

**INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR NEW ENGLAND
STUDENTS INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH THE
NEW ENGLAND INNOCENCE PROJECT (NEIP)**

Professor David M. Siegel

This memo is to clarify the terms under which New England students work with NEIP. Please read this document carefully. The application form, which may be submitted as an email attachment to Professor Siegel, is on the CLSR website. *If you are selected, there will be a mandatory training session. Applications are due by 5:00 pm on the 2d Monday of the semester.*

The New England Innocence Project (NEIP) is housed at the law firm of Goodwin | Procter LLP, at Exchange Place, 53 State Street in Boston. NEIP is unique among innocence projects around the country in being housed at a major law firm, with the benefits and resources this provides. Students working with NEIP must conduct themselves appropriately and professionally in these circumstances. A position with NEIP is an outstanding opportunity to work with highly skilled, dynamic young lawyers in one of Boston's premier national law firms.

Most of students' work with NEIP involves examining claims by persons who assert they were wrongfully convicted. New England students have worked at NEIP for several years and have found it to be rewarding, interesting and educational. It is, however, work. Lawyers, staff, faculty and administrative personnel who work with NEIP all do so as volunteers, and their time is extremely valuable. Your decision to apply for a position with NEIP must be done with recognition that, if accepted, you will be expected to work with the same commitment, energy and efficiency.

Work with NEIP involves correspondence with persons who claim they were wrongfully convicted and investigation of their cases. It necessarily requires a high degree of commitment and persistence. Every person whose case NEIP examines has been convicted, typically of one or more very serious felonies involving death or injury, and contends that they were factually innocent. There are often multiple court opinions affirming the conviction, and substantial facts indicating guilt. The job of NEIP is to exhaustively reexamine these facts, through trial transcripts, court records, and outside investigation, to determine whether physical evidence exists that can be tested to exculpate the inmate. This requires contacting persons who commonly are uninterested in assisting with this process and pursuing very old or incomplete information. Being creative and dogged in these efforts is essential.

Work with NEIP involves assisting persons who are deprived of their liberty, and requires the care and professionalism such a task demands. That means your research must be complete, accurate and comprehensive. Because NEIP cases can stretch over extended periods, it is extremely important that you thoroughly document all your work and contacts on the case. Because NEIP cases involve confidential information, all work on NEIP cases is governed by the requirements of confidentiality that accompany legal representation. This means you can't tell your roommate what a witness or NEIP inmate told you, or what you learned in researching the case.

Work with NEIP is as a volunteer (for everyone involved). There is no pay and no academic credit involved, unless you are also enrolled in the optional Casework Practice component of the Perspectives: Wrongful Convictions seminar. Completing volunteer work with NEIP can qualify a NEL/B student for a public service transcript notation. Work with NEIP requires a semester commitment of at least 5 (five) hours per week. Work with NEIP involves agreement to attend biweekly meetings as determined necessary by Prof. Siegel to review a student's work for NEIP Failure to complete this work in timely fashion, attend meetings and maintain contact will result in termination from work with NEIP.

If you complete the application form, please keep this sheet for your reference. If you have questions, please contact Professor Siegel at dsiegel@.nesl.edu or (617) 422-7270.