The Gillis W. Long Poverty Law Center (GLPLC) was established in 1985 at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law by an act of the United States Congress. It was named for the late Gillis W. Long, who was a member of the House of Representatives. Long was a prominent Louisiana attorney who, throughout his life, was committed to excellence in legal services. His career exemplified service to the needs of the disadvantaged. The Center is a major community service component of the College of Law that enables Loyola University to expand legal education and public service activities both within and beyond the boundaries of the greater metropolitan New Orleans area.

The mission of the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center is to promote legal research and education relevant to the problems of poor people and give assistance to attorneys who provide legal services to those unable to afford representation.

The Center offers several educational and service programs. In addition to the Summer Internship Program and the Loan Repayment Assistance Program, the Center provides financial assistance to legal services attorneys who wish to attend Loyola’s Continuing Legal Education programs. Additionally, a limited number of students receive financial assistance to attend the Equal Justice Conference and Career Fair held annually in Washington, D.C.

The GLPLC publishes a Louisiana Legal Services and Pro Bono Desk Manual. This book is designed as a practical guide for lawyers, but is not intended to be an exhaustive study of any substantive area of law. Chapters for the book are written by local Legal Services attorneys who have expertise in the areas of Bankruptcy, Domestic Violence, Employment Law, Strategies for Representatives the Louisiana Consumer, Subsidized Housing, Landlord-Tenant Law, Social Security and Medicaid.

**Summer Internship Program**

The Summer Internship Program provides opportunities for first- and second-year College of Law students to work as interns in Legal Services Offices in Louisiana. The program has been broadened to allow students to return to their home states for the summer to participate in local legal services communities. The program encourages students to make a commitment to social justice and provides additional training in many areas such as Family Law, Landlord-Tenant, and Immigration issues just to name a few. Customarily, thirty to thirty-five students every summer are awarded a stipend of $4,000.00 each for the ten week program. This program furthers the
Jesuit ideals of scholarship and service at Loyola by providing legal representation to the indigent members of the community.

**Tax Free Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP)**

Many Loyola College of Law graduates devote their careers to public service work as advocates for traditionally underserved communities. Given the significant burden of law school debt, such careers might not be feasible without some form of assistance. Since 1991, the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center’s Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) has tried to address this problem and remains committed to furthering its goal of providing quality legal assistance to communities throughout the country. Financial assistance is available for Loyola graduates who provide services to the poor by providing tax-free grants to reduce loan payments. For the 2006-2007 academic year a total of $153,800.00 in tax-free grants were awarded.

**Acknowledgment**

The Gillis Long Poverty Law Center publicly extends heartfelt thanks to John and June Mary Makdisi and the Kendall Vick Public Law Foundation for their generous financial support of the LRAP Program.

**Pro Bono Program**

All College of Law students must complete 50 hours of pro bono work over the course of their law school careers as a requirement for graduation. The Gillis Long Student Pro Bono Program helps students satisfy that requirement by placing students at approved sites where they are able to gain practical experience. Students conduct client interviews, provide legal research and writing, and, in some cases, represent clients before the courts, where it is permitted by law. Areas of practice include such fields as domestic law, homeless law, mental health law, juvenile law, social security issues, the death penalty, elder law, consumer law, and AIDS issues. Students also have the option of proposing their own project or work with a faculty member on existing projects. This program is under the supervision of R. Judson Mitchell, Jr., Assistant Clinical Professor and Pro Bono Coordinator. Mr. Mitchell has been with the center since 1997.

**The Gillis Long Poverty Law Center’s Distinguished Speaker Series**

Each year, nationally-recognized professionals working in the field of public interest and poverty law are invited to the College of Law to address contemporary issues concerning poverty-related and human rights issues. Distinguished Social Justice lecturers invited to the College have included:

- Derrick Bell – Harvard University
- John Charles Boger – Univ.of North Carolina
- The Rev. Robert Drinan, S.J – Georgetown University
- Jason DeParle – New York Times Magazine
- Linda Greene – University of Wisconsin
- Joel Handler – UCLA
- Charles Lane – The Washington Post
- Robert McDuff – Lawyer’s Committee on Civil Rights Under Law
- Leonard Pitts, Jr. – Miami Herald Columnist
Sr. Helen Prejean, C.S.J. - author Dead Man Walking and founder of Moratorium 2000
Randall Robinson – President of TransAfrica
Vincent Rougeau – Notre Dame
George Ryan – past governor, State of Illinois

Public Service Awards
The Poverty Law Center recognizes students, faculty, and alumni who have demonstrated a commitment to social justice for the poor. Recipients are chosen from nominations submitted to the Gillis Long office. Awards are presented at the annual spring Distinguished Speaker Lecture.