

Yale University President's Public Service Fellowship
Summer 2021

Proposal for Fellow working remotely for organization

- Organization:

Center for Children's Advocacy

Medical-Legal Partnership Project, YaleNew Haven Children's Hospital ("YNHH")

*In 2019, the Yale Daily News wrote about the program:

<https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2019/10/25/not-in-our-silos-yale-new-havens-pediatric-medical-legal-partnership/>

- Full street address of organization:

789 Howard Avenue, room DC-015, New Haven, CT 06519

- Website:

https://cca-ct.org/our-work/aboutus_programs_mlpp/

(note that this is a shared website for 2 MLPs *both* associated with the Center for Children's Advocacy)

- Name and title of person who will be the Fellow's direct supervisor (*the supervisor must be available for Fellow to contact throughout the week*):

Alice Rosenthal, JD, Senior Staff Attorney, Medical-Legal Partnership Project

- Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor:

203-688-0113

arosenthal@cca-ct.org

- Placement dates:

June 1st, 2021 through August 6th, 2021

- Are placement dates flexible? Are you able to accommodate a Fellow working in a different time zone?

We can take students any time within those dates and can go from 8 to 10 weeks as needed.

- Proposed 37.5 hour per week work schedule:
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Monday – Friday, 8:30 – 5:00. All days will have a minimum ½ hour for lunch, but this can be extended to 1 hour if taken during an educational session (e.g., medical or legal didactic). We are flexible about hours.

- Organization description:

CCA is a non-profit legal service organization that fights for the legal rights of vulnerable children in Connecticut. The mission of the Medical-Legal Partnership Project (“MLPP”) at CCA is to improve health outcomes for low-income children through interdisciplinary collaboration in the medical setting by addressing patients’ health harming legal needs. The YNHH MLPP is at the sharp end of addressing social determinants of health (“SDH”) by practicing children’s rights and poverty law in the areas of housing, education, disability rights, public benefits, and teen legal rights. The MLPP uses three strategies to meet the project goals: (1) provision of legal advice both indirectly, to medical providers, and directly, by representing children, youth, and families; (2) interdisciplinary education and training for healthcare providers and community organizations; and (3) policy initiatives aimed at addressing systemic issues affecting the health and well-being of children. The program serves low income families connected to YNHH.

- **Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting:**

The fellow would work with the MLPP lawyer and physicians at YNHH on projects that seek to diminish the impact of SDH on children and on direct advocacy with patients and families. In the summer 2021, we hope the fellow would work specifically on two project, education advocacy and our Healthy Homes project.

- Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

In the summer of 2021, the fellow will support the work of the MLPP generally as well as work on two specific projects, School Advocacy and Healthy Homes which will both directly target the individual education and housing needs of New Haven families. Both projects grow out of the extensive research showing that children who grow up in poverty or near poverty have a greater likelihood of worse health, school performance, and adulthood employment. By improving the lives of families with young children, we are diminishing the stress of poverty and its outcomes.

In general, the fellow will support the MLPP lawyer and medical providers on meeting with children and families of the Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital, inpatient and

outpatient clinics, to screen for health harming legal needs and connect families with appropriate resources. This will include screening families in person or by phone with clear guidance, doing research on appropriate resources, and assisting families in connecting with resources. The MLPP is a high volume, fast paced environment. The MLPP receives 2-5 new referrals every day and must respond quickly. All of our work is with low income families in the New Haven area.

In addition, the fellow will work on two focused projects. The first project is around School Advocacy. Access to a quality education and appropriate school services can be life changing for children. Studies show that children who repeat a grade, are suspended, are not given the right special education supports, all have poorer long-term health outcomes and economic mobility. About 35% of families that the MLP works with are education related issues. These issues include special education services, Section 504 accommodations and school access. Currently, during the COVID pandemic, children in the New Haven Public Schools have struggled to receive appropriate services. We are concerned that many of these students are going to fall far behind in their academics. The MLP wants to ensure that children in New Haven have access to appropriate and compensatory education services as needed to meet their needs.

The fellow will be integral to the development of a project targeting past health center families who received school advocacy from the MLPP. The fellow will contact these families, assess their education needs, and directly assist with connecting families to appropriate services.

The second project the fellow will work on is the Healthy Homes New Haven project. New Haven has some of the oldest housing stock in America wherein 75% of the housing is rental units. Many homes are in poor condition with mold, rodents, vermin, lead, or other hazards. Living in poor housing conditions has a negative impact on children's health. Especially now during the pandemic, many children are home for extended periods of time, being exposed to toxins. The project would focus on developing a Healthy Homes coalition in New Haven with important stakeholders across the city in government, health, youth, and community development. The fellow would research and write an issue brief on best practices around Healthy Homes coalitions. In addition, the fellow would construct a list of key stakeholders and coordinate the first Healthy Homes coalition meeting in New Haven. Further, the fellow would work to develop "Know Your Rights" guides for New Haven residents and work directly with families with poor housing conditions.

- List specific skills/experience required for this work:

Excellent interpersonal skills.

Interest in patient advocacy and direct family contact.

Computer skills.

Spanish-speaking a benefit.

- Equipment/resources you will provide to help Fellow conduct work:

The Fellow will be provided a business email. The phone number will be a google voice account. We do not have the resources to provide a cell phone.

- Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

In the summer of 2020, a PPSF fellow worked on Utility Shutoff Prevention which directly targeted the individual economic needs of New Haven families. The MLPP works closely with families who are at risk of having their utilities terminated. Many of New Haven's most vulnerable families struggle to pay their utility bills. They are often choosing between heat, hot water, food, and rent. Energy insecurity for families can have long lasting impacts on children's health. Unbeknownst to many families, there are state laws that protect vulnerable families, and the State of Connecticut has a number of programs to help families with their expenses. The PPSF fellow was integral to the development of a project targeting past health center families who were at risk for shutoff. The fellow contacted these families, assessed their current utility status, and directly liaised with community resources both for utility assistance and for related financial relief to enable them to catch up on this vital basic need. In addition, the fellow connected families to the MLP to assist with legal actions as needed.

In addition, the CCA MLPP at YNHH has hosted Yale undergraduate students during the school year. The students have been amazing assets to the program. Yale students have worked to support individual patient advocacy by doing initial intakes with families, connecting families to resources, researching relevant laws and guidance on particular topics that emerge and drafting letters and information sheets for patients and providers on specific health harming legal needs. This academic year, 2020-2021, the CCA MLPP is hosting a Dwight Hall Urban Fellow. The student is working on a number of advocacy projects remotely and continuing the work of the PPSF Fellow from the summer.

In addition, the MLPP at YNHH hosts 1-3 Yale Law School students per academic year for academic credit. Currently there are two law student externs. Law students' responsibilities include meeting with patients and medical providers, conducting intakes with clients to determine the type of intervention required, reviewing and synthesizing records, working with our attorneys in their systemic advocacy agendas, and providing research and writing on legal issues impacting our clients.



This is a picture of the clinic where the MLPP serves New Haven children. The picture includes Patricia Nogelo, the clinic social worker, Alice Rosenthal, the MLPP attorney, Dr. Ada Fenick, pediatrician and MLPP medical director. This picture is how the MLPP is a true interdisciplinary collaboration in a medical setting to address health disparities.
