Clinical Education and Experiential Learning

Columbia Law School
Columbia Law School is a leading innovator in legal education. Our curriculum is global, interdisciplinary, intellectually rigorous, and intensely practical. Throughout our curriculum, experiential learning challenges students to apply theory and analytical skills to real-world legal problems.

At Columbia Law School, clinical legal education and externships are the centerpieces of this approach. Students also gain practical experience through internships, pro bono work, and innovative courses that include fieldwork or simulations. In Art of the Deal workshops, for example, students analyze risk, structure agreements, and negotiate the terms of business transactions. In the Native Peacemaking seminar, students participate in mediation clinic training, as well as formal peacemaking training from Native American judges. During spring break, students travel to engage in projects with Native American tribes. Through the Vision, Action, and Social Change seminar, students engage in fieldwork at universities, public schools, and corporations across the country, examining the structure of organizations and developing strategies to address inequality through institutional change.

While experiential learning takes many forms at Columbia Law School, the following pages focus on clinical education and other opportunities outside the traditional classroom. Together with the mentorship of our remarkable faculty and the breadth and depth of our curriculum, this real-world approach to legal education prepares our students to confidently launch their careers, and to hit the ground running.

IN THE CLASSROOM

The Negotiation Workshop
This popular course provides an experiential introduction to the theory and practice of negotiation. Through role-playing exercises and simulations, students gain skills to make deals and resolve conflicts as they negotiate contracts, business transactions, and multi-party disputes. Using this practical experience as a springboard, the workshop explores such topics as the nature of conflict; integrative and distributive bargaining; ways to overcome barriers to agreement; lawyer-client relationships; the art of persuasion; and the role of culture, gender, and race in negotiation. Students reflect on their experiences in journals and review recorded negotiations with their professor. A popular highlight of the workshop is the opportunity to represent their Columbia Business School peers in a mock negotiation.
Students in Columbia Law School’s clinical programs serve on the front lines of justice in many areas of the law. From climate change to human rights, small business issues to families in crisis, complex discrimination litigation to mediating civil court cases, clinic students have the opportunity to work with real clients on some of the most pressing problems of our time. Students become counselors, mediators, litigators, advocates, system change agents, and educators as they learn to apply the legal reasoning and skills they have gained in law school to benefit their clients.

The goal of the Columbia Law School clinical program is to provide outstanding service to its clients while allowing students to begin the lifelong process of becoming thoughtful, responsible, and reflective lawyers. Working under the close supervision of full-time clinical professors, students are encouraged to pursue their own learning goals while taking on the weighty responsibility of providing effective representation to a wide range of clients in important and often sensitive matters.

Clinic students gain critical skills in communication, information gathering, persuasion, and legal and factual analysis, which prepare them to address the multifaceted needs of their clients. Students also are encouraged to recognize and resolve the ethical challenges raised by their cases as they strive to solve their clients’ pressing dilemmas. These expectations and responsibilities make the clinical experience one of the most useful and exciting features of a student’s law school years. One former clinic student has commented: “Working in the clinic was the best...
hands-on experience I received at Columbia Law School. It was an unmatched opportunity to learn from my classmates, the clinic staff, and our client. The challenges are unlike those posed in the classroom; they have a direct impact on the lives of others. I am confident that they have made me better prepared to contribute immediately in the workplace.”

Participating in a Law School clinic allows students with diverse career goals—public interest, private practice, or government service—to gain real-world skills and a critical perspective on the way law should be practiced, before they launch their legal careers. As a result, clinic students are uniquely prepared to take on their professional roles after graduation.

The clinical program at Columbia Law School has two additional goals. First, students—guided by clinical professors who are experts in their fields—are encouraged throughout their clinic experience to envision how legal institutions and practices can be reformed and reorganized to provide the best service to clients and the larger society. Second, clinic students provide pro bono service to clients who are unable to secure representation because of cost, the unpopularity of their causes, or the complexity of their problems. In doing so, they learn to appreciate the professional responsibility and personal rewards of community service, while also fulfilling a graduation requirement. Many Columbia Law School alumni continue this proud tradition of providing pro bono service throughout their legal careers.

**Ethics and Professional Responsibility**

Clinical education places students in professional situations where they are required to put abstract classroom theory into practice. Students learn what it means to provide compassionate and zealous advocacy while upholding the profession’s highest ethical standards. Typical ethical questions faced by students include: When representing organizations, how should a lawyer reconcile differences between the needs of the individuals who make up an organization and the organization as a whole? When is it appropriate for lawyers to substitute their judgment for that of a young client? When, if ever, is it right for a mediator to provide a legal evaluation during the course of a mediation? In helping a parent to regain custody of a child, should it matter that the client has been incarcerated for a serious crime?
Communication Skills
Clinic students draft pleadings and discovery motions, interview and counsel clients, mediate complex disputes, and learn techniques for persuading a judge or adversary—essential skills for any law school graduate. Clinic faculty provide all students with extensive reviews of their written and oral performance.

Understanding Institutions
Lawyers must understand how to work within complex and often overlapping administrative and regulatory systems in order to advocate effectively for their clients. Clinical experience provides students with a basis for understanding other institutional systems that they may encounter as lawyers.

Benefiting Society
Students work on behalf of clients facing human rights abuses, environmental neglect, discrimination, and other legal problems arising from poverty and inequality. They also identify and address serious wrongs that need systemic solutions through legislative advocacy, education, conflict resolution, and community organization.

Reflective Practice
Clinic faculty encourage students to build on their strengths, address any weaknesses, and work toward the goal of becoming lawyers with the ability to reflect upon and learn from their work as professionals.

Dramatic political changes around the world have created new opportunities for clinical legal education. Since 1996, our clinical faculty have been active internationally in promoting a public interest approach to law and lawyering. Collaborating with nongovernmental organizations, they have made an impact around the world. Many universities in places like Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and China have embraced this chance to develop legal clinics and other innovative and dynamic educational programs. The following are only a few ways clinical faculty have supported these burgeoning efforts:

RECENT WORK

- Professor Alexandra Carter ’03 conducted a first-of-its-kind training in conflict resolution for female U.N. delegates. Through the Edson Queiroz Foundation Mediation Program, she holds intensive mediation skills trainings at Columbia Law School for diplomats, judges, lawyers, and students from around the world.
- Professor Barbara A. Schatz has worked with professors in China, Russia, and Central and Eastern Europe to develop clinics representing nonprofit organizations. Most recently, she has worked with the Public Interest Law Institute to strengthen clinical legal education initiatives at Tbilisi State University in Georgia and Yerevan State University in Armenia.
- Professors Carol B. Liebman, Suzanne B. Goldberg, and Schatz have worked with colleagues in China to help develop law school clinics.
- Professor Jane M. Spinak has facilitated a series of trainings and meetings that helped create child advocacy clinics in Hungary, Romania, and Poland.
- Professors Philip M. Genty, Schatz, and Liebman have led workshops at the University of Bialystok (Poland) for students and professors from law schools in Poland and five countries of the former Soviet Union. Genty’s work on clinical programs in Macedonia earned him an honorary professorship from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University.
The Adolescent Representation Clinic represents youth and young adults on collateral issues relating to their aging out of foster care or other institutional settings. Clients range in age from 16 to 23. Their issues extend across a broad spectrum of need, including housing and homelessness prevention; teen pregnancy and parenting; health and health benefits; income and support benefits; education, tuition, and financial aid; financial planning; identity theft and credit; civil rights, including LGBTQ issues; employment and career planning; and family and inheritance law. Students paired in teams represent clients referred from legal advocacy offices, foster care agencies, and community-based organizations.

Classes and assignments provide an intensive introduction to legal representation, as well as to the unique attributes of adolescents and young adults as viewed from multiple disciplines. Graduate students from other schools of the University may enroll in the seminar portion of the clinic, where guest lecturers include advocates, judges, youth in foster care, and mental health professionals. In addition to representing individual clients,
students develop and participate in a range of policy and presentation projects. The most recent presentations were on credit and finance issues many young people face when they leave high school and begin jobs or attend college—issues that are fraught with difficulty for youth growing up in foster care. The Adolescent Representation Clinic has begun a significant student-led housing project to investigate the barriers faced by New York City youth aging out of foster care in securing and maintaining stable housing. The goal of the project is to educate policymakers and lawmakers in order to change rules, regulations, policies, and practices that prevent aging-out youth from living in stable homes. This clinic project will include legislative, policy, and media advocacy over several years.

“My clinical experience was deeply rewarding. It allowed me to argue in a New York criminal court, resulting in an order that worked in my client’s favor. It improved my writing. I drafted a motion and worked on case-management strategy. I will advocate for clinical education for the rest of my life.”

UCHECHI C. AMADI ’11
ASSOCIATE, JONES DAY

“The clinic helped me develop the skills needed to provide clients with sound advice and to advocate on their behalf before a range of agencies. The structure of the clinic provided excellent guidance, but I was also given enough independence to figure things out on my own.”

MAREN HULDEN ’12
SKADDEN FELLOW, MINNESOTA DISABILITY LAW CENTER

Moving into Adulthood

“Before we met our first client, we heard a lot about how difficult she was to work with. We decided to approach her with open minds. One of her goals was to leave foster care and move in with the father of her two children. Her caseworker didn’t think she could do this, but we decided our job was to help her work toward that goal. At our second meeting—after we had outlined all the steps she needed to take—she told us she knew it was time to grow up. After that, things started to change. She and her boyfriend found an apartment and she and the children moved in. We noticed how much more initiative she started taking. Over the course of the year we helped her apply for public assistance and obtain early intervention services for her son. We represented her at foster care case conferences and encouraged her to find a job or enroll in G.E.D. classes. Although she still has obstacles to overcome, we ended the year feeling confident that she had found her stride.”

Student team case report
Legal assistance for community enterprises is often critical to their success. Students in this clinic help nonprofit organizations, social enterprises, and small businesses that cannot afford to pay for legal services turn their visions into reality. Students work to understand clients’ aspirations, help them anticipate and solve problems, and educate them about their responsibilities as heads of enterprises. Students also undertake law reform efforts and offer workshops for nonprofits and small businesses on corporate and tax issues. The clinic is of special interest to those interested in working with organizational clients, representing clients in transactions, and promoting community development.

Some of the clinic’s clients are new nonprofit organizations that need help creating legal structures. Other clients are more mature enterprises that need help addressing the legal issues arising from changes such as expansion, creation of a national program, or initiation of income-generating or legislative activities. Some focus on New York City, promoting the arts, or providing food, shelter, or training for New York City’s neediest residents. Some address large-scale problems, like climate change or human rights violations. Some work abroad: One recent client’s work provides livelihood training and support to ultra-poor women in India, Africa, and Central America.

Small-business clients have ranged from day care centers and bakeries to printing companies and crafts businesses. These clients are primarily located in low-income neighborhoods and seek the clinic’s assistance in choosing and forming appropriate business structures, entering into leases and other contracts, and protecting their intellectual property.

Social enterprises need help in creating entities that can accommodate both their social and financial goals. Recent clients have included a tutoring company that helps minority students prepare for college entrance exams and a “green” food-production business.
Clinic students prepare for their client work by learning the substantive law relevant to forming and operating nonprofit organizations, social enterprises, and small businesses; thinking through the distinctive interviewing, counseling, and ethical issues that arise in representing organizations rather than individuals; and practicing the lawyering skills that will allow them to represent clients effectively. As they take on projects for clients, students explore the variety of roles that lawyers can play in working with community enterprises and examine the choices they have in finding a personally satisfying way of practicing law and promoting social justice.

“My work with the Community Enterprise Clinic was an incredible opportunity to learn, collaborate, and give, leaving me with skills that I apply every day and an internal compass that will guide my legal career. As a brand new associate at my firm, I was able to jump in immediately on work with our nonprofit clients, and I continue to rely on these skills in my day-to-day practice working with clients of all sorts. I especially valued the many opportunities for feedback, self-improvement, and reflection on my professional goals.”

CRYSTAL MAO ’13
ASSOCIATE, ROPES & GRAY

A Bronx Café is Born

Emily Flores is one of many women in low-income communities with the imagination and drive to create a small business. She first came to the clinic for help in creating “non-compete” and “non-disclosure” agreements to protect the special recipes and techniques used in her home-based pastry business. The success of that business inspired her to start a café in her Bronx neighborhood.

Clinic students helped her think through the right structure for her business, given the desire for equity participation by both the chef and a lender, and then drafted a certificate of incorporation, bylaws, and a shareholders’ agreement, all in plain language and tailored to her particular circumstances. The clinic also represented the business in taking over a lease to a storefront and in acquiring a loan for the rehabilitation of the space. The students who worked with her have the satisfaction of having helped a dynamic woman achieve her dream and contribute to the commercial vitality of a Bronx community.
Students in the Environmental Law Clinic have the unique opportunity to engage in the practice of law on local, state, regional, and global levels by working on critical issues that face the planet and on pressing problems that affect poor, underrepresented communities. Whether drafting amicus briefs in climate-related lawsuits, exposing the impact of agricultural practices on food security, protecting residential communities from the toxic waste produced by hydraulic fracturing, or preserving endangered places and species, clinic students endeavor to find the most effective mechanisms to resolve critical environmental challenges.

Issues raised by clinic clients, as well as environmental conundrums making news around the world, expose students to a panoply of methods for addressing environmental issues. By working on litigation, policy development and implementation, and regulatory reform, Law School students have tested their skills in the international arena, handling projects for the United Nations, the World Bank, and a host of sovereign nations.

In the domestic arena, clinic students work on matters before state and federal administrative agencies, before federal trial and appellate courts (including the U.S. Supreme Court), and at the highest levels of state courts. They represent poor and minority communities in efforts to prevent their neighborhoods from being overrun by toxic facilities, such as power and sewage sludge plants.

The lawyering skills developed and honed in the clinic are applicable to any career a student chooses. The clinic emphasizes proficiency in litigation fundamentals—the drafting of pleadings, arguing motions,
and negotiating settlements—that have broad applications beyond environmental law. With a heavy emphasis on client interaction, the clinic teaches students to counsel community groups on how to grapple with and settle their cases in ways that best achieve clients’ goals. In weekly classroom seminars, students lead strategic discussions on how to resolve various issues in their cases. The clinic also addresses the interplay of economic development and environmental protection, as well as the impact of contamination and regulation on communities of color and other economically disadvantaged groups.

Students also partner with the Law School’s Sabin Center for Climate Change Law on a host of projects, including the development of managed retreat strategies that help communities rebuild after catastrophes such as Hurricane Sandy.

“**I have worked extensively with the clinic. The students are highly motivated, hard-working, intellectually engaged, and superbly supervised. I have been so impressed that I actively seek summer interns from the clinic.**”

**DEBORAH GOLDBERG**
**MANAGING ATTORNEY, NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE, EARTH JUSTICE**

“**Students in the Columbia Law School Environmental Law Clinic contributed a superb report to inform my work on land issues. I am grateful for their hard work, professional conduct, and substantive expertise.**”

**OLIVIER DE SCHUTTER**
**U.N. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD**

Setting Standards
The Environmental Law Clinic is part of a team of lawyers from local, state, and national organizations concerned about the impacts of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas extraction in the Marcellus Shale, a shale formation that cuts across New York and Pennsylvania. At the national level, the clinic drafted comments on behalf of 62 groups urging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to include “fracking” in its study of new source performance standards for oil and gas operations that result in contamination of surface and groundwater. The EPA agreed and announced that it would conduct a comprehensive, peer-reviewed study of the environmental and health effects of these techniques. At the state and local levels, the clinic drafted a comprehensive hydraulic fracturing bill for introduction in the New York State Legislature. They scored a major victory in Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court, when the court ruled that the state’s Marcellus Shale drilling law was unconstitutional, given the environmental dangers and the restrictions it placed on the rights of municipalities to govern fracking in their jurisdictions.
The Human Rights Clinic is an innovative space for bringing together human rights work, student education, scholarly research, and critique. Students learn to be strategic and creative human rights advocates, while pursuing social justice in partnership with organizations and communities around the world.

The clinic integrates social justice work and pedagogy through seminars and clinic projects. The clinic’s approach is collaborative, rigorous, and self-reflective. The seminars provide a map of the international human rights terrain—including the field’s dominant forms of action, strategies, methods, and critiques. This provides students with the tools necessary to maneuver within the complexities of human rights law and advocacy. Seminars address such topics as project selection, design, and strategy; choice and sequence of advocacy tactics; fact-finding methodologies; interviewing witnesses, experts, and perpetrators; digital and physical security; report and brief-writing; using judicial and quasi-judicial processes; engaging the press and using social media; mitigating vicarious trauma and promoting resilience; and accountability and project evaluation.

Through active engagement and leadership on clinic projects, students directly and collectively implement and reflect upon what they learned in the seminars. This aspect of the clinic functions similarly to a non-governmental organization. Projects vary from year to year and address marginalized, urgent, and complex human rights issues around the world. During the current academic year, for example, projects are addressing human rights issues related to drone strikes and targeted killings; corporate accountability for sexual violence in Papua New Guinea; environmental harms in the extractive industries; police violence in Peru; armed conflict...
Growing Networks

“Breaking into the human rights field can be difficult, there is no one clear path to follow,” says Bassam Khawaja ’15. “The opportunity to connect with someone who is doing the kind of work you hope to do is invaluable—there is no substitute.”

Helping students make such connections is exactly the aim of the Human Rights Clinic Mentorship Program. This new initiative pairs students with experienced advocates from leading human rights organizations. Mentors share their insights and provide career guidance throughout the year that a student participates in the clinic.

Khawaja’s mentor this year is Christopher Rogers, a human rights lawyer with the Open Society Foundations who is working on policy initiatives for Afghanistan and Pakistan. “Because the program has enlisted such a diverse group of practitioners, students can be paired with a mentor that represents their interests and career goals,” says Khawaja, whose focus is on civilian harm in armed conflicts.

and war crimes in the Central African Republic; and access to justice, housing, and immigration in the United States.

Students work in small teams and are immersed in every aspect of their clinic projects. They design advocacy strategies, form partnerships with NGOs, write legal briefs, interview victims, and investigate abuses in the field. Numerous projects involve advocating before the U.N. or international travel. Student teams meet frequently to advance their projects and think critically about their work, while project supervisors and experienced human rights advocates provide resources, guidance, and feedback to help students further refine their advocacy.

The clinic is also a laboratory for testing and modeling innovative modes of human rights work with a focus on interdisciplinary partnerships, understanding the intersections between rights, and adopting collaborative north-south partnerships. The clinic recently launched a new project with the Earth Institute at Columbia University to engage in an interdisciplinary human rights–based environmental impact study. Students in the clinic are working closely with environmental scientists and indigenous communities to assess the impact of the extractive industries on people’s rights, as well as to model new modes of mixed methods and community-centered human rights advocacy.
Immigration detention is at a historic, all-time high in the United States—approximately 400,000 immigrants cycle through the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement system each year. The majority of these detainees face the deportation process alone because there is no right to counsel in immigration proceedings. The Immigrants’ Rights Clinic at Columbia Law School fills this void and provides critical legal services to some of the most vulnerable individuals caught in the system.

An expanded focus this year is the representation of unaccompanied minors who have been apprehended at the U.S. border without their parents. Although legal service providers estimate that upwards of 60 percent of unaccompanied immigrant children are eligible for legal immigration status under current U.S. law, many of their claims are never properly presented to a court. Even children do not have a right to counsel in removal proceedings, and they are often forced to navigate the immigration court system alone, in a language they do not understand.

With an emphasis on client-centered lawyering, clinic students work with clients from around the world. Through an intensive learning and working environment, the clinic offers students an opportunity to develop lawyering and advocacy skills in the context of both direct client representation and cutting-edge projects related to immigration reform. Each student handles significant case responsibilities, visits immigration detention facilities on a regular basis, and makes at least one appearance in immigration court by the end of the semester.

In the previous academic year, the clinic represented individuals detained at two immigration detention facilities in northern New Jersey: the Elizabeth Detention Center and Newark’s Delaney Hall. In the current academic year,
An Asylum Case Victory

While interviewing potential clients at the Elizabeth Detention Center, Jenna W. Long ’15 and David J. Kim ’14 were handed a document by one of the detainees. It detailed the persecution he faced as a gay man in Nigeria, a country that has recently criminalized homosexuality.

Long and Kim accepted the man’s case and, along with other clinic students, prepared his asylum application and started work on the case. For two weeks, they conducted extensive interviews with the client, his brother in Nigeria, and other witnesses. Before the merits hearing, they submitted nearly 700 pages demonstrating the persecution their client faced and would face in the future. Long and Kim handled the opening and closing arguments and their client’s testimony on the stand. In the end, the judge issued a ruling granting asylum. “‘Granting’ is such a simple word,” Long said. “But this grant gives our client permanent safety. He is on the path to U.S. citizenship, which affords a level of protection his home country could never offer.”

Clinic students won asylum for this West African man facing persecution for his Christian faith by members of the Muslim extremist group Boko Haram. Urooj Khan ’15 (right) is pictured here with the clinic’s client.

the clinic is representing non-detained unaccompanied minors and will likely work with families detained near the southern border this spring. Students represent immigrants in their defenses against deportation—including asylum, withholding of removal, and U.N. Convention Against Torture claims.

Working in pairs, students assume primary responsibility for all aspects of individual case preparation, including interviewing clients and witnesses, investigating facts, drafting pleadings, taking motions and practicing briefings, developing case strategies, conducting oral argument, leading negotiations, preparing witnesses, and performing legal research.

The clinic also works with national and local organizations to further immigrants’ rights issues. Students collaborate on projects involving regulatory and legislative reform, impact litigation, public education, grassroots advocacy, media work, strategic planning, and related matters.

“Asylum cases are life-or-death matters for many of our clients. You can use your legal training to save a life in this clinic.”

Elora Mukerjee
Director, Immigrants’ Rights Clinic
The Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic trains students to advocate for clients in courts, in administrative agencies, and on transactional matters. Students learn and apply “conventional” lawyering skills augmented by “digital-age” approaches, employing technology to become effective, innovative practitioners and to extend basic access to justice. Year after year, student projects have vital, positive effects on the justice system.

The clinic is unique, both because it focuses on the impact of technology on law practice and because it provides students with opportunities to work on legal issues in a variety of subject areas. For example, housing is one focus of the clinic. Each year, the Civil Court of the City of New York takes on nearly 300,000 eviction cases. About 95 percent of tenants have no legal representation. Without legal training, they cannot use the complicated housing and procedural law that should promote just resolutions in their cases. Judges, lacking a well-crafted pleading from an attorney, have to hope the unrepresented tenant can somehow explain the situation, and they are often left with a one-sided view of the case.

To address this problem, Lawyering in the Digital Age students worked with the Hon. Fern Fisher, deputy chief administrative judge for New York City courts and director of the New York State Courts Access to Justice Program, to create a web-based expert system that guides unrepresented tenants through a user-friendly, multimedia interface with a series of simple questions and answers. Definitions and explanations in plain language are offered along the way. The tenant learns about law and procedure, becomes familiar with technical terms, and promptly produces a printed pleading to file in court, with legal claims accurately stated. Other helpful printable material—customized to that tenant’s factual circumstances—furnishes an opportunity for the tenant to do further study and prepare for court. To try out the program, go to:
Collateral Consequences

Collateral consequences of criminal charges are not spelled out in the penal code, in contrast to the direct consequences such as prison or fines. Defendants and their lawyers, along with prosecutors and judges, simply cannot know the myriad of collateral consequences for all possible charges. The Collateral Consequences Calculator, a web-based tool developed by the Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic and the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning, organizes this specialized knowledge. The first tool of its kind, the Calculator provides legal practitioners and judges with the ability to select a section of the penal code and examine the potential impact of convictions in New York on immigration status and public housing eligibility, two areas commonly resulting in collateral consequences. Jonathan Lippman, chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals, has called the Calculator a “remarkable, innovative tool,” and the work of the clinic a “tremendous achievement.”

The Calculator can be viewed at law.columbia.edu/collateral-consequences-criminal-charges.

www.courts.state.ny.us/courts/nyc/housing/int_nonpayment.shtml.

Another notable project is the creation of a self-help legal information website for people who cannot afford lawyers in civil cases. Many of these individuals rely on The Legal Aid Society, which provides assistance to low-income people. However, because of the unprecedented need for civil legal services, Legal Aid must turn away six out of every seven people seeking assistance. It is therefore essential to have another method of sharing important legal information on a 24/7 basis. The website offers basic information on housing, employment, benefits, education, and domestic violence, as well as a catch-all “documents” section. A person needing to know, for example, how to combat domestic violence, what organizations can help, and how to obtain an order of protection can go to: www.legal-aid.org/en/ineedhelp/ineedhelp/self-help/domesticviolence.aspx.

The work of the clinic is occasionally highlighted in the media, as well as locally on the blog of the Columbia Science and Technology Law Review: www.stlr.org/2012/04/spotlight-on-technology-and-public-interest-law.
Mass Incarceration

The United States is the world’s leader in incarceration, with 2.2 million people currently in the nation’s prisons or jails—a 500 percent increase over the past 30 years. Challenging the Consequences of Mass Incarceration is a clinic that studies this expansion and the need it creates for prisoner representation and policymaking.

The Mass Incarceration Clinic focuses on litigation in federal courts and resolution of claims related to prisoners’ conditions of confinement. Students visit clients in state and federal prisons, where they interview, counsel, and develop strategies. In collaboration with nonprofit organizations, clinic students also have opportunities to litigate issues identified by the clients, and to engage in other forms of advocacy.

Identification of cases is done collaboratively with the clients. Students work with clients to develop materials that can be used to prepare internal administrative remedies and to file administrative claims. Projects may range from federal habeas actions on behalf of state prisoners raising actual innocence claims, to religious-freedom claims. Claims related to medical care and mental health care are also part of the clinic’s docket. The clinic accepts appointment to cases from federal courts and has also worked with the Prisoners’ Rights Project at The Legal Aid Society to interview members of a class seeking relief from a pattern and practice of excessive force.

To prepare for their work with the clinic, students read and discuss scholarship about punishment theory and the history of American prisons, as well as the substantive law governing prisoners’ rights. To develop the skills they will need to work with clients, students participate in intensive simulated interview exercises. Other legal skills—including counseling, negotiation, oral argument, and preparation of pleadings, briefs, and litigation-related materials—are taught and acquired in the context of client
Justice for an Innocent Man

In 1995, Daniel* was wrongly convicted of a double homicide—based primarily on the testimony of one witness who later recanted—and sentenced to 120 years in prison. He continued to maintain his innocence throughout the next 18 years of his incarceration.

“He had never given up on himself, and that inspired all of us to work all the harder,” says Jess Hallett ’12, a member of the clinic team representing Daniel in his habeas corpus petition. The students presented evidence and examined witnesses before a federal court. In the end, they successfully argued that state prosecutors had violated Daniel’s constitutional rights by suppressing exculpatory evidence. The federal judge ruled that Daniel was entitled to a retrial or his freedom.

“The clinic deals with some of the most difficult issues in federal litigation, such as habeas corpus. Professor Dignam is an expert in habeas, and she also brings in other Law School professors to share their expertise. You write very detailed and high-level briefs and memoranda, but you also develop the interpersonal skills you need to be a practitioner.”

DAN ASHER ’14
Law Clerk, Hon. Cynthia M. Ruhe, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

“Through the Mass Incarceration Clinic, I used my in-class learning to address the problems of real people. Professor Dignam helps students think critically about how to apply the law in real situations. The clinic is an excellent opportunity to start getting litigation experience before you graduate.”

HELEN ELIZABETH MAYER ’11
Associate, Arnold & Porter

*Daniel is a pseudonym
Litigation, while glamorized in the media, is time-consuming and costly. As lawyers and clients have sought flexible ways to resolve disputes, mediation has become an increasingly powerful and popular legal tool. Through Columbia Law School’s Edson Queiroz Foundation Mediation Program, students consider the role of mediation in national and international legal systems; develop problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills essential to innovative lawyering; design mediation and conflict-resolution programs; and explore the role of the lawyer in mediation, either as mediator or as counsel to a client considering or participating in mediation.

Students mediate cases throughout the semester. Settings are likely to include: Manhattan and the Bronx Civil Court, Harlem Small Claims Court, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Students can also take part in the program’s innovative Native Peacekeeping seminar, which offers participants the opportunity to work with Native American tribes and other communities to develop research, scholarship, and traditional Native American conflict-resolution skills.

The Edson Queiroz Foundation Mediation Program is a partnership between Columbia Law School and the University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR) in Brazil.

The program is designed to expand the teaching and practice of mediation and conflict resolution in the United States and Brazil.

Students in the program learn the benefits and limitations of mediation and other dispute-resolution techniques so that they can counsel clients about choices. They also develop an understanding of how feelings, values, and personal styles affect their performance in a professional role, while providing quality assistance to parties whose disputes they mediate.

The foundation for hands-on clinical work is built in the classroom, where students receive mediation skills training...
An Alternative for a Troubled Teen and His Family

The parents were ready to seek court intervention. Their child stopped attending high school, and his parents also feared he had joined a gang. A two-student team from the mediation program went to work. They first explained the process to the parties, listened to their stories, and summarized the information in a way that allowed each party to hear what the others were saying. In the course of these tense discussions, punctuated by tear-filled breaks, the troubled teen realized his family had his best interest at heart, but he struggled with his increasing need for autonomy. In the end, the mediation team hammered out an agreement, specifying the terms to which all parties consented.

The student was granted some additional freedom in exchange for his promise to attend school regularly, quit the gang, and refrain from use of alcohol or illegal drugs. For the present, the family was able to avoid the intervention of the courts.

"Clinical work showed me how to listen without judgment and give people the chance to be heard. It was a powerful lesson—one that has single-handedly changed the way I understand the law. I learned to see the faces behind conflict."

KATERINA YIANNIBAS ’08
PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW, DEUSTO UNIVERSITY, BILBAO, SPAIN; PROJECT MANAGER FOR GLOBERNANCE, THE INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

and analyze the ethical, systemic, and jurisprudential issues involved in alternative dispute resolution. Class “texts” include the mediations that students observe or conduct, as well as readings, tapes, and role-plays that highlight important issues in the development of mediation practice.
The Prisoners and Families Clinic operates at the intersection of the criminal justice and family court/child welfare systems, and engages in both education and advocacy. The clinic informs people in prison about their parental rights and responsibilities, as well as the ways in which they can advocate effectively for themselves. The clinic also provides services to assist those who have been released from prison and their family members in achieving reunification.

The educational component of the clinic allows participants to work collaboratively with the Parenting Center of Bedford Hills, a women’s prison. During a semester-long course, students observe a family law class taught by an inside facilitator to other incarcerated women and then work in groups to design, prepare, and teach their own classes later in the semester. The class sessions typically involve role-play simulations that include both the students and the prisoners. These classes are designed to provide preventive lawyering so that the women can take the steps necessary to improve their chances...
of success in family court proceedings and avoid legal problems in the future.

For the clinic’s advocacy component, the students provide legal assistance to people who have been released from prison, their family members, or both. The students may also provide research and counseling services to staff members at Bedford Hills who are assisting women with problems relating to their children.

To prepare for this work, students are educated through a process of classroom and experiential learning. In the early part of the semester, they are exposed to influential writing about prisons and prison life, and are provided with a background in the relevant substantive law. Students develop the lawyering skills they will need to work with clients by participating in intensive simulation exercises. They also examine issues of professional responsibility that arise when working with indigent clients who are involved in the criminal justice, family court, or child welfare systems.

“Attending the Child and Family Advocacy 30th Anniversary Conference, it was inspirational to hear all the stories of the client work done by past participants in the clinic and how this work is still very much on their minds in their current practice.”

JASON PARKIN ’04
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LAW AND DIRECTOR OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD JUSTICE CLINIC,
PACE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

A New Lease on Life
Angela* was 17 years old when students in the Prisoners and Families Clinic began representing her. She had lived with her legal guardian since she was 2 years old, shortly after her mother was imprisoned on a 25-year sentence for robbery and assault. But when the guardian died, Angela faced losing the only home she had ever known, a New York City Housing Authority apartment on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The case provided students with insight into how incarceration can impact every aspect of people’s lives. Extending their work beyond the semester of the clinic, the students recovered copies of the lease, tracked down school records, and obtained court documents proving the guardian had been awarded legal custody of Angela. Their efforts paid off. The Housing Authority reversed its decision. Angela was able to stay in her apartment and is now living independently.

*Angela is a pseudonym
Sexuality and Gender Law

The Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic is an intensive learning and working environment that offers students a unique opportunity to hone lawyering and advocacy skills while working on cutting-edge sexuality and gender law issues. The clinic provides vital assistance to lawyers and organizations throughout the country and the world that advocate for the equality and safety of women and lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender individuals.

While engaged in advocacy, students also wrestle with the difficult questions posed by law reform work in the midst of shifting political and legal terrain. What does it mean to advocate on behalf of a community? How do advocates select among issues? Once priorities have been set, how should choices be made among various law reform strategies, including those involving litigation, public education, grassroots advocacy, and legislative efforts? How best can those strategic choices be executed? In the Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic, students have the opportunity to think through these questions while developing strong lawyering skills.

The clinic emphasizes a multidimensional approach, which develops the practice of being strategic, smart, and creative in identifying and deploying resources to advocate for social change. Clinic projects encompass all forms of advocacy, including litigation, public policy development, legislative drafting, training, organizing, public education, and media outreach. This practical, strategic training is coupled with an emphasis on reflective and theoretical inquiry about lawyering in general and, specifically, lawyering on behalf of social movements and in the areas of sexuality and gender.

Clinic students work cooperatively on sexuality and gender law issues with lawyers and advocates at organizations such as Lambda Legal, Equality Now, the ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights
Recent Projects

- Amicus briefs to the Iowa, Connecticut, and California supreme courts in marriage equality litigation, and to the European Court of Human Rights on sex trafficking.

- Development of legal manuals to support women’s rights in Africa and a transgender rights ordinance in New York City.

- Development of public education efforts with UNICEF regarding violence against young women and UNIFEM regarding transitional justice mechanisms’ responses to sexual violence.

- Legislative analysis and drafting in connection with New York State’s domestic violence law and the U.S. immigration law’s ban on entry by people with HIV.

- Preparation of asylum and T and U visa applications for clients with persecution claims based on forced marriage, trafficking, political opinion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV status.

- Litigation research, drafting, and support of women’s rights and those of LGBT individuals in the United States and abroad.

Project, the ACLU Women’s Rights Project, Immigration Equality, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, and UNICEF and UNIFEM, as well as with statewide and local gender and sexuality law organizations.

The Center for Gender and Sexuality Law—the first center of its kind at any law school in the United States—is the nexus of the field’s research, advocacy, and curricular development at Columbia Law School. In addition to administering the clinic, the center sponsors events throughout the year that bring leading scholars and activists to campus to discuss current issues and cases. The center offers students interested in gender and sexuality law a wealth of resources and networking opportunities.
Adolescent Representation

Jane M. Spinak is the Edward Ross Aranow Clinical Professor of Law. Professor Spinak has taught child and family advocacy since joining the faculty and currently directs the Adolescent Representation Clinic. During the mid-1990s, Spinak served as attorney-in-charge of the Juvenile Rights Division of The Legal Aid Society of New York. She recently co-chaired a New York task force on the future of the Family Court. Spinak currently serves as chair of the Leadership Council of the Center for Family Representation. Her teaching and scholarship address the complexities of the child welfare, foster care, and family court systems.

Community Enterprise

Barbara A. Schatz, clinical professor of law, joined the faculty in 1986. She previously served as executive director of the Lawyers Alliance for New York, where she ran a pro bono program for 1,800 lawyers and built the organization’s nonprofit and community development practice. She is chair of the board of PILnet: The Global Network for Public Interest Law and serves on the boards of Trickle Up, the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee, and Human Rights First, which she co-founded. Schatz has trained and consulted with law professors interested in establishing law school clinics in Central and Eastern Europe, China, and countries of the former Soviet Union. She lectures and writes in the areas of nonprofit corporate and tax law and clinical legal education.

Environmental Law

Edward Lloyd, the Evan M. Frankel Clinical Professor in Environmental Law, joined Columbia Law School and launched the Environmental Law Clinic in 2000. He began his career as an environmental advocate with the New Jersey Public Interest Research Group, where he continues to serve as its general counsel. He is a co-founder and co-director of the Eastern Environmental Law Center, a member of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and the Litigation Review Committee of the Environmental Defense Fund, and a former member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Environmental Litigation. Lloyd has testified before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives committees on environmental enforcement.

Susan J. Kraham ’92, lecturer in law, is an associate research scholar and staff attorney for the Environmental Law Clinic. She has spent her legal career representing public interest clients with a particular focus on environmental
and land use law. Prior to joining the clinic, she served as counsel to the New Jersey Audubon Society. From 1998 until 2005, Kraham was an associate clinical professor in the Environmental Law Clinic at Rutgers School of Law–Newark.

**Human Rights**

Sarah Knuckey joined Columbia Law School in July of 2014 as faculty co-director of the Human Rights Institute, director of the Human Rights Clinic, and the Lieff Cabraser Associate Clinical Professor of Law. Knuckey is an international human rights lawyer, professor, and special adviser to the U.N. special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions. Her work has addressed issues such as unlawful killings, armed conflict, sexual violence, corporate accountability, extractive industries, and protest rights. She has carried out investigations and reported on human rights and armed conflict violations around the world, including in Afghanistan, Brazil, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, and the United States. Before joining Columbia Law School, Knuckey was an adjunct professor of clinical law and director of the Initiative on Human Rights Fact-Finding and the Project on Extrajudicial Executions at New York University School of Law’s Center for Human Rights and Global Justice.

**Immigrants’ Rights**

Elora Mukherjee, associate clinical professor of law, is the founder and director of the Immigrants’ Rights Clinic. She also advises students participating in Columbia Law School’s partnership with Kids in Need of Defense, a nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to unaccompanied minors in immigration proceedings. Before joining the Law School, Mukherjee served as a staff attorney at the ACLU Racial Justice Program, working on all aspects of investigating, litigating, and settling suits for detained immigrant children. Mukherjee is a founder and a director of the Refugee Reunification Project, which provides grants to help refugee families purchase plane tickets and reunite with family members who have been granted asylum in the United States; a director of the Fair Housing Justice Center; and a director of Warm Heart, a community-based development organization serving rural northern Thailand. From 2007 to 2010, Mukherjee was an associate at Emery Celli Brinckerhoff & Abady.

**Lawyering in the Digital Age**

Conrad Johnson, clinical professor of law, served as the director of clinical education from 1992 to 1996. He joined the faculty in 1989 after two years as an assistant professor at the City University of New York School of Law and many years as the attorney-in-charge of the Harlem Neighborhood Office of The Legal Aid Society of New York. He co-founded, and for 11 years directed, the Law School’s Fair Housing Clinic. In 2001, he co-founded, and now serves as co-director of, the Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic, which explores the impact
of technology on law practice through client work and collaborative projects with major public interest legal organizations and prominent jurists.

Mary M. Zulack, clinical professor of law, joined the faculty in 1990 and co-directs the Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic. She has also co-directed the Fair Housing Clinic and taught the seminar on Law and Policy of Homelessness. Before joining the faculty, Zulack pursued public interest practice in New York City and held several leadership positions, including attorney-in-charge at the Harlem Neighborhood Office of The Legal Aid Society. She has served on the board of Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services Corporation and of Project-FAIR, a welfare rights organization. Within the New York City Bar Association, Zulack has been a member of the executive, nominating (twice), judiciary (several terms), and civil court committees, and chaired the committee on legal needs of the poor. Honors include the 1996 Leadership Award from the Citywide Task Force on the Housing Court, and numerous Legal Aid Society pro bono awards.

Brian Donnelly, lecturer in law, helped found the Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic and has collaborated for many years with Professors Johnson and Zulack on the development of various efforts to teach lawyering and technology. He is an active member of the American Bar Association law practice management section and is a fellow of the American Bar Foundation. He also serves as a member of the Westlaw Law School Advisory Board.

Mediation
Alexandra Carter ’03, clinical professor of law, director of clinical education, and director of the Edson Queiroz Foundation Mediation Program, joined the faculty in 2008. She previously worked as a litigation associate at Cravath, Swaine & Moore, where she served as the senior antitrust associate on several multibillion-dollar mergers, and as a litigation associate on a variety of matters. Carter has taught mediation and civil procedure in the Netherlands and Brazil, and serves as one of 13 appointed members of the New York State Unified Court System’s mediator ethics advisory committee.

Shawn K. Watts ’12, lecturer in law, is the associate director of the Edson Queiroz Foundation Mediation Program at Columbia Law School.

Carol B. Liebman, clinical professor of law, joined the faculty in 1992 and has lectured and taught widely on negotiation, mediation, and legal education. Her current research focus is on conflict resolution in health care. Liebman has taught mediation and negotiation in Israel, Brazil, Vietnam, and China. She also founded the Law School’s Negotiation Workshop. In 2012, she was the first Law School clinical professor to receive the Columbia University Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching.
Prisoners’ Rights
Philip M. Genty, the Everett B. Birch Innovative Teaching Clinical Professor in Professional Responsibility, joined the faculty in 1989 from Brooklyn Law School. Prior to joining the legal academy, Genty worked as an attorney at Prisoners’ Legal Services of New York; at the New York City Department of Housing, Preservation, and Development; and at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services Corporation. He has developed legal resource materials for incarcerated parents and works with several organizations that assist women who are in prison. In addition to teaching the Prisoners and Families Clinic, Genty directs the first-year Legal Practice Workshop and moot court program. His research interests are in clinical education, prisoners’ rights, legal ethics, and family law. He has taught and consulted on clinical legal education and ethics in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in Israel. In 2008, Genty received the Willis L.M. Reese Prize for Excellence in Teaching. He received a Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching from Columbia University in 2014.

Brett Dignam, clinical professor of law, joined the Columbia Law School faculty in 2010 from Yale Law School. She is the founder and director of Columbia Law School’s Mass Incarceration Clinic. Dignam maintains both a criminal and civil trial and appellate practice in federal and state courts, and she has represented prisoners at both levels for more than 20 years. At Columbia Law School, Dignam has taught Race and the Criminal Justice System, as well as Incarceration: From Streets to Prison. She has served as a member of Connecticut’s Commission on Wrongful Convictions and as chairman of the board for both Junta for Progressive Action and the Center for Children’s Advocacy.

Sexuality and Gender Law
Suzanne B. Goldberg, the Herbert and Doris Wechsler Clinical Professor of Law, has directed Columbia’s Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic since joining the faculty in 2006. She was previously on the faculty of Rutgers School of Law–Newark, where she taught a range of courses and directed the Women’s Rights Litigation Clinic. Prior to entering academia, Goldberg spent nearly a decade as a senior staff attorney with Lambda Legal, serving as counsel in a wide range of cases, including two before the U.S. Supreme Court that became cornerstone gay rights victories. Her scholarship on barriers to equality has won numerous awards, and Goldberg received the Willis L.M. Reese Prize for Excellence in Teaching in 2009. She is co-founder and codirector of the Center for Gender and Sexuality Law.
From The Legal Aid Society to the U.N. to the U.S. Department of State, Columbia Law School provides students with a broad range of externship opportunities.

Externships, like clinics, combine rigorous study of legal doctrine with hands-on experience, but they differ in some fundamental ways. Externship students usually serve as apprentices rather than as lawyers representing their own clients.

Externships allow students to work side-by-side with lawyers in a public interest organization, government agency, pro bono projects of law firms, or federal court. Leading practitioners—often Columbia Law School graduates—bring their expertise into the classroom as seminar leaders. In most instances, they also supervise the students’ work in the field.

Practicing attorneys, judges, and magistrates become mentors, assigning tasks and providing oversight and feedback. Students may be called upon to apply theory and analytical skills learned in the classroom to an oral argument, legal research and writing, client interviews, contract negotiations, using the media as an advocacy tool, and much more. Students also get a firsthand view of how law offices and lawyers operate—an experience that serves Columbia Law School graduates well, whether they work in private practice, government, or public interest.

Through externships, students broaden and deepen their knowledge in an area of practice and applied legal policy, enhance their understanding of substantive law, gain insight into future career paths, and develop skills essential to the practice of law.
Advancing Social and Environmental Justice in the New York Attorney General’s Office: Students work with attorneys in the AG’s Social Justice Division on pressing problems facing New York and the country: from systemic discrimination to climate change and nuclear waste to fraudulent practices by health insurance and tobacco companies to abuses by officers in nonprofit organizations. The division’s top lawyers teach students how the AG’s office can use its unique jurisdiction and law enforcement authority to advance justice.

Arts Law: Assisting staff attorneys at Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, students gain practical experience in intellectual property, entertainment, and nonprofit law. In the seminar, they examine the role of law and lawyers in the arts and entertainment world, and also practice client counseling and contract negotiation.

Bronx Defenders on Holistic Defense: A person of color living in the Bronx is more likely to be stopped and frisked by the police, arrested, evicted, be on welfare, or have their children removed from their homes than a resident of any other county in New York State. Students learn interdisciplinary problem-solving approaches at a defender’s office committed to addressing root problems and serving clients. Seminar content and fieldwork train students as future holistic lawyers offering access to services that meet clients’ legal and social support needs.

City and State Policy Advocacy: The seminar and fieldwork focus on the role of a lawyer in supporting the implementation of community-conceived policy initiatives at the city and state levels—from analyzing constraints on local authority to drafting policy proposals and advising on the political fight to win passage. Issues covered in the seminar and the fieldwork assignments include workers’ rights; immigrants’ rights and immigration reform; civil rights and racial justice issues; health care access; and more.

Community Defense: Students have their own misdemeanor cases and work on a major felony case at the

Federal Government in D.C. Externship
Students participating in this externship have the rare opportunity to spend a full semester in Washington, D.C., working at federal agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Justice. A complement to the Law School’s conventional course offerings in public law, the federal government externship provides students with valuable hands-on experience in the public sector prior to graduation. The externship includes an intensive seminar in ethics for government lawyers, a weekly seminar, supervised legal research, and a field placement—often alongside Columbia Law School graduates working in high-level positions in our nation’s capital.
Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem. Criminal law, legal ethics, and the attorney-client relationship come alive as students track the cases through the court system. In the seminar, they engage in topics related to criminal defense and trial preparation.

Constitutional Rights Enforcement: Students explore how constitutional rights are advanced in capital, criminal, and prison civil rights cases. As part of the unique public service practice groups within two commercial law firms—the Squire Patton Boggs Public Service Initiative and the Holland & Knight Community Services Team—students work on cases where the stakes are high. They perform a variety of litigation tasks related to clients challenging death sentences, life imprisonment, solitary confinement, or other constitutionally-based challenges to sentences or prison conditions. The seminar utilizes court decisions, legislative activity, related research, and case materials to explore how the enforcement of constitutional rights operates both in theory and in practice.

Copyright Dispute Resolution: Students learn to effectively resolve copyright disputes through a weekly seminar and fieldwork. Co-taught by two partners from Cravath, Swaine & Moore, the seminar addresses the policies and doctrines of copyright law and the basic elements of copyright litigation. It also includes in-class simulations, such as conducting a witness examination in a copyright case. Under the supervision of Cravath lawyers, the fieldwork component enables students to represent actual pro bono clients in real copyright disputes. Students evaluate cases; draft complaints; work up motions for a preliminary injunction; prepare written discovery; take and defend depositions; draft motions; participate in settlement negotiations; and draft licensing agreements.

Criminal Appeals: Working with senior lawyers from the Center for Appellate Advocacy, students draft a brief on behalf of an indigent defendant and often argue their cases before the state appellate court. In the seminar, they gain further insights into criminal law and hone skills in briefcraft and oral advocacy.

Domestic Violence Prosecution: Under the supervision of experienced assistant district attorneys, students take the lead in prosecuting misdemeanor domestic violence cases,
working on cases from their inception through trial. Students work in the new Family Justice Center, a unique facility where the efforts of civil service providers working with domestic violence victims are coordinated with those of law enforcement officials. In the seminar, students prepare for field experience and explore topics related to domestic violence prosecution.

**Federal Appellate Court:** Working in the chambers of a U.S. Second Circuit judge provides students with a behind-the-scenes look at judicial and adversarial processes. As they help prepare oral arguments and written opinions, students apply their skills in legal research, analysis, and writing. Second Circuit judges lead the seminars, which include discussions with trial judges and experienced appellate attorneys. A moot court argument before three Court of Appeals judges is a highlight of the semester.

**Federal Prosecution:** Students assist experienced prosecutors as they investigate and prosecute federal criminal cases, including those involving narcotics, fraud, child exploitation, public corruption, terrorism, and violent crimes. Placements are in a U.S. Attorney’s Office for either the Southern or Eastern District of New York, and senior prosecutors lead the seminars, which often involve role-playing exercises.

**Immigration Defense:** Working with attorneys providing direct representation to immigrants facing deportation, students gain in-depth exposure to U.S. immigration laws and policies. The seminar is taught by some of the most respected immigration lawyers in New York, and the field placement is with those attorneys or another senior attorney at The Legal Aid Society’s Immigration Law Unit.

**Pro Bono Practice and Design:** Students are engaged in the critical role of pro bono service in the legal profession and its impact on broader societal issues, such as access to equal justice. Working with both public interest and corporate lawyers at an NGO, students examine the often competing goals of the various constituencies, and the need to mediate them if pro bono programs are to succeed.

**Representing New York City—The New York City Law Department:** Students are placed in a division of the Law Department. As they work with city attorneys and attend meetings, legislative hearings, depositions, and trials, they gain a deep understanding of the role of government lawyers and the legal and ethical issues they face every day. In the seminar, taught by two senior city attorneys, students complete a counseling memorandum on a policy matter and present their recommendations to the class.
**Student-Initiated Externships:** Students who enroll in the Advocacy in Theory and Practice seminar gain expertise in a range of lawyering skills, including oral advocacy, legal writing and drafting, legal research, negotiation, mediation, working collaboratively, client communication, and case theory and planning. With approval from the faculty member and the director of pro bono programs, students can also earn additional credit for an externship which they initiate, enabling students to explore areas of law that are of particular interest to them.

**Undocumented and Unaccompanied Immigrant Youth:** This externship provides an opportunity to learn about immigration and family law and practice through the lens of child advocacy. Students work through the interplay between the common law and the federal regulatory systems by taking a seminar and doing closely related fieldwork in which they represent unaccompanied youth in both federal and state courts. Unaccompanied immigrant youth are children under the age of 18 who have been apprehended at the U.S. border without traditional caregivers. Following their detention at federal facilities, they are released to sponsors and placed in removal proceedings in immigration court. Working under the supervision of lawyers, externs provide legal services to these children. The seminar explores the intersection of immigration law, criminal law, and family law; the ethical challenges of representing unaccompanied minors; and the U.S. government’s immigration policies and their impact on communities.

**United Nations:** Through placements at the U.N. or U.N.-related offices, students are immersed in the law and practice of the U.N and the processes of making and implementing institutional law at this world organization. Adjunct professors who held diverse senior legal positions at the U.N. lead the seminar, which examines the interaction between U.N. governing documents and U.N. practice. The seminar provides a focused approach, beyond what is provided in a basic public international law course, to help students fully comprehend the mix of law and policy that U.N. law encapsulates.
Through required pro bono work, students enrich their legal education, gain practical experience, and learn the rewards of public service. Students choose from hundreds of opportunities and also design projects tailored to their interests. Students may serve as advocates in family court for domestic violence victims, staff legal clinics at a local homeless shelter, or work with leading law firms that have strong pro bono programs. For example, students work with attorneys from Davis Polk & Wardwell on complex asylum cases and team up with attorneys from Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy to represent low-income taxpayers in IRS disputes.

Spring Break Caravans combine travel and public service. Recent caravans have taken students to Texas to assist lawyers working on capital punishment cases, to Miami to work on immigration issues, and to Native American communities to help protect land rights. Last year, among the international caravans organized, were trips to Jordan, South Africa, and Myanmar. In Jordan, students learned how to interview victims of torture before conducting client intake sessions under the supervision of attorneys from the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project. A team of students sent to the rural Transkei region of South Africa worked with lawyers from the Legal Resources Centre to document the conditions of local schools and make recommendations on potential litigation. And in Yangon, Myanmar, students worked with attorneys from Justice for All, a civil society group committed to the advancement of human rights and the rule of law.

“Partnering with local human rights groups around the world is the perfect way to combine students’ interests with local needs and opportunities,” says Douglas Cantwell ’15. “Caravans allow organizations to tackle projects that might otherwise tax their resources and give students a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”
OTHER EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Summer Programs
Columbia Law School’s summer public interest law program enables students to gain valuable experience as they provide much-needed legal assistance to a wide range of nonprofit organizations and government agencies in the United States and abroad.

Through the Human Rights Internship Program, Columbia students have spent summers helping to establish legal services systems in Africa and developing anti-discrimination law in Hungary. Columbia Arts Law Internships support opportunities to work in the legal departments of organizations such as Channel 13, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and National Public Radio. Special fellowships support summer public interest work in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan.

Moot Court Program
Moot courts simulate all aspects of an appellate or trial litigation. Students conduct research, file briefs, and argue their cases before a distinguished panel of judges. Our students regularly capture top honors at premier national and international competitions. Opportunities include:

The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program
1L Foundation Moot Court
American Intellectual Property Law Association Moot Court
Environmental Law Moot Court
Frederick Douglass Moot Court
Harlan Fiske Stone Moot Court
Latino/a Law Students Association Moot Court
Native American Law Students Association Moot Court

International Competitions
European Law Moot Court
Jessup International Law Moot Court
Vienna International Arbitration Moot Court (Vis)

Student Journals
Columbia Law School is home to 14 law journals. Many are the leading scholarly publications in their fields. Working on a journal exposes students to cutting-edge research and further hones legal research, writing, and analytical skills—qualities highly valued by employers and essential to the successful practice of law.

Columbia Business Law Review
Columbia Human Rights Law Review
Columbia Journal of Asian Law
Columbia Journal of Environmental Law
Columbia Journal of European Law
Columbia Journal of Gender and Law
The Columbia Journal of Law & Social Problems
Columbia Journal of Law & the Arts
Columbia Journal of Race & Law
Columbia Journal of Tax Law
Columbia Journal of Transnational Law
Columbia Law Review
Columbia Science and Technology Law Review
The American Review of International Arbitration

In the final round of arguments for the Harlan Fiske Stone Moot Court, students argue before a distinguished panel of judges. The Law School is often honored to host a U.S. Supreme Court justice as a presiding judge.
For More Information
To learn more about admissions and current course offerings at Columbia Law School:
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