



EBCLC News

November 2016

Edition





The Big Give is Just Around the Corner

On Thursday, November 17, the [UC Berkeley Big Give](#) is back! The university's 24-hour day of giving is a great opportunity for Cal alumni and affiliates to donate to various schools, clinics, and programs of the university and show their school spirit on social media.

The theme for this year's Big Give is "The Berkeley Effect," showing how even the smallest action can have big impact. And what better way to increase the impact of your Big Give donation than to make a contribution to EBCLC that benefits both the clinical legal education experience **and** improves the lives of low-income community-members in need of critical legal services and advocacy?

Last year, with your help, we were able to raise just over \$20,000 from 30 Berkeley Law alums. Many of you shared selfies in your "I hella <3 justice" gear and tagged us on social media. You reached out to your friends and family-members and asked them to show their support as well. We truly appreciate it. This year, please help EBCLC make the Big Give even bigger. Here are some ways you can help make it a success:

1. **Like Us on Facebook Today!** [Support our Facebook page](#) and invite your friends from Berkeley Law to do the same.
2. **Donate to EBCLC on November 17** -[Bookmark EBCLC's Big Give donation page](#)
3. **Rep EBCLC and Cal on Social Media** - Help us win cash prizes through Big Give [social media contests](#) by sharing our posts or creating your own throughout the day. Creativity counts! Post pictures of you, your friends and family--even your pets--in I Hella <3 Justice or Cal Gear. And don't forget to include the hashtags

#CalBigGive, #BigGiveLaw, and #BigGiveEBCLC to make sure your post is counted.

We'll be in touch in the days leading up with more information about how you can get involved and support EBCLC on Big Give day. Let's Go Cal! Let's Go EBCLC!

Alumni Alley *Where are they now?*

Doan Nguyen
Berkeley Law '07
Grants Administrator, Legal Services Trust Fund Program at the
State Bar of California



During her second year of law school, Doan interned at EBCLC in the Income & Employment Support unit, where she helped low-income, predominantly monolingual Vietnamese clients obtain and maintain public benefits, such as CalWORKS and food stamps. In addition, she participated in efforts to eliminate the Maximum Family Grant rule for CalWORKS recipients through the introduction of new legislation. Since graduating from law school, she has worked at various legal aid organizations in the Bay Area, including OneJustice and the Justice &

Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco, where she directed a program that provided pro bono legal assistance to nonprofit organizations. She currently works in the Legal Services Trust Fund Program (LSTFP) at the State Bar of California, where she is responsible for designing and implementing a series of grants administration policies for the distribution of over \$50 million obtained from bank settlements involving U.S. Department of Justice, Bank of America, and Citi. The Legal Services Trust Fund Program is also responsible for reviewing, selecting, and monitoring IOLTA and Equal Access Fund grants issued to 94+ nonprofit legal aid organizations throughout California.

How did your time in the Public Benefits clinic influence the work you do now?

My commitment to helping low-income communities is what motivated me to pursue a law degree, and my experience at EBCLC reaffirmed and deepened that commitment to helping marginalized individuals and families in California access legal services. Through my internship at EBCLC, I was able to gain invaluable lawyering skills, including how to work with clients and how to represent them in administrative hearings. I believe that these skills have made me a stronger public interest attorney and advocate.

What is one thing you know now that you wish you knew when you were still in law school?

I regret not taking courses and engaging in clinical work that was outside of my comfort zone. If I could do law school all over again, I would definitely take more trial advocacy courses, and volunteer in some of EBCLC's other program areas, such as housing or immigration. Now that I've been out of law school for almost 10 years, it's definitely hard to find time to learn new areas of law.



Celebrating 10 Years of Partnership

Money can be like oxygen - those who possess it in abundance may scarcely notice its presence; but for those without, it can be all they consider.

There are a lot of people gasping today, in our modern Gilded Age. But for those lucky enough to meet EBCLC's Health & Wellness Practice Director Sheila Hall and Staff Attorney Erin Le, a simple introduction can be a breath of fresh air. Now 10 years into its existence, EBCLC's Medical-Legal Partnership with Children's Hospital Oakland is a sustained success.

Founded on a \$25,000 budget, the program stabilizes families' lives by securing basic needs. Recipients of the practice's services are referred by medical providers Hall and Le train to identify needs beyond the physical.

"We've taught them to ask if the children have enough to eat, to describe their housing situation, to get beyond the immediate," Le said.

Once referred, recipients may present one or two issues, but Hall and Le dig for holistic solutions. What can start with an application for Supplemental Security Income or In-Home Supportive Services can evolve into visits with teachers, landlords and medical providers.

Ask their clients, and you hear Hall and Le have a funny way of changing the dynamic when they advocate for the clients before powerbrokers. Missing applications suddenly appear. Backlogs shrink. New units open up.

"Many of our clients are homeless, or facing immigration challenges or have children with severe impairments," Hall said.

Staff Spotlight

Erin Le



Tell us about yourself.

I am a Staff Attorney and Clinical Supervisor in the Health & Welfare Practice. I have been with EBCLC since 2011, when I completed my law and public health degrees. I train law students to address social factors that impact clients' health. I work in Medical-Legal Partnerships with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, Highland Hospital, and local HIV/AIDS providers. Through these partnerships, I advocate for housing habitability and stability, and for economic security. In addition to my work at EBCLC, I am mom to two daughters, Anya (4) and Jada (1).

Who has inspired you in your life and why?

Throughout my childhood I was surrounded and inspired by strong women. The oldest of four girls, I was raised by a single mom who somehow scraped up enough funds to send me to an all-girls international middle and high school. The school was located near my hometown and in one of the most segregated regions of the US. My friends came from neighboring communities that I had never entered, and from all over the world. It was there that I was immersed in an environment of women from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and where I began to crave environments rich in diversity. These experiences laid the groundwork for my work advocating for diversity, inclusion, and equity.

One of my favorite places in the Bay Area is...

Sonoma County. My cousins' home in Sebastopol is my peaceful refuge - a backyard of fresh fruit and vegetables, a hot tub under a starlit sky, and a sweet dog to cuddle. I also enjoy taking out-of-towners to Cast Winery, a vineyard with stunning views of the valley from the comfort of Adirondack chairs. I'm probably their most frequent visitor, and I don't even drink!

Funding Focus



GILEAD

Each month, EBCLC highlights the financial support of a foundation or corporation that has contributed to the stability and expansion of our programs. Today we focus on the crucial assistance provided to EBCLC since 2011 by Gilead Sciences, Inc., based in Foster City, CA. Gilead is a research-based biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery, development, and commercialization of innovative medicines, especially for people living with HIV and/or Hepatitis C. EBCLC alum Brett Pletcher (Berkeley Law '96) serves as Gilead's Executive Vice President and General Counsel. Together with Amy Flood, Vice President of Public Affairs, and Korab Zuka, Director of Public Affairs, Brett has helped to champion the company's support for EBCLC's Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLPs) - projects in which our attorneys and law students work in health care settings alongside medical providers to deliver legal assistance to low-income community members. In 2015, Gilead substantially increased their support, allowing EBCLC to continue our MLP with Children's Hospital Oakland and launch a new MLP at Alameda Health System's Highland Hospital, helping to meet the needs of both medically fragile children and adults living with chronic disease.



Korab Zuka, Brett Pletcher, Tirien Steinbach, and Daniel Faessler, EBCLC Staff Attorney for the Medical-Legal Partnership at Highland Hospital.

Advisory Board Corner

Alexander Lyon



Tell us about yourself.

I am an in-house lawyer at Applied Materials in Santa Clara, where I work on commercial and technology transactions in the semiconductor industry. Before joining the team at Applied, I was a securities and class-action litigator for ten years before moving in-house with Samsung. I attended UC Berkeley both as an undergraduate and then again for law school. I live with my wife and two daughters in San Mateo.

Are you a native Bay Area resident? If not, what brought you to the Bay Area?

No. I came to the Bay Area to attend UC Berkeley as an undergrad, and except for a short stint in San Diego, I've been here ever since.

What motivated you to join EBCLC's Advisory Board, and why have you continued to stay involved?

Working as a student at EBCLC was one of the most important and rewarding experiences I've had in my life. It really changed me, and I was grateful to have a way to connect with the organization again. Once you understand how crucial EBCLC is to supporting the community and how hungry it is to tackle new issues,

it really compels you to want to help.

What do you hope to accomplish by serving as an EBCLC Advisory Board member?

Every day, the students, staff, and volunteers at EBCLC are tackling pressing economic and social issues, like housing scarcity, economic inequality, access to healthcare, and civil rights. My hope is that, as an Advisory Board member, I can help call attention to their work and, as a result, to the underlying issues that make it so necessary.

What was the most important lesson you learned during your time in EBCLC's Health & Welfare unit?

Working at EBCLC was the first time I really appreciated how many members of our community struggle to obtain the basic civil and economic rights I had always taken for granted. It made me realize how essential dedicated advocacy, like that provided by EBCLC, really is.



Advance Justice Today!

Your investment helps EBCLC advance justice and expand opportunity to low-income community members in the areas of housing, health, income support, civic participation and economic development.



Donate