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Pace University's Elisabeth Haub School of Law Launches Food and Beverage Law Clinic

Gift from alumnus to fund legal services for
New York State's growing sector of food and beverage entrepreneurs

NEW YORK – Pace University's Elisabeth Haub School of Law announced today that it has received a generous grant of $400,000 from alumnus Rob Sands, and from Constellation Brands, where Mr. Sands is CEO and President. The gift will sponsor a two-year pilot of a new Food and Beverage Law Clinic that will provide transactional legal services to farmers, community and grassroots groups, and mission-oriented food and beverage entrepreneurs.

The Clinic is part of a broader collaboration between Pace Law and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to expand the capacity of the legal community to provide direct services to individuals and organizations seeking to build a more sustainable and healthy regional food system. In order to implement innovative practices, farmers, food entrepreneurs, micro brewers and distillers, and other activists must navigate a complicated legal landscape governing everything from labelling to estate planning.

"Many businesses in the growing 'farm to table' economy start out in someone's kitchen, backyard or even roof garden," said David Yassky, Dean of the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. "When these business grow, new legal issues emerge and often these entrepreneurs can't afford the legal help they need. Our clinic will fill that gap. We are enormously grateful to our alumnus, Rob Sands, for his support and vision for this project."

"I am thrilled to be supporting this important endeavor, which is the first of its kind in this region," said Rob Sands, CEO of Constellation Brands and an alumnus of Pace Law. "I am particularly gratified to be able to help farmers and new food and beverage

businesses get the legal help they need while also supporting students from my alma mater, Pace Law."

Professor Margot Pollans, the Faculty Director of the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative will direct the Clinic. The Clinic also seeks to hire a managing attorney, who will serve as lead attorney in all clinic projects and supervise students in clinic work. "We are very excited that this gift will make the clinic possible," says Professor Pollans. "Launching the clinic was a primary goal of the Initiative from the start. We see it as a critical way for the legal community to help in the development of sustainable food economies."

"The Haub Environmental Law Program is renowned for the environmental law and advocacy education that it provides. We have now expanded our expertise and faculty in the fast-growing area of food law," said Professor Jason J. Czarnezki, Associate Dean and Executive Director of the program. "The creation of a food law clinic is the next and exciting step in not only training our students to be excellent lawyers, but also addressing the direct legal service needs of small farmers, craft beverage makers, local food entrepreneurs, and food justice organizations."

"This path-breaking clinic will provide much needed legal help to farmers and food revolutionaries in the region," said Mark A Izeman, Senior Attorney and Director of the New York Program at NRDC. "It will also create a national food law model that others can replicate across the country. Together, NRDC and Pace are training a new generation of lawyers that will help rebuild our broken food systems, and cultivate stronger sustainable farming economies."

The Law School is currently seeking a transactional Food and Beverage Law Clinic Director to begin in September. The job listing can be found online.

About Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University
The Elisabeth Haub School of Law, the law school at Pace University, offers J.D. and Masters of Law degrees in both Environmental and International Law, as well as a series of joint degree programs including a Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) in Environmental Law. The school, housed on the University's campus in White Plains, NY, opened its doors in 1976 and has over 9,000 alumni around the world. The school maintains a unique philosophy and approach to legal education that strikes an important balance between practice and theory. For more information visit the Haub Law website.

About Haub Environmental Law Program
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. Visit the Environmental Law program website for more information.

About the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative

As noted, the overall goal of the Pace-NRDC Food Law Initiative is to address the significantly direct legal service needs of food justice organizations, farmers, and food entrepreneurs in the greater New York region. In addition to the new Clinic, which will be operated by Pace, there are three other key components of the Initiative. First, each semester a Pace student will work at NRDC on regional food—and the first extern started in January 2016. Second, the initiative will also host an annual lecture focusing on critical food law topics; the first annual lecture was held on January 27, 2016. And third, there will be a Workshop Series for law students and lawyers to build the capacity of the legal community to deal with food and agriculture issues.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 2 million members and online activists. Since 1970, its lawyers, scientists, and other environmental specialists have worked to protect the world's natural resources, public health, and the environment. NRDC is committed to fixing the broken national food system and rebuilding strong, equitable, and sustainable regional food systems. For more information on NRDC's regional food work, visit https://www.nrdc.org/issues/local-food-systems.