Texas Access to Justice Foundation Names 2015 Texas Equal Justice Works Fellows

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas Access to Justice Foundation, in partnership with Equal Justice Works, has announced the 2015 Texas Equal Justice Works Fellows, Esther Kim and Tovah Pentelovitch. The recent law school graduates have developed new and innovative legal projects that will impact lives and serve communities in desperate need of legal assistance. The two-year Fellowship projects begin in September.

Since 2002, the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, as part of its commitment to ensuring access to justice for the poor, has sponsored the Fellowship projects. This year, the Foundation is fortunate to have the support of the law firm of Greenberg Traurig LLP to co-sponsor a Fellowship.

The Equal Justice Works Fellowship initiative is the largest postgraduate legal fellowship program in the nation. Each year, hundreds of talented law school graduates apply to the program having designed their “dream job” with a nonprofit organization that has agreed to host the applicant, if awarded a Fellowship. Sponsors review the project proposals and select candidates who meet criteria or otherwise complement their philanthropic and pro bono interests.

Esther Kim, a graduate of The University of Houston Law Center, will work in the Houston office of Lone Star Legal Aid. She will provide the Asian community in Harris and Fort Bend counties with legal services in guardianship and domestic violence cases through direct representation, outreach and collaboration with local organizations.

Tovah Pentelovitch, a graduate of The University of Texas School of Law, will work in the Austin office of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. She will work to curb problematic use of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Austin and underserved regions. Efforts will include outreach and representation of some of the most at-risk students in school disciplinary proceedings.
Continuing Fellows from the 2014 class sponsored by the Texas Access to Justice Foundation are: Olivia Mathis, Catholic Charities Cabrini Center, Houston; Gonzalo Serrano, Equal Justice Center, Dallas/Fort Worth; Johnathan Silva, Lone Star Legal Aid, Houston; and Mani Nezami, Thurgood Marshall School of Law’s Earl Carl Institute, Houston.

The 2016 EJW Fellowship Application/Selection Process opens July 6, 2015. The application and supporting paperwork are due to Equal Justice Works no later than 5 pm EDT on Sept. 18, 2015. E-mail Lisa Melton at LDMelton@tajf.org for more information.

The Texas Access to Justice Foundation, created by the Supreme Court of Texas in 1984, is the largest state-based funding source for the provision of civil legal aid in Texas. The organization is committed to the vision that all Texans will have equal access to justice, regardless of their income. The Foundation administers a variety of funding sources, which are earmarked to assist nonprofit organizations in providing legal aid to approximately 100,000 Texas families each year. For more information, please visit: www.teajf.org.

Equal Justice Works is the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. Collaborating with the nation’s leading law schools, law firms, corporate legal departments and nonprofit organizations, Equal Justice Works offers a continuum of opportunities that provide the training and skills that enable attorneys to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes. Equal Justice Works is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For additional information about Equal Justice Works, please visit www.equaljusticeworks.org.