

VERMONT LAW SCHOOL

Vermont Law School Environmental Justice Young Fellows Exchange Application DEADLINE for Application: November 13, 2009

Vermont Law School (VLS) has been awarded a federal grant to support a U.S.-China exchange program for young professionals working on environmental justice issues. Funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State, the educational and cultural exchange will provide leadership training opportunities to 18 Chinese and American women and men, particularly members of minority groups, who are active in environmental justice efforts. Participants in the program will jointly examine the environmental burdens, including climate change impacts, on minority communities and low-income populations in the U.S. and China and will be mentored in designing projects to advance environmental justice for those communities.

Minority groups and low-income populations in China and the United States are disproportionately bearing adverse health and environmental impacts from pollution. The growing challenges of climate change will further affect these marginalized groups. While the environmental injustice problem in China has not attracted the same level of attention as in the United States, environmental impacts are awakening Chinese citizens to speak out for their right to environmental justice and to seek solutions through laws, regulations, and community projects.

This U.S.-China exchange program aims to cultivate leadership among young environmental professionals and to provide them with opportunities to gain insights into legal tools, policies, and activism that can assist vulnerable communities in addressing environmental challenges. The participants in the program will attend a series of roundtables, study tours, and hands-on internships in both the U.S. and China. They will examine the issues of environmental justice and climate change through a comparative and collaborative approach and will participate in experiential learning exercises to build mutual approaches to the issues. To deepen the collaboration, the exchange will include short internships at environmental justice organizations in each country—potentially at the organizations from which the 18 participants originate. The participants will spend a total of six weeks together in the United States and China. The first three weeks will include activities in Vermont; Washington, D.C.; and a one-week internship at an environmental organization in the United States. In China they will be carrying out activities in Beijing, Yichang, and Guangzhou. Participants' expenses for international travel and domestic travel within U.S. and China, accommodation, meals, and visa will be covered by the program.

VLS partners that will be helping in designing and carrying out the exchange activities include: the China Environment Forum at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C.; Sun-Yat Sen University in Guangzhou; and the Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims in Beijing.



Sun Yat-sen University

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APPLICATION MATERIALS

Please complete the following application materials **in English** and **Email** the completed documents to Ms. Joanna Gillin at jgillin@vermontlaw.edu by November 13, 2009.

Interviews (face-to-face, phone, video, or Skype) will be conducted throughout early December. Selection results will be announced by December 31, 2009.

Applicants who are accepted will be divided into pairs (one Chinese pairs up with one American) and these pairs will participate in email/phone/Skype communications to help them start in the design of a joint project. The project will be a product or activity that will benefit each individual's environmental work. (See details below)

Any questions on the substance of the fellowship or the application process should be directed to Ms. Jingjing Liu at aliu@vermontlaw.edu or at 802-831-1276.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS: VLS is seeking young professionals who have 2-3 years of working experience in the environmental law field and would like to expand their work into the environmental justice field. Applicants must be a citizen of the People's Republic of China or the United States of America. For Chinese participants, proficiency in the English language is required. For American participants, Chinese language skill is useful, but not required. The application must include the following information:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name

Affiliation

Address

Phone, Fax, E-mail and Skype address (if available)

1) RESUME

Applicants should include curriculum vitae or resume (2-page in maximum) in English that includes their education, professional, and personal experience.

2) DESCRIPTION OF WORK AT APPLICANT'S CURRENT JOB/ ORGANIZATION

Submit a short (250-word maximum) description in English of your current organization and any environmental justice-related or climate change work that you have done. Please include information as to whether your organization could host a fellow in this program for one week (e.g., have partner come and work one week with your organization).



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3) PERSONAL ESSAY

Submit a 500-word personal statement in English that addresses the reason you are interested in environmental justice and the communities with whom you have worked or would like to work on environmental justice issues. Some other questions to be covered include:

- Experience in environmental law and governance and/or climate change work (if any).
- Experience in environmental justice field.
- Statement of what you would like to accomplish with the fellowship.
- Explanation of how you see the fellowship affecting your future career.
- How your professional work could benefit from your participation in this fellowship.
- How do you plan to use the experience you learn from the fellowship.

4) PROPOSAL FOR END PRODUCT

One goal that VLS and its partners have for the fellows is to help them design and execute a new project that will benefit each fellow's current work. Such projects could include (but are not limited to) the creation of: a new interactive website and/or blog, a community education initiative, a handbook for other activists/lawyers working in your community, a training workshop for professionals or community members, a documentary, a strategy plan for a campaign, etc. Each individual will produce his/her own project, but with the input of his/her partner and the VLS team. This proposal would be subject to change as partners go through the fellowship exchange activities.

Please submit an outline or a description in English of a proposed end product in 500 words or less that you would like to work on during the fellowship and describe how this proposed project would enhance or contribute to your work, the work of your organization, or the environmental justice field in general.

5) LETTERS OF REFERENCE

Two letters of reference in either Chinese or English should be submitted to Ms. Joanna Gillin at jgillin@vermontlaw.edu.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations, as mandated by the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchanges Act of 1961.
<http://exchanges.state.gov/>

