

October 30, 2019

Job Announcement: Director/Criminal Defense Clinic

Rising for Justice (“RFJ”) invites applications for a full-time Director for its Criminal Defense Clinic starting in December 2019. The Clinic, which focuses primarily on misdemeanor criminal defense litigation in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, is part of RFJ’s long-established and highly regarded clinical legal education program. We seek a dynamic educator and advocate with substantial experience in criminal defense practice. Efforts are underway to evaluate and enhance the RFJ clinical teaching program and it is anticipated that the Criminal Defense Clinic’s Director will play a key role in collaborating with the Executive Director, expert consultants, and other staff on this exciting project.

About Rising for Justice

Created in 1969, RFJ, formerly known as D.C. Law Students in Court, is the oldest clinical teaching program in the District of Columbia. RFJ currently operates as both a public interest law firm and a clinical education program that draws students from area law schools in Washington, D.C. Since our founding, RFJ has trained law students to provide free, high-quality legal services to the District’s indigent and low-income community. A fundamental part of our mission is to provide law students with an exceptional clinical education that meets the highest standards of instruction and practice.

RFJ embraces equal justice and diversity as core values. We strive to maintain a workplace that is vibrant, welcoming, innovative, and collaborative. We are committed to fostering the thoughtful exchange of ideas and to ensuring that all voices are heard and respected. We seek a Director for our Criminal Defense Clinic who embraces our mission and values. Our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and non-discrimination includes race, sex, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, personal appearance, genetic information, political affiliation, marital status, family responsibilities, disability, status as a veteran, and any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law or regulation.

The Criminal Defense Clinic

Supervisors in RFJ’s criminal defense program are responsible for guiding students through all aspects of criminal defense representation, including interviewing and maintaining ongoing communication with clients, conducting fact investigations, legal research and writing, arguing motions, engaging in pretrial discovery, conducting evidentiary hearings, trying cases, negotiating plea agreements and assisting clients with probation revocations and related matters. Through seminars, reading assignments, mock hearings, guided reflection, individual and group instruction, and actual representation, supervisors help students learn how to effectively represent clients and how to derive lawyering lessons from their experiences.

Experienced clinicians with expertise in criminal defense create a learning environment that focuses on student growth and development through case preparation, constructive attorney-client interaction, courtroom advocacy, classroom instruction and individual supervision. Instruction and supervision develop the students' capacity for strategic judgment, problem-solving, and zealous client-centered representation.

Position Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Director include: 1) supervising and working collaboratively with a clinical supervising attorney; 2) co-planning and co-teaching seminar classes in lawyering and advocacy skills, substantive criminal law and procedure, evidence, ethics, and professionalism; 3) supervising second- and third-year law students in their misdemeanor cases; 4) providing direct client representation; 5) serving on the RFJ management team; 6) completing administrative and other clinical work such as recruiting students and possibly training and mentoring pro bono attorneys; and, in collaboration with RFJ management, 7) serving as a liaison with area law schools. Related duties include participating in staff meetings and organizational fundraising and development opportunities; managing the thorough input of data in the office's case management system; and, overseeing student evaluation processes and grades.

Qualification Requirements

The Director of the Criminal Division must be a member of the D.C. Bar with prior criminal defense and teaching experience as well as excellent communication and management skills, the ability to work independently and collaboratively, a strong work ethic, a client-centered approach to criminal defense practice, and a passion to teach and mentor law students. RFJ alumni are encouraged to apply.

Accountability: Reports to the Executive Director.

Hours, Salary and Benefits: This is a full-time position based on a 40-hour work week. Salary is commensurate with experience. We offer an excellent benefits package, including employer-paid medical, dental, and vision insurance; generous sick, annual and personal leave; and paid federal and local holidays.

To Apply: Each candidate should submit a cover letter, resume or CV, and the names and contact information of three professional references by email to Tegan Peterson at tpeterson@risingforjustice.org. Please indicate "Director of Criminal Defense Clinic, [your full name]" in the subject line of the email.

Application Deadline: Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled.