer lawyers programs (VLP's).

For additional information on Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) and its offices and statewide projects, visit the LANC Internet website: www.legalaidnc.org.



About Summer Internships at Legal Aid of North Carolina

Internships are available at Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) during the summer months for law students who want to gain experience working in a public interest setting and desire an opportunity to do more than just legal research.

Summer internships offer unique situations through which one might better understand the special legal issues facing people who live in poverty and low-income communities. In turn, the summer interns provide valuable and necessary service to the LANC offices/projects in which they are placed.

LANC typically seeks opportunities for its interns to experience direct client contact, participate in administrative hearings (for those certified), draft pleadings and/or work on a case (under supervision).

Types of Internships

‡ **Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Internships**
Summer, paid internships for current law students (usually 2L's) to participate in the work of LANC over the traditional 10-week summer internship period.

‡ **Work/Study Internships**
Summer internships that are made possible through partnerships with law schools who offer work/study programs and who allow internship performance at LANC to displace loan obligation.

‡ **Volunteer Internships**
Summer internships performed entirely on a volunteer (without pay) basis by law students.

‡ **Otherwise funded Internships**
Summer internships for which the law student is paid through a source with the understanding that the internship is performed at LANC.

Law students may indicate their interest in serving as a LANC summer intern by sending a letter (expressing your interest and preferences), resume, a writing sample (no more than 10 pages) and names/contact information of three (3) references to:

Legal Aid of North Carolina
Summer Internships
224 South Dawson Street
Raleigh, NC 27601



(Reflections, continued from page 3)



Daniel Joyce
Rising 3L
Elon University
School of Law

Returning for my second summer as a law clerk at Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) was a great experience.

Not only was I able to work on fascinating cases, but I also really felt that I made a tangible impact on our clients' lives. I learned more about the law, which allowed me to assist clients more effectively. The opportunity to get experience with hands-on client service was a major reason I wanted to clerk at LANC for a second summer.

As a rising 3L law student, I was given the opportunity to represent clients under the supervision of a staff attorney. My first client was a victim of domestic violence. As I was

"The opportunity to get experience with hands-on client service was a major reason I wanted to clerk at LANC for a second summer...."

- Daniel Joyce


preparing, I discovered that the defendant had not been served. The client thought he had gotten into other legal trouble and was on the run avoiding service. Without service, we could not go forward with the hearing. However, I was able to go with the client to court and speak to a judge as a client representative for the first time. I was relieved to find that it was much less scary than I imagined it would be.

Even though I have not yet gone through with the continued hearing, the preparation itself was a great learning experience. I was able to put the skills I learned in Trial Advocacy and other classes into action for a real-life situation. The opportunity to take ownership of the case was rewarding and is an experience I will not soon forget.

The experience taught me how to deal with some of the frustrations that go along with the legal profession. Being prepared and ready for the hearing but being unable to go forward required me to serve our client in another way. After the case was delayed, I advised the client about actions she could take to help the Sheriff's Office execute service. The defendant was later arrested for criminal charges arising from the same incident of domestic violence. After I discovered his court date for his criminal charge, we moved the hearing for the protective order to the same day so that we could have the opportunity to serve him when he appeared for the criminal charges. The process of serving this defendant who was avoiding service was more complicated

than I had expected or even had felt prepared to handle. But I was glad that I had the advantage of guidance from an experienced Legal Aid attorney to guide me through the process. Working together, we assisted the client through a difficult time in her life.

I also had a chance work in the area of public benefits. One of the cases allowed me to do research and assist a client whose case I worked on last summer. The client is HIV-positive and was trying to get disability benefits. Last summer she did not have medical records that met the requirements for Social Security. After deeper digging, the client's newer medical records may be enough to allow her to receive disability benefits, as the client continued to go to the doctor. It will likely be a close case, but hopefully some creative lawyering will help her qualify for disability benefits. She was just one of many clients with whom I worked that really need assistance, and the good people of LANC are fighting every day to help them get the assistance that can change their lives.

I am thankful to have had the opportunity to learn about being a lawyer while giving back to the community. Being able to assist LANC clients who are unable to afford private representation been extremely rewarding. 



Chelsea Leathers
Rising 3L
University of South
Carolina School of Law

My experience at Legal Aid of North Carolina's (LANC's) Winston-Salem Office was more valuable than I could have ever imagined.

Through working at LANC, I have learned so much from the attorneys as well as the clients. I have noticed that while each attorney in the office has a different approach to clients and their cases, it is obvious that each one cares for their clients and does everything they can do to help them. Through their actions and continuing professionalism, all of the attorneys have been wonderful role models for the interns. Overall, they have taught us that as future attorneys, we should not settle for doing the bare minimum for clients, but should go above and beyond.

I have been surprised at the valuable lessons I have learned through interactions with clients. Many clients contact LANC

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(Reflections, continued from page 4)

with one issue, but once one learns more about their cases, it becomes clear that they often face several other legal challenges at the same time.

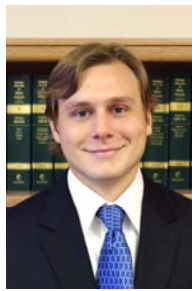
I have also learned that many clients assume that if you are an attorney, you can solve all of their problems. Sometimes clients have difficulty understanding the difference between legal issues and real-life issues. Many clients sometimes also feel that the law is not on their side or is not protecting their interests; in some instances they are correct.

More specifically, I was shocked to learn that when a person receives an overpayment of their benefits through no fault of their own, they are responsible for paying back the extra money. While working in the benefits unit, I spoke with a client who was so frustrated about this law that she decided to contact her elected officials in hope that this could eventually be changed.

One of the most touching experiences I had while was during my time in the Family Law Unit. Within the first week, I was told that I would be doing an in-person interview. Initially, I was very nervous, but I knew that I would have to overcome my fears and gain control of my own emotions for the sake of the client. Just as I expected, the interview was very difficult. On the date of the hearing, the client was hesitant about whether she actually wanted to go through with the protective order. While she was testifying, the courtroom was silent and it was obvious that many people there that day were affected by her. A few weeks later, the client sent a very thoughtful email thanking us for our services. My experience with this client made me realize that what we do can impact people in ways that we might never understand.

As the summer comes to an end, I will be representing my very own client in an unemployment benefits hearing. I am very excited to have this opportunity and to use everything that I have learned over this summer to assist my client with his case.

Overall, my experience at LANC has made me more confident in my decision to attend law school. Through this internship, I have developed a better understanding of how I can use my law degree to help others, and have a career which will be meaningful and impact the lives of others.



Benjamin Snyder
 Rising 2L
 Elon University School
 of Law

I have said to myself and others many times that I decided to go to law school because I wanted to work for a place like Legal Aid of NC (LANC). After several weeks, and hundreds of hours spent helping dozens of clients, I now have a very real sense of the commitment that working for Legal Aid can demand and of the profound rewards that such work can offer.

My first day at LANC was on my twenty-fifth birthday, May 24th, 2010. After what seemed like a hazardously brief orientation, I was handed a stack of files and documents representing real legal problems — for work that would affect real

peoples' lives.

My first assignment was to call a client and find out whether the Social Security

Administration had notified her of her disability benefits hearing date. I remember saying to myself: "Do they expect me, a mere law *student*, to actually call a real client on behalf of my supervising attorneys, and speak to them?" I dialed. She answered. I introduced myself and asked her the short, simple questions. She answered succinctly. I hung up and typed my notes. I had completed my task and not entirely ruined the client's case. This was my first exposure to doing actual legal work, and I realized that I was up to the task.

In the many telephone and in-person discussions I have had with clients, opposing parties and government administrators since, I have thoroughly exercised my interpersonal communication skills and professional conduct. These exchanges are interesting on their own, but such opportunities to interact with others in a professional capacity are rewarding experiences that I, a legal neophyte, find especially valuable. I am very thankful for these opportunities.

In addition to offering me many real-world communication experiences, LANC has also provided me with a hands-on education in many elements of law that I had not yet encountered. Any intern that comes to the LANC-Winston-Salem Office and rotates through the HEEC, Benefits,

(Reflections, continued on page 6)

Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Summer Internships

An opportunity to make a difference...

Each summer, Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) awards paid internships to current law students to participate in the legal services work over the traditional 10-week summer internship period.

The summer internship program is named in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and is funded in part by contributions from IOLTA, Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company and the NC Bar Association Foundation.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Internship is an integral part of the LANC's dual goals to: (1) reduce the inequities in our legal system by ensuring that poor people, minorities and victims of domestic violence receive equal justice; and (2) to initiate new lawyers to the lifelong commitment of providing access to justice for all individuals regardless of their ability to pay.

The MLK program places talented law students into the real world of legal aid advocacy in order to work on actual cases. MLK interns experience client contact, courtroom participation and legal research and writing on actual cases under the supervision of seasoned legal aid attorneys. Each day of the internship, MLK interns are challenged to put classroom training and talent to work on behalf of the many needy individuals that LANC serves and to work creatively to reduce the barriers to a more just society. Each MLK intern is treated as a valuable member of the legal staff and is expected to participate in case strategy and contribute to overall case management.

LANC typically places summer MLK interns in each of the 24 LANC field offices and in the offices of Advocates for Children Services (Durham) and the Farmworker Unit (Raleigh).

Applications for MLK Summer Internships: Initial review of applicants typically begins October 30th prior to the summer of employment. For additional information, visit the "Internships" webpage of the LANC Internet website:

www.legalaidnc.org/public/participate/internships.aspx



Staff

LANC-Winston-Salem Office

Our staff provides legal assistance in civil matters (non-criminal matters) to eligible, low-income clients who have problems with their basic needs and live in the six-county area surrounding Winston-Salem, NC: Davie County, Forsyth County, Iredell County, Stokes County, Surry County and Yadkin County.

R. Yvette Stackhouse

Managing Attorney

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Managing Attorney (HEEC Unit)

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Managing Attorney (DV Unit)

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David A. Sobie

Paralegal

Gray W. Wilson

Technology Specialist

Jean L. Witherspoon

PAI Coordinator

Nikki A. Worthy

Paralegal



(Reflections, continued from page 5)

and Family Law Units leaves endowed with practical knowledge of the law dealing with government benefits, public housing, debtor-creditor relationships, mortgage arrangements and civil domestic violence protection orders (DVPOs). I now expect to have a leg up in future administrative law, securities, and family law classes.

Working at LANC also exposed me to some of the more frustrating sides of the legal profession. In one case for the Benefits Unit, I spent many hours doing extensive research and writing a brief to submit to an administrative law judge in a child's disability benefits hearing. After

"My time at LANC has been eye-opening, and I am thankful for it. The attorneys here have been gracious enough to give me immeasurably valuable experience...."

- Benjamin Snyder

driving to Charlotte for the hearing, the judge informed us that he had received the new medical records and the brief that we had faxed, but that they had not yet been processed and added to the file as exhibits. He had not looked at the records or brief. Instead of making a decision, he ordered our client to undergo more testing. The child had been waiting for benefits for more than two years, and was now likely going to fall further behind in school in the meantime due to his medical condition.

After having a glimpse of what I had held as a goal from before I entered law school, I can now confidently say that my desire to work for the public interest has been renewed. My time at LANC has been eye-opening, and I am thankful for it. The attorneys here have been gracious enough to give me immeasurably valuable experience, and I have realized my satisfaction with the decision to go to law school and work in the legal field because of it.



Brittany Speas

**Rising 2L
Wake Forest University
School of Law**

As a rising 2L, clerking at Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) this summer was the first opportunity to apply my first year of legal education to real legal issues with *real* people.

This experience reminded me of exactly why I went to law school: my passion for people. Working at LANC became the conduit through which I effectuated my passion for public interest work and becoming the voice for the voiceless.

When I learned that my first rotation was to the Family Law Unit, I was excited but a little

wary because many of the clients were victims of domestic violence and the work was very emotionally demanding. However, the experience was very rewarding because I realized the passion that Family Law Unit attorneys have for ensuring that each victim's story is, indeed, heard.

The most disturbing case that I witnessed involved a client who sought a Domestic Violence Protective Order (DVPO) but wanted to dismiss her case and dissolve the order. The defendant in her case also faced criminal charges for assault on a female (our client) for the same incident. After the DVPO was dismissed, the client, who was pregnant, took the stand to testify about the criminal charges. It was apparent that she had some

mental impairment or that she was intimidated by the presence of the defendant, who was also the father of her unborn child. As the prosecutor began his direct examination of her, the client evaded the questions for a while and was finally ordered to pay court costs and charged with false and malicious prosecution. She was then taken into custody. Seeing her taken away, pregnant and in handcuffs, was disheartening. However, it was also a depiction of the harsh realities of domestic violence and the need for urgent community intervention.

As I moved on through the remaining units and became accustomed to the flow of things, I recognized that the same passion I have flows throughout every aspect of the office. During my second rotation, in the Benefits Unit, the skills that I had learned during my experience working as a pharmacy technician came into play, especially in reviewing medical records. I had a couple of assignments to draft medical chronologies with the clients' medical records, which was tedious yet beneficial — especially as I began writing the brief to the Administrative Law Judge who would preside over the client's hearing for disability benefits.

I also sat in on an intake interview that involved a client whose food stamps were cancelled. The client had three children and did not have food in her home. Our staff attorney called DSS to inquire about the issue and gave her a bag of food from the food bank in our office. The client was more than grateful. Most of the advocates in the office go above and beyond their legal duty to help our clients, which is something that I admire about LANC.

My final rotation was in the HEEC unit. On of my first case assignments involved a client in subsidized housing who was facing

(Reflections, continued on page 7)

(Reflections, continued from page 6)

eviction because she failed too many housing authority inspections. We went to the client's home and aided her in cleaning up her stove, which was the cause of the failed inspection. After the stove was cleaned we determined that it did not look much different than the photos taken during the failed inspection. We then contacted the property manager and he dismissed the eviction action against the client, which made me feel great — and I'm sure the client appreciated it as well.

Another research assignment I had in the HEEC unit involved predatory lending and foreclosure. The client was unemployed and disabled, and specifically told the agent that she was unable to make mortgage payments. With this knowledge, the agent assured the client that she would receive assistance making the payments. One year later she was facing foreclosure because she had not made her mortgage payments.

All of my experiences at LANC show how much the office's advocacy impacts the lives of those who seek it. The genuine sincerity in the eyes of each attorney and other office personnel, as clients came to our office has amplified my passion for public interest work.

This experience has been more than I could have imagined, more than I could have asked for, and it has opened my eyes to the practicality of the passion that lies deep inside of my heart.



Lauren Tozzi
Rising 3L
Wake Forest University School of Law

It was only my second day of work when I found myself in the courthouse, helping an attorney find a judge who could sign a temporary restraining

order that would protect a mother and her four children from being padlocked out of their rental home.

Within ten days, we were back in court for the client's second hearing, and we ultimately won a favorable outcome for her. I thought this action-packed first experience might have been an accident of good timing, but I soon learned that fast problem-solving is the norm at Legal Aid of NC (LANC).

My work experiences have included a wide range of writing assignments as well as many hands-on tasks. I have drafted pleadings, legal memoranda, demand letters and case

summaries. I have also enjoyed the opportunity to participate in intake interviews, employment hearings, bankruptcy hearings and domestic violence hearings.

The attorneys have patiently transitioned the summer interns from shadowing them on new tasks to conducting our own intake interviews and even representing clients in employment and domestic violence hearings. I have especially enjoyed conducting intake interviews with clients. Learning about the client's problem, figuring out what questions to ask, then presenting the case to the supervising attorney

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- Lauren Tozzi

and discussing solutions has been an excellent way to employ legal knowledge in a real

world context.

The summer internship at LANC is rich with real world experience. I have worked directly with clients, conducting intake interviews and hearing preparation in employment, consumer and housing matters.

Amongst other lessons, I have seen that many people who need legal assistance are fighting an uphill battle. Health problems that lead to unemployment can quickly put a client's car and home in jeopardy. At the same time that I have felt bitterly defeated by the complexity of many people's problems, I have been deeply inspired by their hopefulness and perseverance in seemingly impossible circumstances.

By far, the most valuable aspect of working at LANC has been the close mentoring of the staff. Legal Aid of NC attorneys are presented with one heart-wrenching, difficult problem after another, and watching them manage and resolve these crises has been a tremendous learning experience. I am most grateful for the chance to learn from these professionals as they calmly and competently handle what at first seems impossible.



Interested in Summer Internships?

See the column (page 4 of this newsletter):

"About Summer Internships at Legal Aid of North Carolina"

OR, visit the Legal Aid of North Carolina website:

www.legalaidnc.org

Units & Areas of Law

LANC-Winston-Salem Office

Family Law Unit

Family Law: Domestic Violence Protective Orders; No Contact Orders for Stalking or Non-consensual Sexual Conduct; Emergency/Temporary Child Custody.

HEEC Unit

(Housing, Education, Employment, Consumer)

Housing (private & subsidized): Illegal padlocking; illegal utility shut-off; repair issues; evictions; denial of subsidized housing; foreclosure on rental property.

Education: Personal Education Plans (PEPs); school suspensions and expulsions.

Employment: Unemployment compensation hearings; wage and hour claims; discrimination claims; expungement of criminal records; wrongful termination; FMLA claims; ADA claims; retaliatory termination.

Consumer: Repossession of vehicles; contract disputes; debt collection defense; judgment collection (exemptions); bankruptcy (Chapters 13 and 7 only); predatory lending; unfair trade practices and other consumer matters.

Mortgage Foreclosure Project:

Representation in foreclosure actions involving low-income families.

Public Benefits Unit

Disability: SSI/SSDI and Medicaid denials and benefits; overpayment, reduction and termination issues.

Food Stamps/Work First: Food stamp denials, reduction, and overpayment issues; Work First termination, non-compliance issues.

For questions, call the LANC-Winston-Salem Office, 336-725-9162, or visit the LANC-Winston-Salem Office webpage at:

www.legalaidnc.org/winstonsalem



