

Louisiana Capital Assistance Center

A Non-Profit Law Office

December 2010

<p>Position: Capital Mitigation Specialist / Fact Investigator</p>

1. Introduction

The Louisiana Capital Assistance Center (LCAC) is a not-for-profit law office based in New Orleans, Louisiana committed to excellence in the provision of defense services to indigent clients facing the death penalty.

The LCAC is principally a trial level office, representing indigent clients at trial in cases throughout Louisiana. In addition, the LCAC provides resource and consultative services to other capital trial counsel throughout Louisiana.

The LCAC is committed to the following values:

- excellence in the provision of capital defender services for indigent defendants, accepting that ABA Guidelines for high quality representation in capital cases set a *minimum* standard in the field;
- client-centered and relationship based work that respects the humanity and dignity of all involved in the criminal justice system;
- innovation and creativity in the provision of capital defense services;
- the elimination of racism and other forms of discrimination in the criminal justice system.

The LCAC delivers capital defense services through a staff of dedicated attorneys and fact and mitigation investigators, as well as contracting with outside counsel, mitigation specialists and other experts. The LCAC emphasizes team based defense and a holistic approach to questions of culpability and mitigation.

The LCAC has been in operation for over a decade and is located at The Justice Center in New Orleans, a building it shares with other not-for-profit offices working with indigent clients in the criminal justice system, including, the Capital Appeals Project of Louisiana. Further details are available at our website: www.thejusticecenter.org.

2. Role

The primary function of the capital mitigation specialist / fact investigator is assisting in the representation of indigent defendants facing capital charges at trial level in Louisiana through the development of evidence relevant to culpability and, in particular, mitigation.

3. Duties

The responsibilities of a capital mitigation specialist/fact investigator include:

- Investigating the facts and circumstances of the crime via the gathering of documentary evidence and witness interviewing;
- Obtaining and analyzing anecdotal and documentary evidence relevant to the client's life history, including but not limited to: medical and psychiatric history, trauma history, educational history, employment history, multigenerational family history and patterns of behavior, genetic disorders and vulnerabilities, prior adult and juvenile correctional experience, religious, gender, sexual orientation ethnic, racial, cultural and community influences as well as socio-economic, historical and political factors;
- Identifying, locating and interviewing both the client and witnesses relevant to both the crime and the client's life history in a culturally competent manner. The mitigation specialist/fact investigator must be able to establish rapport with the client and witnesses that will be sufficient to overcome barriers those individuals may have against the disclosure of sensitive information;
- Assisting in identifying and working with experts;
- Furnishing memos on a variety of topics to counsel and experts, including social histories and chronologies;
- Consulting with attorneys to develop penalty phase theories of the case and case strategy;
- Organizing and administering the case file;
- Providing litigation support to counsel;
- Attending and successfully completing at least one specialized training annually which focuses on the defense of death penalty cases that is offered by an organization with substantial experience and expertise in the defense of death penalty cases;
- Participating in trainings and consulting on cases with non LCAC capital defense practitioners;
- Providing additional services and performing other duties from time to time as the needs of the office dictate.

4. Selection Criteria

Essential

- College degree;
- Driver's licence and ability and willingness to travel;
- An organized and precise work practice with attention to detail;
- A developed ability to absorb and order information;
- Clear written and oral expression;
- Highly developed interpersonal skills;

- A commitment to excellence in the provision of capital defender services;
- Strengths in team work, client relations and relationship building;
- A commitment to working with clients in poverty;
- Creativity and energy in approaching indigent criminal defense and capital representation;
- Familiarity and proficiency with Microsoft Word

Non-essential but desirable

- Post-graduate qualification in relevant area;
- Related work experience (investigation or mitigation work);
- Familiarity or experience with key areas such as: mental health, mental disabilities, criminal justice, forensic sciences, prisoners and prisons (or other institutional settings), data collection, management and analysis;
- Experience in dealing with issues of race and poverty;
- Computer literacy in additional useful software, such as, spreadsheets, databases, case management software;
- A second language, preferably Spanish

5. Salary & Benefits

- the position is full time with a six month probationary period and a two year minimum commitment;
- Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience;
- Benefits include 70% employer contribution to health insurance for employee and dependents including dental, 5% employer contribution to 401(k) and Flexible Spending Account.

6. Application Process

Applications should be submitted in writing or electronically to Eleni Antonopoulos, 636 Baronne Street, New Orleans La 70113, elenia@thejusticecenter.org. Applications should include a current CV, writing sample and contact details for three references. It is very important that applicants address the listed selection criteria in their cover letters. The position will remain open until filled.

LCAC is an equal opportunity employer