



Law Students Learn About Social and Economic Justice Issues at Conference

By Christine Cristiano

The Minority Outreach Program of the Lawyers Coordinating Committee (LCC) sponsored a conference at the American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organization's headquarters (AFL-CIO) in Washington, D.C. The June 5-6 conference was host to 26 law students who had the opportunity to participate in the law clerk training and conference and learn about the ongoing battle for social and economic justice. The AFL-CIO is a "voluntary federation of 56 national and international labor unions, and represents workers from all walks of life."



06/12/09

Twelve years ago, the LLC created The Minority Outreach Program to encourage students of visible

minorities to apply for openings at LLC firms and legal departments for summer clerkship. Students currently enrolled in the clerkship will also take part in the LLC Mentoring Program in which they will work with established attorneys who lend support and guidance to the students throughout the duration of the program and thereafter.

John Sweeney, President of AFL-CIO, attended the conference and remarked that "today, more than ever, working people need to have bright, creative, young lawyers on their side."

Since the program's inception, over 350 minority law students have gained valuable exposure to the labor movement and labor law while participating in the program and attending the conferences.

Sweeney addressed the students and stated, "I say that not only because we need to have you in the ongoing battle for social and economic justice, fighting against corporate greed and defending the rights of working people, but because we also need your fresh, creative and unique views on what a proactive agenda looks like."

During the conference, participants gained some valuable experience and knowledge regarding issues pertaining to "the relationship between trade, globalization and workers' rights; the labor movement's involvement in civil rights; the economic crisis; the interconnections among social justice, organizing and the law; and immigration and immigrant workers."

The AFL-CIO also sponsors the Law Student Union Summer (LSUS) consisting of an "exciting 10-week internship for law students that combines front-line labor-related public interest legal work with grassroots organizing in real, ongoing campaigns by AFL-CIO affiliated unions in various regions of the country." The program will give the interns the chance to get involved in legal and corporate research, writing, community outreach, member mobilization, and legislative campaigns. They will also gain experience in general litigation, canvassing and attend meetings and home visits."

Interns enrolled in the program are supervised by attorneys and union organizers, and will receive a weekly stipend, transportation and housing. To qualify for the program, applicants must be enrolled as a first or second year student at an accredited law school and have a demonstrated interest in labor law. Preference is given to students who have successfully completed labor law courses and are experienced in organizing and activism, with community, political, campus or other social justice organizations.

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