
**NATIONAL
HOUSING LAW
PROJECT**



advancing housing justice



Pathways to Growth:

**Fellowship & Internship
Opportunities at NHLP**

**Who will work in the public interest?
Who will speak for those who have been denied a voice?**



“The National Housing Law Project is the premier housing law and policy center in the country. My 2000-2002 fellowship at NHLP was a profoundly valuable experience. As a recent law school graduate, I got to work alongside the people who literally wrote the book on affordable housing advocacy.” Todd Espinosa, Esq.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL HOUSING LAW PROJECT

Who We Are:

Mission & Goals. Established in 1968, the mission of the National Housing Law Project (NHLP) is to advance housing justice for low-income people. Our goals include: increasing and preserving the supply of decent, affordable housing; improving existing housing conditions; expanding and enforcing low-income tenants’ and homeowners’ rights; and increasing housing opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities.

NHLP provides legal support for a network that includes nearly the entire spectrum of those involved in low-income housing advocacy and issues: residents and resident organizations; legal services, civil rights and pro bono attorneys; community groups; government officials; non-profit housing providers and public housing authorities; and other intermediaries who serve public housing and Section 8 residents and applicants.

What We Do:

Initiatives. NHLP focuses primarily on the following areas: public housing, preservation of federally-assisted housing, rural housing foreclosure prevention, fair housing, increasing job opportunities for low-income people through Section 3, Section 8 voucher utilization and homeownership, and several local initiatives focused on the District of Columbia, California, and the Bay Area. Our extensive, nationwide advocacy network relies on our work – information and technical assistance, litigation support, training, research, and advocacy – to help preserve the local affordable housing stock, improve housing conditions, and expand the rights, resources, and opportunities of residents. Through these networks, NHLP continually monitors the local impact of housing programs and takes steps to address systemic problems, help residents gain support and stability, and hold affordable housing providers accountable to residents.

Advocacy. NHLP advocates for sound federal housing policies and works closely with other national and local housing and resident advocates. National partners include the National Low Income Housing Coalition, National Alliance of HUD Tenants, ENPHRONT, the National Housing Trust, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Housing Assistance Council.

Information & Training Services. NHLP serves as an informational and educational hub for housing advocates and residents, regularly providing workshops, teleconference training and seminars for local and national audiences. We also provide information about federal housing programs and policies through our website (www.nhlp.org) and via our monthly *Housing Law Bulletin*. An updated third edition of our definitive HUD HOUSING PROGRAMS: TENANTS’ RIGHTS manual was published in the spring of 2004.

POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS WITH THE NATIONAL HOUSING LAW PROJECT IN OAKLAND, CA AND WASHINGTON, DC

NHLP encourages interested new law school students who have ideas for a public interest project within our broad, substantive priorities to seek our sponsorship for a post-graduate fellowship. NHLP's expertise in housing law is an ideal place to design and implement innovative fellowship projects. Our Oakland office is in Northern California's Bay Area, home of a strong tradition of community advocacy and progressive public policy, while our second office in Washington DC puts NHLP on the pulse of national housing trends and in close proximity to policymakers to whom we provide valuable advice and education.

Current project possibilities include: *Housing Access for Those with Limited English Proficiency; Supporting the Preservation of Rural Multi-Family Housing; Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Housing; Preservation & Rehabilitation of the Portfolio, Reasonable Accommodation and Federally-Assisted Housing; Issues in Foreclosure: Protecting Our Most Vulnerable Communities; and Housing Needs of the Previously Incarcerated.*

Meet Our Recent Fellows:

Meliah Schultzman – Meliah joined NHLP in 2007 as a two-year Equal Justice Works Fellow, a fellowship funded by Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP. Meliah's fellowship is focused on the implementation of the housing protections granted to federally-assisted housing residents under the Violence Against Women Act. She is also training advocates in using protections against sex discrimination in the Fair Housing Act to safeguard housing for domestic violence victims and survivors in private rental properties. While working as an NHLP fellow, Meliah assisted the California state legislature in creating AB2053, a state bill enacted in October 2008, which allows victims to leave a rental residence prior to the end of the lease term without penalty in order to escape domestic violence.

Alaric Degrafinried – Alaric joined NHLP in 2005 as a two-year Equal Justice Works Fellow, a fellowship funded by the *American Lawyer Media*. While at NHLP, Alaric worked on a special project focusing on the compliance/effectiveness of HUD's Section 3 regulations. HUD's Section 3 program requires certain HUD funding recipients to provide job training, employment and contracting opportunities to very-low and low-income residents and eligible businesses. During his fellowship, Alaric established a collaborative working relationship between NHLP and HUD's administrative staff and he promoted employment opportunities for low-income individuals by providing community advocates with training and transactional documents to ensure and/or improve the overall Section 3 compliance rate.

Demetria McCain – Demetria joined NHLP in 2003 as a two-year Equal Justice Works Fellow, a fellowship funded by the Bernard E. and Alba Witkin Charitable Trust; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Norman Hurwitz; and the Washington Mutual Foundation. Demetria worked with NHLP's Rural Housing Preservation Initiative and monitored prepayments of USDA mortgages for rural rental housing properties across the country. Her nationwide training and outreach empowered legal services attorneys and advocates to monitor prepayments in their local communities

Todd Espinosa – Todd joined NHLP in 2001 as a two-year New Voices Fellow, a fellowship funded by the Academy for Education Development and underwritten by the Ford Foundation. At NHLP, Todd drafted a report, *False Hope, A Critical Assessment of the HOPE IV Public Housing Redevelopment Program*, that has influenced Congressional policy and administrative guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on the rights of public housing residents displaced by HOPE IV redevelopment.

"NHLP provided opportunities for me to strengthen my litigation and coalition-building skills, provided a close-up view of the national policy-making process, and taught me how to effectively educate policy makers on important issues."
Demetria L. McCain, Esq.





“During my fellowship at NHLP, I have honed my litigation skills, shaped local housing policy, and formed coalitions with regional and national advocates. As a new public interest attorney, these experiences have been invaluable.”
Meliah Schultzman, Esq.

**Where will the next generation
of highly skilled and conscientious lawyers come from?**

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS AT THE NATIONAL HOUSING LAW PROJECT

As the national legal and policy center focused on advancing housing justice for low-income people, NHLP is committed to nurturing law students who are making a commitment to careers in the public interest.

Because our housing work extends out into other areas—domestic violence, predatory lending, racial discrimination, public health, equal access — we offer a broad and dynamic arena in which to learn and grow.

Available Positions:

Part-time law clerks serving during the school year typically receive externship credit. Full-time summer positions are also available; they are usually funded through student-procured fellowships or work-study. Positions are available in NHLP’s Oakland, California and Washington, D.C. offices. NHLP accepts applications on a rolling basis, but students should call first to discuss availability.

NHLP offers a supportive and rewarding experience for a diverse and energetic group of students. Our attorneys provide supervision, training, and unique work opportunities in the multi-faceted arena of housing law and policy. Several recent NHLP summer interns have returned after graduation with two-year fellowships supported by Equal Justice Works or New Voices.

Recently, Our Law Student Interns Worked with Leading Housing Advocates & Policymakers to:

- Develop an analysis of available protections under case law for tenants in the event of foreclosures.
- Research and write articles for NHLP’s monthly *Housing Law Bulletin* on a wide range of developments in federal housing and civil rights law, including the 2008 federal legislation on foreclosure relief.
- Obtain vital protections to preserve affordable units threatened by the Oakland Housing Authority’s public housing disposition plan.
- Compile and analyze state and local preservation laws for NHLP’s new website.
- Help draft amendments to S. 1197, the housing provisions of the bill reauthorizing the Violence Against Women (VAWA) Act.
- Perform extensive research on the federal preemption of state and local housing laws.
- Analyze new federal regulations on utility allowances to keep housing affordable.
- Draft comments to HUD regarding the proposed operating fund rule for public housing.

How To Apply:

Please contact Jim Grow, staff attorney in our Oakland office.
Phone: (510)251-9400 x104 or email at: jgrow@nhlp.org



“The diversity and complexity of issues that NHLP tackles on a daily basis is truly unique. I’m confident that this experience will provide me with a solid foundation from which a lifelong legal career will surely flourish.”
Alaric Degrafinried, Esq.