



First Amendment Foundation

Protecting Your Right to Know for 30 Years!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The First Amendment Foundation

Hanna and Douglas Weiss Open Government Legal Fellowship

Supported by a donation from Kenneth L. Weiss, Esq., the Hanna and Douglas Weiss Open Government Legal Fellowship is a one-semester fellowship for a law student interested in learning about Florida's open government laws and the legislative process.

Mr. Weiss was encouraged to become involved in open government by the First Amendment Foundation and with its support, Mr. Weiss pursued several Sunshine and Public Records law matters. Most recently, in *Anderson v. City of St. Pete Beach*, the appellate court adopted a portion of the FAF amicus brief when it ruled that "even when an illicit action is 'cured' it does not absolve a public body of its responsibility for violating the Sunshine Law in the first instance; it simply provides a way to salvage a void act by reconsidering it in Sunshine." The court went on to state that the brief from the FAF "also points out that responsibility for a violation can include criminal and noncriminal penalties under section 286.011(4)"

Mr. Weiss is donating a portion of the fees associated with that case for the establishment of the legal fellowship at the First Amendment Foundation.

Fellows will be selected on the basis of academic achievement and communication skills, a demonstrated interest in public policy, and a commitment to public service.

Weiss Fellows will work directly with the Foundation president on legislative analysis and bill tracking; answering questions from the public and the press on the Foundation's FOI Hotline; composing letters in response to open government issues; and drafting briefs and position papers on issues related to government transparency and accountability.

The Weiss Fellowship is open to all second and third year law students currently attending an accredited Florida law school. It carries a stipend of \$5,000.

The Hanna and Douglas Weiss Open Government Legal Fellowship will be awarded each December for the following spring semester.

The application deadline for the 2017 Weiss Fellowship is November 15, 2016. Those interested in applying should submit a resume with a cover letter explaining the applicant's interest in open government and public service, and at least three references to info@floridafaf.org with the subject line WEISS FELLOWSHIP. A writing sample will be required of all finalists.

For more information about the Weiss Fellowship and how to apply, please contact Barbara Petersen at 800/337-3518 or email sunshine@floridafaf.org.