Securities Arbitration Clinic Featured in New York Daily News

The following is an excerpt from “Law students help small investors” by Phyllis Furman – printed in the Daily News, Monday, February 18, 2008.

“For years, Jacoby did nothing until she heard about free legal advice offered by New York Law School’s securities arbitration clinic. “They are fantastic resources for investors,” said Kenneth Andrichik of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. “They are trying to help people of modest means who can’t otherwise find representation.” The role of these free clinics could become more important now given the stock market’s volatility.

Over the last two months as the Dow has tanked, the clinic at New York Law School has seen inquiries surge by 50%. Teams of third-year law students supervised by the clinic’s co-director, Howard Meyers, took on her case. Recently, they reached a settlement with brokerage firm that sold Jacoby the annuity, and a check arrived in the mail. “It’s a great feeling to apply what you have learned and help someone out,” said third-year New York Law student Lucas Charleston, 26, of Red Bank, N.J., who worked on Jacoby’s case. 

The clients of New York Law School’s arbitration clinic generally earn less than $75,000 a year. The damages in their cases often range from $5,000 to $75,000, though there are no limits “We evaluate each client on a case by case basis,” Meyers said. “We’re extremely cautious – we won’t take frivolous suits.”

*The Securities Arbitration Clinic was also featured on the Wall Street Journal Law Blog, which picked up the Daily News article about the Clinic.

Students of the Safe Passage Project Making a Difference through Volunteerism

This semester, students Manuel Garcia 3L and Desiree Hernandez 3L have been assisting volunteer attorneys with two cases for previously unrepresented minors in immigration court.

Students Marta Izak IL, Omar Issa 1L, Amanda Koons 2L, and Megan Natale 1L joined Associate Dean Lenni Benson and Adjunct Professor Lindsay Curcio at the Pro Bono Citizenship Clinic hosted by ACORN, a national nonprofit organization, at its Bronx office on Saturday, February 23. They assisted about 20 individuals with their applications for naturalization and addressed other immigration law questions.

Interested in Enrolling for a Fall ’08/Spring ’09 Clinic, Externship, or Workshop?

ALE: Application period for Limited Enrollment courses
If you are interested in applying for a Clinic, Externship, or Workshop (fall ’08/spring ’09), applications will be available on the Intranet starting on March 17. An e-mail will be sent out with all the details.
Criminal Law Clinic Scores Two More Victories

Criminal Law Clinic student Peter Hanschke 3L posts another win! After an oral argument on written motions, a criminal court judge dismissed the misdemeanor marijuana possession charges against our client based on Hanschke’s argument that the accusatory instrument was facially insufficient. Hanschke’s client was charged with possession of marijuana in the 5th degree (Penal Law § 221.10) for allegedly possessing marijuana in a “public place.” The court accepted Hanschke’s argument that the accusatory instrument failed to allege facts sufficient to show that the defendant was in a public place as defined by Penal Law § 240.00.

Criminal Law Clinic student Matthew Pettefer 3L convinced a criminal court judge to dismiss all charges against his client based upon the facial insufficiency of the accusatory instrument. The defendant was charged with criminal possession of a forged instrument in the third degree (Penal Law §170.20), petit larceny (Penal Law §155.25), and other offenses related to his alleged use of a “bent” MetroCard to gain access to the subway. The court found in a written opinion, as Pettefer argued in a written motion, that the accusatory instrument failed to allege that the MetroCard was “bent” in a way that altered the encoded data on the card such that it enabled the defendant to (and that the defendant did) gain access to the subway without paying the fare.

Elder Law Clinic Student’s Presentation of Court Evaluator Report Praised by Court

Elder Law Clinic student Rachel Ney 2L was the first of this semester’s Clinic students to participate in a hearing in an Article 81 guardianship proceeding in New York Supreme Court. Ney and her mentor, Fern Finkel, were appointed Court Evaluator. The Court Evaluator is appointed by the court to explain the proceeding to the alleged incapacitated party (AIP), investigate the case, and then make a recommendation to the court as to a disposition. In Ney’s case, one of eight daughters of an elderly man sought to be appointed guardian of her father. The case was complicated by a “friend” of the AIP who purportedly was taking advantage of the AIP.

Ney presented the recommendations in her Court Evaluator Report at the court hearing, and they were adopted fully by Justice Tomei. The judge further publicly praised Ney for the excellent work she had done in preparing the report and in her presentation.