

## **2014 Reita Clarke Memorial**

### **Nomination of Miranda Grell for Award for Excellence**

Miranda Grell has worked at Hackney Community Law Centre (HCLC) since November 2011. In that period she has held a number of roles - Intern, Development Manager and Business Development Manager. She has been directly responsible for pioneering new initiatives to increase availability and access of legal advice for those who find interaction with agencies the most difficult.

Central to this has been HCLC Pop Up Clinics which have operated at Hackney Central Library since June 2012, and the consumer and debt clinic at Dalston CLR James Library. She is also a hands on person acting as triage at the pop up clinics, working directly with clients on many different issues. Under her guidance the pop ups have also extended to the neighbouring boroughs of Waltham Forest and Haringey.

A significant feature of these initiatives is her success in building and developing partnerships with key individuals and organisations both within Hackney, other boroughs and across the corporate legal and education sector bringing together lawyers, students and volunteers. The Dalston pop up clinic is an example of her natural ability to harness, positively engage and enthuse colleagues to collaborate on these new initiatives for local people. In 2012 the HCLC Pop up advice service was shortlisted for a Law Society Excellence Award for Excellence in Innovation. In 2013 thanks to Miranda and colleagues especially Rebecca Greenhalgh from Debovoise and Plimpton, Faegre Baker Daniels, BPP law School and the Hackney Library Services, the Dalston Clinic won the Halsbury Awards 2013 for the best pro bono team of the year.

As well as getting others to work together Miranda has a natural gift for encouraging colleagues to believe in themselves and to excel in their work. In recent years our staff have been recognised by colleagues across the sector – Paul Heron, in-house solicitor of the Year at the 2012 Law Society Excellence Awards, Hilton von Herbert, Immigration Lawyer of the Year - LAPG 2013 and just recently Diane Morrison won in-house Solicitor of the Year at the Law Society Excellence Awards 2014. And all the time Miranda has been busy publicising their efforts through the website, which she set up.

All of this has taken place while behind the scenes Miranda has been labouring at her Bar Vocational Course (BVC) for the last two years in the evening. We are pleased to say that her efforts have paid off and Miranda has been invited to be called to the Bar.

Miranda will take any project on, as well as thinking up new things to aid us in our efforts to secure access to justice for people in these harsh times. She has helped to make sure the Sustainable Advice Network in Hackney, a new group of advice agencies led by HCLC including the CAB, has got off the ground and started providing useful seminars for advice sector and community workers, and others, on housing, family law and other topics. In all that she does, Miranda remains an enthusiastic and hopeful person who inspires others.

On behalf of staff colleagues, trustees and colleagues in our partner organisations we are delighted to nominate Miranda as this year's recipient of the Reita Clarke Memorial Law Centre Award for Excellence.

**Sean Canning**  
**Hackney Community Law Centre**