

No matter the problem, CLASP will see you through

By DEBBIE PEKILIS

Are you a foreign student having problems with the Department of Immigration? Are you involved in a hassle with the Unemployment Insurance Commission or with the Workmen's Compensation Board? If your answer to either or both of the above questions was yes, then CLASP may be able to help you.

CLASP stands for the Community Legal Aid Services Programme, a student legal aid service run by the students of Osgoode Hall Law School. The organization is staffed by students on a volunteer basis and represents clients free of charge.

CLASP represents clients before small claims court and administrative tribunals such as the Unemployment Insurance Commission, the Workmen's Compensation Board, traffic court, and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (in the case of victims of a crime who sustained personal injury).

CLASP is divided into several divisions. The first is civil law or civil litigation, which involves small claims court. "An example of this," said CLASP head Greg Jones, "is if a person sues to get paid on a debt."

The second division is family law, in which the students counsel deserted mothers. The third division said Jones, is criminal law and the fourth is administrative law which represents clients dealing with government agencies.

He explained that although CLASP gets many telephone calls from "all kinds of people" asking for help and information, they will only represent students and the working poor on a graduated scale, such as a single person making under \$6,000 a year or a couple earning under \$7,500 a year.

"We only represent people who can't afford a lawyer themselves," said Jones. "We have limited resources and these problems are time consuming, so we help only those people who have the least alternatives."

"We will represent someone if his claim is worthwhile," said Jones. "Students on campus don't realize that if they have problems they can come to us for advice. They are unaware that we can represent them at, for example, an immigration inquiry at no cost to them."

Jones also said that "if people

come to us with a problem we can't solve, we can put them through to the specific agency that can help them."

The bulk of CLASP's work is in negotiating with the different agencies on behalf of their clients and a significant number of their cases get beyond the negotiation stage and must be settled in court. They also spend a lot of their time in providing information to the public.

CLASP also provides legal services such as name changes and signing wills. On staff is a notary

public (Bruna Billingsley) who notarizes documents and affidavits and takes oaths. She is also a receptionist and runs the office.

CLASP also provides many community services, including clinics all over Toronto and Oshawa, and a family court in Brampton. These clinics are to be found in shopping and recreation centres and are staffed by the law students.

It gives us first-hand information on the needs of the community," explained Jones.

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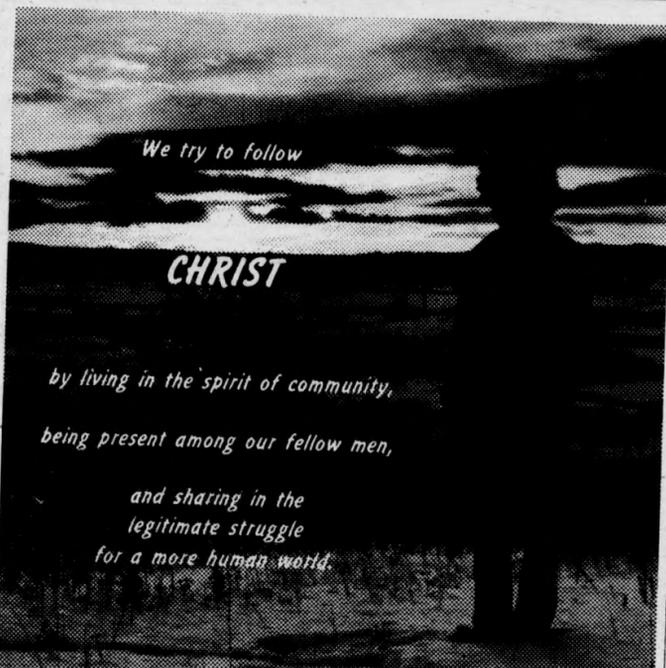
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Coming Events

Dr. Henry Morgentaler will be the special guest speaker at the "Women Working: Three Days on Issues and Problems Confronting Women" being held at York University, March 3, 4, and 5, 1976. Morgentaler will speak on the final day of events, Friday, March 5, at 12:00 noon in Moot Court, Osgoode Hall Law School. Everyone is invited to attend. There is no admission charge.

The International Family Association will hold a meeting Saturday, February 28, at 7:30 at the University of Toronto's Hart House on the unity of the family. Anyone interested in strong families is invited to attend. The meeting is sponsored by CARP.

Today, 3:30 - 6 p.m. - Gay Academic Union will meet for an informal get-together. All welcome - Call Jim Quixley. 487-6146, 961-3822.



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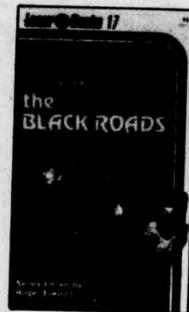
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