

TAKEROOT JUSTICE

TakeRoot Justice, formerly the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center Summer 2020 Legal Internships for Current Law Students

TakeRoot Justice, formerly the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center, provides legal, participatory research, and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic and social oppression. TakeRoot employs a unique model of partnership with grassroots and community-based groups. Our partners take the lead in determining the priorities and goals for our work and advance our understanding of justice. This upends the traditional power dynamics between communities and service providers. We believe in a theory of change where short-term and individual successes help build the capacity and power of our partners, who in turn can have longer-term impact on policies, laws, and systems that affect their communities. Our work is done in connection with organizing, building power, and leadership development. Candidates with proficiency in a second language – especially Spanish, East Asian, or South Asian languages – are strongly preferred.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINES: We accept intern applications for summer positions from current 2L students until November 1, 2019, and from 1L students from December 1, 2019 to February 1, 2020. Review of applications and offers for internship positions will be made on a rolling basis. Please e-mail a cover letter and resume to Attn: Tedmund Wan at jobs@takerootjustice.org, with “Summer 2020 Legal Intern” in the subject line. Cover letters should explain why the applicant is interested in working with TakeRoot. All law school interns must work full time for a minimum of 10 weeks. This internship may require regular night meetings. TakeRoot will work with summer interns who cannot receive funding from their law schools to apply for funding from outside sources and will seek to compensate summer interns who receive little or no outside support, budget permitting.

Applicants should state specifically which of the following practice area(s) they have preference to work in, and why such practice area(s) is/are of interest:

Capacity Building for Community Non-Profits and Worker Cooperatives: We provide legal advice and assistance to: (i) groups of workers establishing worker-owned cooperative businesses and established worker-owned cooperative businesses in connection with incorporation, governance and other matters; (ii) small businesses in connection with commercial lease review and negotiations; and (iii) grassroots organizations, including nonprofits and unincorporated associations, in connection with incorporation, tax exemption and compliance with corporate, employment, tax and other laws.

Consumer Justice: We support community-based organizations whose members and constituents are experiencing debt collection abuse and represent low-income consumers on matters such as identity theft, rental arrears lawsuits, and unlawful debt collection practices. Our work often intersects with other practice areas in TakeRoot, such as Immigrants’ Rights and Tenants’ Rights.

Equitable Neighborhoods: We work with grassroots groups, neighborhood organizations and community coalitions to help make sure that people of color, immigrants, and other low-income residents who have built our city are not pushed out in the name of “progress.” We work together with our partners and clients to ensure that residents in historically under-resourced areas have stable housing they can afford, places where they can connect and organize, jobs to make a good living, and other opportunities that allow people to thrive.

Housing & Tenants' Rights: We provide direct legal assistance to community groups, their organizers, and their members engaged in tenant organizing. Our practice includes affirmative litigation on behalf of tenant associations, as well as individual anti-eviction litigation. We train community groups and their members on tenants' rights issues, collaborate with tenant organizers, assist with legislative and/or regulatory advocacy, and lead housing clinics. Types of cases include HP actions for repairs, rent strikes, and 7A proceedings to strip landlords of control of their buildings.

Immigrants' Rights: We aim to protect individuals from detention and deportation, keep families together, and build power in immigrant communities. We assist with a wide range of immigration case types including citizenship, T and U visas, asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile status, detention defense, and much more. We are also involved in efforts to support the development of immigrant community defense networks, challenge harsh immigration laws and enforcement practices, promote language access, and combat immigration fraud.

Workers' Rights: We represent low-wage workers from workers' centers against employers for failure to pay minimum wage and overtime, tip-stealing, labor trafficking, unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, and other violations of the labor laws. We also collaborate with community groups to provide legal support to employees involved in a variety of labor-related organizing efforts.

TakeRoot Justice is an equal opportunity employer. TakeRoot encourages applications from people with diverse backgrounds, including women, people of color, immigrants, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ people, people from low-income backgrounds, and people with personal experience with the criminal justice system. We strongly encourage applications from people with lived experiences in the communities we serve.