Columbia Law School announces the inaugural HERBERT AND NELL SINGER SOCIAL JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP which honors class of 1928 graduate Herbert Singer and his commitment to providing support to meaningful learning experiences in public interest law. This annual Fellowship will help launch the social justice career of a Columbia Law graduate who demonstrates substantial commitment, ability and preparation for making a difference as a public interest lawyer by providing a stipend to do civil public interest or human rights legal work at a not-for-profit organization in the United States. Proposals for the fellowship are due by 3:00 p.m. on Monday April 27, 2015.

Terms of the Fellowship

One Singer Fellowship will be awarded annually for a one-year term, beginning within five months of graduation. The Fellowship is available to graduates of Columbia Law School who are (1) members of the J.D. Class of 2015 (October 2014, February 2015 and May 2015), and (2) current state or federal judicial clerks for whom the clerkship is the first postgraduate position.

The Fellowships will be awarded to applicants who demonstrate a deep commitment to doing public interest human rights legal work and the ability to make a substantial contribution in their fields. They will provide the financial ability to work with public interest organizations which address the unmet civil legal needs of low-income and disadvantaged individuals, or underrepresented communities or issues, and which could not otherwise afford to hire an entry-level lawyer. They also aim to afford the opportunity to gain the practical legal experience necessary to advance the Fellows’ careers in public interest law including human rights.

The fellowship carries a stipend of $60,000 a year plus health insurance and all other fringe benefits to which an entry level lawyer at the host organization is entitled up to the value of $15,000. The Fellow must begin work within five months after graduation or completion of a clerkship.

Qualifying Projects and Placements

Applicants can propose to be staff attorneys at their host organization or can propose a new project at the host organization that the applicant will implement if selected for the Singer Fellowship. Applications for a Singer Fellowship must include a description of the staff position or the project. In evaluating the proposal, the fellowship Selection Committee will consider the appropriateness of the proposed host organization to the applicants’ projects and to their long range career goals.

Eligible host organizations usually will be limited to public interest or human rights not-for-profit organizations (501c (3) or the equivalent) in the United States that are engaged in providing civil legal assistance as a substantial part of their mission. In most cases, these organizations will be involved in direct legal services, impact litigation or public interest transactional work.

Qualifying projects may also be at organizations which embrace new or interdisciplinary forms, as long as a legal education is required for the project. The Selection Committee may accept a proposal for a project in academia that advances the Fellowship’s public interest or human rights service goals. Applicants considering such host organizations should meet with Dean Ellen Chapnick or Maddie Kurtz early in the development of their project.
Application and Selection Procedure

Social Justice Initiatives must receive applications no later than 3:00pm on Monday, April 27, 2015. Applications may not be submitted by fax or e-mail. You may mail or hand deliver the application to:

Social Justice Initiatives  
Columbia Law School  
Box B-26  
435 West 116th Street  
New York, NY 10027

The application should consist of SIX STAPLED COPIES of the following in the indicated order.

1. The official cover sheet.

2. A current résumé.

3. A personal statement (2 pages maximum) that demonstrates your deep commitment to doing public interest or human rights law and ability to make a substantial contribution in your field. This should include your relevant experience and future aspirations with respect to public interest or human rights legal work. The statement also should include a discussion of the place of the fellowship in your career plans.

4. A project description including: (3 pages maximum)  
   a. a description of the host organization or agency and its work; and  
   b. a description of your project, which may be a staff position, and its relation to the work of the proposed host organization.

5. A copy of your Columbia Law school transcript (unofficial is acceptable).

6. A letter indicting bona fide interest in your proposal from the host organization. The letter should include discussion of how the Fellow would be supervised and a statement that the organization does not have the financial ability to hire entry level lawyers.

7. Two letters of recommendation, preferably one from a Columbia Law School faculty member and one from a supervisor at a relevant organization other than the proposed host organization. Letters may be in sealed envelopes or not, depending on the recommender’s preference.

8. Identification of two persons who would serve as references.

Selection

A committee consisting of the Dean for Social Justice Initiatives, a Columbia Law School faculty member, a Columbia Law graduate, and a federal judge will select the Fellow. A Fellow and an alternate will be selected by May 31, 2015.
THE HERBERT AND NELL SINGER SOCIAL JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP
AT COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL
APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Name: _____________________________________________________

CUID No.: _____________________________________________________

Email Address: _____________________________________________________

Telephone Number: _____________________________________________________

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Signature _____________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________