

The Community Development Externship Network: Statement of General Understandings

[January 27, 2004]

Based on our discussions to date, the parties (LatCrit, Inc. and DePaul University College of Law) hereby adopt this Statement of General Understandings as the framework for a “critical partnership” between them to inaugurate and operate the “Community Development Externship Network” beginning in the 2004-05 academic year.

1. The parties agree that the Community Development Externship Network is a joint project focused on the combination of experiential learning, community service, social justice and critical theory, and that the purpose of this project is to place law students across the Americas in both rural and urban communities to achieve an overall balance between placements and students in or from the South (of the Rio Grande) or North, and that the emphasis of the externship placements shall be on issues involving land, housing and/or human rights.

2. In particular, the parties agree that the Project Team’s administration of this program (see below, Paragraph 3) shall emphasize externship placements focused on issues primarily involving community development in communities that are marginalized, poor and underserved; that externs will be placed in both rural and urban sites and will receive an Orientation and Training Session at the Annual LatCrit Conference or the Annual South-North Exchange as part of this program, and prior to the commencement of their externship placements; that externships will be designed to help underserved communities maintain and/or enhance assets such as real property in the form of land or home ownership; that externships additionally will be designed to aid such communities with respect to other social justice and human rights issues involving land and the environment such as matters raising environmental justice questions, both in rural and urban settings; and that, to the extent possible, externs will be required to work and live in the communities that they will serve.

3. The parties agree that LatCrit, Inc. will organize a “Project Team” consisting of Thomas Mitchell, Alicia Alvarez, Sumi Cho and 2-3 other persons to be selected by them and LatCrit, Inc. – including at least one Project Team member from the South (of the Rio Grande) – beginning in the 2004-05 academic year for the year-round administration of the Community Development Externship Network in accordance with the duly enacted internal policies of DePaul University College of Law and LatCrit, Inc., and consistent with the focus and purpose of this project as describe here and specifically in Paragraph 2 above, including: (1) the composition, production and distribution of appropriate Program Materials; (2) the recruitment, vetting, and selection of appropriate placement locations and student externs, and; (3) the monitoring of placement sites to ensure compliance with attorney-supervision and any other relevant guidelines governing externships as promulgated by the American Bar Association and/or any other relevant professional organization with jurisdiction over externship programs such as the “Community Development Externship Network”; (4) the setting up of annual site visits at each placement site during the course of a student’s externship to ensure student satisfaction to the fullest extent possible; (5) the expansion or modification of the Project Team and/or its operations as may become necessary or prudent from time to time.

4. The parties agree that LatCrit, Inc. will make its mailing lists available for outreach for this project and use its best efforts to promote awareness of and participation in this project nationally, hemispherically and internationally. The parties further agree that LatCrit, Inc. will provide funding for at least one student extern beginning in the 2004-05 academic year, and also will use its best efforts to raise funds for additional externships beyond this immediate baseline, in order to help achieve and maintain the overall balance and emphasis of the program as described here, and specifically in Paragraphs 1 and 2, above.

5. The parties agree that DePaul University College of Law will provide funding for: (1) the production and printing of the Program Materials (approximately \$3,000 per year); (2) the mass mailings of said materials to the LatCrit mailing list and other recipients to be determined by the Project Team; (3) at least two student externs (at \$5,000 per extern) beginning in the 2004-05 academic year (which may be funded by the University or other sources to be secured by DePaul University College of Law); and (4) use its best efforts to raise funds for additional externships beyond this immediate baseline; provided that at least one of the DePaul-funded externs each year shall be a student in good standing of the DePaul University College of Law (and assuming at least one qualified applicant from DePaul in that year’s pool of applying students).

6. The parties further agree that DePaul University College of Law will provide appropriate support staff time for the operation of this project, and also include all the student externs of this project in its insurance programs.

7. The parties agree that both LatCrit, Inc., and DePaul University College of Law shall be recognized equally by name in the Program Materials.

8. The "Community Development Externship Network" is a trademark of LatCrit, Inc., which reserves the exclusive right to register this mark, and will do so pursuant to state and/or national and/or international laws and regulations.

9. The parties anticipate a successful critical partnership of longstanding duration, but in the event that either party decides to dissolve this partnership for any reason, the Community Development Externship Network shall remain a project of LatCrit, Inc., and DePaul University College of Law shall not seek to replicate or compete with this project for at least two years after the effective date of this partnership's dissolution under this Statement of General Understandings, and in no instance shall DePaul University College of Law seek to operate an externship program under a name that is similar to, or infringes upon, the name selected for this project.

10. To permit flexibility for both parties but also to provide sufficient time for alternative arrangements to be explored without disrupting the project's operations in the event either party wishes to dissolve this partnership, the parties agree that either may terminate this partnership by notifying the other in writing during the month of August with one year's advance notice of such intent to terminate; provided that neither party shall be able to exercise this right of termination during the first three years of operation (because the project is being inaugurated in 2004-05, the parties agree that this right of termination may not be exercised until August 2007 to provide the requisite one-year advance notice, which would terminate this partnership, at the earliest, in August 2008).

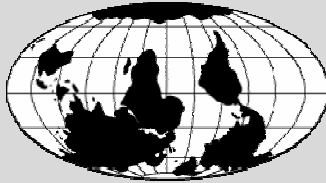
11. Finally, the parties agree that upcoming discussions may further specify the understandings that shall govern this critical partnership when reduced to a writing that expressly modifies this Statement of General Understandings.

Frank Valdes, Co-Chair, for LatCrit, Inc.

Date

Glen Weissenberger, Dean, for DePaul University College of Law

Date



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The
Community Development Externship Network

The Community Development Externship Network is a joint project of LatCrit, Inc. and the DePaul University College of Law

SPRING 2004

Since 1995, LatCrit theorists have published a series of symposia and developed a Portfolio of Projects designed to promote social justice knowledge and activism throughout the Americas and, increasingly, the world. Many of these efforts are student-oriented, and designed to ensure that tomorrow's generation of practitioners and policymakers are well prepared to tackle the enduring social and legal ills associated with social inequality, official authoritarianism, widespread poverty and oppressive laws that, all over the Americas, are based on colonial and neocolonial legacies. To promote these efforts and commitments, the Community Development Externship Network combines experiential learning, community service, social justice and critical theory in the placement of student externs among rural and urban communities across the Americas. The externship placements focus on issues primarily involving community development in communities that are marginalized, poor and underserved in order to help them maintain and/or enhance assets such as real property in the form of land or home ownership, and also to provide legal services in support of human or civil rights relating to land, development and environmental justice. To the extent possible, student externs live in and among the communities within which they work.

Each year the program aims to achieve a balance between the South and North, with respect both to the externs as well as to their placements, and invites applications from law students in good standing at any accredited law school in the Americas. The externship placements extend for a period of six weeks, beginning in early July and concluding mid-August. This timing permits externs to "split" their summer between this and other opportunities, and to gain "hands-on" legal experience while also developing expertise in social and legal issues regarding public interest law. Prior to commencing their placements, externs also receive an Orientation & Training session at the Annual LatCrit Conference (or similar LatCrit event) that covers both basic or practical information, as well as substantive exposure to critical theory and to the LatCrit community of scholars and activists. A Call for Applications is issued through the LatCrit website and other means every September, and all interested students are requested to submit their full and timely applications by March 5th. We hope you will consider this opportunity, and share word of it with other students who may benefit from this unique program in experiential learning.

The application packet includes completion of a basic form together with a Personal Statement and a transcript showing the applicant is a student in good standing at an accredited law school in the Americas. Successful applicants will receive: (A) a travel and living stipend to subsidize externship-related expenses relating to their placement; and (B) a scholarship to attend the Orientation & Training session, including a travel stipend for this purpose. For more information, please contact Project Coordinators Thomas Mitchell (tmitchell@facstaff.wisc.edu) and Alicia Alvarez (alvarez@depaul.edu), or contact LatCrit directly at the email address provided above; for more information on LatCrit theory, publications, projects or plans, please visit the LatCrit website (see address above). Muchas gracias!!

Community Development Externship Network

A Joint Externship Project of
LatCrit, Inc. and DePaul University
College of Law
Center for Rural & Urban Community Development



Community Development Externship

DePaul University College of Law's Center for Rural & Urban Community Development (CRUCD) and LatCrit, Inc. offer students committed to social justice and human rights a unique opportunity to participate in an externship program that undertakes community development work in poor, rural and urban communities in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Applications for the Community Development Externship Network (CDEN) will be accepted from law students in schools located in the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Externs work on legal matters addressing asset-based community development and economic rights. The work includes land rights litigation, real estate transactions, estate planning, and environmental justice.

A select number of students are paid a stipend up to \$5,000 to help limit out-of-pocket travel and living expenses during the program.

THE ORIENTATION & TRAINING PROGRAM

In early June, students spend five days in San Juan at an orientation and training program held at the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico School of Law. Faculty members from throughout the world who are affiliated with LatCrit, Inc. train students in critical theory, including its application in educational and professional settings. The orientation also includes skills-based training in:

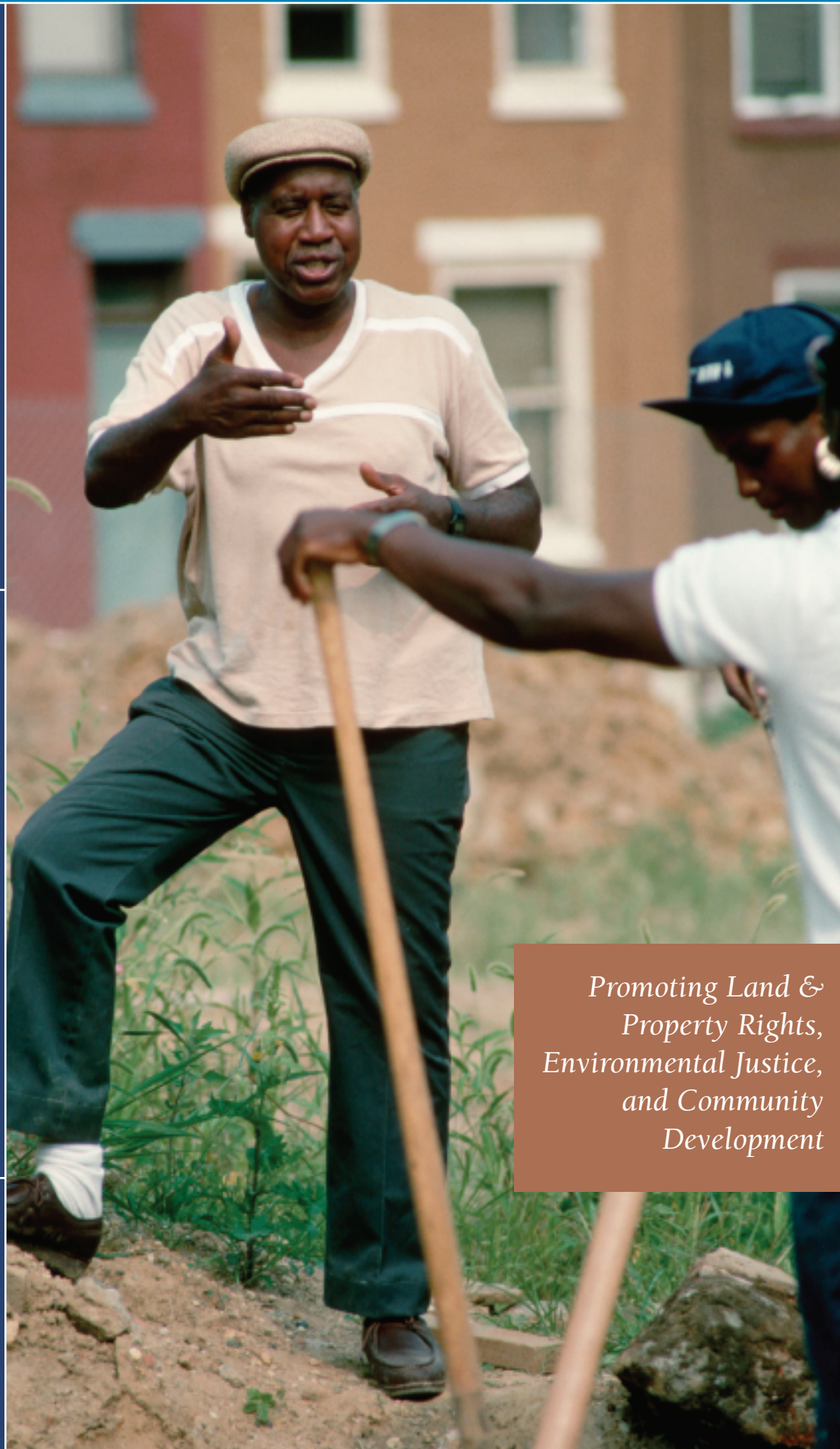
- Land records research
- Estate planning
- Legal research
- Community lawyering

While in San Juan, student externs meet with judges, scholars, and activists. Students also take field trips to Puerto Rican communities engaged in community development projects.

THE 10-WEEK FIELD PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Following orientation, each student is placed for 10 weeks in a poor, rural or urban community located in the Americas or the Caribbean. These communities face social and economic inequality, racism, and authoritarianism. Many of these communities are working hard to acquire or maintain assets such as land and homes. Others seek to secure water rights or to live in communities in which the soil and water is free from contamination. While there,

- Externs use their legal training to make these community development efforts more viable.
- Licensed attorneys supervise students at each site.
- To the extent possible, student externs live in or near the communities they serve.



Promoting Land & Property Rights, Environmental Justice, and Community Development

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.law.depaul.edu/crucd or www.latcrit.org

Professor Thomas Mitchell, tmitche6@depaul.edu

Director, Center for Rural & Urban Community Development

Professor Alicia Alvarez, CDEN Team Member, aalvarez@depaul.edu