GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS CLINIC
Spring 2022 Newsletter

WERC Will be Featured in the California Supreme Court Historical Society Journal

The annual journal of the California Supreme Court Historical Society will be publishing a special section "Legal History in the Making" for the 2022 volume of the California Legal History. The issue will be devoted to current law school experiential learning programs that reflect a new direction for social progress, going beyond providing direct legal assistance to promoting positive change in the law and society. GGU Law is honored that WERC will be featured for its groundbreaking work in expanding workplace protections for the most vulnerable workers and in providing transformative learning opportunities for clinic students.

Donate to WERC!

Spring 2022 WERC Students

This semester, WERC students were busy, representing domestic workers, truckers, plumbers and restaurant workers on a wide range of workplace issues. Of particular note, **Javonna Smith** ('22) and **Alexandria Palacio** ('23) represented a domestic worker at an all day hearing in front of the Labor Commissioner, delivering open and closing statements, and conducting brilliant direct and cross examinations. They are still waiting on the Labor Commissioner's decision.

Meanwhile, **Piper Wheeler** ('23) and **Carl Nestler** ('23), representing five Port of Oakland truck drivers, diligently and strategically responded to civil discovery and ultimately, prepared their case for an all-day mediation (pictured above.) Additionally, WERC Students, **Monique Adams** ('23), **Yasmin Cavillo Lopez** ('23) and **Kaitlyn Guadagno** ('23), filed several new cases (more details to come in subsequent newsletters!)

Finally, in addition to their casework, **Celena Gentry** (’23), **Ema Rocha** ('22) **Kaitlyn Guadagno** ('23) and **Piper Wheeler** ('23) contributed to the amicus brief the Clinic will be submitting on behalf of economic and racial justice advocates and rideshare and delivery drivers on the constitutional challenges to Proposition 22, that carved this precarious workforce from employee protections. **Celena Gentry** (’23) and **Ema Rocha** ('22) also conducted a Know Your Rights webinar for undocumented workers at the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center.

Senate President pro Tempore appoints Clinic Director, Prof. Shah, to the Advisory Committee on Household Domestic Services

Senate
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE
The President pro Tempore of the California State Senate, in the name of and by the authority of the People of the State of California, has appointed
HINA SHAH, J.D.
to serve as Member of the Advisory Committee on Household Domestic Services effective January 20, 2022.
President pro Tempore

In the United States, domestic workers, largely women and people of color, have been historically excluded from the most basic labor protections. They are the only group of employees currently excluded from the CA Occupational and Health and Safety Standards, despite being frontline, essential workers, as demonstrated by their role in responding to the COVID-19 global pandemic and the California wildfires.

On September 27, 2021, Governor Newsom signed into law SB 321, the Household Domestic Services Employment Safety Standards, which establishes the first guidelines for health and safety in the domestic work industry. The Clinic, which serves as legal counsel to the bill's sponsor, the California Domestic Worker's Coalition, provided technical and legal advice and helped draft SB 321.
Senate President pro Tempore appointed Clinic Director, Prof. Shah, to serve on the Advisory Committee on Household Domestic Services, which formed as a result of SB 321. The Advisory Committee is comprised of members of the public and experts, like Professor Shah, who are brought together to discuss and develop voluntary industry-specific occupational health and safety guidance and to make recommendations for policy to protect the health and safety of domestic workers.

WERC Participates in Research on Homecare Industry

WERC was part of a unique collaborative research team with UCLA Labor Center and Hand in Hand, the domestic employer network, that published Lives & Livelihoods: California's Private Homecare Industry in Crisis (ucla.edu). The report corroborates the on-the ground reality of many workers and consumers of a homecare industry facing critical issues, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. The report makes a compelling case for a publicly funded long-term care program.

Read the Report Here

Alumni Highlight: Julie Cummings

Julie Cummings (Class of '16) is an Attorney Advisor with the Social Security Administration, drafting legal decisions for administrative law judges presiding over disability determinations. While in WERC, she had the opportunity to represent a low-income worker at a Labor Commissioner hearing under the supervision of professors who mentored her every step of the way. She credits her time in WERC with helping her become a better version of herself in the legal community.
A piece of advice she has for her former law student self:

Chill out -- things will work out!

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