

The background image shows a group of students at an outdoor event, possibly a fair or festival. A young man in a red t-shirt with a dog logo and 'LIFE OFF' text is visible on the left. Next to him is a young woman with sunglasses on her head, wearing a white tank top and a beaded necklace. To her right is another young woman with long dark hair wearing a black top. In the foreground, a person with long blonde hair is seen from behind, looking down at something. The scene is bright and sunny, with trees and buildings in the background. Overlaid on the image are several geometric shapes: a large light blue triangle on the left, a yellow triangle at the top right, and a blue triangle at the bottom right.

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

UCLA

School of Law

**Judge Rand Schrader
Pro Bono Program**

SERVING COMMUNITIES, DEVELOPING PRO BONO LEADERS

The Schrader Pro Bono Program creates opportunities for students, starting as early as their first year of law school, to provide much-needed legal services to low-income communities, while developing critical real-life lawyering skills. UCLA Law has a rich history of student leadership in pro bono, and the program actively supports student-led initiatives.

Students also respond to partners' calls for

urgent and timely assistance and participate in Service-Learning Trips. They work in such issue areas as HIV/AIDS, housing and homelessness, education, immigration, juvenile justice, LGBTQIA+ rights, public health, reproductive rights, and workers' rights.

UCLA Law's goal is to foster in its graduates a lifelong commitment to pro bono and access to justice.



In March 2023, UCLA Law honored 8 JD., LLM, and MLS students with a U Serve LA award, in recognition of their significant contributions to public interest and pro bono while at UCLA School of Law.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2022-2023

- First Annual **Pro Bono and Public Interest Fair**, introducing the pro bono and public interest community to the incoming students
- Launch of the **Pro Bono Pledge** – challenging JD students to do at least 50 pro bono hours during their three years in law school
- First students graduating with **Pro Bono Distinction** in the Class of 2023, for completing the Pro Bono Pledge
- **6700+ pro bono hours contributed**, up 40% from 2021-2022; the average number of hours per student went up 50% from 2021-2022
- Third Annual **Public Service Challenge** and Celebration, with a focus on nonpartisan voter protection, held November 4-11, 2022
- Launch of new pro bono projects focusing on **homelessness prevention for people living with HIV and veterans** and **reproductive justice**
- New **pro bono trainings** for students and events to support the development of **future housing attorneys** to address an urgent housing crisis in Los Angeles
- Received **LA County Abortion Safe Haven Grant** to support staffing for a pro bono partnership focused on reproductive justice.



Forty students in the Class of 2023 graduated with Pro Bono Distinction.



UCLA Law's first Pro Bono and Public Interest Fair in August 2022 drew hundreds of students eager to learn about pro bono opportunities at UCLA Law.

6700+

hours were contributed by UCLA Law students, a nearly 40% increase from the previous year.

TWO-THIRDS

of UCLA Law first-year students participated in pro bono.

35+

organizations in Los Angeles and around the world received volunteer support from UCLA Law students.

49

student served as pro bono leaders, enabling other students to participate and grow in their pro bono practice

INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The Schrader Pro Bono Program and the Center for Reproductive Health Law and Policy at UCLA Law this year launched an innovative new Medical-Legal Partnership in collaboration with Planned Parenthood of Los Angeles (PPLA) and the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA).

As part of PPLA's Black Health Initiative, the Medical Legal Partnership is based in PPLA's Inglewood Community Center, in a historically Black community in Los Angeles County. This is the first medical-legal partnership with a Planned Parenthood affiliate in the country.

At a time when reproductive rights are under threat in the United States, the new Medical-Legal Partnership advances reproductive justice. It combats stark and

persistent racial disparities in maternal and child mortality, and other reproductive health outcomes, by bringing comprehensive legal services directly to the community.

UCLA Law students participating in the Schrader Pro Bono Program help conduct intakes on a wide range of issues, such as housing, government benefits, family law, and criminal record expungement. Student are trained in key legal skills and develop into future leaders in reproductive justice.



UCLA Law Center for Reproductive Health Law & Policy staff and students at the Medical-Legal Partnership Launch in February 2023.

WHAT PRO BONO MEANS TO STUDENTS



Galyn Sumida-Ross JD '23

Galyn Sumida-Ross served as Executive Director of El Centro Legal in 2022-2023. Galyn is the first student at UCLA Law to graduate with Pro Bono Highest Distinction. This fall, she will be clerking for an administrative law judge with the U.S. Department of Labor.

"Serving on the board has given me the opportunity to expand my leadership skills and build connections with passionate law students committed to pro bono work across class years."



Kamilah Mims JD '24

Kamilah served as one of the student co-chairs of the Prison Accountability Project in 2022-2023, organizing dozens of UCLA Law students to analyze letters and call transcripts from incarcerated people in California to hold prison officials accountable for abusive conditions. Kamilah was named to the AALS Pro Bono Honor Roll in 2022.

"The Prison Accountability Project has helped me find some of my best friends in law school all while allowing me to support and give back to the communities I care about."



Caroline Belanger-Hilaire LLM '23

Caroline Belanger-Hilaire, an LLM student from Canada, dedicated herself to volunteering weekly for an eviction defense clinic with Community Legal Aid SoCal during her year at UCLA Law.

"In the news, I saw the homelessness crisis," she said. "You think that's another world." But in helping LA residents defend against eviction, Caroline came to see that there is a fine line between stability and homelessness. She credits her pro bono experience as helping her figure out the kind of lawyer she wants to be.

Arianna Swazer JD '24

Arianna Swazer served as one of the co-chairs of the Let's Go! Liberation Clinic at El Centro in 2022-2023. Let's Go! Liberation partnered with the LA LGBT Center to host several name and gender marker change clinics throughout the year.

Arianna knows how important this work is: "We have enabled our clients at the LA LGBT Center to live in a way that is more in line with their authentic self." Arianna believes strongly, "Pro bono is our obligation and honor as lawyers and future lawyers."



Carson McKinney JD '24

Carson McKinney has been an active participant and leader in El Centro's Workers' Rights Clinic throughout his law school career. UCLA Law students partner with attorneys at Bet Tzedek to interview workers about wage theft, unemployment benefits, workplace discrimination, and misclassification as independent contractors.

"Being able to provide help that can change a person's life who would not otherwise be able to assert their rights is one of the most important things we can do as law students and future advocates."



Ben Wu JD '25

Ben came to law school with the goal of becoming a public interest attorney. Through the Schrader Pro Bono Program, Ben found, "You can start helping people as soon as your first semester."

Ben volunteered with El Centro's Let's Go! Liberation Clinic and the Tenants' Rights Clinic, and the International and Human Rights Law Association. The first year of law school is notoriously challenging. Ben reported, "[Pro bono] gave me a lot of purpose at a time when I was feeling really lost." Next year, Ben will be supporting other students as a student co-chair of the Let's Go! Liberation Clinic and the Tenants' Rights Clinic.



ALUMNI PRO BONO LEADERS



Misty Sanford JD '05

Misty Sanford, a partner in the Real Estate Department at Wilkie Farr & Gallagher, has made pro bono a central part of her legal career. She received a U Serve LA alumni award in 2023.

Misty has a sophisticated, broad-based real estate transactional practice, representing institutional investors, private equity firms, developers, multinational corporations, REITs, foundations, nonprofits, and individual entrepreneurs. Misty's pro bono clients - including park development, homelessness, and affordable housing organizations - benefit from her tremendous expertise in negotiating and managing complex projects.

"It's the most meaningful work we do," said Misty. "I love what I do, to apply my skill set to something that will change lives."

Kristen Johnson JD '13

Kristen Johnson is Pro Bono Counsel at Cooley, where she works with the firm's pro bono team to develop and manage Cooley's pro bono practice, with a particular emphasis on racial justice.

While at UCLA Law, Kristen volunteered with El Centro's Reentry Clinic, helping individuals clear their criminal records in order to improve their chances at gaining employment, housing, and a clean start. Prior to joining Cooley, Kristen was assistant counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund for nearly a decade, litigating racial discrimination claims in areas like voting rights, economic justice, criminal justice, and education equity.

In recognition of her commitment to racial justice, UCLA Law awarded Kristen a U Serve LA award in 2023.



The Prison Accountability Project was started by Joseph Gaylin JD'25 and Shireen Jalali-Yazdi JD'25 in their first year of law school. It is a stellar example of student leadership in pro bono at UCLA Law.

In June 2023, the Prison Accountability Project published a [report](#) documenting serious health and safety failures at California prisons in the first year of the coronavirus pandemic. As [reported](#) by the *LA Times*, "many of the complaints ... could rise to the level of constitutional violations under the 8th Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment."

The report relied heavily on volunteer pro bono hours from UCLA Law students. Over the past two years, 64 UCLA Law students contributed over 800 hours to this project. The four co-chairs of the project in 2022-2023 - Joseph Gaylin, Shireen Jalali-Yazdi, Nora Browning, and Kamilah Mims - alone contributed over 500 volunteer hours.

Systemic Failures

Conditions in California
State Prisons During the
Covid-19 Pandemic



June 2023

CELEBRATIONS



HONORING JUDGE RAND SCHRADER AND 2022 PUBLIC SERVICE CHALLENGE CELEBRATION NOVEMBER 10, 2022

Friends and colleagues of Judge Rand Schrader gathered on November 10, 2022, to honor his legacy and to celebrate the launch of the pro bono program that bears his name.



2023 U SERVE LA CELEBRATION MARCH 12, 2023

The UCLA Law community came together in March to celebrate the pro bono and public interest achievements of UCLA Law students and alumni. Eight students received U Serve LA student awards and the following alumni were honored for their work:

- [David Lash '80](#), for building a pro bono ethic and culture among private lawyers;
- [Shiu-Ming Cheer '00](#), for fiercely advocating and organizing for immigrant rights and justice;
- [Misty Sanford '05](#), for building a diverse pipeline of future lawyers and significant pro bono work;
- [Frankie Guzman '12](#), for championing systems-impacted youth, particularly youth of color;
- [Kristen Johnson '13](#), for advocating and litigating for racial justice; and
- [Geneva Thompson '16](#), for leadership on tribal and environmental issues.

SCHRADER PRO BONO PROGRAM PARTNERS

ACLU of Southern California – Asian Americans Advancing Justice SoCal – Bet Tzedek – Black Worker Center – Central California Legal Services – Commonwealth Human Rights Institute – Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project – Catholic Charities – Human Rights Watch Inner City Law Center – International Legal Foundation – International Refugee Advocacy Project – LACBA Homelessness Prevention Advocacy Project – LA LGBT Center – LawHelpCA – Lawyers for Good Government – Legal Aid at Work – Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles – A New Way of Life – National Lawyers' Guild Los Angeles – Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles – People's Parity Project – Public Law Center – UCLA Law Covid Behind Bars Data Project – UCLA Law Criminal Justice Program – UCLA Law Promise Institute – UCLA Voting Rights Project – UCLA Law Williams Institute – Unite HERE Local 11

STUDENT LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: EL CENTRO LEGAL

UCLA Law's pro bono culture thrives due to student leadership and initiative.

El Centro Legal, UCLA School of Law's largest student-coordinated network of volunteer legal aid projects, was founded in 1973 by UCLA's La Raza Law Students Association. Today, students work with a wide range of El Centro projects, partnering with community legal organizations in Los Angeles to provide services under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

El Centro volunteers serve clients facing issues related to education, housing and homelessness, immigration, juvenile justice, domestic violence, workers' rights, and labor protections. They play a key role in expanding local organizations' capacity to serve clients.



First-year student volunteers for El Centro.