



PACE LAW SCHOOL
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW PROGRAM



NRDC
NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

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PACE LAW SCHOOL AND THE NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL LAUNCH INNOVATIVE FOOD LAW INITIATIVE TO HELP REGIONAL FARMERS, COMMUNITY GROUPS

New Partnership Will Address the Growing Legal Needs of the Food and Agriculture Community in the Greater New York City Region

New York, New York – November 16, 2015. The nationally-ranked Environmental Law Program at Pace Law School is teaming up with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to expand legal services for farmers, community groups and food entrepreneurs in the New York region. The goal of the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative is to fill a critical gap in the legal system’s capacity to support individuals and organizations seeking to build a more sustainable and healthy regional food system.

Specifically, the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative will host workshops for students, academics, practicing lawyers, and food system professionals on cutting edge food law issues. These workshops will address practical issues and transactional legal problems that regional farmers, community and grassroots groups and small businesses – and the attorneys serving these parties – face on a regular basis. The Initiative will host an annual event to raise the profile of food law as a unique and important academic discipline and legal practice area. Also, each semester the Initiative will place one Pace law student at the NRDC to gain hands on experience.

“The Pace Environmental Law Program is renowned for the environmental law and advocacy education that it provides. We are quickly expanding our expertise and faculty in the fast-growing area of food law,” said Professor Jason J. Czarnecki, executive director of the program. “NRDC is a national leader in environmental advocacy and has assembled an amazing team of food law and environmental attorneys. Our joint Food Law Initiative will bring expertise and experience from across the nation to address regional food systems issues in New York. Our faculty and students look forward to working with NRDC to fill the food law educational gap for practitioners and to inspire discussion and progress on food systems issues in our region.”

“Here in New York—and in other regions around the country—people are increasingly beginning to recognize food as a critical social justice and environmental issue,” said Mark A. Izeman, Senior Attorney and Director of the New York Program at NRDC. “At the same time, there is increased need for legal expertise to empower stakeholders working to rebuild regional food systems. This innovative partnership seeks to fill that gap by building important legal capacity for a sustainable and just food system.”

At Pace, the Initiative will be directed by Professor Margot Pollans, who recently joined the Pace faculty from her fellowship at UCLA School of Law’s Resnick Program for Food Law and Policy. “Food is the next frontier of environmental law,” says Pollans. “There is a critical need to expand environmental law into food production to ensure the ongoing viability of the food supply and the health of populations and ecosystems affected by food production. There is also a serious need to protect consumers, to ensure equal access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food. Lawyers provide

an important service in these efforts; they help individuals and organizations navigate complicated permitting and zoning systems, maintain compliance with food safety laws, and advocate for legal changes to improve sustainable food production and equitable food access. The goal of this initiative is make sure that there are enough well-trained lawyers out there to do this important work.”

The inaugural food law event, a moderated forum featuring Professor Pollans and attorney Margaret Brown from NRDC, will take place on January 27, 2016 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the NRDC offices in New York City.

For more information about the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative, please email Professor Margot Pollans at mpollans@law.pace.edu.

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For almost four decades, the Pace Environmental Law Program has provided an internationally acclaimed environmental legal education. Its dedicated faculty have been pioneers in developing and implementing environmental law and continue to serve as national and world leaders in the field. Its alumni are at work in law firms, government agencies, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and universities across the country and around the world. Its students choose from more than forty environmental law courses, exciting opportunities to work in its innovative on-campus research centers and clinics, and unparalleled prospects to develop into highly qualified environmental lawyers. For more information on the Pace Environmental Law Program, visit law.pace.edu/environment.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 2 million members and online activists. Since 1970, our lawyers, scientists, and other environmental specialists have worked to protect the world's natural resources, public health, and the environment. NRDC has offices in New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Bozeman, MT, and Beijing. Visit us at www.nrdc.org and follow us on Twitter @NRDC.