Judith E. Levy, '96, an assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan, who specializes in civil rights issues. In 2004 Levy won a Department of Justice Director's Award for her work on civil rights investigations. Recounting one case she led, Levy described how she investigated alleged violations of the 1997 Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act at the W.J. Maxey School north of Ann Arbor, a correctional facility for adolescents. "We were able to do a systemic review of a facility no one else had been able to get to change," she related. "There were serious violations of these children's civil rights." Levy teaches Fair Housing Law and Policy.

Mark Van Putten, '82, former president/CEO of the National Wildlife Federation, for a quarter century has been a leader in environmental policy making and nonprofit organizations at the international, national, regional, and local levels. He is the founder and current president of ConservationStrategy LLC, an environmental strategy and organizational development consulting firm based in the Washington, D.C., area. Van Putten explained that he is concerned about how environmental issues have become "wedge issues" that often polarize people and enhance the power of those who oppose environmentalists' goals. He hopes to find ways to build cooperation among traditional ecological opponents like environmentalists and business organizations. He is teaching How to Save the Planet, a course designed to "focus on the challenges posed by current and emerging environmental problems to existing U.S. environmental laws and policies, environmental groups, and business practices."

"The new Public Interest/Public Service Faculty Fellows Program offers new and expanded opportunities to our students who wish to pursue or sample work for the public good," said Dean Evan H. Caminker. "It also reflects the continuing vitality of this School's longstanding commitment to such work."

Student reaction to the new program has been enthusiastic. "With the creation of the PIPS program, the Law School is taking concrete steps to help students discover the opportunities and rewards of lawyering in the public interest," notes Jeremy Hekhuis, co-chair of the Law School's Organization of Public Interest Students. "By learning from legal practitioners who are at the pinnacle of their field, students can gain a sense of how to create a legal career that is in keeping with their values, interests, and goals."

"The overwhelming majority of incoming students express an interest to work for the public good," Hekhuis continued. "This program will enable students to learn from those who acted on similar commitments throughout their careers.

"We are excited by the program. The combination of courses and mentoring opportunities will help us as we seek to examine career opportunities. The courses being taught by PIPS faculty this semester are outstanding and add valuable breadth and diversity to the curriculum."

"There's a special, renewable energy with this program," adds Assistant Dean for Public Service MaryAnn Sarosi, '87, who oversees the PIPS program. "The Fellows' experiences in their law practice and other work are always changing, so the case examples and anecdotes they bring into their discussions with students are fresh and current—they are happening now. Students enjoy the opportunity to interact with lawyers on issues that are relevant today."