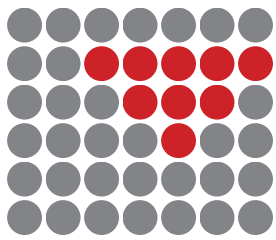


2023
Public
Interest
Awards
Night

Chicago-Kent College of Law

Public Interest Center

April 19, 2023



Welcome from the Director of the Public Interest Center



Thank you so much for attending our 2023 Public Interest Awards. Our students have been so involved this past year, and it is an honor to recognize them and our community partners. In Fall 2022, Chicago-Kent College of Law built upon its strong public interest tradition by launching a new Public Interest Center (PIC). The Center's Mission is to increase pro bono and community service and support careers in public interest law for Chicago-Kent students, while expanding access to justice in the community. We do this by coordinating school wide public service events and celebrating the pro bono and public interest work of our students and community partners.

From our 1L Service Day in August 2022 to our newly formed pro bono partnership with the Children's Legal Center, the Public Interest Center's inaugural year has been both busy and rewarding. We have coordinated opportunities throughout the school year for students to engage in a wide range of pro bono and community service activities. Our goal is to engage every Chicago-Kent student in at least 50 hours of pro bono during law school, helping to foster a mindset of using legal skills to give to others that will hopefully last their entire professional career.

This semester, the student-run Self-Help Resource Center at the Daley Center, a unique opportunity for students to assist pro se litigants who are unfamiliar with the court system, reopened. It was closed for three years because of Covid, but was able to reopen even better than before, thanks to a generous donation of laptops and printers from the law firm of Chapman & Cutler. Students can once again learn the vital skill of communicating with litigants and help close the justice gap.

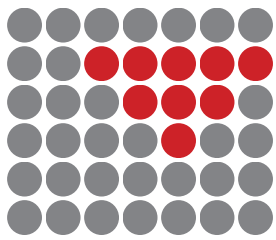
Earlier this year we lost a beloved colleague, Professor Vivien Gross, a cornerstone in Chicago-Kent's rich pro bono history. I have been at Chicago-Kent for 18 years and am honored to have worked with Vivien. I so admired Vivien and the way she would talk glowingly about what a great accomplishment it was for students to have taken the time to complete 50 hours or 250 hours of service. I observed and learned from Vivien how to support our Kent Justice Foundation students in their fundraising efforts as well as students devoting their time to pro bono efforts. She leaves a strong legacy, and she will be missed.

I hope you consider donating to the Public Interest Center or joining our pro bono efforts. Our work will continue to get stronger thanks to your engagement.

Thank you again for your support, and I hope to see you again next year.

Michelle Mohr Vodenik

Michelle Mohr Vodenik
Director, Public Interest Center



Program

Welcome

Anita Krug, Dean and Professor of Law

2023 Public Interest Student Awards and Recognition

Public Interest Center Highlights

Michelle Vodenik, Director

Certificate in Public Interest Law

Carolyn Shapiro, Director of Public Interest Certificate Program

Center for Access to Justice and Technology

Alexander Rabanal '12, Associate Director, The Law Lab

Public Interest Center Certificate of Service and Dean's Distinguished Public Service Award

Michelle Vodenik, Director, Public Interest Center

2023 Honorable Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Award

Militza Pagan, '17, Shriver Center on Poverty Law

John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship

Nancy Marder, Director, Justice John Paul Stevens Jury Center

Patent Hub Volunteers

Paul Holly, Director, Patent Hub

Alvin H. Baum Fellows

Keith I. Harley '88, Co-Director, Program in Environmental and Energy Law

Student Recognition

Michelle Vodenik, Director, Public Interest Center

In Memoriam of Professor Vivien C. Gross

Anita Krug, Dean and Professor of Law

Michelle Vodenik, Director of the Public Interest Center

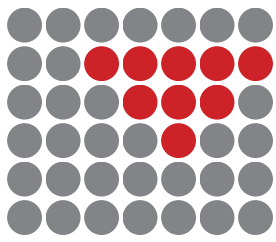
2023 Vivien C. Gross Pro Bono and Public Interest Leadership Award

Nicole Jansma, '23

2023 Ronald W. Staudt Public Interest Partner Award

Children's Legal Center, Laura Hoover, Director

Reception to Follow



Student Public Interest Recognition

Chicago-Kent Student Humanitarian Network

2023 New Orleans Service Trip Participants

Jordan Briggs*

Emily Barraza*

Noah Ramirez*

Catherine Arnpriester*

Allison Terry*

Sydney Briscoe-Curtis

Kaitlyn Timm

Sophie Ilunga

Viktoriia Chernova

Emanuel Centeno

Kaitlyn McCaskill

Henry Ferolie

**Executive board member*

Chicago-Kent Second Annual Service Week Initiative,

SBA Philanthropy Committee

Janie Sanford*

Alexandria Devlin*

Melisa Topic

Nicholas Brighty

Gabrielle Pilgrim

Romteen Bahramirad

Shadawn Coleman-Epps

Rebekah Heckler

**Co-chairs*

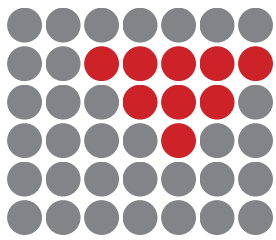
Public Interest Center Student Workers

Zainab Abid

Sylvie Durlacher

Rhys Green

Joseph Strom



Student Public Interest Recognition

Certificate in Public Interest Law, Class of 2023 Recipients

Aleathea Williams
Ashley Rice
Danielle Craan
Elizabeth Varon
Jessica Kibbe
Maya Simkin
Nicole Jansma

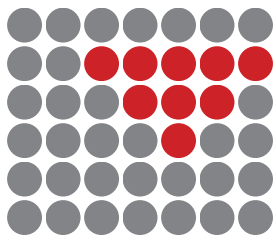
Center for Access to Justice and Technology

2022-2023 Self-Help Resource Center Student Volunteers

Supervising Manager: Nat Lewis
Resources Manager: Dulcie Xue
Associate Manager: Annie Poggioli
Training Manager: Riley Mullen

AK Alilonu
Allison Bettlach
Amanda Miller
Anna Christiansen
Ben Abrams
Clayton Kovich
Colin Boysen
Constantine Makris
Corey Hamilton-Buis
Dan Luiton
Derick Kat
Francesca Sikora
Fresa Mendez
Jacob Philip
Jake Marshall
Joseph Strom

Khizr Masalawala
Madeline Cintron
Madison Castleberry
Mollie Crook
Nancy Whaley
Nicholas Brighty
Niko Little
Nina Wilson
Rhys Green
Samantha Thomas
Sophia D'Amico
Sultan Alzahrani
Sydney Briscoe-Curtis
William Hausman
Zainab Abid



Student Public Interest Recognition

Public Interest Center (PIC)

Certificate of Service

Awarded to students who have volunteered 50 or more hours over the last academic year.

Jumana Abdelrahman, 50

Zainab Abid, 66

Sultan Alzahrani, 53

Emily Barraza, 66

Emile Boghos, 154

Nicholas Brighty, 68

Viktoriia Chernova, 55

Danielle Craan, 137

Corey Hamilton-Buis, 161

Isaac Harnden, 153

Yeonjoo Kim, 102

Elizabeth Lerum, 198

Nat Lewis, 50

Haya Muhammad, 50

Ian Murray, 70

Janie Sanford, 65

Maya Simkin, 50

Joseph Strom, 80

Nicholas Valdivia, 105

Aleathea Williams, 50

Katherine Withers, 97

Randy Xie, 67

Dean's Distinguished Public Service Award

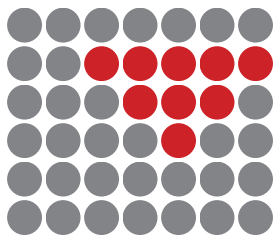
Awarded to students who have volunteered 250 or more hours over the last academic year.

Ashley Rice, 3L, 260 hours

Isabelle Abbott, 3L, 293 hours

Margaret Miles, 2L, 547 hours

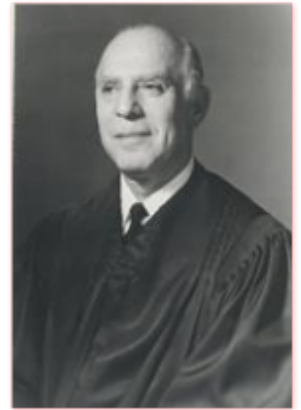
Nicole Jansma, 3L, 593 hours



Alumni Public Interest Recognition

Honorable Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Public Interest Law Award

Chicago-Kent College of Law enjoys a rich tradition of legal activism and public interest work. In honor of one of our most renowned alumni in this field, each year Chicago-Kent awards the Honorable Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Public Interest Law Award to alumni who have graduated in the last 15 years and who have demonstrated outstanding public interest leadership, reflecting" the character, life, and work of Judge Marovitz '25.



The Honorable Abraham Lincoln Marovitz '25

U.S. District Court Judge Abraham Lincoln Marovitz passed away on March 17, 2001 after serving as a government prosecutor, state senator, and state and federal judge. He saw active duty as a Marine in World War II, swore in more new U.S. citizens than any judge in the country, administered the oath of office to both Mayor Daleys, and escorted World's Fair fan dancer Sally Rand to the opening of the Palmer House's Empire Room in 1933.

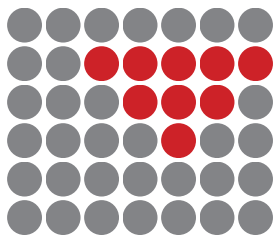
2023 Marovitz Award Recipient

Militza Pagan, Class of 2017



Militza M. Pagán is an economic justice staff attorney and former Skadden fellow at the Shriver Center on Poverty Law. Her work focuses on protecting and expanding immigrant access to public benefits and the rights of low-wage and domestic workers through litigation, policy advocacy, community outreach, coalition building, and legal training for legal service providers. At Shriver, Militza was part of the team litigating *Cook County v. Wolf*, a case that brought an end to the cruel and discriminatory 2019 federal public charge regulation. Militza has also led efforts to pass legislation providing domestic

workers in Chicago with the right to earn a higher minimum wage, overtime, and a written contract. Before law school, Militza was deputy director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and an AmeriCorps Fellow at the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. She received a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from Chicago-Kent. She currently sits on the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) Alumni Network Council.



Student Public Interest Recognition

Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship Recipients

The Stevens Public Interest Summer Fellowship at Chicago-Kent seeks to promote the public interest and social justice values that characterized Justice John Paul Stevens's work throughout his long career. The Stevens Fellowship at Chicago-Kent was established in 2011 and is awarded to two outstanding law students who have obtained unpaid summer positions at public interest organizations. Stevens Fellows are selected based on their commitment to public service and their potential for excellence throughout their legal careers. Stevens Fellows at Chicago-Kent are part of a large network of Stevens Fellows throughout the country.

Elizabeth Lerum '24

Joseph Strom '25

2022-2023 Alvin H. Baum Fellows

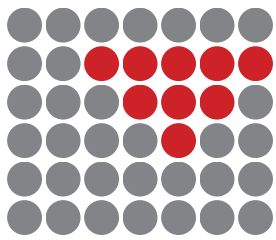
Collaboration between Chicago-Kent, the Greater Chicago Legal Clinic, and the Alvin H. Baum Family Fund.

Mackenzie Castle
Francesca Centracchio
Amber Damerow
Matthew Estenssoro
Jordan Farber
Caitlin Federici
Dakotah Olah

Mitchell Parker
Noah Parrill
Jacob Regan
Ashley Rice
Carly Rogers
Katherine Withers
Taylor Young

2022-2023 Chicago-Kent Patent Hub Student Volunteers

Albert Ponce-Cruz	Kahlan Noel
Alison Moon	Katelyn Holcomb
Catalina Medrano	Mackenna Dunn
Daniela Dulworth	Owen Bradley
Ethan Tibbs	Rebecca Fauver
Grace Beach	Robert Vaughn
Jessica Klitsch	Samantha Thomas
Jordana Kaye	Steven Criner
Joshua Kibert	Victor Chahin
Randy Xie	Zariya Jeffers



Student Public Interest Recognition

Constitutional Democracy Project Volunteers

2022 You(th) Decide

Paul Ansani*
Emile Boghos
Jackson Frank
Danielle Gensburg
Daniel Gomez*
Grace Heidorn
Megan Manoj
Kyla Marshall
Madeline Moore
Kelsea Nolot
Jonathan Panton
Jonathan Potter
Jacob Regan
Kostiantyn Sheiko
Samantha Thomas*
Hannah Werner
Nancy Whaley*

We the People Judges/Facilitators

Paul Ansani*
Joseph Strom
Mark Tamvakis*

Equal Justice Under Law

Natalie Bober
Jay Castillo
Daniel Gomez*
Diayan Rajamohan
Mark Tamvakis*
Samantha Thomas*
Nancy Whaley*
Aleathea Williams
Mel Williams

**Volunteered for multiple projects*

3L Non-Profit Board Leadership

Aleathea Williams

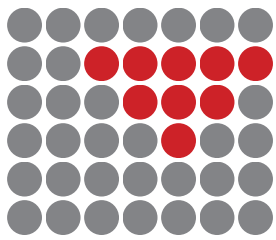
Intern Representative, Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) Board of Directors
Member, PILI's Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
Member, Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights NextGen Leadership Council

Nicole Jansma

Member, National Advisory Committee for Equal Justice Works
Associate Board, Esperanza Community Services

Kent Justice Foundation Summer Fellowship Recipients

Alisha Panthier, Cook County Public Defender's Office
Amanda Miller, Illinois Prison Project
Audrey Park, Legal Aid Chicago
Ben Abrams, organization to be confirmed
Colin Boysen, McHenry County State's Attorney's Office
Jackson Frank, United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT)
Jordan Madden, Hamilton Law Office
Ricardo Alvarez, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Rhys Green, Cabrini Green Legal Aid
Sam Clendenning, Cook County Public Defender's Office
Sydney Briscoe-Curtis, Orleans Public Defender's Office
Trevor Guidry, Cook County Public Defender's Office



In Memoriam Professor Vivien C. Gross



Professor Gross was kind, caring, and generous with her time. Her years of dedication laid the foundation of what now makes up Chicago-Kent's Public Interest Center.

When Michelle Vodenik asked Vivien how the Public Interest Resource Center (PIRC) – now the Public Interest Center - started, Vivien relayed that a student came to her and said, "I want us

to have a way to track pro bono and community service hours," and she said to that student, "That's a great idea, we should do it." Vivien would hold an awards event in the spring through PIRC to recognize students for doing 50 hours or 250 hours of service.

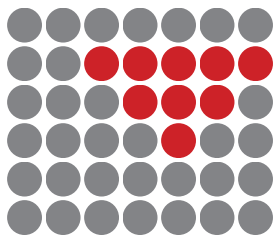
That ceremony eventually expanded and became known as the Public Interest Awards. For decades, Vivien also served as the faculty adviser for the Kent Justice Foundation – our public interest student organization that raises money to support students in unpaid summer internships.

Vivien was appreciated immensely by her colleagues as well as students. Professor Richard Gonzalez, a long-time colleague and friend of Vivien's in the Law Offices, recalled "We could hear her meeting with the students. She was always so terrific with them. She didn't cut corners. She'd talk to them for a half hour. We're going to miss that."

Clinical Professor Pamela Kentra worked closely with Gross for 28 years. She helped teach some of the immensely popular legal externship courses. She was also previously a student of Gross's. "She's just irreplaceable. It's unbelievable the legacy she's built here," Kentra says. "I think she cared profoundly about each and every one of her students. She was deeply involved with what they were doing and really understood the day to day. One of our last conversations was about a student who was struggling. We were brainstorming solutions," Kentra adds. "Up until the very end of her life, she was trying to figure out how to make the program the best it could possibly be for each and every student."

Dean Anita Krug remarked, "Vivien had been battling cancer for many years but, throughout it all, consistently remained committed to Chicago-Kent and to educating the next generation of lawyers—and never ceased to enjoy working with students"

For all of these reasons we are proud to continue Professor Gross' Legacy by renaming one of our student awards in her honor: "The Vivien C. Gross Pro Bono and Public Interest Leadership Award."



Leadership and Partner Recognition

2023 Vivien C. Gross Pro Bono & Public Interest Leadership Award

The Vivien C. Gross Pro Bono & Public Interest Leadership Award recognizes a graduating law student who has made outstanding contributions to public interest law through their pro bono contributions as well as leadership. The award, formerly known as the "Pro Bono & Community Service Leadership Award" has been renamed this year to honor Professor Gross for her significant contributions to public interest law.



Nicole Jansma '23

Nicole has a deep and lasting commitment to service that is reflected in her receipt of the Dean's Distinguished Public Service Award and Public Interest Law Certificate; her current service on the National Advisory Committee of Equal Justice Works – a national nonprofit dedicated to supporting students in launching their public interest law careers; on the Associate Board of Esperanza Community Services, and her service to the Chicago-Kent community. Her pro bono work involves volunteering largely with indigent criminal defendants – at the Office of the State Appellate Defender, the Federal Defender's Office, and with the prison response unit of the

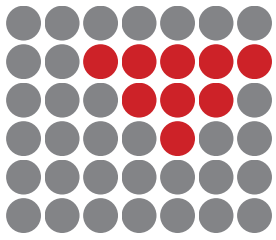
John Howard Association - a prison watch group. At Chicago-Kent, Nicole serves as President of the Kent Justice Foundation – an organization that she has taken to new heights this year by working diligently to rebuild events, such as the KJF Auction, that suffered greatly during the worst of the Covid pandemic. Under her leadership, the Kent Justice Foundation is strong again – set on a path to raise significant funds to support public interest students in the years ahead.

2023 Ronald W. Staudt Public Interest Partner Award

The Ronald W. Staudt Public Interest Partner Award at Chicago-Kent College of Law recognizes organizations that make outstanding contributions to public interest law and provide opportunities for Chicago-Kent students to gain meaningful experience in public interest practice. In 2017, we changed the name of the award to the Ronald W. Staudt Public Interest Partner Award in honor of Professor Staudt's retirement and his dedication to public interest.

Children's Legal Center

The Children's Legal Center (CLC) provides free immigration legal services to children; and families with children; including refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, and victims of human trafficking and domestic violence. We appreciate the many opportunities the Children's Legal Center has provided to Chicago-Kent students to develop excellent legal skills serving immigrant clients; and in particular, how flexible the CLC has been accepting students for the hours they can provide to you. Whether a student can volunteer for 4 hours or 40 hours - the CLC finds a place for them to assist immigrant clients in need. This past year has been particularly significant, in that we have had the pleasure of hosting two full-day Asylum Clinics - in a collaboration between our Immigration Law Society, our Public Interest Center, and the Children's Legal Clinic. At the most recent clinic, 28 Chicago-Kent students spent the day assisting asylum seekers with their applications.



Sponsor Recognition

Thank you to our sponsors generous donors, Faegre Drinker LLP at the Supporter Level, and Chapman and Cutler LLP who donated laptops and printers for relaunch of Self-Help Resource Center.

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Chicago-Kent College of Law

Public Interest Center