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Equal Justice for All

FORT WORTH, Texas – With over 20 organizations representing everything from women’s rights issues to the public defender’s office, students who visited the Equal Justice Day information fair on Wednesday, Feb. 20, had plenty of options to consider when they begin to apply for jobs that will satisfy their *pro bono* requirement.

Part of Public Interest Week, the information fair was one of several activities offered to Texas Wesleyan University School of Law students during the week of Feb. 18. Events aimed at educating students about the public interest opportunities around North Texas were organized by the Wesleyan Law Fellowship, a student-run organization that provides summer stipends to students who wish to explore opportunities in public interest positions that cannot typically afford to pay for assistance.

“The Dallas-Fort Worth Legal Community, the public interest organizations, students, faculty and staff that participated in Texas Wesleyan’s Public Interest Week and Equal Justice Day all helped ensure that this week’s events were a great success,” Lauren Zettler, co-chair of the Wesleyan Law Fellowship, said. “Public Interest Week gave students the unique opportunity to meet with various attorneys and legal programs that dedicate themselves to providing free or low-cost legal services to people in the community. Everyone deserves equal access to justice, and without programs like these, people would not get the help they need.”

In addition to Wednesday’s information fair, representatives from Catholic Charities, the Federal Public Defender’s Office, and Legal Aid of North West Texas, spoke to students earlier in the week about their respective organizations, giving students the chance to receive more in-depth information.

Assistant Dean for Students Affairs Patti Gearheart Turner said that bringing so many public interest organizations together in one location was beneficial for everyone involved.

“Public Interest Law Day enables our students to meet attorneys who deliver legal services in public interest and nonprofit organizations,” Turner said. “The students become educated about access to justice issues in our community and more fully understand how *pro bono* legal services can make a difference in the lives of others.”

Organizations that participated in the Equal Justice Day fair included Advocacy Inc., CASA of Tarrant County, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Legal Hospice of Texas, Tarrant County Probate Court, CLEAT, the Federal Public Defenders Offices of Fort Worth and Dallas, Legal Aid of North West Texas (Denton and Fort Worth), the Office of the Attorney General, Pro Bono for Kids, the

State Counsel for Offenders, Tarrant County Probate Court (#1 and 2), the Wesleyan Immigration Initiative, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity, the Wesleyan Innocence Project, SafeHaven of Tarrant County, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Wesleyan Law Fellowship.

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