

Fall 2012

Clinics & Externships: Reflections from the Front Lines

University of Michigan Law School

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CLINICS & EXTERNSHIPS

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FRONT LINES FALL '12 / WINTER '13



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DOMESTIC RELATIONS MEDIATION CLINIC

Becoming a “Real” Lawyer in the Domestic Relations Mediation Clinic

By Joe Regalia

During my first semester of law school, my civil procedure professor stressed the importance of ADR, and mediation in particular, but I never really paid much attention. Being a lawyer was about writing motions and briefs and arguing passionately before a jury – not about “helping people reach



creative solutions” or “win-win situations.”

Then I took the general litigation clinic. I quickly realized that I had no idea what it meant to be a good lawyer. In working on real cases, with real people, I learned that some of the most

important lawyering skills were not what I expected: the ability to listen, the ability to counsel a client, and yes, the ability to figure out creative solutions that did not always require my client to get everything and the opposing party to get nothing.

During my final year at Michigan I heard about the **Domestic Relations Mediation Clinic (DRMC)**. At first, I did not even consider it. Wouldn't my time be better spent writing briefs or doing legal research – in other words doing work that lawyers do? More importantly, I had no interest – whatsoever – in a career in family law. But then I remembered my experiences at the general litigation clinic, and I remembered feeling that there were so many interpersonal and problem solving skills that I had not learned in traditional classes. I recalled the times I had walked into a negotiation and failed to reach a solution even though I had spent hours memorizing controlling case law and detailed facts. I recalled the hours I had spent with clients struggling to help them understand their situations and options.

It hit me that mediation could be exactly the type of training I needed. After some of the most intense, and effective training I have ever received, I started mediating real people's problems. The first time I truly realized how much I was getting out of the experience was during my second mediation. I had spent hours sitting in a room listening to two parties argue about who was going to get an old pickup truck in their divorce. The entire dispute made no sense: these were people with wealth, and children, and

yet they were arguing about a vehicle that appeared worthless. At some point the training kicked in and I finally understood what the parties were actually arguing about. My mediation partner and I spent the next several hours piecing together the issues, and we were able to make a real difference in resolving the couple's problems.

The DRMC is a chance to receive some of the most effective training law school has to offer. The skills I developed reached every aspect of my practice – from dealing with clients to dealing with partners to dealing with judges. Perhaps more importantly, the DRMC gave me creative problem-solving skills that can mean real benefits for my clients.

CRIMINAL APPELLATE PRACTICE CLINIC

Awesome Responsibility in the Criminal Appellate Practice Clinic

By Zackary Stillings

When I read the transcript of the trial, I thought my client was innocent. Maybe innocent is the wrong word – there was some evidence that he wasn't Michigan's model citizen. But rather, I thought that he had made a bad choice that led to a string of unfortunate circumstances. After some conflicting testimony and a few trial errors, my client was facing at least twelve years in state prison.

And I was supposed to write his brief on appeal. His one last chance at a new trial rested upon a 2nd year law student whose experience with criminal law



extended as far as a mediocre grade in Crim.

It was kind of amazing, really. For two years, my only experience with the law was dealing with philosophical hypotheticals in sterile environments, where the only consequence of a poorly reasoned answer was a blow to my pride. That all changes with an actual client, when your work has real consequences for someone else – particularly when a person's

freedom depends upon your ability to make a logical argument. It's a huge responsibility, and one that reminded me of why I wanted to be an attorney in the first place.

Being a part of the **Criminal Appellate Practice Clinic** has been the highlight of law school for me. Instead of reading cases from a dry textbook, you work on an actual case with actual consequences. The course challenges your ability to think critically, to advocate effectively, and to write persuasively. In addition, the experience of working with a client is an experience whose value cannot be overstated. At no point have I been so motivated throughout law school as when my work mattered for someone else. The work in the clinic is meaningful, challenging, and rewarding, and I would highly recommend it to anyone considering taking a clinic next semester.

TRANSACTIONAL LAB

New Transactional Lab Introduces Students to the World of Transactional Law

By Kelly Hagen

An oft-heard complaint from law students who, like myself, hope to pursue a career in corporate law is that law schools provide a litigation-oriented education, leaving students in the dark as to the world of transactions. The University of Michigan Law School, however, offers a full range of classes, practicums, and clinics that help students to develop transactional knowledge and skills. One new such offering is the Transactional Lab.

Technically, the Lab begins Fall 2013, but I, along with a small group of other students, had the opportunity to get involved with the Lab during the Winter 2013 semester. With Professor Michael Bloom leading the charge, we took on a significant role in development, such as recruiting potential clients and students, developing the course syllabus, and applying for grants. This type of work will continue on throughout this semester for students in the Lab, giving a whole new meaning to the idea of a student-directed education.

As for the work within the Lab, students have the opportunity to work with leading companies, helping them navigate various contract drafting issues. In addition to developing both my drafting abilities and a better appreciation of the business world, I am particularly excited about working with corporate clients. Students in the Lab may also have the opportunity to co-publish articles in *Corporate Counsel*, a publication widely read by corporate lawyers, allowing the

Lab to share generally applicable findings with the broader legal community.

Overall, the Lab promises to be a diverse and engaging experience, in both the client work and the broader crafting of the Lab's future. With the addition of the Lab to Michigan's already rich set of classes, I know one thing's for sure – there is no lack of opportunities for gaining exposure to transactional law at this law school.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CLINIC

Satisfied Clients & Lawyers in the CEDC

By Jamen Tyler

There are few things as satisfying as helping a client whose work you truly care about. During my semester at the **Community and Economic Development Clinic (CEDC)**, I got to experience that satisfaction first-hand. As student attorneys with the CEDC, my fellow students and I helped Detroit's urban farms market their goods, community organizations re-develop blighted land in the Motor City, and small businesses create outreach programs to teach young people how to save and manage their money. My partner and I personally helped clients navigate the complicated world of employment, land use, and tax law. By the end of the semester, we had helped them create better working environments for their employees, and helped set the foundation for a neighborhood-wide redevelopment project.

In the process, we learned invaluable skills about how to help small businesses and non-profits navigate the complexities of the legal system. After my semester at the CEDC, I learned that the best lawyer doesn't tell her clients what their goals should be; they tell their clients how to achieve the goals they



have. I learned how to listen to my clients' concerns and identify the issues and law most relevant to achieving their goals. I also gained invaluable experience in counseling clients on the complex issues they faced.

By the end of the semester, I not only gained confidence in my lawyering skills, but also helped my clients make their communities better places to work, live and play.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING CLINIC

Diverse Experiences & Rewards in the Human Trafficking Clinic

By James Boufides and Emily Gesmundo

Participating in the **Human Trafficking Clinic (HTC)** was by far the most rewarding experience of our law school careers. Even though we did not fully understand what human trafficking was when we joined the Clinic, we quickly fell in love with the work, the cases, and most of all, the amazing clients that have been through so much and yet still managed to lend us inspiration that we will carry with us forever. Yet the most exciting thing about the HTC is the wide variety of legal issues that human trafficking presents. Trafficking survivors have needs that range from obtaining immigration status as resident aliens or citizens in the U.S., to family law and housing issues, to expunging convictions that arose from their victimization, and much more.

Indeed, our most rewarding moments in the HTC arose out of completely unrelated legal situations. One such moment was procuring immigration status for a client's family members and witnessing



the reunification of that family after ten years of separation. Another was helping a client who lost custody of her daughter due to her trafficking regain that custody.

Yet another was helping a married couple that had been victimized for years navigate their way out of their trafficking situation, work with law enforcement against their trafficker, and obtain legal status to remain in the country.

Clearly, the cases that the HTC has to offer are incredibly diverse. Our interests prior to entering the Clinic spanned immigration law, human rights, family law, general advocacy, women's issues, cultural relativism, and more, and the HTC was able to satisfy each and every one of them. It cannot be overstated how much this helped transform us into more well-rounded attorneys and imbued us with an even

deeper passion for all of these topics. The HTC is the perfect environment for anyone who wishes to more deeply explore these subjects while growing exponentially as an advocate.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS CLINIC

Making an Impact in the World of Transactions

By Ji Won Kim

When I decided to come to law school, I knew I wanted to learn to "think like a lawyer" and contribute my skills to help organizations with social missions. What I did not know, however, was the wide range of ways in which lawyers could use their skills. Having worked in a poverty law organization focusing on legislative reform and impact litigation, I was not familiar with how lawyers could use their transactional



skills to contribute to empowering communities and fostering development. The **International Transactions Clinic (ITC)** showed me exactly how.

The ITC maintains an impressive list of clients, including social enterprises, non-profit organizations, and impact investing firms that are taking their innovative solutions all over the world. Shortly after an overview of the ITC and introduction to its clients, the students begin working with their "match clients" right away. While the "boot camp" training in the fall equips each student with the basic legal knowledge, and frequent visits by prominent alumni and established practitioners provide special avenues for learning, each student makes his/her greatest leap while working for the clients.

Over the course of my two semesters in the ITC, I helped negotiate a 1.25 million-dollar repayable grant agreement for a social enterprise in East Africa, drafted agreements to structure a complex three-way relationship for a mission to improve medical services in Haiti, and presented recommendations to a well-established foundation on how to improve their compliance with the Foreign Corrupt Practice Act and Anti-Money Laundering/Combat-

ing the Financing of Terrorism laws and regulations. By getting involved in these unique and challenging transactions, I learned a great deal about what it means to understand the clients' needs and be an effective contributor to multiple teams with distinct



dynamics. After devoting my time and efforts to countless conference calls and many rounds of revisions, it was truly rewarding to see that not only did I gain useful skills for a transactional career, but our work also got our clients a step closer to their goals.

Personally, the ITC experience led to a summer internship with a firm devoted to serving a similar clientele as the ITC. My internship supervisors recognized the value of my clinic experience and respected my insight and inputs that much more. I cannot imagine what my Michigan Law experience would have been like without having participated in the ITC. I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to serving the clients as an advanced clinician this fall. And of course, I will be taking these skills to serve social entrepreneurs around the world, even after I leave Ann Arbor.

EXTERNSHIP

U.S. DOJ, Executive Office of Immigration Review, Immigration Court, Detroit

By Katie Kersh

Like many public interest students, the summer before my 3L year, I was faced with a job search and the overwhelming need to decide what I would do with my life after graduation. I have always wanted to practice immigration law, and I looked for experiences that would make me a competitive applicant in this particular specialty.

After speaking with several immigration lawyers, I decided to apply for an externship with the **Department of Justice Executive Office of Immigration Review** (EOIR) Immigration Court in Detroit.

I began my externship with three goals: to

increase my understanding of immigration law, to understand how an immigration judge analyzes a case and makes a decision, and to become a competitive applicant for the Attorney General Honors Program (a post-graduate clerkship in an Immigration Court). Throughout the course of my externship, I was able to achieve all of these goals.

My substantive legal knowledge increased dramatically. My main assignment was to draft an opinion for an immigration judge, which required a thorough understanding of burdens of proof, and grounds of removability under the Immigration and Nationality Act, as well as an in-depth knowledge of American refugee law. I observed immigration judges inside and outside of the courtroom, and learned how they approached cases from an adjudicator's perspective. I also witnessed the litigation strategies of many different immigration attorneys.

My externship also took me out of the classroom and allowed me to function in a professional legal environment. I was responsible for writing memos on various issues, including witness competency and sufficiency of evidence, to judges and my supervisor. Over the course of the semester, I saw my writing become clearer and more concise. My research skills became stronger too – I learned how to research issues efficiently and effectively on Westlaw, and how to learn when I was finished researching. Most importantly, I learned to speak with authority on issues of immigration law, and to have confidence in my legal conclusions.

My experience as an extern did make me a competitive job applicant. During interviews, I was constantly asked about my experience as an extern at EOIR. In January, I received an offer from the Attorney General Honors Program. As I begin my first job as an immigration attorney, I am grateful for my experiences as an EOIR extern. Not only did I gain the experience and skills necessary to navigate the job market today, but I am now better prepared to effectively advocate for my clients' immigration needs.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLINIC

Real World Experience in the Entrepreneurship Clinic

By Eric Jarrett

The **Entrepreneurship Clinic** (EC) does not simply teach a body of law, it provides students with the skills necessary to finally apply the legal concepts that we have studied so closely in our course books. Ultimately, as legal counsel, we must know how to apply the knowledge that we gained in law school to solve real-world problems for real clients. A year ago, playing the role of legal counsel would definitely have been a daunting task. Fortunately, the Clinic thoroughly prepared me to take on this challenge when the time came.

For example, performing an initial client interview is a key step in bringing client business into a firm. To help develop the skills needed in such interviews,



the EC professors demonstrated how to conduct an initial client interview. Following this demonstration, we participated in a simulated client interview, after which we received tailored feedback from our professors to help us identify our strengths and weaknesses. Finally, after weeks of preparation, we then had the opportunity to begin to counsel real start-up companies.

In this regard, the Entrepreneurship Clinic is empowering. I must say that I was quite nervous during the first few weeks of working with our new clients. How do I know which issues are relevant? How do I know how to prioritize these issues? I understand the differences between each of the major business entity types, but how do I extract all the information necessary to make a recommendation on which type to use within 30 minutes? These questions, among many others, consumed my thoughts during the early stages of the program. By the end, I felt confident in each recommendation that I provided to my clients.

This specialized, hands-on training prepared me for my Summer Associate position more so than any

other business law course. I was fortunate enough to spend my summer working at one of the most well-known law firms in the entrepreneur, tech, and venture capital communities. While the program was intellectually challenging, the learning curve for projects working with start-ups did not feel as steep



for me as it may have been for other summer associates. When I worked on Entity Formation for a new start-up, I was surprised to see that the firm followed almost exactly the same process that I had gone through several times in the Clinic. While certain documents were new to me, I felt very familiar and confident with the overall process. In the end, I received great feedback on that project and ultimately received a job offer.

The Entrepreneurship Clinic provides students with an educational experience that cannot be substituted by any combination of other business law courses, as students are given the rare chance to gain hands-on experience without the risk of, or stressful pressure to avoid, receiving poor evaluations during their first summer or year at a firm.

MICHIGAN CLINICAL LAW PROGRAM

General Clinic: From the Local State Courts to the U.S. Supreme Court

By Mark Osmond

The **General Clinic** offered me a variety of gratifying and instructive experiences during my two semesters with the program. For example, I helped negotiate a settlement in a landlord-tenant case in Ypsilanti district court, I argued a motion for class certification in the circuit court in Lansing, and I drafted a brief for a juvenile sentenced to life without parole.

One experience especially stands out: Over winter break, I asked for an extra project to fulfill my Pro Bono Pledge hours. Professor Paul Reingold suggested that I help write an amicus brief in support of a cert petition to the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Burnside v. Walters*. I jumped at the chance.

Since the Court grants cert so rarely – especially from the *in forma pauperis* docket – I assumed that



failure was a foregone conclusion. The brief seemed like a great writing exercise, nothing more. But after familiarizing myself with the issue, I thought our prospects were brighter.

The question hinged on the Sixth Circuit's interpretation of the Prison Litigation Reform

Act (PLRA). The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure establish a liberal amendment policy for pleadings. But whenever indigent plaintiffs filing *in forma pauperis* failed to state a claim, Sixth Circuit precedent required federal district courts to dismiss the complaint with prejudice and without leave to amend – even if the complaint's deficiency was easily curable. Yet the PLRA itself was silent on the amendment issue. And the Supreme Court, in *Jones v. Bock* (2007), had warned that courts lacked license to expand the PLRA. Accordingly, all other circuits rejected the Sixth Circuit's no-amendment policy.

From an advocate's perspective, the issue was an underhand pitch. It was so straightforward that I sought to make the brief as lean and punchy as possible. The final product was just 12 pages. Two prisoner advocacy groups – the Prisons & Corrections Section of the Michigan State Bar, and the American Friends Service Committee – agreed to serve as our amici clients on the brief.

The U.S. Supreme Court granted cert in May 2013. As it turned out, the Court had to do no more.



A few weeks later, the Sixth Circuit reversed itself in another case that raised the same issue. There, the plaintiff's counsel had alerted the panel to the cert grant, which gave extra force to the argument that the Sixth Circuit should reconsider its stance on the issue.

Looking at the U.S. Supreme Court's order list on

the day cert was granted was exhilarating. Our petition was the only one the Court granted; some 260 other petitions were denied. The amicus brief likely helped make a difference. This experience made me more confident in my appellate advocacy, which I hope to make a predominate part of my practice. In preparation, the General Clinic allowed me to work both in the local courts and at the highest appellate level.

PEDIATRIC ADVOCACY CLINIC

Providing Holistic Client Services at the Pediatric Advocacy Clinic

By Jillian Wilson Ambrose

As a law student, it is easy to feel like you never leave the Law Quad, and are isolated from the non-University community around you. Being a clinic student attorney provides a great opportunity to leave the law school “bubble.” As a Medical-Legal partnership, the **Pediatric Advocacy Clinic** fosters relationships between student attorneys and area healthcare providers. It also, perhaps less deliberately but just as importantly, creates a working relationship between law students and Ann Arbor's community institutions.

In one of my clinic cases, I represented the low-income mother of a fifteen year old boy who, although he is intellectually gifted, has a complicated set of emotional, learning, and behavioral challenges that prevent him from succeeding in a traditional classroom. When the clinic got the case, “Daniel” had been out of school for more than a year. His public school didn't have the resources to provide him the “free, appropriate public education” guaranteed to him by federal law, and his mom felt like she was out of options. My partner and I researched and found a small private school that offers individually paced instruction and a creative, student-driven curriculum. We toured the school, consulted with the principal, and learned how they serve the Ann Arbor community. After negotiations with the school district's attorney (and before we even filed our lawsuit), the public school district agreed to place Daniel at the private school, and he has thrived. Daniel and his mother were both grateful for the positive outcome, and I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know a local institution.

In another case, I worked with a mother going through a contentious divorce and helped her obtain a fair child support order by successfully arguing a motion on her behalf in circuit court. As the case was

wrapping up, my client called to tell me that her child was going to be baptized that weekend, and that she disagreed with the Godparents that her ex-husband had unilaterally designated. While this was not a legal issue, it symbolized the power struggle she had endured throughout the divorce process and was very important to her. A few phone calls to local Catholic priests and deacons later, my client was able to designate her own set of Godparents – a creative and not dogmatically traditional solution, but one that worked. When I attended the baptism that Saturday, my client's problem had been happily resolved with the help of the neighborhood church.

Working in the Pediatric Advocacy Clinic gave me an opportunity to provide both legal and non-legal support to people in need. It also provided a chance to collaborate with community institutions, and a reminder that they play an invaluable role in achieving our clients' goals.

JUVENILE JUSTICE CLINIC

Jumping Right In With the Juvenile Justice Clinic

By Megan Conway and Sarah Dada

Most law students hope to graduate from law school with the practical skills required to be a successful advocate for their clients. However, since clients are real people with opinions and personalities, and cases are full of surprises, the traditional law school course work is hard-pressed to prepare a new lawyer for the experience of direct representation – especially when representing children.

The Michigan **Juvenile Justice Clinic** (JJC) fills this gap between course work and reality by focusing



on the unique skills needed to represent children in the juvenile justice system. The clinic gives students the opportunity to approach juvenile advocacy from a multitude of vantage points. Students are able to represent children directly in trial court, take part in

legislative reform of the juvenile justice system, and participate in appeals involving juveniles sentenced to life without the possibility of parole.

One of the most valuable parts of the JJC is how quickly we were thrown into our cases and the significant responsibility we were given. On our very first

day as JJC partners, we were assigned a juvenile life without parole case being appealed to the Sixth Circuit and were asked to draft a reply brief advocating for the release of our client based on the grant of habeas in his favor. Four days later, this brief was filed in federal court. Two months later, we filed the response brief for the Sixth Circuit appeal.

Also during that first week, we were given a case where our client was detained in a juvenile detention facility for admitting to creating racist graffiti. We visited the client in detention, negotiated with the prosecutor and probation officer, and succeeded in obtaining a stipulated order for his immediate release.

All in all, taking part in the JJC was easily one of the best and most useful experiences of our law school careers. It prepared us to handle whatever unexpected situations may arise when doing direct client representation. If you're looking to gain experience working with youth in a legal capacity, skills for representing clients in court, or an understanding of the criminal justice system in Michigan as applied to juveniles, sign up for JJC ASAP!

EXTERNSHIP

Externship with the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

By Michael H. El-Zein

After surviving 1L and working with the Human Trafficking Clinic over the summer, I knew that I wanted more time out of the classroom. I wanted an immersive experience that would strengthen and expand my lawyering skills, allow me to make an impact on peoples' lives, and remind me why I was pushing myself so hard to obtain this degree. Luckily, I was offered the chance to work as a full-time extern with the **American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan** ("ACLU"). As a young law student coming straight through from undergrad, I had never worked as a full-time professional. As my start date drew closer, I realized I was filled with equal parts excitement and fear – what if I wasn't cut out for professional life? I went into the ACLU unsure of what to expect, and it ended up being one of the most challenging, rewarding, and enjoyable experiences of my legal education.

Adjusting to professional life took some time; I wasn't used to being in an office all day, and at first I found it hard to focus. Additionally, my supervisors put great faith in my ability to produce quality work in areas of law with which I was completely unfamiliar.

Through the outstanding supervision and support I received from ACLU attorneys and UM faculty, I was able to successfully navigate that difficult transition.



course, the best part about my experience was the sheer breadth of lawyering skills I developed. My projects included conducting legal research, writing interoffice memos, creating educational materials, fact gathering for potential litigation, and even writing an amicus brief. Furthermore, I made lasting connections with some of the most dedicated and talented attorneys in the legal community I hope to join next year. I can't think of a better way to have spent my semester, and I now feel confident about entering the workplace upon graduation.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CLINIC

Becoming Environmental Lawyers

By Elizabeth Madden and Benjamin Davis

The **Environmental Law Clinic** provides an excellent introduction to environmental litigation in the federal courts. During the semester, we assisted in all aspects of a challenge to an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation in the D.C. District Court. We drafted motions, performed legal research, and wrote portions of a memorandum in support of motions for a preliminary injunction and temporary restraining order. We also became familiar with the timing and procedures involved in filing a lawsuit in federal court.

While the skills we gained were very useful in our summer positions with environmental organizations, what may have been even more beneficial to our development as environmental advocates and federal litigators were the intangible skills and tips that we picked up through the duration of the clinic. From day one, Professor Kagan included us in the development of the case strategy, which involved important decisions on when and where to file. Is our case ripe for review? Does the jurisprudence in the D.C. Circuit favor our claim? These questions not only had to be considered within the context of our case, but also within the larger context of National Wildlife Federation's litigation on

Of invasive species in other federal and state courts. Environmental advocacy organizations commonly develop broad litigation and policy strategies to accomplish their organizational mission, and we gained invaluable insight as to the factors that must be weighed.

During the early stages of the clinic, Professor Kagan spent a lot of time working with us on refining our persuasive writing, including avoidance of semantic pitfalls. As we became more knowledgeable about and invested in our case, our weekly, and often biweekly, meetings started to focus far more on legal strategy and argumentation.

The meetings became a time when all three of us could fervently and constructively debate the most challenging legal questions of our case. Professor Kagan always treated us like peers and valued our opinions.



In addition to Professor Kagan's guidance, we would be remiss if we did not mention the value of working so closely together and with our other classmates. We both agree that the availability of our counterpart served as an important sounding board for early insights and ideas. Additionally, full class meetings provided a good opportunity to communicate the major issues in the case to students working on other projects, and helped us bring our argument into focus. All in all, the Environmental Law Clinic was an excellent experience.

TAX CLINIC

Serving the Public Interest in the Tax Clinic

By Andrew Hartlage

My time spent helping needy families in the **Tax Clinic** was the best-spent classroom time I had over my entire law school experience. The clients I served over my three semesters in the clinic were among the neediest in Michigan: Many of my clients dealt with joblessness, disability, or loss of a home. Some struggled with the tax consequences of ending a marriage or losing a family member. Others were victims of abuse or fraud. I helped my clients make their way through the bewildering world of tax practice and helped many of them adjust their liability, recover tax refunds, or protect their limited income and assets from seizure.

Along the way I developed a range of skills that have helped me be a more effective attorney and counselor. Tax Clinic students have greater responsi-

bility to seek out the facts and develop a strategy for the client, and this trained me to listen better, be more curious, and research the law more effectively.



I strengthened my oral advocacy and counseling skills through regular interactions with my clients and with the Internal Revenue Service. I learned a great deal of substantive tax law. And I experienced the practical side of

litigation by representing clients in United States Tax Court. Today I feel much more confident about taking on cases with complicated facts, understanding a complex body of substantive and procedural rules, and developing and communicating a strategy to clients.

My experience in the Tax Clinic helped me commit to a career in public service, and I use the skills that I developed in the clinic every day as an attorney with the federal government. The Tax Clinic is the best kept secret at Michigan Law!

CIVIL MEDIATION CLINIC

Learning Valuable Skills in the Civil Mediation Clinic

By Jeremy Garson

I enrolled in the **Civil Mediation Clinic** to become better at communicating and solving problems without the scorched earth tactics that often define litigation. That is exactly what the Clinic teaches. Class sessions regularly included discussion on how alternative dispute resolution techniques play a role in our everyday lives and how those same techniques can be used professionally.

I left Civil Mediation Clinic grateful for the experience, but without any concrete expectations of how it would affect me as a professional. Recently, however, those expectations have changed decisively. I want to be a union-side labor attorney and have talked to a number of labor lawyers about the classes I should take to make that happen. Surprisingly, nearly every young labor



attorney I have spoken with has said some variation of “it would be good to take an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) course. For one, mediation and ADR are less expensive than litigation, and two, you are trying to maintain a relationship between your client and the employer.” When I tell these attorneys that I took the Civil Mediation Clinic, the response is uniformly positive.

These conversations have led me to understand the great value of ADR. Litigation is expensive, so finding alternative, cost-effective ways to resolve civil disputes is highly desirable. Because I have formal training in mediation and ADR, I am now that much more valuable as a future attorney. Furthermore, mediation’s emphasis on maintaining relations (especially business relations, which can lead to future profitability for all parties) is icing on top of an already delicious cake. Therefore, I encourage my peers to take the Civil Mediation Clinic. The skills you will learn are growing in value by the day, and can only help you as you begin your professional career.

MICHIGAN INNOCENCE CLINIC

Working on Behalf of the Wrongfully Accused in the Michigan Innocence Clinic

By Lauren Rosen

Kendrick Scott is currently serving a life sentence for a murder he did not commit. On March 14, 2013, my clinic partner and I traveled to Detroit to file a motion for a new trial on behalf of Mr. Scott. This was a very important moment, not only for Mr. Scott and his family, but also for my clinic partner and me, as well as other students who had worked on Mr. Scott’s case throughout the years. It was what we all hope will be the first step in setting an innocent man free.

The **Michigan Innocence Clinic** is a non-DNA clinic – the first of its kind. As students in the Clinic, we spend most of our time evaluating questionnaires the Clinic receives from prisoners who claim they are innocent, and investigating those cases that appear to contain a viable claim of actual innocence. Our investigations center on finding new evidence – such as a fingerprint that will exclude a person as the perpetrator – that will prove the individual’s innocence. Only a small percentage of the cases we investigate are officially accepted as clients of the Clinic.

Mr. Scott was accepted as a client in the Spring of 2012, after years of investigation by numerous Clinic students. Students assigned to Mr. Scott’s case tracked down files and transcripts, pored over

discovery, and dug into police files. They drafted letters and affidavits. They interviewed numerous witnesses including an important eyewitness to the crime. They gave interviews to a local reporter and had the opportunity



to administer a double blind sequential photo lineup. And finally, after years of investigation produced numerous pieces of evidence that demonstrated Mr. Scott's innocence, the Clinic filed a motion requesting a new trial for Mr. Scott.

Whether or not the Clinic will ultimately succeed in freeing Mr. Scott remains to be seen. But without a doubt, my work on Mr. Scott's case, and other Innocence Clinic cases, has been the highlight of my experience at Michigan Law. Working to free those who have been wrongfully incarcerated is incredibly meaningful work. In addition, I learned how to be a lawyer in the Clinic. I learned how to investigate a crime, how to interview witnesses, and how to build a case. I learned how to draft motions and deal with sensitive ethical issues. And, finally the past year I spent in the Innocence Clinic was the most fun I had while at Michigan Law.

CHILD ADVOCACY LAW CLINIC

Becoming a Litigator – Fast! – in CALC

By Laura Jacobson

Everyone enters law school with different perceptions of what being a “lawyer” actually means. For me, Atticus Finch or Perry Mason personified a lawyer – someone counseling victims, arguing motions to a judge, cross-examining witnesses, passionately presenting a case to a jury. Those were the skills I came to law school to master. Unfortunately, my expectations were a tad premature given the introductory content of 1L classes. Enter the **Child Advocacy Law Clinic (CALC)**.

Right off the bat, you are assigned clients. They can be infants, teenagers, drug-addicted parents, or even inmates in prison. You and your partner will look at each other in a panic and say, “What do we do? What do we say? Are we allowed to call them? What if I tell them the wrong thing? Wait, they are talking

to us like we are real lawyers!” And that is all part of the learning process. You'll practice client counseling in class, but the biggest impact comes when five minutes later you're doing it for real with your actual client! You'll do mock hearings in class, and later that week have a hearing in front of a judge on terminating your client's parental rights. You'll learn litigation skills, communication skills, and plain old life skills. But the best part? You know you are making a difference in someone's life. You don't get that feeling in most classrooms.

This summer I worked at the District Attorney's office in Charlotte, NC, and was able to second chair a felony assault trial. I picked the jury, gave the opening statement, examined the victim, and helped prepare the closing. I also conducted a handful of misdemeanor bench trials with a max of 20 minutes preparation per trial before examining witnesses and giving closing arguments. Talk about on the fly! Aside from the awesome sense of pride and exhilaration in having my own Perry Mason moment, I distinctly remember feeling sorry for the other interns at the office who had not participated in a clinic like CALC. Not to imply that CALC necessarily made me any better than the other interns, but I know just how terrifying it is to stand up in court for the very first time, and I am so grateful that I was able to practice and develop these skills in CALC before someone's 10 year prison sentence was on the line!

Another great part of CALC is the CALC family. I know my CALC professors better than any professors I've had, and I use the term professors loosely because colleagues or mentors is probably more appropriate for the relationship you develop. And the students who take CALC are all more or less like you – they want to feel like real lawyers, they want to help real victims, and they want real courtroom experience. It's an extraordinary feeling to be surrounded by smart, talented people who are as excited to put on a suit and say “May it please the court” as you are. Plus, as I found out this summer, the CALC family is everywhere. One of the top homicide DA's in Charlotte is a CALC alum, and he made a special point to take me under his wing upon learning I too had been in CALC.

CALC will inspire, challenge, teach, change, and fulfill you in ways you've never imagined. If you came to law school to make a difference, to step into a lawyer's shoes as soon as possible, then don't hesitate: CALC will redefine law school for you.



CLINICS & FACULTY

Child Advocacy Law Clinic

Donald Duquette
Frank Vandervort
Vivek Sankaran
Joshua Kay
Amanda Alexander, Soros Fellow

Child Welfare Appellate Clinic

Vivek Sankaran
Joshua Kay
Timothy Pinto
Patrick Barry

Civil Mediation Clinic

Nicole Appleberry

Community and Economic Development Clinic

Alicia Alvarez

Criminal Appellate Practice

Valerie Newman
Peter Van Hoek

Domestic Relations Mediation Clinic

Nicole Appleberry
Joshua Kay

Entrepreneurship Clinic

Dana Thompson
Bryce Pilz

Environmental Law Clinic

Neil Kagan

Externships

Amy Sankaran

Federal Appellate Litigation Clinic

Dennis Terez
Melissa Salinas

Human Trafficking Clinic

Bridgette Carr
Suelyn Scarnecchia
Elizabeth Campbell
Eva Foti

International Transactions Clinic

Deborah Burand
Mary Rose Brusewitz
Donald Crane
Timothy Dickinson
David Guenther
David Koch
David Shaub
Carl Valenstein

Juvenile Justice Clinic

Kimberly Thomas
Frank Vandervort

Legislation Clinic

Donald Duquette

Michigan Clinical Law Program

Paul Reingold
Nick Rine
David Santacroce
Kimberly Thomas

Michigan Innocence Clinic

David Moran
Imran Syed
Caitlin Plummer

Pediatric Advocacy Clinic

Debra Chopp
Cheryl Bratt

Tax Clinic

Nicole Appleberry

Transactional Lab

Michael Bloom

Clinical Affairs

David Santacroce, Associate Dean
John Lemmer, Clinic Administrator