



Host Site: Alaska Legal Services Corporation

Project: Pro Bono Training and General Practices

Location: Juneau, AK or Bethel, AK (depending on student preference)

Description of Fellow Project:

Alaska Legal Services has a Pro Bono Training Academy (PBTA)—a training system for pro bono attorneys. The PBTA has three components: 1) designing comprehensive distance learning webinars on five specific topics faced by the rural Alaska poverty community (public benefits, bankruptcy, housing issues, elder law, and consumer issues); 2) creating a mentorship program matching newer pro bono attorneys with more experienced mentors; and 3) working with law students who will both assist in the PBTA and represent rural clients. The goal of the PBTA is to provide more support to pro bono attorneys thereby increasing their willingness to take on extended service (or higher) cases. Because of the low percentage of attorneys practicing in rural areas, the need for pro bono volunteers is especially high in the rural offices. The PBTA will focus on placing cases from clients living in the targeted rural areas.

The law student will develop content for the PBTA and participate in the expansion of the PBTA to non-attorney volunteers. The law student will work with rural office attorneys offering direct services to clients. As an example (and what we have found to be successful in the past), the student will work with rural Alaska Native Elders to draft and execute wills—which are of special importance in rural Alaska due to unique property issues. The student will also help coordinate outreach and training on Alaska’s Legal Navigator (formerly known as the Microsoft Legal Access Portal) --a ground breaking initiative to simplify the process through which people seek and access civil legal assistance developed through a partnership between Microsoft, LSC, ALSC, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and Pro Bono Net. The Navigator is expected to launch in early 2019.

