Volunteer Attorney: Sven Skillrud

How did you first get involved with the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic?
I first got involved with the MVLC as a 1L at Marquette. It was the first opportunity to see “clients” and gain some front-line experience.

Why did you choose to continue to work with the MVLC?
Because I strongly believe in the vision behind the MVLC, which is as follows: (1) to provide free legal assistance and information to individuals who would otherwise have limited or no access to the civil legal system; (2) to provide a hands-on, real life, educational experience for students and to assist them in acquiring and developing skills necessary to practice law, all under the guidance of actual legal practitioners; (3) to instill in the volunteer law students a recognition of their unique societal role and privilege as future members of the legal profession and the corresponding pro bono obligations of the profession; (4) to reinforce and affirm the commitment of both the volunteer students and lawyers to be Marquette Lawyers, through association with other Marquette Lawyers donating time and talent to pro bono activities; and (5) to fulfill the Jesuit and Ignatian mission to be a person for others.

Has your work at the MVLC been of any assistance to you professionally?
Yes, the MVLC has allowed me to broaden my legal knowledge and network with fellow practitioners. It also allowed me to keep a pulse on what is going on with the Law School.

What advice would you give to students in law school?
Network, network, network. It may not pay off in the short-term, but it will be invaluable in the long-term.

What do you wish someone had told you about entering the law profession after getting your JD?
That the profession is not just limited to working in a law firm. The skill set obtained in law school (and as a practicing attorney) is more transferable than people think. I think law schools could do a better job communicating this.

Why is it important for lawyers to do pro bono work?
Because it is the right thing to do. No further explanation is necessary.