ASHINGTON UNIVERSITY School of Law has a long tradition of valuing the importance of clinical education in furthering students’ professional development while providing ethical and much-needed legal services to underrepresented groups. When Professor Samuel H. Liberman opened the school’s first storefront legal office in 1973, law students and faculty literally expanded outside of the classroom and into the community. This first Introductory Clinic, offered in conjunction with Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, was soon augmented by the Advanced Clinic and Judicial Clerkship Clinic. Five years later, the program expanded nationally with the launching of the Congressional Clinic.

Then under the direction of Professor Karen Tokarz, from 1980 to 2008, the program grew dramatically both in stature and clinical offerings, including international placements, and has been consistently ranked among the top clinical programs nationally. Under the subsequent vision of Associate Dean Annette Appell from 2008 to 2011, the program dedicated its new professional space and expanded to the current 15 distinct local, national, and international clinical opportunities. Now with Professor Robert Kuehn as the new associate dean,
the law school is furthering the program’s mission of providing superior clinical education; award-winning faculty scholarship and advocacy; increased services to clients; and projects to address systemic change.

Recent Clinical Education Program highlights include:
• Beginning this fall, the New York City Regulatory & Business Externship is sending law students to New York City for a semester-long clinical experience.
• The new Corporate Judicial Field Placement is providing students with opportunities to extern in the Delaware Supreme Court.
• The new Patent Law Field Placement expands upon the mission of the Intellectual Property & Nonprofit Organizations Clinic by placing students with the intellectual property law firm of Oliff & Berridge in Alexandria, Virginia, for a semester-long clinical experience.
• Students in the Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic had the opportunity to research issues related to BP’s massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico for Dean Kent Syverud, one of two independent trustees of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Trust. The clinic also celebrated its 10th anniversary.
• The long-standing Congressional & Administrative Law Externship has expanded its offerings to spring and fall placements. It is capitalizing on Washington University’s new space in Washington, D.C., and the university’s partnership with the Brookings Institution.

LOOKING BACK: The law school launched the Clinical Education Program in 1973 with its first clinic in a storefront law office in conjunction with Legal Services of Eastern Missouri.