



Community Legal
Assistance Society

DAVID MOSSOP, Q.C. PUBLIC INTEREST ARTICLING FELLOWSHIP (2022-2023)

(Closing Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 4:00 pm, PST)

I. Introduction

[The Community Legal Assistance Society \(“CLAS”\)](#) is seeking an articling student to start in May 2022. This position is for a full articling term of 12 months, including PLTC.

All candidates must satisfy the articling qualifications prescribed by the Law Society of British Columbia.

This is a great opportunity for a student who seeks an experience that includes:

- a) learning about the practical aspects of public interest and poverty law;
- b) having conduct of their own files; and
- c) collaborating with our experienced lawyers in a wide range of our practice areas.

This posting explains:

- the funding of the articling position;
- an overview of CLAS;
- what to expect from this position;
- the application process;
- selection criteria and Diversity and Inclusion; and
- testimonials from previous articling students.

II. Funding of the Articling Position

This articling position is funded by a special grant from the Law Foundation of BC under its David Mossop Q.C. Public Interest Articling Fellowship Program. The primary purpose of the grant is twofold:

- to enhance justice by supporting public interest law; and
- to broaden public interest opportunities for articling students.

III. Overview of CLAS

General Description of CLAS

CLAS is one of the oldest, most diverse and largest public interest law organizations in Canada. The organization runs five main programs with a staff of approximately 46 people, comprised of lawyers, legal advocates and legal support staff. Our mission statement is:

CLAS respects the dignity of all in our community and works towards positive social change by providing legal assistance and advancing the law to address the critical needs of those who are disadvantaged or face discrimination.

Legal Activities

CLAS, as a public interest law organization, carries on the following activities:

- service case work;
- systemic advocacy, including test case / *Charter* litigation;
- law reform;
- legal supervision of advocacy groups and law students;
- publication of legal materials designed to assist self-represented litigants; and
- legal training and support to lay advocates, community groups, law students and lawyers doing pro-bono work.

CLAS' service case work informs its systemic test case litigation and law reform work.

Test Cases and the Supreme Court of Canada

CLAS has done a number of high-level, systemic test cases, including many at the Supreme Court of Canada. Please see <https://clasbc.net/our-work/cases/> for a list of some of CLAS' important cases.

[CLAS Programs](#)

Community Law Program (CLP)

Our [Community Law Program \(CLP\)](#) provides legal services in the areas of housing, income security, workers' rights, and systemic human rights and mental health legal issues that are not covered by our other programs. CLP's work includes test case / *Charter* litigation, service case work, law reform, legal supervision for legal advocacy groups, legal support to community groups, community development and public legal education.

Mental Health Law Program (MHLP)

Our [Mental Health Law Program \(MHLP\)](#) provides legal services to people who are detained as a result of a mental illness. MHLP's work includes: the provision of legal information to persons detained under the *Mental Health Act* at the Forensic Psychiatric Hospital; representation of persons detained pursuant to the *Mental Health Act* at hearings throughout BC; and representation of persons detained pursuant to the Mental Disorder Provisions of the *Criminal Code* at hearings in the Lower Mainland.

BC Human Rights Clinic (BCHRC)

Our [BC Human Rights Clinic \(BCHRC\)](#) provides assistance to people who have filed complaints or wish to file a complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal under the *BC Human Rights Code*. This includes assistance with drafting of complaints, preparing disclosure, dealing with preliminary applications as well as providing representation.

Community Advocate Support Line (CASL)

Our [Community Advocate Support Line \(CASL\)](#) provides legal support by telephone and the internet to community advocates across the province. The areas of law covered include housing, income security and family law, among other legal matters.

Sexual Harassment Advice, Response, and Prevention for Workplaces (SHARP)

Our [Sexual Harassment Advice, Response, and Prevention for Workplaces \(SHARP Workplaces\)](#) provides free, confidential legal advice from a lawyer to anyone who has experienced, or is experiencing, sexual harassment in their workplace in BC. In partnership with Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) delivers free education and training on preventing and addressing sexual harassment in the workplace to non-profits, Indigenous organizations, and small businesses.

IV. What to Expect From This Position

The articling student's work will include:

1. Supervised administrative tribunal work in such areas as residential tenancy, income assistance, human rights and mental health law. CLAS articling students will have direct contact with clients and their own files to work on.
2. Supervised court work, as permitted by the rules of the Law Society of BC.

3. Support for staff lawyers on important and complex superior court matters. These assignments include developing strategies, drafting pleadings, preparing affidavits, doing legal research and writing legal arguments.

Non-Traditional Opportunities

The articling student will have opportunities not typically available in traditional law firms, e.g.:

- assisting CLAS lawyers on test case litigation;
- working with community organizations on issues affecting those with low income and/or disabilities;
- assisting CLAS lawyers supervising community advocates, funded by the Law Foundation;
- assisting in the preparation of public legal education material; and
- assisting in the preparation of training material for community advocates.

Salary and Benefits

CLAS pays the student's salary for the 12 month articling period as well as the cost of the mandatory Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC).

CLAS also provides a health, dental and prescription drug benefit plan after three months of employment.

V. Application Process

CLOSING DATE – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021

Your Application must include:

- a covering letter (please try to keep it to one page) addressing:
 - why you want to article at CLAS;
 - what you can offer CLAS (including any unique skills, experiences or accomplishments);
 - your contact information;
- resume highlighting your relevant work and clinical experience;
- at least two references with contact information:
 - we usually check references during interview week so please make sure your references will be available to speak with us at that time.
- your law school and undergraduate transcripts.

Preferred Method of Transmission (Email)

We receive a large number of applications each year. Our preference is for you to send your application by email with your covering letter, resume and transcripts scanned and attached in **pdf format, preferably all as a single attachment so that they are one complete and continuous document.**

We strongly recommend that you check your email regularly during the application process. If you are unable to, please indicate this in your application.

If you cannot email, please mail or fax your application to us, in due to our current office location closure.

Application Information

Application Documents should be addressed to:

**Careers
Community Legal Assistance Society
300 - 1140 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC V6E 4G1**

**Email careers@clasbc.net
Fax 604-685-7611
Phone 604-685-3425**

CLAS follows the articling guidelines and timelines published by the Vancouver Bar Association (VBA).

Interviews

Only candidates who are shortlisted for an interview will be contacted. At this time, we are planning for interviews by videoconference but we may be able to arrange an in-person interview if provincial and federal health directives support that we can safely do so.

Please be prepared to submit a paper produced at law school if you are called for an interview. However, do not include this paper in your Application Documents.

VI. Selection Criteria and Diversity and Inclusion

CLAS hires on the basis of merit. In determining merit, we consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- commitment to and participation in public interest law, *pro bono* or legal aid work;
- courses chosen (note: it is an advantage if the student has completed more extensive courses in administrative and constitutional law);
- academic achievement;

- community involvement;
- work and life experience; and
- references.

CLAS strives to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. We strongly believe that a workplace that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve strengthens our ability to achieve our mission. We encourage applications from members of communities that face discrimination and disadvantage. To achieve a representative team, preference may be given to applicants self-identifying as a member of one or more of the following groups: Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ people, and people from ethnic or cultural minorities. We encourage applicants to self-identify in their application if they feel comfortable doing so.

VII. Testimonials from Past Articling Students

Here are testimonials from past articling students:

Alanna Tom, who articulated in 2019-2020:

Being an articulated student at CLAS is a remarkable opportunity to gain sophisticated lawyering skills. Among other things, you get the chance to pursue on-your-feet litigation in the Mental Health rotation, mediation and negotiation in the Human Rights rotation, and legal drafting and analysis in the Community Law rotation. It is the ideal place for someone passionate about pursuing critical issues of poverty, systemic oppression, and access to justice.

Isaac Won, who articulated in 2017-2018:

CLAS' articling position offers an unrivalled array of experiences representing a marginalized clientele. Whether you're interested in litigation, dispute resolution, or legal research, articling with CLAS provides the opportunity to develop vital legal skills doing meaningful work in a supportive environment."