

# BACK STORY

## LAWYERS GIVING BACK

### LEGAL AID CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA ANNOUNCES SECOND FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



**Olga Torres**

The Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada has named William S. Boyd School of Law student Olga Torres as recipient of the Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship for 2018. Torres is finishing up her first year of law school.

Prior to coming to Boyd, she graduated summa cum laude from St. John's University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice with a Minor in Forensic Psychology. Her fellowship begins this month and runs through August. During that time, Torres will work with, and learn from, the hardworking staff and volunteers at the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's Pro Bono Project. She will receive a \$10,000 stipend and will be able to attend the State Bar of Nevada's Annual Meeting in Chicago, free of charge.

As part of the application process, candidates must submit a proposal demonstrating commitment to public interest law and dedication to assisting individuals unable to afford the civil legal help they need. During her fellowship, Torres will focus on putting her proposal—access to justice through technology—to work for the Legal Aid Center's Pro Bono Project. So, while learning everything she can about the Pro Bono

Project, she will also be researching mobile apps and evaluating their effectiveness as tools for providing legal information and resources to low-income and vulnerable individuals seeking civil legal help. Her goal is to design an easy-to-use Legal Aid Center app that organizes free resources (including legal forms, legal education classes and Ask-A-Lawyer sessions) and legal information regarding pro bono representation. Torres will later have an opportunity to present the results of her work to the Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission.

Torres is the second recipient of the fellowship created to honor the legacy of Melanie Kushnir, who died in a tragic hiking accident in May 2016. As directing attorney of the Pro Bono Project, Kushnir spent her professional life inspiring the legal community to provide its services to Nevada's most vulnerable.



**Melanie Kushnir**

The first fellowship recipient was Matthew Cook. His project was designing an online ad campaign to broaden the access of legal aid services to a wider audience. Cook's fellowship work helped make it possible for more than 1.5 million online users to access legal information on various websites maintained by Legal Aid Center in 2017.

To learn more about the Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship, visit the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's website at [www.lacsn.org](http://www.lacsn.org). **NL**