

## **RESPONSES: Virtual Legal Advice Clinic**

- Participants are from UTK-School of Law, Belmont College of Law & Vanderbilt University

## **STUDENT SURVEY**

### **17 Students Participated in the Survey overall.**

#### **1. Do you feel like you helped a low-income Tennessean with their civil legal issue?**

- 15 selected "Yes, I do feel like I helped."
- 1 selected "Maybe"
- 1 selected "No, I do not feel like I helped."

##### *Question 1 Comments*

- "I feel that we were able to provide a useful explanation of the law to our client, along with practical advice for his situation." *Selected Yes.*
- "Most questions me and the attorney working with me answered required more information before an accurate answer could be given." *Selected Maybe.*
- "As a 1L, I did not have any standing knowledge of the issue my group dealt with, and I was not given the question ahead of time to research. I may or may not have been able to help even with a chance to research." *Selected No.*

#### **2. Would you participate in another virtual legal advice clinic?**

- 17 responded "Yes, I would participate in another virtual legal advice clinic."

##### *Question 2 Comments*

- "Yes, I thought it was rewarding to know an hour of my time could have really helped someone in need."
- "My group was very knowledgeable, and I learned quite a bit about TN law, and the process of thinking through the issue. I am confident continuing to participate will give me the experience to be useful as I continue to attend."
- "I would be eager to participate in another such event."

#### **3. Please briefly describe the interaction you had with the attorney volunteer. Would you categorize it as positive?**

- "Yes, I would categorize my interaction as very positive. The attorney I worked with was very interactive and engaging. We actually ran out of time and continued to help our attorney after the clinic ended. Our attorney helped us in issue spotting and worked with us instead of acting like we did not know anything or couldn't contribute."
- "The interaction was positive and very open to our suggestion. She was informative on the topic as well."
- "I was able to work with a judge, who was quite knowledgeable about the topic and provided the legal framework without answering the question, and an attorney, who was able to frame the conclusions we made in the response to our client. I was amazed at how many types of issues there were in the clinic, and relieved to see that there was almost something for every type of attorney. I learned so much and I would definitely do it again."

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**Please briefly describe the interaction you had with the attorney volunteer. Would you categorize it as positive? *continued***

- "I had a very positive experience with the attorney volunteer that I worked with. He was patient and helped me to think through the problem presented using common sense."
- "Overall, it was very positive. The attorney I worked with explained the applicable portions of the law in relation to the questions and even asked me what I thought of her analyses of the questions."

### **4. Do you have any recommendations for our next virtual legal advice clinic?**

- "Have more than an hour to work on problems. It took our group a little while to figure out how to work together but once things started to click, we worked well. Also, some of the questions involved some depth in the answer, so was difficult to answer in just an hour."
- "Not necessarily. If time permitted I would be open to making the event longer/answering more questions."
- "I thought the general structure of the event worked well. Pairing students together with local attorneys definitely provided students with the opportunity of helping out while also becoming educated about legal issues, and learning how to interface with clients in a new, developing fashion."
- "I would like to do this monthly if that would even be possible. I think it's an excellent networking opportunity in a relaxed setting while also providing an educational and pro bono aspect. I had no idea something like this existed but I know now and I look forward to participating once I become a licensed attorney."
- "If the students had the questions and/or issues to be addressed by the Attorney the day prior to the session, we could craft a thoughtful response, rather than pleading ignorance for fear of error."

### **5. What recommendations do you have for publicizing this type of event students?**

- "Honestly, just someone talking about it in class."
- "More emails, I know for me this is the main way I learn about events around school."
- "I think people who want to help and check their emails knew, I thought the turnout was great and I am thankful I was able to participate."
- "Possibly publicizing some statistics as in "x amount of low-income Tennesseans provided legal advice in only one hour!"
- "I think the email worked well for publicizing the event. Next time, however, perhaps the email should come out a little farther in advance so more people can plan ahead. Also, multiple emails may attract more people, since some people might overlook the first one."

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## **ATTORNEY SURVEY**

### **7 Attorneys Participated in the Survey overall.**

#### **1. Do you feel like you helped a low-income Tennessean with their civil legal issue?**

- 6 selected "Yes, I do feel like I helped."
- 1 selected "Other"

##### *Question 1 Comment*

- "Both of the ones we handled required additional information from the inquirer. I have heard back from both of them and will finalize the advice and let the student know what was ultimately advised." *Selected Yes.*
- "I feel as though we provided accurate information, though there appeared to little shelter the law could provide to the individual posing the question we answered." *Selected Other*

#### **2. Would you participate in another virtual legal advice clinic?**

- 7 responded "Yes, I would participate in another virtual legal advice clinic."

##### *Question 2 Comments*

- "I think it would great to do this on a regular schedule, say quarterly."
- "I would jump at the opportunity."

#### **3. Did you find value in working with students to answer questions? If yes, what was the value? If no, why not?**

- "I was pleasantly surprised to hear the quality of thoughts and suggestions that came from 1Ls who had not had lead time to process and answer to the question. They did an extremely good job."
- "Yes. Definitely a learning moment for the student that gives them the opportunity to work with real individuals rather than dealing with hypothetical situations."
- "Being able to discuss a real world case with a student is valuable for me because of the additional perspective it allows. I think it is also valuable for law students to wrestle with existing situations instead of memorizing settled questions of law arising from dead cases."

#### **4. Is there anything that you wish you would have known prior to arriving at the event?**

- "That I should have brought my tablet and or laptop"

#### **5. What recommendations do you have for publicizing this type of event students?**

- "I like the idea of the students having the questions in advance and even drafting up an answer if appropriate. I see this as more feasible in areas that are more statutory, such as URLTA or CPA rather than family law, which are so incredibly fact specific."
- "More lawyers answering many more questions."
- I thought it was a great event. Would love to do it again and try to recruit more people from my firm to get involved.