• Organization:
  Center for Children’s Advocacy
  Medical-Legal Partnership Project, Yale-New Haven Children’s Hospital (“YNHH”)
  *there was a recent article in the Yale Daily News about the program:

• Full street address of organization:
  789 Howard Avenue, New Haven, CT 06519

• Website:
  https://cca-ct.org/our-work/aboutus_programs_mlpp/
  (note that this is a shared website for 2 MLPs both associated with the Center for Children’s Advocacy)

• Name and title of person who will be the Fellow’s direct supervisor:
  Alice Rosenthal, JD, Senior Staff Attorney, Medical-Legal Partnership Project

• Phone number and e-mail address of proposed direct supervisor:
  203-688-0113
  arosenthal@cca-ct.org

• Placement dates:
  May 27th, 2020 through August 7th, 2020

• Are placement dates flexible? If so, please describe:
  We can take students any time within those dates and can go from 8 to 11 weeks as needed.

• Proposed work schedule:
  Monday – Friday, 8:30 – 5:00. All days will have a minimum ½ hour for lunch, but this can be extended to 1 hour if taken during an educational session (e.g., medical or legal didactic). We are flexible about hours.
Placement Description

- **Organization description:**
  CCA is a non-profit legal service organization that fights for the legal rights of vulnerable children in Connecticut. The mission of the Medical-Legal Partnership Project (“MLPP”) at CCA is to improve health outcomes for low-income children through interdisciplinary collaboration in the medical setting by addressing patients’ health harming legal needs. The YNHH MLPP in New Haven is at the sharp end of addressing social determinants of health (“SDH”) by practicing children’s rights and poverty law in the areas of housing, education, disability rights, public benefits, and teen legal rights. The MLPP uses three strategies to meet the project goals: (1) provision of legal advice both indirectly, by consulting with medical providers and hospital staff, and directly, by representing children, youth, and families; (2) interdisciplinary education and training for healthcare providers and community organizations; and (3) policy initiatives aimed at addressing systemic issues affecting the health and well-being of children.

- **Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting:**
  The fellow would work with the MLPP lawyer and physicians at YNHH on projects that seek to diminish the impact of SDH on children and on direct advocacy with patients. One example is contacting families at risk of utility shut-offs and connecting them with appropriate resources to ensure children’s health.

- **Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.**

In the summer of 2020, the fellow will be working on two specific projects, Utility Shutoff Prevention and Healthy Homes which will both directly target the individual economic and housing needs of New Haven families. Both projects grow out of the extensive research showing that children who grow up in poverty or near poverty have a greater likelihood of worse health, school performance, and adulthood employment. This is, in part, due to the persistent stress of poverty, of which there is growing biologic data how living in poverty changes one’s DNA, brain metabolism, and immune system. By improving the lives of families with young children, we are diminishing the stress of poverty and its outcomes.

In general, the fellow will support the MLPP lawyer and medical providers on meeting with children and families of the Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital, inpatient and outpatient clinics, to screen for health harming legal needs and connect families with
appropriate resources. This will include screening families in person or by phone with clear guidance, doing research on appropriate resources, and assisting families in connecting with resources. The MLPP is a high volume, fast paced environment. The MLPP receives 2-5 new referrals every day and must respond quickly. All of our work is with low income families in the New Haven area.

In addition, the fellow will work on two focused projects. The first project is the Utility Shutoff Prevention. The MLPP works closely with families who are at risk of having their utilities terminated. Many of New Haven’s most vulnerable families struggle to pay their utility bills. Families under economic stress often run in arrears with the utility companies, and risk having utilities shut off. They are often choosing between heat, hot water, food, and rent. Energy insecurity for families can have long lasting impacts on children’s health. Unbeknownst to many families, there are state laws that protect vulnerable families, and the State of Connecticut has a number of programs to help families with their expenses.

The fellow will be integral to the development of a project targeting past health center families who were at risk for shutoff. The fellow will contact these families, assess their current utility status, and directly liaise with community resources both for utility assistance and for related financial relief to enable them to catch up on this vital basic need.

The second project the fellow will work on is the Healthy Homes New Haven project. New Haven some of the oldest housing stock in America wherein 75% of the housing is rental units. Many homes are in poor condition with mold, rodents, vermin, lead, or other hazards. The project would focus on developing a Healthy Homes coalition in New Haven with important stakeholders across the city in government, health, youth, and community development. The fellow would research and write an issue brief on best practices around Healthy Homes coalitions. In addition, the fellow would construct a list of key stakeholders and coordinate the first Healthy Homes coalition meeting in New Haven. Further, the fellow would work to develop “Know Your Rights” guides for New Haven residents and work directly with families with poor housing conditions.

- List specific skills/experience required for the project:
  - Excellent interpersonal skills.
  - Interest in patient advocacy and direct family contact.
  - Computer skills.
  - Spanish-speaking a benefit.
• Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement): N/A

• Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.
   The CCA MLPP at YNHH has hosted two Yale undergraduate students in the past two years, Geeta Rao and Lisa Wu. The students have been amazing assets to the program. Both students worked with the program for almost two years and Lisa Wu is still an intern with the program. Yale students work to support individual patient advocacy by doing initial intakes with families, connecting families to resources, researching relevant laws and guidance on particular topics that emerge and drafting letters and information sheets for patients and providers on specific health harming legal needs.

   In addition, the MLPP at YNHH hosts 1-3 Yale Law School students per academic year for academic credit. Currently there are three law student externs. Law students’ responsibilities include meeting with patients and medical providers, conducting intakes with clients to determine the type of intervention required, reviewing and synthesizing records, working with our attorneys in their systemic advocacy agendas, and providing research and writing on legal issues impacting our clients.
This is a picture of the clinic where the MLPP serves New Haven children. The picture includes Patricia Nogelo, the clinic social worker, Alice Rosenthal, the MLPP attorney, Dr. Ada Fenick, pediatrician and MLPP medical director. This picture is how the MLPP is a true interdisciplinary collaboration in a medical setting to address health disparities.