

For Immediate Release

May 9, 2013

Contact: Jane D. Schwartz, jane.prf@gmail.com, 212-888-6578

**PAUL RAPOPORT FOUNDATION'S FINAL GRANT TO CREATE
PUBLIC INTEREST LAW FELLOWSHIP IN MEMORY OF FOUNDER**

Fellows to Address Critical Legal Needs of LGBTQ communities of color in New York

(*May 9, 2013 – New York, New York*) - The Paul Rapoport Foundation announced today that it had established a fellowship at Equal Justice Works that will enable new LGBTQ lawyers of color to address issues impacting LGBTQ communities of color in New York. The 10-year endowment of \$560,000 is the first of its kind to focus specifically on LGBTQ communities and will provide five two-year fellowships for LGBTQ people of color newly admitted to the bar.

“This award to Equal Justice Works will be the final grant made by the Paul Rapoport Foundation, which is scheduled to close in 2015,” said Board President Kimberleigh J. Smith. “We hope it will serve to create a lasting legacy in Paul Rapoport’s name. Paul was an attorney by trade, who fought for the rights and equal representation of LGBTQ people so a fellowship like this is a fitting legacy for Paul as the Foundation closes. We hope these fellowships will encourage LGBTQ lawyers of color to address and bring creative and innovative strategies to the pressing issues affecting LGBTQ communities of color. LGBTQ communities of color are underserved and highly vulnerable, but lawyers from these communities often do not have the financial means to follow public interest law careers. Each Paul Rapoport Fellowship will provide two years of competitive salary coupled with loan repayment assistance and important training assistance.”

The Foundation (www.paulrapoportfoundation.org) was established in 1988 with funds from the estate of Paul Rapoport, an attorney who was a founder of two pivotal New York City LGBT organizations: the Gay Men’s Health Crisis, in 1981, (one of the first organizations in the United States to respond to the AIDS epidemic) and, in 1983, the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center.

For the past five years the focus of the Foundation has been the intersection of racial and economic equity within the LGBTQ community and this has translated into grantmaking targeting the needs of LGBTQ youth and seniors of color and transgender persons of color, with a particular emphasis on healthcare for the transgender community. In 2009 the Foundation announced it would spend out its remaining assets and close its doors in 2015.

“We are proud to provide legal support for a population that historically has received very little,” said Equal Justice Works Executive Director David Stern. “We hope that, in addressing some of the most serious legal needs of New York’s LGBTQ communities of color, this fellowship will be a sign of greater things to come in the movement for equal rights for all.”

(More)

220 East 60th Street, Suite 3H
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) 888-6578
Fax (212) 980-0867

The first fellowship will be awarded in 2014. For more information contact Equal Justice Works: Peggy Hubble, Director of Communications & Marketing, phubble@equaljusticeworks.org, 202-466-3686, ext.102; or Allison Yarborough, Communications Specialist, ayarborough@equaljusticeworks.org 202-466-3686. Ext. 110.

Equal Justice Works is the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. Collaborating with the nation's leading law schools, law firms, corporate legal departments and nonprofit organizations, Equal Justice Works offers a continuum of opportunities that provide the training and skills that enable attorneys to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes. Equal Justice Works is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For additional information about Equal Justice Works, please visit www.equaljusticeworks.org.

220 East 60th Street, Suite 3H
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) 888-6578
Fax (212) 980-0867