



Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

Fighting for the human rights of Haiti's poor

IJDH Legal Fellowship

About Us

The Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) and its Haiti-based affiliate, the *Bureau des Avocats Internationaux* (BAI), have over 15 years of demonstrated success enforcing Haitians' human rights, in Haiti and abroad. We work in four areas: 1) *impact litigation* to force open the doors of Haitian, international and U.S. courts for precedent-setting human rights cases; 2) *documentation* to provide public officials, human rights advocates and grassroots activists the reliable information they need to speak up for human rights in Haiti; 3) *transnational grassroots advocacy* to compel governments and powerful institutions in Haiti and abroad to respect Haitians' human rights; and 4) *systemic capacity building* to develop a corps of Haitian lawyers and advocates trained to fight for sustainable change in their country.

The organizations' successes include spearheading the Raboteau Massacre trial, considered Haiti's most successful complex litigation, and *Yvon Neptune v. Haiti*, one of the most important human rights cases in the Americas and the first Haiti case to be decided by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The New York Times called the BAI's Mario Joseph "Haiti's most prominent human rights lawyer."

Project Description

IJDH is seeking a Legal Fellow to help coordinate our Cholera Accountability Project (CAP) for a 6-12 month period from our office in Boston. Preference will be given to candidates who can commit to a longer time frame.

The Legal Fellow will be working closely with a team of lawyers in the United States and Haiti on advocacy and legal work aimed at seeking accountability from the United Nations (UN) for causing Haiti's cholera epidemic. Cholera broke out in Haiti in October 2010, and the country is now fighting to contain the world's largest cholera epidemic. Overwhelming evidence has established that reckless disposal of human waste on a UN peacekeeping base in Mirebalais poisoned Haiti's rivers with a particularly deadly strain of cholera bacteria and caused the epidemic. IJDH and BAI represent victims of cholera in their quest for justice from the UN. In November 2011, we filed claims on behalf of 5,000 victims of cholera seeking a) investments in water and sanitation infrastructure to control the epidemic, b) compensation for the victims and c) a public apology. The UN has yet to accept responsibility and respond to the victims' claims. CAP works with Haitian grassroots groups and international advocates in a broad-based campaign to push the UN to take action to stop cholera's killing.

Fellow Responsibilities

Given our small office and large volume of work, fellows will be given a high degree of responsibility from the start. Accordingly, fellows must be highly motivated and reliable. Responsibilities of the Legal Fellow include:

- Conducting domestic, international and comparative legal research;
- Producing internal memoranda and drafts of legal documents;
- Participating in case management, including overseeing the collection and processing of documentation related to individual clients' claims, managing victims' databases, and reviewing evidence;
- Supporting the organization and implementation of domestic and international advocacy campaigns in collaboration with partner organizations;
- Developing political strategies and engaging directly with national legislators, UN officers and other powerful international actors;
- Drafting advocacy documents, including human rights reports, op-eds and case summaries for publication;
- Assisting with composition of fundraising and grant proposal documents, as needed;
- Engaging with international media, including drafting press releases and educating press on recent case developments.

Qualifications

- Bachelors and J.D., or equivalent law degree (bar admission not required);
- Excellent written and oral communication skills;
- Proficiency in standard computer applications;
- High level of initiative and motivation;
- Ability to handle sensitive client relationships and protect the confidentiality of our work and our communications;
- Proficiency in French and/or Haitian Creole desired;
- Knowledge of Haitian history and political environment desired;
- Experience in civil or criminal litigation a plus.

Funding

This position is unpaid. Deferred law firm associates or candidates who can secure external funding are encouraged to apply.

Application Procedure

Attorneys interested in the position of IJDH Legal Fellow should submit a cover letter, resume, short writing sample, and contact information for two references as soon as possible. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and position is open until filled. Please send all application materials electronically to Beatrice Lindstrom (beatrice@ijdh.org). Include "IJDH Legal Fellow" in the subject line.

Contact Information

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