Tuesday, March 3, 1987, at the hour of 9:00 A.M.

Present:

Mr. Jonathan L. Haas, and Mr. Geoffrey A. Fields, Senior Law Student at the Legal Aid Bureau, Legal Aid Clinic, appeared on behalf of the plaintiff;

Mr. Laurel B. Rector, Assistant Attorney General, appeared on behalf of the defendant.

In Search of the Ideal Intake System

Legal Aid Notes

New telephone screening process helps meet rising demands for legal aid

The Legal Aid Bureau of Chicago (L.A.B) initiated a new telephone screening process at its intake center this month to meet an increased demand for legal aid services.

Over the past two years, the Bureau has been serving an average of 2,500 people per year. The increased demand is attributed to a variety of factors, including a rising unemployment rate and an increase in the number of low-income families seeking legal assistance.

The new system, which was implemented in January 1987, involves a screening process that helps identify cases that are most likely to result in legal aid services. This process is designed to ensure that legal aid is provided to those who are most in need.

Advocacy Efforts End Barrier to Energy Assistance

With the help of law students, more low-income families can now receive fuel assistance payments

The Legal Aid Bureau of Chicago (L.A.B) has launched an advocacy effort to end a barrier to energy assistance for low-income families. The effort is aimed at ensuring that eligible families receive the fuel assistance payments they are entitled to.

The fuel assistance program, which is funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, provides assistance to low-income families for the purchase of heating fuel. However, many families have found it difficult to navigate the program and receive the assistance they need.

The Legal Aid Bureau has partnered with law students to provide legal assistance to families seeking fuel assistance. The students work with families to navigate the application process and ensure that they receive the necessary assistance.

Notice to All First Year Students

Summer Jobs with the Mandel Clinic

The Mandel Legal Aid Clinic at the University of Chicago Law School has several summer positions available. The Clinic is seeking energetic and dedicated students for these positions.

First-year law students selected for the program will work under the close supervision of the Clinic's attorneys and will be responsible for the legal work involved in their positions. The summer program with the Clinic provides students an excellent opportunity to become involved in a variety of civil legal problems that affect the poor. Currently, the attorneys at the Clinic specialize in the areas of employment discrimination, civil rights, public utilities, and welfare law.

Compensation for the positions has not yet been set for the upcoming summer. Students in the program last summer received a $4,000.00 stipend for the thirteen weeks.
Dean's Page

The Mandel Legal Aid Clinic

In an address before the Legal Club of Chicago in 1951, then-Dean Edward H. Levi offered a vision: "Suppose a clinic were attached to a university law school which handled actual cases under the supervision of a trained staff and under the general guidance of the faculty of the school. It would be possible then to take a number of students and to have them assist in the preparation of cases. ... This kind of clinic could undertake legal aid [and] civil liberties cases... If the work of the clinic were of high quality, there seems little doubt that it would fill a public need while at the same time it would provide an opportunity for research and training."

Building upon this vision, in 1959 the University of Chicago Law School established the Edwin F. Mandel Legal Aid Clinic to further "educational, research, and experimental work in the field of Legal Aid" and to create "a model Legal Aid-Law School Clinic program." In the almost thirty years since its founding, the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic has provided quality legal service to the poor and has served as a national leader in the field of clinical legal education.

The Clinic today provides direct legal advice and representation to about 1,000 indigent clients each year and serves thousands of other poor people through class actions and other forms of group representation. Recent litigation projects of the Clinic have involved racial and gender discrimination in employment, the rights of the disabled (especially handicapped children), and the rights of the indigent in such diverse contexts as welfare, housing, and utilities.

Over the years, the Clinic has shifted its emphasis away from routine, single client representation toward more complex forms of "impact" and public interest litigation for the poor. The Clinic has won several landmark decisions in the United States Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and the Illinois Supreme Court. The Clinic's emphasis on improving the law through legal advocacy is especially appropriate for a law school at one of the nation's leading research universities.

The clinic teachers include Professor Gary H. Palm, who serves as Director of the Clinic, five full-time attorneys who serve as Lecturers in Law or Clinical Fellows, and a professional social worker.

Approximately thirty percent of the students at the Law School work in the Clinic sometime during their second or third year. The Clinic's educational program, which extends across the second and third years of a student's legal education, represents the culmination of long-standing efforts to integrate practical legal experience with formal legal education. Students who participate in the Clinic act not as mere observers, but as full-fledged student attorneys with responsibility for their own cases, from the initial interview through final disposition, under the constant supervision of a full-time clinical teacher.

Over the course of the two-year educational experience, the Clinic staff plans an individualized program for each student. In the fall and winter quarters of the second year of law school, students concentrate on research, legal writing, drafting, inter-viewing, counseling, negotiation, informal advocacy, preparation of briefs, and the responsibilities of a trial assistant. In the spring quarter of the second year, students participating in the Clinic may enroll in the Litigation Methods course. This course, which extends over four quarters, is taught by members of the Clinic staff and carries six hours of academic credit.

Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711 authorizes third-year students participating in the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic to appear in state courts on behalf of clients. Thus, the third-year program provides each student with the opportunity to represent clients individually and to learn trial skills and strategies. The Litigation Methods course, which operates in close coordination with ongoing litigation, serves as a continuous planning session as each student prepares for actual court appearances in a range of different matters.

The Mandel Legal Aid Clinic, which receives approximately 18 percent of its funding from United Charities of Chicago, 15 percent from government grants and attorneys' fees, and 65 percent from the Law School and its alumni, plays a pivotal role in enabling the Law School to meet its educational and public service responsibilities. The Clinic fulfills Edward Levi's vision.

Geoffrey R. Stone
Harry Kalven, Jr., Professor of Law
Dean of the Law School