

School of Law

Advocating for Justice



Public Interest Centers and Institutes: \$5 million

Background

The School of Law is seeking \$5 million to support its existing **public interest centers and institutes**. Many graduates of USD's School of Law are employed in the public sector. Nearly one in four of our recent graduates are employed by the government or in public interest jobs. Competition for these jobs is intense. Each of our faculty-directed public interest clinics and institutes has the dual purpose of training our students for public service, and offering students research, learning and advocacy opportunities on important policy issues that impact the San Diego region and California.

Additionally, these centers and institutes have profound impact on laws and regulations nationally and internationally.

Objectives

At a time of declining revenues from tuition, these centers increasingly must rely on funding from grants and the generosity of our donors. Additional resources are needed to sustain the law school's four public interest centers and institutes, as well as the school's strong commitment to public policy research, training and advocacy.

Center for Public Interest Law: The Center for Public Interest Law (CPIL) serves as an academic center of research and advocacy in regulatory and public interest law. The center focuses its efforts on the study of state regulatory agencies. Under the supervision of experienced public interest attorneys and advocates, the center's law student interns study California agencies that regulate business, professions, and trades. The CPIL publishes the *California Regulatory Law Reporter*, a unique legal journal that covers the activities and decisions of more than 25 major California regulatory agencies.

In addition to its academic program, CPIL has an advocacy component. Its faculty, professional staff and interns represent the interests of the unorganized and

underrepresented in California's legislature, courts and regulatory agencies. The center attempts to make the regulatory functions of California government more efficient and visible by serving as a public monitor of state regulatory activity.

Children's Advocacy Institute: The Children's Advocacy Institute (CAI) is one of the nation's premier academic, research, and advocacy organizations working to improve the lives of children and youth. Its current focus is on improving the child protection and foster care systems, and enhancing resources that are available to youth aging out of foster care.

The center also trains law students and attorneys to be effective child advocates throughout their legal careers. The CAI offers law students three distinct clinical opportunities (dependency, delinquency and policy) to advocate on behalf of children and youth. Its Dependency Counsel Training Program also provides comprehensive training to licensed attorneys engaged in or contemplating Dependency Court practice. The center's research and advocacy component — conducted through its offices in San Diego, Sacramento, and Washington, D.C. — seeks to leverage change for children and youth through impact litigation, regulatory and legislative advocacy, and public education.

Energy Policy Initiatives Center: The Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC) is a nonprofit academic and research center that studies energy policy issues that directly affecting the San Diego region and California, and that often have national implications. EPIC integrates research and analysis, legal training and public education, and serves as a source of legal and policy expertise and information in the development of sustainable solutions that meet our future energy needs. Through its seminars and course offerings, EPIC engages law students in legal and policy research in the following areas: renewable energy credits; distributed generation; solar laws; advanced electricity grid technology; and public interest program funding. In

addition, EPIC monitors regulatory and legislative activity related to energy policy issues affecting the San Diego region and California.

Center for Education and Policy Law: The Center for Education Policy and Law is a joint undertaking of the School of Law and the School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES). Its mission is to foster a better link between educational research, policymaking and practice. The center undertakes commissioned empirical and legal research on education policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels — enhancing communication between education leaders and local and state-level policymakers; and facilitating understanding among USD law students and graduate students in SOLES about the policymaking process through courses, internships, and research opportunities.

Impact

The School of Law's centers and institutes help support and build its reputation by attracting and retaining top faculty members and students, and involving them in training and advocacy programs that impact law and policy at the local, state and national levels.

A key goal of the Leading Change Campaign is to make each of the School of Law's centers and institutes financially self-sustaining and to ensure they continue to be a vital part of how we train our students, serve our communities, and advance the understanding of important legal and policy issues.

For More Information

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