SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE & TRIPS
SPRING 2020

The Service-Learning Practicum & Seminar is a 3-credit course which consists of a seminar and a Spring Break service trip. During and after the service trip, students will reflect on their experiences through journaling or making a video (either individually or as a team project). Students will also produce work products during the service week, and together they will present a “Report-Back” event to the student body and faculty, after the Spring Break trips. This course is a spin-off from the School of Law's original Katrina and Beyond: Disaster Prevention and Recovery, Social Justice and Government Accountability, which began in 2006. On that first trip and several subsequent trips, UDC law students and professors traveled to post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans, and thereafter to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Over the years, the course has expanded the trips to include experiences in other traumatized, impoverished or historically under-represented communities, not necessarily the results of a disaster. As a result, we changed the name of the course to Service-Learning.

In recent years UDC Law service-learning delegations have traveled to the U.S.-Mexico border and to the family immigration detention centers in Pennsylvania and Texas, providing humanitarian and legal aid to families and children immigrants from Mexico and Central America. Other UDC Law service-learning delegations have travelled to Mississippi and worked with the Mississippi Center for Justice in the Mississippi Delta, Jackson, and the Biloxi-Gulfport area, assisting residents with their economic and civil rights. While there, students also have walked in the path of the major civil rights struggles and events, visiting and learning about these important sites.

UDC LAW SCHOOL’S “LEGAL JUSTICE PEACE CORPS”: UDC Law’s Service-Learning program has become well-known nationally for our “legal justice peace corps.” Working together, we engage in experiences that enrich learning by integrating meaningful community and humanitarian service with instruction and reflection. In the Seminar sessions, we discuss different models of social justice lawyering, professional ethics, the role of lawyers in assisting people and communities in crisis, as well as legal topics we will be working on during the trips.

SPRING 2020 SERVICE-LEARNING TRIPS: In spring 2020, we will return to Mississippi to work with the Mississippi Center for Justice. As in prior years, we also plan to travel throughout the state to bear witness to the major events of the 1960s Civil Rights movement (along the recently marked Civil Rights Trail and the Blues Trail). For the Mississippi trip, enrollment is limited based on funding needs and is limited to 2Ls, 3Ls and 4Ls. For this trip, students must enroll in the Service-Learning course.

In addition, and in collaboration with the Immigration and Human Rights Clinic, there will be a service trip and delegation to Tijuana at the Mexico-U.S. border, to work with Al Otro Lado. Students will assist asylum seekers on the Mexican side of the border who are fleeing violence. To participate in this service trip, students must be enrolled in the regular 7-credit Immigration and Human Rights Clinic.

STUDENT TRIP EXPENSES: Expenses for both trips, including students' hotel, airfare, local transportation and group meals are covered by private funding that supports the School of Law's Service-Learning program. For more information, contact: Professor Susan Waysdorf at swaysdorf@udc.edu, Professor John Brittain at jbrittain@udc.edu, or Professor Lindsay Harris at Lindsay.harris@udc.edu.