**The End of Life Liberty Project**

**Student Intern/Extern Opportunity**

**The End of Life Liberty Project (ELLP)** is a think tank and effective social change agent focused on protecting and expanding the rights of terminally ill patients. It conceives, develops, and implements bold, creative advocacy to promote changes in law and policy that lead to improvements in end of life care and expanding the autonomy of terminally ill patients, enabling each to make the journey through their illness in a manner most consistent with their preferences, values and beliefs.

Founded in 2015 as a program within the Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC), the nation’s oldest cross-disability advocacy organization, during the tenure of Kathryn Tucker as DRLC’s Executive Director. This was a transformational moment in the movement for end of life liberty, as the disability advocacy community had until then presented a unified front of opposition to expanding end of life liberty. DRLC’s launch of the ELLP makes clear that commitment to disability rights and end of life liberty can be reconciled. The ELLP is uniquely positioned to educate the public, professionals and policy makers about this, and to move the nation forward in this social change movement.

**About ELLP’s Leadership:** Kathryn Tucker became ED of DRLC after a record of success in leading the advocacy work of another non-profit, Compassion & Choices, for two decades. Tucker’s work to protect and expand the rights of the terminally ill has put her at the forefront of nearly every advocacy effort in this arena in the United States since 1990. The ELLP is advised by an Advisory Committee of leading professionals with special expertise in law, medicine, disability rights, and ethics.

**The End of Life Liberty Project Strives to:**

**Create More Options for Terminally Ill Patients**: **Expanding End of Life Liberty to Include Aid in Dying**

 Modern medicine can prolong the dying process to a point that a patient may feel trapped in a torturous, lingering decline. Suffering may become unbearable; some patients want a swifter, more peaceful death through aid-in-dying. The ELLP seeks to expand end-of-life liberty through impact litigation in state and federal courts to ensure that mentally competent terminally ill patients can choose a peaceful death, consistent with their preferences, values and beliefs. Such litigation often includes pressing for recognition that this choice is deserving of protection as a matter of state and/or federal constitutional right.

**Explore New Frontiers in Palliative Care**

 Progress in reducing physical pain and discomfort due to terminal illness has been dramatic throughout the past two decades. However, less progress has been made in helping patients reduce anxiety about, or come to terms with, psychological and existential issues raised by impending death. Compelling clinical findings about the efficacy of psychotherapy with psychedelic agents to relieve anxiety among terminally ill patients are emerging. ELLP is in the forefront of developing advocacy to expand access to these medicines in the context of medical and mental health care of terminally ill patients. One of the ELLP’s projects in this arena is the convening of a symposium to be held in 2017, exploring the state of the research, its implications for palliative care, and how advocacy can best achieve changes in law and policy making access possible.

**Evolve the Discussion and Erode Opposition to End of Life Liberty**

The ELLP, founded and launched in a respected disability rights organization, is committed to evolving the discussion about end-of-life liberty in the disability rights community. The ELLP participates in conferences identifying common ground in disability and patient rights and publishes articles in leading journals of law, medicine and health policy elucidating that the same principles that animate support for one also support the other, fostering support for end-of-life liberty in the disability rights community.

**Applications Invited**:

Students interested in working on such matters as interns/externs/research assistants who have strong research and writing skills, are comfortable working remotely, and can commit a minimum of 10 hours per week, are invited to submit letters of interest and resume to kathrynltucker@yahoo.com.