

YALE LAW SCHOOL CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP

Veterans Legal Services Clinic

Yale Law School seeks applications for a clinical fellowship in the Veterans Legal Services Clinic (VLSC) of the Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization, within Yale Law School's clinical program. This is a two-year position, with a third-year option, beginning July 1, 2021, designed for lawyers with at least three years of practice who are considering a career in law school teaching.

VLSC is a semester-long, in-house clinic whose students represent veterans and their organizations in disability compensation benefits, record correction, and civil rights litigation in administrative, state, and federal courts. VLSC students also represent veterans' organizations in regulatory and legislative advocacy, strategic planning, and public education campaigns.

Illustrative examples include representation of:

- Individual veterans seeking disability compensation benefits for injuries incurred during military service, in initial applications, administrative appeals, and judicial review in federal court. Recent cases include representation of veterans suffering PTSD from combat or sexual assault, traumatic brain injuries (TBI), and Agent Orange and radiation exposure-related disabilities.
- Former service members in individual applications to upgrade a less-than-fully-honorable ("bad paper") discharge before Department of Defense boards and on judicial review in federal court. Recent cases include representation of veterans discharged for minor misconduct while suffering from undiagnosed PTSD or TBI; in retaliation for complaining about sexual harassment; and for "homosexual" conduct in the 1940s.
- A New Haven veteran in a proposed nation-wide class action challenging extreme delays in VA adjudication of benefits applications and which resulted in a 2017 decision, *Monk v. Wilkie*, overturning nearly thirty years of precedent that had barred veterans from pursuing aggregate litigation via the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the Article I court that is the exclusive channel for review of VA benefits claims.
- A woman raped while a cadet at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in federal civil rights litigation against the former leadership of West Point.

- Two certified, nation-wide class actions of more than 100,000 Iraq and Afghanistan Era Army veterans who were discharged with bad paper despite having PTSD or PTSD-related conditions attributable to their military service.
- A nation-wide class of U.S. Air Force veterans exposed to radiation after cleaning up two hydrogen bombs accidentally dropped on Spain in 1966, whose exposure the VA refuses to recognize, in the first appeals class action certified in the history of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. *Skaar v. Wilkie*.
- Incarcerated Connecticut veterans seeking release from prison during the COVID-19 outbreak, on state and federal habeas petitions.
- Local and national veterans' organizations in legislative and regulatory campaigns to address gender and race discrimination in congressional nominations to the military service academies; secure reparations for historic VA discrimination against Black veterans; recognize herbicide exposure of veterans who served on Guam in the Vietnam era; improve services for incarcerated veterans; curb retaliation against service-members who report sexual harassment or assault; better credit military training in occupational and professional licensing laws; make Connecticut veterans with bad paper eligible for state veterans' benefits; and bar employment discrimination against veterans with bad paper.

The Fellow's responsibilities include the representation of VLSC clients, supervision of students, assistance in designing and teaching the weekly VLSC seminar, and work on one's own scholarship. In addition, the Fellow may be asked to co-teach a section of a seven-week fall program for first-year students, Introduction to Legal Analysis and Writing. Candidates must be prepared to apply for admission to the Connecticut bar. (Candidates may qualify for admission without examination.) All work will be conducted with the support of the clinical faculty, and will focus on providing legal assistance to low-income and civil rights clients and organizations. The principal supervisor for the position will be Professor Michael Wishnie.

The Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization is committed to building a culturally diverse and pluralistic faculty and staff committed to teaching and working in a multicultural environment. Candidates must be able to work both independently and as part of a team, and must

possess strong written and oral communication skills. Experience in creative and community-driven advocacy is a strong plus. Annual salary is \$65,000-70,000. Fellows receive health benefits and access to university facilities. Send (or email) a resume, cover letter, writing sample, law school transcript, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three references by February 28, 2021 (early applications encouraged) to: Osikhena Awudu, Program Manager, **The Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization, P.O. Box 209090, New Haven, CT 06520-9090; telephone: (203) 432-4800; fax: (203) 432-1426; osikhena.awudu@yale.edu.**

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