



Annual Report of Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc. (CLASSIC)

2012-13

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INTRODUCTION

This year CLASSIC celebrated its **sixth anniversary** of providing services to the community. From its beginnings as an enthusiastic student initiative, we are so proud that, six years later, CLASSIC continues to flourish within the community. CLASSIC is eminently grateful to its generous funders, dedicated staff and volunteers, and myriad of supporters who have made its growth and stability possible. We are humbled, too, by how graciously CLASSIC has been received and trusted by the community. CLASSIC now presents its record of service for the year 2012-13.

PROGRAMMING

Walk-in Advocacy Clinic (WAC)

CLASSIC fulfills its mandate primarily through the **Walk-In Advocacy Clinic (WAC)**. Under the supervision of staff lawyers, students from the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan assist low-income clients with legal matters that affect them, such as landlord-tenant, income support, summary criminal, immigration and refugee, contract and debt, wills and estates, and more. Since the WAC opened in February 2007, its services have assisted **over 2,300 low-income clients** and their families.



Fall Intensive Clinical Students: Kathleen McLean, Glenn Mackay, Janelle Anderson, Brea Lowenberger, Tom O'Hara, Khurshed Chowdhury, Kim Chatfield, Sadie Etemud-Rezaic and Adam Crocker

During 2012-13, the WAC served **614 low-income clients**, a slight decrease over the previous year. We attribute this to our files becoming more complex, and requiring more time to complete. Further, CLASSIC's current two Supervising Lawyers have identified that working on any more than 250 open files at once is not reasonably manageable.

Starting in the academic fall semester of 2012 CLASSIC launched the "**Intensive Clinical Law**" course where students obtain a full term's worth of course credits for

working at the WAC. They are at the office Monday-Thursday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. throughout the course of the term. Fridays they take the seminar course related to their clinical experience. In the first term, we had **9 Intensive Students** with us, and in the second term, we had **10 Intensive Students**. These numbers, combined with our other volunteers, for a total of **44 students and student volunteers** through the WAC this year.

"I thank you so much for your empathy, understanding and taking my case through to the best conclusion I could have hoped for."

- CLASSIC Client

CLASSIC is grateful to those who **refer low-income people with legal needs** to us. After six years of being in the community, the

predominant way clients find CLASSIC is through word of mouth. Legal Aid Saskatchewan and the Courts also guide many clients to us. Community agencies such as the White Buffalo Youth Lodge and the Open Door Society refer clients to us as well.

WAC student advocates and supervising lawyers made **372 appearances in the Provincial Court, 50 appearances before administrative tribunals** (e.g. the Office of the Residential Tenancies), and **2 appearances before the Court of Queen’s Bench** over the course of the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

WAC clients are diverse in age, gender and reported ancestry. One of the WAC project goals is prioritizing the legal needs of Aboriginal people. In 2012-13 44% of the WAC’s clientele were of Aboriginal ancestry. Below is statistical information about the demographics of WAC clientele for 2012-13:

Age	
Ages 1 – 19	4.5%
Ages 20 – 29	26.3%
Ages 30 – 39	21.6%
Ages 40 – 49	19.5%
Ages 50 – 59	15.3%
Ages 60 – 69	7.8%
Ages 70 – 79	3.9%
Ages 80 – 89	1.1%

Ancestry	
Immigrant/Refugee	19.8%
Metis	9.5%
Status	30.1%
Non-Status	5.3%
Non-Native	35.3%

Gender	
Female	46.8%
Male	53.2%

The WAC has **improved clients’ lives in very tangible ways**. In 2012-13, WAC student advocates saved tenancies, obtained compensation for poor living conditions, assisted in successful refugee claims, increased and defended public benefits, obtained acquittals and rehabilitative sentences, helped clients advance immigration matters, settled and litigated civil claims, drafted wills, and much more. WAC advocacy helped clients **obtain \$81,857.91** in compensation and income support. Further, WAC clients **retained \$19,942.28** they would have had to pay or income support they would lose, but for the WAC’s advocacy. This is a total of **\$101,800.19 in the pockets of low-income community members**. Further, many of the WAC file successes include non-monetary outcomes, such as stays of criminal charges, permanent residency status, and continuation of residence in rental accommodation, to name a few examples.



Judge Smith with some of the Fall Term Intensive Clinical Students, and Supervising Lawyer Nicholas Blenkinsop

CLASSIC enjoys tremendous support from the **legal community**. This year, **22 lawyers** volunteered to **mentor law students** placed in the WAC. CLASSIC enjoys support from a number of firms, particularly **McKercher LLP** which is not only well-represented among our mentor lawyers, but also placed their articling students **Rebecca Wood and Logan Kachur** with the WAC during 2012-13 exam periods.

Legal Advice Clinic (LAC)

CLASSIC also facilitates the **Legal Advice Clinic (LAC)** through which low-income clients receive free legal advice and guidance from practicing lawyers in the areas of criminal, family and civil law. The LAC provides vital support to low-income individuals who are self-represented through justice systems.

CLASSIC works in partnership with Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan (PBLs) to provide this program. Since its inception, the LAC has assisted **over 1,200 low-income community members**. During 2012-13, the LAC assisted **170 clients**: 64% of the clients received family law advice, 27% received civil law advice, and 9% received criminal law advice.

The LAC is coordinated and supported by volunteer students from the College of Law. In 2012-13, **Janelle Anderson** and **Kim Chatfield** served as coordinators. **Eleven students** facilitated the clinics, and a parallel **21 lawyers** provided free legal advice at the clinics. CLASSIC deeply appreciates the work of the volunteer lawyers and students; without their *pro bono* ethic this program would not be possible!



COMMUNITY

CLASSIC receives incredible support from the community. CLASSIC works in partnership with, and receives support from the College of Law. CLASSIC is proud of its ongoing partnerships with the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) Urban, the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI) and the White Buffalo Youth Lodge.



CLASSIC has continued to run the Wiyasiwewina:Core Neighbourhood Law School (CNLS). At the beginning of the year the CNLS was struggling due to low attendance. After doing some community consultation, we found that the name was too vague and confusing for many of the people we were trying to reach. For example, a number of people indicated that they did not think something named “law school” could possibly apply to them. CLASSIC has decided to rebrand the CNLS as the **Free Legal Information Clinic** (part of the Wiyasiwewina: CNLS Series). The clinic continues to run one Wednesday every month. Since the name change, CLASSIC has noted an increase in attendance.

CLASSIC has also created an exciting partnership with the University of Saskatchewan, Community Outreach and Engagement, one of the co-located agencies at **Station 20 West**. CLASSIC has run several Free Legal Information Clinics out of Station 20 West which is located at 1120 20th St West. Further, CLASSIC conducted strategic planning sessions over the course of two weekends in February and March at the Station 20 West site, in their multi-purpose room. The space was comfortable and elicited great discussion. CLASSIC has also continued our partnership with **Public Legal Education Association (PLEA)** who continues to help us find volunteer lawyers to host the Free Legal Information Clinic, through their Speakers Bureau program. We also rely on the excellent legal education materials PLEA provides. Finally, PLEA invited CLASSIC to sit on its advisory committee for the Family Law Forms Website it is currently developing.

In the Fall term of 2012 CLASSIC partnered **with Masters of Public Health (MPH)** students who conducted an evaluability assessment of CLASSIC. This was a partnership that promoted interdisciplinary learning, which fits nicely with CLASSIC's mandate. Initially CLASSIC asked the MPH students to provide an organizational and program evaluation as well as a forward-looking strategic and operational plan. However, given the time constraints of one term for the students to finish the project and the vast scope of the initial project, details of the initial proposal plan were tailored to a more manageable project within the context of the program planning and evaluation course.

Ultimately the MPH students provided an evaluability assessment to determine program goals and objectives for the WAC and the LAC. In addition, they provided a SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis, and a logic model for use for future planning and evaluation within CLASSIC.

CLASSIC also began meeting with various other agencies in the city about Family Law issues. We are currently in the beginning stages of working with Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC) to further meet the needs of people struggling to self-represent with a family law issue, while acknowledging that students cannot represent clients on family law matters, because they occur at the Court of Queen's Bench. The vision is that this project will be a PBSC project which augments the family law LAC clinic.

CLASSIC continues to seek and foster relationships with other **community organizations and the legal community**, regularly meeting with representatives from other community organizations and attending community events. This year CLASSIC gave presentations to organizations including: AIDS Saskatoon, Global

Gathering Place, Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre, the Saskatoon Prosecution Office, Ombudsman Saskatchewan, the Provincial Court Managers (provincial meeting), and the Saskatoon Provincial Court Judges. CLASSIC has received very **positive feedback** from our community partners about our services and how they benefit community members.



Winter Term Intensive Clinical Students: Mark Chui, Lindsey Cybulskie, Yafen Xu, Leif Jensen, Kelsey O'Brien, Glen Nesbitt, Sophie Ferre, Hayden McGuire and Sean Fagan

During 2012-13, CLASSIC welcomed **59 student volunteers**. Students come to CLASSIC in two ways: participation in the College's intensive clinical law course and the **Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC)** volunteer student program.

PBSC continued to be an important partner to CLASSIC, recruiting and placing our remaining 40+ law student volunteers in CLASSIC's WAC and LAC programs, as well as manual writing. Thank you to the 2012-13 PBSC coordinators, **Lindsey Cybulskie** and **Fraiba Jalal**.

It is easy to boast about CLASSIC's amazing students. This year, the **Sam Beckie Prize for Clinical Law** went to well-deserving student **Glen Nesbitt**. Congratulations Glen!

"This has been the best experience of my law school career. It has taught me the real life stories of clients and the work that is required in the legal profession."

- CLASSIC Student

Last but certainly not least, CLASSIC places **inter-disciplinary students** who support and strengthen our programs in many ways. During 2012-13, CLASSIC placed social work practicum student, **Kelsey Tkachuk**, and political studies interns **Kylee Crosby** and **Tyfanny Amy**.

CLASSIC students report very positive experiences from their placements at CLASSIC. The students describe how their experiences teach them about the realities of those living in poverty, as well as the value of putting their legal training in action by helping others.

BOARD

CLASSIC's Board of Directors is a diverse group, made up of representatives of the College of Law, our partner organizations, the legal community, and the community at large. The Board and its subcommittees meet every 4-6 weeks throughout the year. The Board provides CLASSIC with guidance and assistance in the areas of finance, fundraising, policy and program development, governance, and human resources. We are thankful for the dedicated volunteers who sit on our Board and invest in CLASSIC's present and future. Below is a list of all individuals who sat on the Board over the course of this fiscal year. Those members with an * beside their name are no longer on the Board, as they stepped down over the course of the year.

2012-2013 Board of Directors

Lori Johnstone-Clarke, *Chair and Saskatoon Tribal Council Representative*

Tori Lynn Wanotch, *Chair and Community Representative*

Prof. Glen Luther, *Vice-Chair and College of Law Representative*

Prof. Tim Quigley, *Treasurer and College of Law Representative*

Bonnie Reddekopp, *Secretary and Private Bar Representative*

Darlene Speidel*, *Community Representative*

Deb Andrade, *White Buffalo Youth Lodge Representative*

Aaron Starr*, *Aboriginal Bar Representative*

Haidah Amirzadeh*, *Private Bar Representative*

Marcel Petit*, *Community Representative*

Mary Johnson*, *Community Representative*

Cathy Bohachik, *Legal Aid Saskatchewan Representative*
Ammy Murray, *Community Representative*
Lynn Latta, *Community Representative*
Andy Park, *Community Representative*
Steve Robertson, *College of Law Student, Student Representative*
Gus Michalik, *Aboriginal Law Student Representative*
Patrick McDougall, *Community Representative*
Rachelle Tanton, *CUMFI Representative*
Felix Chen*, *Community Representative*
Maria Campbell, *Advising Elder*
Michael Maurice, *Advising Elder*

STAFF

CLASSIC is immensely proud of our dedicated, hard-working staff. They keep the clinic running smoothly and successfully. During 2012-13, CLASSIC's student managers were **Kevin Rosales** and **Matt Straw**, and its summer caseworkers were **Steve Robertson**, **Sara Hansvall**, **Heather Hoiness** and **Christa Weber**. During 2012-13, CLASSIC was pleased to welcome **Chantelle Johnson** as our new Executive Director. Supervising Lawyers **Nicholas Blenkinsop** and **Amanda Dodge** continued in their roles, as did Office Manager **Betty Beaton** and Legal Assistant **Lierin Mulder**. During the 2012-13 year, CLASSIC also welcomed **Janice Gingell** as a part time volunteer.



Janice donates 20 hours a week of her time to CLASSIC, and has quickly made herself irreplaceable.

FUNDING

CLASSIC is very thankful for the financial support it received during the 2012-13 fiscal year. Our funders included the **Law Foundation of Saskatchewan**, the **University of Saskatchewan**, the **Ministry of Justice**, the **Urban Aboriginal Strategy**, the **Community Initiatives Fund**, the **United Way of Saskatoon and Area**, the **City of Saskatoon**, the **Saskatoon Community Foundation**, **Affinity Credit Union**, **Student Summer Works**, **Canada Summer Jobs**, the **Beatrice Stevens Memorial Foundation** and **individual donors**. CLASSIC also received generous in kind donations and support, in particular from the **College of Law** and the **legal community**.



CLASSIC was excited to learn that in the 2012-13 year, it became a new member agency with the **United Way of Saskatoon and Area**. The United Way is dedicated to addressing underlying causes of social problems and work to effect changes that will make a measurable difference in the community. CLASSIC is very grateful to be welcomed into the United Way community, along with its many other member agencies.

In March 2012, a group of CLASSIC Alumni organized a **Karaoke Night Fundraiser** with all proceeds going to CLASSIC. The group managed to raise \$2,500.00 and everyone had a great time signing their favourite tunes.

CLOSING

CLASSIC's Board and staff are very thankful for the many individuals and organizations that have supported CLASSIC and enabled us to meet the needs of our community. We especially thank our dedicated and hard-working volunteers who are the hands and hearts of our service to the community.