WINNER
Elizabeth O. Gutierrez
St. Mary’s University School of Law

In just two years, Elizabeth has established herself as a tireless advocate and true change-maker in the San Antonio public service legal community. Her advocacy has been multifaceted, with particular focus on aiding society’s most vulnerable, including victims of domestic violence, children, and immigrants. On every front Elizabeth has realized success for herself and those she serves. As a legal intern with Catholic Charities of San Antonio and the Asociacion de Servicios Para el Inmigrante, Elizabeth offered bilingual legal services to vulnerable immigrant populations. Currently, she is the site coordinator for St. Mary’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, where she helps low-income taxpayers prepare returns. Elizabeth also serves as the research assistant for the Center for Legal & Social Justice’s Pro Bono and Public Interest Opportunities division, and a Teaching Assistant in the Civil Justice Clinic. She has spearheaded various pro bono projects, including the Ask-a-Lawyer Clinic and the People’s Law School – an initiative created to educate the public about various legal topics such as elder, family and consumer law. In the words of Justice Rebecca Simmons of the 4th Court of Appeals, “Simply, when Ms. Gutierrez recognizes a need, she acts on it to bring a solution or assistance to fruition.” In addition to her legal service, Elizabeth helped the St. Mary’s Women’s Law Association raise over $15,000 during their annual silent auctions since 2010.

RUNNER-UP
Kathleen Norland
University of Pennsylvania Law School

Kathleen’s leadership on two hugely impactful pro bono projects – the Penn Law Immigrant Rights project and Penn Law’s chapter of the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) – has made her one of Penn Law’s most influential students. As the executive director and founder of Penn Law’s IRAP, Kathleen took the organization from a new student clinical project to one of the most important extracurricular programs for students interested in international law and human rights. Norland led six students to Jordan to help with refugee petitions in the project’s first year. There, she not only served as a project manager for her team, but handled a significant amount of legal work. The next year over 35 students volunteered pro bono through IRAP, and twice as many students volunteered for the spring break trip as there were available slots. Norland’s advocacy has touched the hearts of many at Penn Law as she continues to use the law as a tool for social change.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Charles Ryan Dalton, University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law
Charles works with Operation Broken Silence as the director of anti-trafficking operations, a division he helped open in 2010. He researched, proposed and lobbied for seven laws that currently affect Tennessee’s anti-trafficking efforts and also conducts trainings for the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

Elizabeth Leonard, Seattle University School of Law
Elizabeth has committed much of her law school career to serving low-income clients in need. She is currently a law intern with Legal Voice, an organization that works to secure and protect women’s legal rights. Elizabeth spent her summer assisting clients facing eviction at the Snohomish County Housing Justice Project, and serves as an executive board member for the Incarcerated Mothers Advocacy Project.

Angela McCray, Stanford Law School
Angela designed and developed Project ReMADE, a pro bono initiative designed to facilitate successful reentry for those returning home from prison by providing them with entrepreneurial skills. A former UNICEF intern, Angela uses her business savvy to increase the financial literacy of marginalized populations seeking a second start.