

[VERITAS VINCIT]

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Going It Alone

By Molly Bentley, SLS Research Intern

This summer, you may encounter issues of a legal nature, such as a traffic ticket or a dispute with a landlord. Student Legal Services (SLS) is open during the summer to assist students who will be registered for Fall Quarter 2010 classes. SLS is not open to the public—individuals who are not currently-registered UC San Diego students will need to look to other legal resources.

one's disposal for individuals who decide to represent themselves (aka "pro se") as well as low-cost options for when it is necessary to obtain legal representation.

There are many reasons why an individual may believe it would be easier or more cost-effective to handle his or her own legal matters. People who choose to represent themselves may be low income

When legal issues arise, a big question is whether to retain a lawyer or to handle things on one's own. California courts recognize that some individuals will choose to manage their own legal matters. In the state's Rules of Court (CRC), it is mandated that there be aid provided to those wishing to be self-represented litigants (SRL). Courts must have programs, policies, and procedures to support those representing themselves (CRC 10.960b). Accordingly, there are many resources at

or may believe that the issue will be simple to resolve. Of course there are also matters that the courts recommend individuals do not pursue as an SRL, such as those requiring intensive litigation and court proceedings, personal injury or malpractice suits, complex business transactions, and criminal cases where there is a chance for harsh punishment.



(www.standardlegal.com.)

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You may wish to consult with the attorneys at SLS to determine whether or not you should ultimately represent yourself. In the event of a possible criminal charge or pending litigation, you'll almost certainly need the assistance of legal counsel.

One place where it is required that an individual represent him or herself is in small claims court. An individual may seek the advice of a lawyer, but the lawyers cannot represent parties in small claims court (www.sdcourt.ca.gov). Small claims court is used for claims of \$7,500 or less, for things like landlord-tenant disputes or confronting a roommate who is not paying their share of the rent. Free help exists at the courthouse as well as through the Small Claims Legal Advisory. The Legal Advisory can assist parties at each step, from the filing of a claim to enforcing the decision of the court to collect what is owed (www.sdcourt.ca.gov). There is also a specific self-help center online for those heading to small claims court at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/smallclaims/>.

If you ever consider representing yourself, there are many important resources available to help you research your case and know how to conduct yourself in court. First of all, it will be necessary that you do research. In doing so, *How to Research a Legal Problem: A Guide for Non-Lawyers* suggests that you determine which court may have jurisdiction over issues such as yours, and that you make sure to understand the citations and abbreviations used in legal resources. (www.courtinfo.ca.gov.) Public law libraries as well as many online sources will help you understand various aspects of your matter. These same sources may also be the place to look for any forms that will be necessary to file in your case. Additionally, you will need to understand the California Rules of Court, as self-represented litigants are held to the same standards as attorneys (Cal. San Diego Cty. Super. Ct. Div. V, R. 5.1.1). Whether a matter is appropriate to pursue through pro se legal representation or whether you must retain legal counsel, there are many resources at your disposal to assist you.

SLS by the Numbers

2 - the number of full-time attorneys available to provide free, confidential counseling and present legal education programs

4 - the number of undergraduate internship positions SLS offers

100 - the approximate number of workshops/programs SLS presents each year

168 - the number certificates SLS has given to students who have successfully completed the award-winning Discover the Law program during Winter Quarters 2009 and 2010

(858) 534-4374 - the phone number to call to schedule an appointment to meet with an SLS attorney

Did you know? SLS Is Open All Summer!

SLS continues to provide free, confidential counseling during the summer for students who will be registered at UC San Diego during the Fall Quarter 2010. Topics for which students frequently seek counseling during the summer include landlord-tenant concerns or other issues that students did not have the time to address during the academic year. Call (858) 534-4374 if you would like to schedule an appointment.

Welcome Interns!

by **Jessica St. Clair**, Legal Education Coordinator

The staff of SLS is extremely grateful for the diligence, energy, and enthusiasm of our 2009-2010 undergraduate interns. Research interns Patricia Sohn and Molly Bentley provided tremendous help with research and program preparation. Marketing interns Jasmin King and Lilith Mansuryan were true pioneers. Their can-do attitudes and willingness to experiment helped us to develop the new marketing internship as an important part of our Undergraduate Internship Program.

As sad as we are that we will not have the pleasure of working with them each week, we are equally excited to welcome our 2010-2011 undergraduate interns.

Learn more about these impressive students below.

2010-2011 Undergraduate Interns

Research Interns

Amanda Goodman - Ms. Goodman will be a senior at Warren College in the fall. She is a writing tutor and is involved in several social justice projects.

Sarah Spacht - Ms. Spacht will be a senior at Muir College in the fall. She is a Muir College house advisor and orientation leader.

Marketing & Outreach Interns

Sara Nickpay - Ms. Nickpay will be a senior at Warren College in the fall. She is a member of Kappa Alpha Theta and has served as philanthropy chair.

Toni Sarge - Ms. Sarge will be a sophomore at Marshall College this fall. She is a member of both the UCSD Track and Field and Cross Country teams.

