



The *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal*

is pleased to announce its 2009 Student Writing Competition

The *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal* (BLRLJ) at UC Berkeley School of Law is sponsoring its first annual student essay competition designed to promote scholarship that addresses issues which affect the Latino community in the U.S and abroad. In this inaugural year, *BLRLJ* seeks submissions that discuss contemporary problems faced by underserved rural communities and the legal avenues through which their conditions can be improved.

In 1972, Michael Bennett and Cruz Reynoso co-authored California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA): Survival of a Poverty Law Practice. 1 *Chicano L. Rev.* 79, 1972, which discusses the formation of the nation's first impact litigation practice dedicated to representing underserved rural communities throughout California. Bennett and Reynoso described how CRLA sought to make the legal system work for underrepresented Chicanos and how the organization survived amidst great opposition from local bar associations, industry leaders, state and federal legislators, and then California Governor Reagan. In their perspective:

the problems of the poor result far less from unjust rules than from an inequitable distribution of wealth and power and that the lawyers serving them must focus on building legal institutions which can enhance the power of the poor client to economically and politically cope for himself.

In response, student submissions for this essay competition should address the following: How far have we, as a society, progressed with respect to providing effective advocacy for rural communities since the formation of CRLA? How should we assess current programs providing legal services for underrepresented rural communities in California and throughout the nation? What should the current generation of leaders do to improve the conditions underserved rural communities are facing? Submissions are encouraged to propose policy solutions or model programs related to impact litigation and/or direct services.

Award

The author of the winning submission will receive a \$2,000 award and have his or her paper published in Volume 20 of the *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal* (BLRLJ). BLRLJ will also consider other submissions for publication.

Criteria

Submissions must meet the following criteria:

- Be an original and unpublished work.
- Be sent as both a PDF and Microsoft Word attachments to blrlj.writingcompetition@gmail.com
- Be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font, use one-inch margins, and be at least twelve (12) typed pages.
- Include a cover letter with the author's name, current address, current telephone number, and current e-mail address.
- Include citations at the bottom of each page that conform to The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (18th Edition).

*BLRLJ will consider all submission for publications and reserves the exclusive publication rights to all submissions selected for publication.

Deadline: March 1, 2009. Email any questions to blrlj.writingcompetition@gmail.com