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and with the domestic-violence community coordinator assisting in the prosecution of domestic-violence cases, drafting protocols and implementing a county-wide response to domestic violence.

In Monroe County, students help with the prosecution of cases in the district attorney's office, and assist clients of Monroe County Legal Aids Family Courts Project.

In addition to providing direct legal services, students are engaged in research projects, including a recidivism study in Rochester City Court.

The clinic, established in the fall of 1992, grew out of the Domestic Violence Task Force that Tomkins — a 1992 UB Law graduate — and other law students developed six years ago. The volunteer, student-run task force assists local lawyers who provide pro bono counseling to family-violence victims. The volunteers also act as advocates for women involved in Family Court proceedings in both Niagara and Erie Counties. ■



Suzanne E. Tomkins

UB LAW'S TOMKINS RECEIVES AWARDS FROM SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Suzanne E. Tomkins, a co-founder of the Domestic Violence Clinic in the University at Buffalo School of Law, has received several awards from social service organizations.

Tomkins received the Exemplary Service Award from the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence. She served in 1994 and 1995 as vice chair of the coalition, which is composed of agencies and individuals working together to stop all types of family violence, including the abuse of children, the elderly and partners.

She also was named Citizen of the Year — along with Bernadine Butler, a 1994 UB Law School graduate, and third-year UB Law student Julia Hall — by the Western New York Division of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). That designation led to the trio receiving the same honor at the state level.

The NASW awards recognize the work of Tomkins, Butler and Hall as co-founders of the Women's Law Center, Inc. The law center, with offices in Buffalo and Clarence, is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1993 to meet the legal needs of women who do not qualify for free legal services, but who cannot afford a private attorney.

The center offers legal services in the areas of divorce, custody, visitation, support, domestic violence and related issues on a sliding-scale fee based on an individual's income; provides on-site, legal rights orientation programs throughout Erie County on topics of law that impact women, and identifies and forges links with other existing services in the community in order to provide a comprehensive response to the client's overall needs.

Tomkins, a 1992 graduate of UB Law School, serves as clinic instructor in the Domestic Violence Clinic, part of the Legal Assistance Program in the law school. The clinic, established in 1992 to meet the unique legal needs of survivors of family violence, brings the issue of domestic violence into the law school curriculum, with students receiving academic credit for their work.

Students working in the clinic have been involved in a variety of projects, including compiling and editing a manual on domestic violence for incarcerated women, working in various legal agencies providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, assisting in the development of the Buffalo Police Department's pro-arrest policy and working with the Erie County District Attorney's Domestic Violence Unit, the Niagara County Domestic Violence Intervention Project and the Monroe County Office of the District Attorney.

While a student at UB Law School, Tomkins also helped set up the school's Domestic Violence Task Force. The volunteer, student-run task force, now in its sixth year, has several extracurricular projects under way. These include assisting local lawyers who provide pro bono counseling at a weekly clinic and acting as advocates for women seeking orders of protection in family and criminal court.

Tomkins received a bachelor's degree in political science from Buffalo State College. She resides on Grand Island, N.Y. ■