JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

STAFF ATTORNEY/ADVOCATE – ECONOMIC RIGHTS UNIT

(Full-Time - Permanent)

The Law Foundation of Silicon Valley advances the rights of under-represented individuals and families in our diverse community through legal services, strategic advocacy, and educational outreach. Now with over 80 employees, the Law Foundation is the largest provider of free legal services in the South Bay. Located in downtown San Jose, the Law Foundation is a dynamic and interesting place to work. We pride ourselves on fostering a work environment that is motivating, collaborative and fun, with plenty of opportunities for professional growth. We are working towards a race-conscious legal services practice.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Health program at Law Foundation is seeking a permanent Economic Rights Staff Attorney/Advocate in its Health Unit (formerly known as Mental Health Advocacy Project and Health Legal Services). The Economic Rights Attorney/Advocate provides legal assistance and representation regarding problems related to public benefits, such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medi-Cal, as well as general legal services related to consumer law, employment law, simple estate planning, and more. The Attorney/Advocate helps clients obtain benefits or prevent the loss of benefits to which they are entitled. This includes representation at administrative law hearings. The Attorney/Advocate will participate in our Health Unit’s outreach efforts, other community and client education presentations, and system reform projects. The Attorney/Advocate may also assist with client intake, performing eligibility screening to potential clients, assessing their legal issues, and either referring clients for further assistance within the Law Foundation or providing appropriate referrals.

The Staff Attorney/Advocate will also represent patients in locked psychiatric facilities in administrative hearings to challenge involuntary detention for mental health treatment or to preserve a patients’ right to refuse psychiatric medications.

This position is full-time. Law school graduates are eligible to apply.

JOB DUTIES:

- Provide legal advocacy and representation to individuals living with mental health, developmental disabilities, and other chronic health issues associated with poverty.
- Conduct community education and outreach sessions and produce educational materials.
- Respond to referrals and requests for technical assistance from community-based organizations.
- Participate in Health Units intake, information and referral services.
- Attend community meetings and participate in events that concern or impact Health Unit clients.
- Address system reform needs of Health clients.
- Represent clients in locked psychiatric facilities in detention and capacity hearings.
- Monitor mental health facilities for compliance with patients’ rights laws, including laws governing the use of seclusion, restraint, and involuntary medication, and due process requirements for involuntary mental health treatment.
- Work in coordination with supervisory and other Law Foundation staff.
- Keep statistics regarding individuals served and perform other administrative tasks and data collection.
- Participate in Law Foundation activities, such as special events and other fundraisers.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:
- California Bar Membership, eligibility to practice law in California, or prior experience representing clients in public benefits matters. Law school graduates are eligible to apply.
- Experience with or general understanding of public benefits programs highly desired.
- Direct experience with or general knowledge of issues affecting individuals living with HIV/AIDS, mental health disabilities, and/or other chronic health conditions correlated with poverty.
- Commitment to civil rights and the rights of individuals living with HIV/AIDS, mental health disabilities, other disabilities and individuals from underserved and BIPOC communities.
- Ability to be sensitive to and work well with low-income individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS, people living with mental health disabilities, people of color, active drug users, people experiencing homelessness, persons currently or formerly involved in the criminal justice system, and members of the LGBTQ community is essential.
- Ability to work independently and be self-motivated.
- Ability to identify, investigate and resolve client problems effectively.
- Ability to analyze, write and present ideas and legal concepts clearly and concisely.
- Ability to develop and conduct effective oral presentations, such as community outreach and argument at hearings.
- Ability to negotiate solutions to problems between clients and other parties, such as government agencies, treatment providers, and other service providers.
- Strong organizational skills and ability to perform tasks necessary to maintain a substantial active caseload of advocacy and administrative hearing work.
- Demonstrated experience working with and/or sensitivity to persons living with mental health or developmental disabilities.
- Willingness and ability to work as part of a team.
- Bilingual (particularly Spanish or Vietnamese) applicants are desired.
- Candidates of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, persons living with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community encouraged to apply.
- Experience in using Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Valid California Driver’s License and regular access to a vehicle for hearings required.

COMPENSATION
Salary scale starts at $63,989.69/year and $56,888.53 for a JD Advocate; compensation based upon qualifications and comparable experience. Additional $100/month bilingual differential is available. All compensation determined by the wage table of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between SEIU Local 521 and LFSV. The Law Foundation also provides a generous benefits package. More information regarding the Law Foundation is available on our website: www.lawfoundation.org.

TEMPORARY COVID-19 REMOTE WORK
Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley employees are currently working remotely for the foreseeable future, subject to some exceptions. The Law Foundation has implemented rigorous health and safety protocols to minimize risk of exposure for staff who occasionally need, or want, to work from the office. Due to the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on personal lives, the Law Foundation is open to providing flexibility regarding work schedules to the extent feasible for the position.

The Law Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Employer. We encourage people
of color, women, people living with disabilities, older people, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people to apply. It is the policy of the Law Foundation to prohibit discrimination and harassment of any type and to afford equal employment opportunities to employees and applicants, without regard to race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy, medical condition or genetic information, veteran status, national origin, disability, marital or other protected status. The Law Foundation will conform to the spirit, as well as the letter of all applicable laws and regulations.

APPLICATION PROCESS
Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until position is filled. Please submit the following via email to jobs@lawfoundation.org: (1) a resume, (2) three professional references, and (3) a cover letter that explains your interest, and also addresses the following question:

In order to best serve our clients and our community, the Law Foundation is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace in which differences are acknowledged and valued. How has your personal background or experiences, professional or otherwise, prepared you to contribute to social justice, race equity and diversity among our staff?