

The AALS Section on Pro Bono and Public Service Opportunities (PBPSO) announces Allison Constance as the 2022 PBPSO Emerging Leader Award winner. The Emerging Leader Award honors early-to-mid career staff or faculty who have made an outstanding contribution to pro bono and public service in the law school setting.

Allison Constance serves as the Director of Pro Bono Initiatives at the University of North Carolina School of Law (UNC Law). Under her committed leadership, the past 4 graduating classes at UNC Law have had 100% participation in the pro bono program, an extracurricular program that connects law students to hundreds of projects with supervising attorneys in public interest organizations, government agencies and private practice. Allison, known for her organized, empathetic and efficient work, has developed new programs to serve the North Carolina community and work with the law school clinic to harness the work of the law school faculty and provide opportunities to students that might otherwise go undeveloped.

One of her signature projects is the Juvenile Parole Project (JPP), which matches former juveniles eligible for parole with pro bono attorneys. In the three years since Alison and co-founder, Ben Finholt (Duke University School of Law), created the JPP, the project has represented dozens of former juveniles in their attempt to show the North Carolina Parole Commission that they are mature, rehabilitated, and ready to be released from prison. According to Mr. Finholt, UNC Law students had no exposure to prison representation before Allison initiated the JPP. Her effective administration of JPP has contributed to its growth and impact on access to legal services for former juveniles and invaluable pro bono opportunities for UNC law students.

John Kasprzak, Assistant Dean for Student Development, commented:

“On a personal level, Allison has also committed herself to her own pro bono work. With her experience with NC Prisoner Legal Services, she has not only been able to practice what she preaches to students, she has been able to develop a program that enables students to participate. Students seeing Allison commit to others and mentor them through the process has inspired another generation of legal servants.”

Allison Constance will be presented with the Emerging Leader Award during the virtual 2022 AALS Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 8, 2022.