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The Public Interest Law Consortuim (PILC)

**A project of the Minnesota Justice Foundation (MJF), the University of Minnesota
School of Law, and the William Mitchell College of Law**

**Formative Evaluation
Summer, 1996**

**Produced by Stephanie Agresta, Humphrey Institute
for the Minnesota Justice Foundation**

CURA RESOURCE COLLECTION

**Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
University of Minnesota
330 Humphrey Center**

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I. Introduction

The Public Interest Law Consortium (PILC) is dedicated to building a collaborative service learning component into the curricula of the University of Minnesota and William Mitchell Law Schools that provides desperately needed legal services to low-income Minnesotans while also educating law students on their need to perform pro bono legal work on behalf of the community. This cooperative project of the Minnesota Justice Foundation (MJF), the University of Minnesota School of Law and the William Mitchell College of Law, is funded in part by a three-year grant under President Clinton's Learn and Serve America program, and has just completed its second year of programming. In an attempt to further develop their program areas and analyze data collected thus far, MJF requested and received funding from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota to initiate this formative evaluation.

Why Evaluate:

Evaluation is a critical element of effective educational programs. Evaluation of a training event or community program can help planners improve their events, and provide information on the extent to which they are achieving their objectives. The purpose of evaluation is to produce information that can be used to report on the overall success of the event and to improve future program activities. A list of evaluation resources and references is available in Appendix A.

Methodology:

This formative evaluation relied heavily on the qualitative analysis of open ended responses on evaluation instruments and statistical analysis, mostly descriptive in nature, of the quantitative information. Larger themes were drawn from trends in the responses and examples from these themes are given in this report.. This use of both quantitative and qualitative methods allowed staff to make statistical comparison, while also benefiting from the rich information provided by participants open-ended responses.

Report Goal:

This formative evaluation looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the PILC program and makes suggestions for improvement based on the insights of participants provided in the collected data. Additionally, revised evaluation tools will make further evaluation of the program area more successful.

II. Suggested Revisions for Evaluation Tools:

Suggested edits have been made for the Supervising Attorney Evaluation, the Student Evaluation, the Pro Bono Projects Training Session Evaluations and additional tools have been added, including a pre- and post- survey for participants in the Pro Bono Projects Training Sessions. Some surveys have been shortened, although the majority of edits are related to how questions are asked and how the survey is organized. An attempt was made to make these surveys more “user-friendly” and direct. When reviewing these suggestions, MJF staff might want to consider other ways to make the surveys more utilization-focused and concise. It is helpful to ask oneself how the information collected will be used once it is collected and analyzed. The disk included with this report contains these drafts, should the MJF staff choose to incorporate these changes.

Please note that the revisions include:

- Removing questions regarding the specifics of the student’s “daily work” from the supervising attorney’s survey. Many attorneys did not know the exact percentages of time students spent on activities or specific reference to the characteristics of clients. Generally, people are more likely to answer questions that ask them to estimate such specific information rather than recall it exactly. This will prevent large amounts of missing data in the future. Additionally, the question regarding the area of law also reflected no major difference, and was omitted from the attorney survey.
- Short pre- and post-training surveys have been included for the Pro Bono Projects Training Sessions. These can be attached to the surveys handed out at Sessions 1 and 3.
- A draft of a client feedback survey is also included in this section. Please see Client Feedback portion Section IV, “Student and Supervising Attorney Findings.” This survey could be adapted into a “verbal” one, and the law student could receive training on eliciting verbal feedback from clients at the end of the internship.

**The Public Interest Law Consortium (PILC)
Supervising Attorney Evaluation Form
Fall, 1996**

**A project of the Minnesota Justice Foundation (MJF), the University of Minnesota
School of Law and the William Mitchell College of Law**

This survey is an important part of our evaluation of the field component of the Public Interest Law Consortium (PILC) and MJF. Your answers are very important and will help us to further develop our program, and provide our students with effective feedback on their performance.

Information from your evaluation will be shared with the Corporation for National Service and the Otto Bremer Foundation, the organizations which provide significant portions of PILC funding. **All identifying information will be removed from materials that are shared with outside funders.**

This evaluation will also be used by the student's instructor in determining his/her grade. You may be contacted by the instructor or MJF staff for more information.

Your responses regarding the law student will not be shared with that person unless you so indicate on this form.

1. May MJF and the U of M share your comments from Section II with this law student? yes _____ no _____

[You can add additional questions, such as your existing question regarding the potential for involvement in a focus group or more in-depth interview.]

We appreciate your time and effort to complete this survey.

Directions: Please carefully read and answer the following questions, and return your survey to _____ by _____.

I. Supervising Attorney and Agency Information:

1. Name:
2. Agency:
3. Contact Information:

4. Semester of PILC Internship:
5. PILC Student:
School:
6. Main area of law that student worked in:

II. PILC Student Performance Appraisal

7. Throughout the semester, did you have an opportunity to provide the PILC student with feedback on his/her performance?
 Yes
 No
8. Did the PILC student complete his/her work to your satisfaction?
 Yes
 No

If not, please explain.

9. Was your PILC student's work completed on time?
 Yes
 No

If not, please explain any reasons which may have prevented timely completion.

10. Please rate the quality of your PILC student's written work (if applicable)?

Poor			Average			Excellent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Please rate the quality of the student's interaction with client(s) based upon your observations (if applicable).

Poor			Average			Excellent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. To the extent that you are able to determine, were clients satisfied with the services provided by the student?

Yes

No

13. Did the PILC student seem to understand and handle the legal work your agency performs?

Yes

No

If not, please explain.

14. Did you have the opportunity to discuss the ethical dimension of the work that you do with this law student?

Yes

No

If so, please briefly describe the nature of the discussion.

III. PILC and MJF Feedback:

15. Please mark the ways in which having a PILC student has affected your agency's activities and services. (Mark all that apply).

- Increased number of people receiving services
- Increased the amount of service provided per client
- Increased the variety or breadth of services available
- Increased the quality of service provided
- Decreased the workload of paid staff
- Increased the number of volunteers serving your organization
- Other (please list):

16. What are the most significant benefits your agency has obtained from working with PILC?

17. What are the most significant challenges your agency has faced in working with PILC?

18. Is there any specific training that you think should be done in the classroom component of PILC to better prepare a student for placement with you agency?

19. If you are still with your agency, do you plan to participate as a supervising attorney for a PILC student in the future?

Yes

No

If not, please explain:

20. Please list any other suggestions you have for increasing the success and effectiveness of this program.

[Add any additional or timely questions.]

**Thank you again for your time and effort.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).**

**The Public Interest Law Consortium (PILC)
Student Evaluation Form
Fall, 1996**

**A project of the Minnesota Justice Foundation (MJF), the University of Minnesota
School of Law and the William Mitchell College of Law**

This survey is an important part of our evaluation of the field component of the Public Interest Law Consortium (PILC) and MJF. Your answers are very important and will help us to further develop our program, and provide collaborating organizations with feedback.

Information from your evaluation will be shared with the Corporation for National Service and the Otto Bremer Foundation, the organizations which provide significant portions of PILC funding. **All identifying information will be removed from materials that are shared with outside funders.**

Your responses regarding your supervising attorney and field placement will not be shared with that person unless you so indicate on this form.

1. May MJF and the U of M share your comments from Section II with your supervising attorney? yes _____ no _____

[You can add additional questions, such as your existing question regarding the potential for involvement in a focus group or more in-depth interview. Additionally, you could consider the idea of placing portions of this evaluation in a notebook that could be accessed by other law students attempting to select their internship site.]

We appreciate your time and effort to complete this survey.

Directions: Please carefully read and answer the following questions, and return your survey to _____ by _____.

I. Demographic and Internship Information:

1. Name:
2. School:
3. Semester:
4. Agency Name:
5. Supervising Attorney(s):
6. Main area of law you worked in:

To the best of your ability, please provide estimates for the following questions:

7. Number of Clients Served: _____

Percentage of Clients whose ethnic origin(s) were:

White (non-hispanic) _____%	African-American (non-Hispanic) _____%
Hispanic/Latino _____%	Asian/Pacific Islander _____%
Native American/ Alaskan native _____%	Other: _____%

8. Type of Legal work performed:
(Please estimate the percentage of time spent on the following tasks)

Legal research _____%	Court or administrative hearing appearance _____%
Drafted documents _____%	Client interview/Intake _____%
Wrote memos/briefs _____%	Other: _____%

II. The Internship Experience

9. Were you able to complete the work that was assigned to you to your satisfaction?
 Yes
 No

If not, please describe any reasons you feel prevented you from completing the work.

10. Do you feel that the work provided to you was too much to complete in the required amount of hours for credit?
 Yes
 No

11. Were you satisfied with the variety of type of work assignments that were given to you?
 Yes
 No

If not, please list the type of work you would have preferred to be doing?

12. Were you given the opportunity to observe the attorneys from the program in court, at administrative hearings or during client interviews?
 Yes
 No

13. Were you given clear instructions regarding the tasks and duties assigned to you?
 Yes
 No

14. Do you receive adequate feedback and comments on the work that you completed?
 Yes
 No

15. Do you feel your supervising attorney used your time and skills efficiently?

Yes

No

16. Did you feel your supervising attorney had adequate knowledge of the law and issues you were working on?

Yes

No

17. Did you understand the legal issues involved in the project(s)?

Yes

No

18. Did you receive client feedback on the projects you worked on?

Yes

No

If yes, what was that feedback?

19. Did you have the opportunity to discuss ethical dimensions of the work that you did with your supervising attorneys?

Yes

No

If so, please briefly describe:

20. Please mark which of the following benefits you gained from the work experience (Mark all that apply):

Gained a better understanding of the types of legal problems faced by low-income people

Gained a greater understanding of the need for legal services for low-income people

Developed problem solving skills needed to address the legal needs of low-income and disadvantaged individuals

Increased substantive legal skills

Greater understanding of the role of a lawyer

Other

27. Did the topics you discussed in class compliment the work you performed in your PILC placement?
 Yes
 No
28. Was the MJF staff responsive to your needs?
 Yes
 No
29. Was enough information provided to you by MJF regarding the project and host office that you selected for your field work?
 Yes
 No
30. What other types of training would you have liked before or during your field experience from MJF and the law school?
31. What 3 things do you wish you would have know before starting your PILC placement?
32. Please share any other comments, ideas or stories that you experienced in your PILC placement that stand out in your mind.

**Thank you again for your time and effort.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).**

Pro Bono Projects
Session 1 -- Fall, 1996
Session Evaluation
Date _____

Your assessment of today's activities will assist us in further developing our program areas. Please rate each activity listed below for its usefulness by circling the appropriate number.

	Speaker, Name							
Not useful				Somewhat useful				Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

	Small group discussion, Title							
Not useful				Somewhat useful				Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

	Video, Title							
Not useful				Somewhat useful				Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Please feel free to share your comments on any aspect of this workshop and on the training series. If you rated any of the activities above high (8 or 9) or low (1 or 2), please describe briefly the reasons why that session was particularly useful or not useful. [Use back of sheet if more space is needed].

Thank you for your feedback and attendance.
Your responses are very important to us.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).

Pro Bono Projects
Session 1 -- Fall, 1996
Pre-Training Evaluation
Date

We are also interested in your past experience in the area of public interest law and expectations for this training series. Please take a moment to answer the following questions. Your answers to these questions will be kept **confidential**.

1. Have you ever done volunteer work in the area of public interest law before?
 Yes
 No

2. If yes, did you receive training as a part of this volunteer experience? If so, please list the type of training you received?
 Yes

 No

3. What are your expectations for this training series?

4. What are you hoping to gain or learn from the volunteer placement?

5. What skills do you think you will bring to your volunteer placement experience?

Again, thank you for feedback. We appreciate your dedication to MJF.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).

Pro Bono Projects
Session 2 -- Fall, 1996
Session Evaluation
Date

Your assessment of today's activities will assist us in further developing our program areas. Please rate each activity listed below for its usefulness by circling the appropriate number.

	Speaker, Name							
Not useful	Somewhat useful							Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

	Small group discussion, Title							
Not useful	Somewhat useful							Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

	Video, Title							
Not useful	Somewhat useful							Very useful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Please feel free to share your comments on any aspect of this workshop and on the training series. If you rated any of the activities above high (8 or 9) or low (1 or 2), please describe briefly the reasons why that session was particularly useful or not useful. [Use back of sheet if more space is needed].

Thank you for your feedback and attendance.
Your responses are very important to us.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).

Pro Bono Projects
Session 3 -- Fall, 1996
Session Evaluation
Date

Your assessment of today's activities will assist us in further developing our program areas. Please rate each activity listed below for its usefulness by circling the appropriate number.

	Speaker, Name								
Not useful	Somewhat useful						Very useful		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

	Small group discussion, Title								
Not useful	Somewhat useful						Very useful		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

	Video, Title								
Not useful	Somewhat useful						Very useful		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

Please feel free to share your comments on any aspect of this workshop and on the training series. If you rated any of the activities above high (8 or 9) or low (1 or 2), please describe briefly the reasons why that session was particularly useful or not useful. [Use back of sheet if more space is needed].

Thank you for your feedback and attendance.
Your responses are very important to us.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).

5. Were your expectations for your volunteer placement met?
[] Yes
[] No
If not, please list any suggestions you have for improvement.

6. Has this training series been helpful in preparing you for and supplementing your *pro bono* work? Please describe any particular way in which this series has had an impact in this area.

7. Has this training strengthened your commitment to performing *pro bono* legal work. Please explain.

**Again, thank you for feedback. We appreciate your dedication to MJF.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).**

DRAFT Client Feedback Survey

We'd like to take this opportunity to ask you for some important feedback on our ability to serve you. **THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE ON THIS FORM IS CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL BE VIEWED ONLY BY THE STUDENT AND THEIR SUPERVISING ATTORNEY.**

Directions: Please answer the following questions:

1. Name of Student:
2. Did you feel the student listened to your concerns?
 Yes
 No
3. Did you enjoy working with this law student?
4. What was the greatest strength of the student?
5. Do you have any suggestions for how this student could improve his or her interaction with clients? .

**Thank you for your feedback. Your responses are very important to us.
For additional information, please contact _____ (phone and email).**

III. Pro Bono Projects Training Session Information

For over a year, MJF has sponsored the very successful training seminars which explore the nature of public interest law and the pro bono experience. Surveys are administered to participants which ask them to rank the speakers and activities of the day. Both the quantitative and qualitative data below speak to the success of the sessions.

Mean Scores:

Session Description	Mean Score	Number of Responses
SUMMER 1995		
June 21		
Mgeni	4.3	13
Powell	4.3	13
MJF Staff Presentation	3.7	12
Loverude	4.1	12
Eavesel	4.0	12
Lewis	4.2	11
Marino	4.7	9
Closing	4.1	7
July 19		
Video	4.1	7
Horan	4.7	7
Frias	4.9	7
Breakout Session	4.4	7
Closing	4.0	6
September 6		
Orfield	4.0	8
Breakout Session	--	--
Large Group Discussion	4.2	9
Closing	4.1	8

Session Description	Mean Score	Number of Responses
FALL 1995		
September 23		
Nordby	4.8	53
Writing Session	2.9	53
D'Cruz	4.7	53
Resource Guidebook Review	3.4	53
Rutherford	4.5	53
October 21		
Video	4.0	26
Horan	4.7	27
Loverude	4.5	27
Breakout Session	3.4	26
Report	3.2	25
November 11		
Lange	4.7	18
Breakout Session	3.9	18
Video	3.8	16

Session Description	Mean Score	Number of Responses
SPRING 1996		
January 27		
Nordby	4.8	16
D'Cruz	4.7	16
Resource Guidebook Review	3.8	16
Rutherford	4.3	16
February 24		
Video	4.1	16
Horan	4.8	16
Loverude	4.4	16
Breakout	3.8	16
Report	--	--
June 21		
Cochrane	4.3	11
Breakout	3.5	11
Video	3.7	9

Session Description	Mean Score	Number of Responses
SUMMER 1996		
June 19		
D'Cruz	4.5	13
Nordby	4.6	14
Rutherford	4.3	13
July 9		
Video	3.6	10
Horan	4.6	10
Loverude	4.1	10