Volunteer Attorney: Kashoua Yang
Attorney Kashoua Yang is an associate at Hawks Quindel, S.C. in the Milwaukee office. Ms. Yang helps individuals and families resolve their family law matters, restore lost wages and benefits to injured workers, and disabled individuals obtain social security benefits. Ms. Yang is also a mediator. She mediates family law related issues, as well as loan modification disputes in bankruptcy and foreclosure matters, and pre- or post-nuptial agreements. She has conducted workshops and spoken at events, including the State Bar of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Magazine, Pathways to College, Hmong American Peace Academy, and the Southeast Asian Youth Career and Education Conference, to name a few. Ms. Yang is a volunteer with the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, and is the central figure behind the newest MVLC site, the Hmong Legal Clinic.

How did you first get involved with the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic?
I came to know of MVLC through their marketing. I was interested in volunteering so I contacted Dawn.

Why did you choose to continue to work with the MVLC?
I had always had a desire to educate and help people obtain legal advice. MVLC was the most effective at marketing free legal help to the community, and since I want to be able to help as many people as possible, I chose to continue to work with the MVLC due to their large base of clients. This volunteer opportunity exposes me to unique issues. Due to MVLC’s large client base there are more unique issues, which mean more opportunities for me to learn the law.

Has your work at the MVLC been of any assistance to you professionally?
Yes. The MVLC has helped me learn my practice area. It has also allowed me to connect with other practitioners in the Milwaukee area.

What advice would you give to students in law school?
Whether it’s a paid or volunteer opportunity, it is a learning opportunity, so you should not discount volunteer positions just because the value you gain from your experiences may have more value than the money you are paid. Moreover, the quality of learning is not any less just because it is a volunteer opportunity. People should volunteer as their schedule permits.

What do you wish someone had told you about entering the law profession after getting your JD?
Life as a lawyer is a lesson you cannot learn until you personally go through it or have done it. It is something you have to experience and go through in order to fully understand and appreciate all
that lawyers do and the value they provide for the community. So with that, I would say when the going gets tough, you just get going and things will work out in the end.

**Why is it important for lawyers to do pro bono work?**
There is a sense of comfort lawyers provide to their clients, and sometimes when you have been practicing for some time you can forget that. I think people value the sense of comfort and security that they get when they have had their legal issues reviewed by a lawyer. For the most part, despite bad lawyer jokes, lawyers are revered by the public. So when we start practicing, we forget how much influence we can have over people. When you start volunteering, you see this public notion in the eyes of the clients at the clinics and you see the importance of our profession.

**How, if at all, has your experience with the MVLC enriched your notions of justice?**
Justice really starts with the individual, because only that individual can ever have a sense that justice was done. The courts will enforce court orders but true justice is in the eyes of the beholder. I think that is why it is important for lawyers to advocate from a practical perspective because a court cannot always deliver justice, due to procedural impediments for example, which may prevent the client from obtaining their sense of justice.