

# Creighton University School of Law

## Community Economic Development Clinic

### Community Economic Development Law Clinic

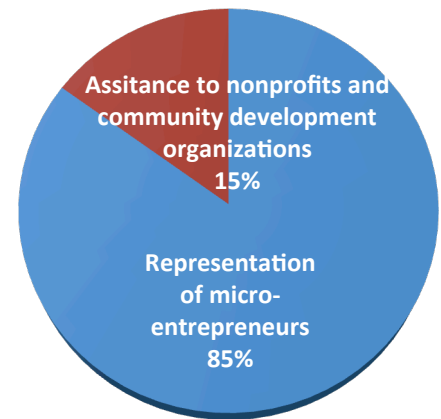
The Community Economic Development Clinic is the University Center at the Creighton University School of Law. The grant supports this clinic, which requires students to work about 16 hours a week to assist entrepreneurs, microenterprises, and nonprofits with legal matters. The clients are mainly from distressed rural areas and urban pockets of poverty where major employers are few and employment trends are negative.

### Activities

The Center provides business attorney services in the form of business planning and organization. Business organization services assist clients in the choice of business form, which has substantial consequences in terms of self-employment taxes, ease of operation, personal liability, and allocation of revenue and duties among owners. In addition, the Center helps clients with contracts tailored to the enterprise's specific needs and with tax planning. The Center also hosts business law workshops addressing law-related

concerns of particular interest to micro-entrepreneurs, enabling them to operate more efficiently and maximize profits. Finally, the Center has published a handbook for microentrepreneurs.

The Center conducts applied research on the impact of access to attorneys on microenterprises by following their own clients.



### Leveraging

The Center leverages the students and faculty extensively. Students provide the bulk of the work to the clients, while supervised by the Clinic faculty. The Center leverages its relationship with the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), a rural Nebraska

### University

Creighton University School of Law

### Center Director

Milo Alexander

### Center Location

School of Law

### Center since 2007

### Center Activities

- Business legal matters counseling
- Training and workshops
- Applied research

### Clients

- Entrepreneurs
- Microenterprises
- Nonprofits

### Assessment Techniques

- Feedback from workshops
- Client satisfaction surveys

### Contact Information

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microenterprise development fund. REAP refers graduates of its micro-enterprise development program and entrepreneurs working with REAP business counselors to the Clinic. In addition, the Center leverages partnerships with Catholic Charities Microbusiness Training and Development Program and the Midlands Latino Community Development Corporation to provide workshop and classes on business issues related to legal issues.

*"The Center is needed to help and assist small start-ups with legal business recommendations at a reduced cost. I love working with the Center. I think giving students the opportunity to work on "real" project in a safe environment is a win/win for all involved."*

*--Center Client*

## Success

**Creighton University's Community Economic Development (CED) Law Clinic provides high-quality legal services to entities that would not be able afford the same quality of services elsewhere**

The Center began working with No More Empty Pots™ (NMEP) in January 2009. NMEP's founders, Nancy Williams and Susan Whitfield, came to the Center with an ambitious vision of addressing food insecurity in North Omaha while simultaneously promoting economic development around food-related ventures. Two semesters worth of students worked closely with Nancy and Susan to incorporate NMEP and obtain IRS recognition as a tax exempt 501 (c) (3) public charity. Recognition as a 501 (c) (3) is important for a nonprofit because it means that contributions to it are tax deductible for the donors. It also makes the nonprofit eligible for foundation grants, which are

ordinarily limited to 501 (c) (3) organizations. The process of incorporation and IRS recognition of NMEP was complete by the end of 2009.

Since then, NMEP has worked to promote self-sufficiency, food security, and economic development by creating and leading a coalition of people and groups interested in urban agriculture, access to fresh produce from local farmers, development of a commercial kitchen, and other food-related issues. Almost a thousand people have attended community education, organizing, and other events sponsored by NMEP.

**Creighton University's CED has shown how students and external clients can both be served by a program that is targeted to client needs and which closely directs student contributions.**