

National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement (NLSCA)

Our Mission

The mission of NLSCA is to ensure the human rights and dignity of Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian peoples. We advocate for unity through diversity via: (1) Legal defense of civil rights. (2) Responsible media coverage and depiction; (3) Proactive collaboration with governmental and non-governmental institutions; and (4) Fostering education and community outreach.

The vision of NLSCA is a society where the humanity of each individual is liberated in the pursuit of peace and equity for all.

The Next Chapter of the Civil Rights Movement

Under the guise of fighting terrorism, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian people in the U.S. face institutionalized discrimination and widespread suspicion. Recognizing that these political and cultural changes have become systemic, NLSCA was established as a nonprofit organization to advocate for those hailing from the 24 nations targeted by the U.S. government in the wake of September 11th. In the footsteps of other human rights struggles, NLSCA pursues legal remedies and exposes the injustices of current government policies while working to relieve our nation's populace of damaging common prejudices. In this context, NLSCA has inaugurated a new civil rights legacy in California and in the nation – inspiring this country to fulfill its promise of a just society.

Our Strategies

- Legal defense through the provision of pro bono and sliding-scale counsel to individuals facing civil rights violations, FBI interrogations and detentions, selective and retaliatory immigration enforcement, employment discrimination, education discrimination and hate crimes.
- Policy advocacy and public education to affect changes in discriminatory and dangerous governmental policies and foster cultural competency in institutions.
- Media representation to counter the harmful and long-lasting effects of racial/ethnic, religious and national origin stereotypes and promote a responsible, accurate and accountable media.
- Community building through the education of community members regarding their inalienable rights in a democracy and through the provision of training in community organizing, advocacy and coalition development.

Legal Extern

Looking for a rewarding experience working for a new non-profit organization? Our team at the National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement (NLSCA) is dedicated to providing legal advocacy to protect the Civil Rights of Middle Easterners, Muslims and South Asians in a Post 9/11 Era.

A San Francisco-based Civil Rights Law office, Akhlaghi & Associates was transformed into a non-profit organization, the National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement (NLSCA), in October of 2004. Our positions are demanding yet rewarding. We welcome recent graduates, students interested in gaining experience for law or graduate school and career professionals.

All externs will have the opportunity to participate in different aspects of our legal services, including initial client contact, fact investigation, legal research, legal writing and trial and hearing preparation. Externs may also assist in the efforts of media, legislative and public education advocacy to support the ongoing struggle for racial equality amongst the Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian community post 9/11.

Some familiarity with legal concepts and computer skills are useful, but no prior legal or paralegal training or experience is required. Working well under pressure and caring about the quality of work, externs will ensure the completion of applications and petitions for government mandated deadlines, grant deadlines for fundraising, media communications, event planning, etc. All externs will work hard in a fast-paced legal environment, and must be able to handle many tasks at once. All externs will also assist with the administrative functions of the office and will work to create new procedures to assist his/her team members. NLSCA's staff works as a team. The unique individual skills an extern provides are invaluable, though team strategizing is a central component to our organization.

We are currently in need of one full-time Extern, with a time commitment spanning this academic year. Externs receive a monthly stipend of \$1,000.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. A demonstrated concern for the needs of Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian communities.
2. A demonstrated concern for the needs of civil rights and public interests.
3. Law student training and/or experience preferred, but not required.
4. Bilingual skills in Farsi, Arabic, Urdu, & Dari are a definite plus, but not required.
5. Excellent abilities in the areas of analytical thinking and deduction, strong writing and research skills, and warm interpersonal interaction with clients are a must.

Personality

The persons we hire are unique. They possess the ability to think outside the box. With creativity and passion they take initiative and are assertive, yet flexible and organized. They multitask and have a willingness to take on responsibility with a high degree of attention to detail. They must possess a desire to advocate with heart to defend the civil liberties and rights of our clients.

Responsibilities

Under the supervision of a staff attorney, legal externs will prepare legal memoranda, conduct legal research, contact opposing counsel, as well as conduct client interviews. Although we cannot predict what our needs will be in the rapidly changing environment of Immigration and Civil Rights Law, legal projects will mostly involve factual and legal research into varied issues such as human rights conditions in countries such as Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, to name a few. Externs will also focus on media correspondence, assist in website development, brochure development, coordinate marketing efforts, manage contacts, conduct research, as well as coordination of grant proposals, direct mail appeals, individual donor outreach, membership development, and more.

Application Process

Please send a *cover letter, resume, list of references and writing sample** to:

National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement
444 De Haro St., Suite 205
San Francisco, CA 94107

OR FAX (415) 553-7101

OR EMAIL akhlaghilaw@sbcglobal.net

Writing Sample: Do a “Google” search on NLSCA and Attorney Banafsheh Akhlaghi, and look us up on the web at <http://nlscanet.org> or <http://www.legalsanctuary.org>. Please then write a 2-3 page essay that is personal yet articulate, focusing on the following points:

- 1) Why do you want to join this office?
- 2) How will you contribute to the work we do? What makes you different? How are you unique?