



VLP Current Events

NSBA and VLP Recognize Law Students Through New Outstanding Law Student Advocate Award



Taylor Hayes



Deanna Hobbs



Tessa Lengeling



Lydia Mann



Sarah O'Neill



Amy Sonnenfeld



Hannes Zetzche

In April, the NSBA & VLP initiated a new award for law students making significant contributions to the Tenant Assistance Project (TAP), an eviction defense project that launched in Lancaster County on April 1, 2020. Students receiving the “Tenant Assistance Project—Outstanding Law Student Advocate” Award must exhibit exemplary efforts in support of TAP by going above and beyond expectations in their effort to support the program and contribute to its success. Awards will be presented three times annually, in May, August and December. Students honored this past year include:

Taylor Hayes and Hannes Zetzche

During the spring semester of 2020, Taylor and Hannes developed the process and forms that would be required to facilitate a program like TAP. They attended several hearings to observe the eviction process in Lancaster County and attended numerous meetings with housing advocates across the state and nationally. They conducted a significant amount of research on the feasibility of the program and into the relevant laws and rules applicable to evictions. Taylor and Hannes were the first student attorneys to participate in the TAP program, assisting several tenants at the courthouse at the end of the spring term.

Amy Sonnenfeld and Lydia Mann

Summer 2020 was the first full semester where TAP was made part of the Clinical program at the College of Law; and, Amy and Lydia dove in head first. Each represented numerous tenants over the summer and regularly volunteered to cover additional shifts or create additional eviction defense packets to aid attorneys representing their clients. Their zeal for representing tenants was unmatched. Both Lydia and Amy continued to support TAP long after their time in the Clinic had concluded.

Tessa Lengeling and Sarah O'Neill

Tessa and Sarah began working within the TAP program in August 2020. They continued to contribute to TAP through April 2021. Sarah and Tessa collectively created more eviction defense packets and volunteered for more shifts than any other law students during the fall of 2020. Due to their additional volunteering, they were able to take on complex matters early in the semester. Both of them also continued to volunteer through TAP over the entirety of the holiday break when volunteers were sparse, and when there was a significant increase in hearings as a result of the anticipated expiration of the CDC moratorium on January 1.



VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

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Deanna Hobbs

Deanna's dedication and enthusiasm for TAP began over the holiday break, over a month before she was set to begin her TAP work as part of the Civil Clinic in mid-January. Deanna volunteered over a dozen times over the holiday break, sometimes appearing every single day in a given week. By the time she began in the Clinic, she was at near full speed and was able to run solo on many cases from day one. Due to the experience she gained over the break, Deanna was put in a position to mentor other Clinic students as well as 1Ls and 2Ls who volunteered. In her work, she was extremely thoughtful in her analysis of each case, always zealously advocating for her clients' interests.

VLP is indebted to these students for their passion, commitment and skill. Their efforts ensure volunteer attorneys are equipped to represent tenants within minutes of meeting their clients. Their talent not only makes the project possible, but it expands the capacity and ensures equal access to justice for all. Congratulations to Taylor, Hannes, Amy, Lydia, Tessa, Sarah and Deanna!



EVOLVES

Essential Volunteers Offering Legal Services for Victims,
Ensuring Safety

VLP Reduced Fee Program for Rural Victims of Crime

Program Description: VLP matches eligible victims of crime in rural Nebraska who need legal assistance with private attorneys who provide legal services on a reduced fee basis.

Case priorities:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Divorce | ■ Paternity, Custody & Child Support | ■ Modification of Orders |
| ■ Protective Orders | ■ Bankruptcy/Debt | ■ Name Change |
| | | ■ Immigration |

Benefits:

- Compensation of \$60.00 per hour
- Malpractice insurance coverage
- Recognition in NSBA media
- Free legal research through UNL Pro Bono Research Fellows Program

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