



Clinical Law  
Newsletter

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# Clinic Connections

## Real Clients, Real Cases, Real News

### Immigrant Rights Clinic offers training for Volunteer Interpreters

In the past year, the clinical program at the University of Baltimore School of Law has trained more than 20 law students and community members to serve as volunteer interpreters. Sabrina Balgamwalla, teaching fellow for the Immigrant Rights Clinic, led the most recent training this February, focusing on the role of interpreter, applicable ethical rules, best practices for facilitating communication and secondary trauma and self-care.

The training is intended to not only prepare vol-

unteers for their work with clinic clients, but also to promote awareness of the challenges faced by limited- and non-English proficient clients seeking legal assistance. Around 9% of Baltimore residents speak a language other than English at home, and language access is an issue of growing importance for lawyers and legal service providers.

Volunteers currently provide clinic interpretation and translation assistance in 10 languages, and have assisted clients with such matters as immigration removal defense, child

custody, and employment law. The clinic plans to hold the next interpreter training session in September 2013. For more information,



please contact Sabrina at [sbalgamwalla@ubalt.edu](mailto:sbalgamwalla@ubalt.edu).

### Community Development Clinic establishes 'Baltimore Communities Grant'

Each year, the student group UB Students for Public Interest Law (UBSPI) raise money to provide \$4,000 grants to support first and second year law students who take non-paying summer public interest law positions in nonprofit organizations and government. This year, the Community Development Clinic

created and raised funds for a new designated grant called the Baltimore Communities Grant. The grant will support one student working directly in or with one or more marginalized or underrepresented population or geographic communities in the city of Baltimore. The internship does not have to be

with a legal organization, but the work must be related to public interest law. Thanks to the generous contributions of 8 UB Law faculty and administrators, as well as a couple of wonderful alumni, the grant has been established for 2013! For a list of donors, please see page 5.

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**News Flash:**

**The Civil Advocacy Clinic is the recipient of \$60,000 in cy pres funds resulting from a class action settlement approved by United States District Court Judge Paul Grimm. We are grateful to Judge Grimm and to Peter Holland, whose law firm brought the class action case, for considering the CAC a worthy recipient of these funds, which will be used to assist Maryland consumers.**

**Civil Advocacy Clinic**

Before enrolling in the Civil Advocacy Clinic, I reached out to other attorneys with a clinical experience, and they told me that it would be one of the most rewarding and memorable experiences in my law school career.

They were right.

It was the first time I was able to manage a case from start to finish. This was in stark contrast to other practical experiences where I was assigned bits and pieces of a larger project. The Clinic pro-

vided all of the things that my prior experiences had lacked: personal one-on-ones with clients, a command over the strategy and execution, and the motivation in knowing that I would own all of my work in front of a judge. It was the first time I really felt independent and in control of the lawyering process.

The Clinic gave me this sense of independence without a feeling of abandonment. Weekly meetings provided valuable feedback and allowed me to learn from my fellow

clinic members and supervisors in a comfortable environment.

I have no doubt that my experience in the Clinic has given me the tools to be a better lawyer. Not only did I improve the technical aspects of lawyering, such as research and writing, but I was exposed to the more personal side of advocacy. I saw firsthand how the law impacted clients and how to approach counseling with sensitivity while being honest and realistic. It is a skill that you cannot learn from a textbook. —

Ryan Stoker, 3L

**Community Development Clinic**

Between June 2012 and March 2013 The Community Development Clinic spoke with nearly 50 new community and grassroots groups and collectives, nonprofit organizations, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. The CDC received more than 30 completed applications for services and from a wide array of groups seeking services, and was able to accept a significant number of new clients while continuing to work with many existing clients. Whether they are providing vital services to underserved populations in Maryland, representing the interests of their neighborhoods, organizing for new ways to address injustice or engage in responsible and coop-

erative commerce, or building the dreams into viable businesses that contribute to their neighborhood and local economies, CDC clients are making critical differences across Baltimore and Maryland!

Each semester, the Community Development Clinic student attorneys present community education workshops for free to the public on a number of community development legal topics.

In Fall 2012, as part of a partnership between the CDC and the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) at UB's Merrick School of Business, student attorneys presented workshops on choosing the right organizational entity for new

small businesses, the federal 501(c)(3) tax exemption application process, and the laws governing the formation of worker-owned cooperatives in Maryland. The small business choice of form presentation was made to local community entrepreneurs who are running or planning their small businesses, and nearly 50 individuals attended the worker-owned cooperatives presentation! The presentations were part of CEI's Global Entrepreneurship Week.



**CDC Student Attorneys, Anna Watson and James Clark, present on Worker Co-ops.**

## Immigrant Rights Clinic

### The Immigrant Rights Clinic and Baltimore's Expanding Immigrant Community

Baltimore has established a reputation for welcoming immigrants, and has been experiencing a rise in its immigrant population—with immigrants arriving from all corners of the world and needing help navigating complicated immigration processes once here. The UB Immigrant Rights Clinic has been responding with a varied docket of cases, and in 2012-2013 we have been representing more than two dozen clients directly, while also working on several policy projects to extend the impact of the clinic's work.

In Fall 2012, our ten students:

- Won asylum for a severely traumatized young woman from Rwanda. She now has her work permit and is enrolled in classes to complete her interrupted education.
- Won asylum for a man from Cameroon who was persecuted by police in his home country. He had been living in extreme isolation in Baltimore because he so feared encounters with the police, even here.

- Won asylum for a woman from Cameroon who had been labeled an opposition member and persecuted for it.
- Won an emergency custody case for the mother of a teenage boy whose father had inflicted terrible violence on them both, paving the way for him to seek lawful permanent residence in the U.S.
- Began the family law case for another family, where the child had been sexually abused by other relatives.
- Filed an application for a woman who had survived domestic violence in her marriage.

The range of cases we are working on this spring reflects the complexity of immigration law, and we are teaching with a close eye on how immigration reform could affect all of our clients—and recognizing how our cases show us the gaps and needs existing under our present system.

This concern for systemic issues of immigrant rights has led us into exciting policy and community work. In the Fall, students prepared a policy brief at the request of the Public Justice Center, analyzing the problem of wage theft

in Maryland—the non-payment of some or all of a worker's earned wages. The report was submitted in support of a wage lien bill introduced in the 2013 Maryland legislative session, and clinic students helped prepare the testimony in support of the bill.

Spring Clinic students are also doing a legislative project in support of amending Maryland's Theft Statute, in ways that will help low-level offenders generally, but will especially affect even long-term lawfully resident immigrants who could be—as the law currently stands—deported for modest shoplifting convictions. Another group of students is developing community education materials to help youth apply for temporary immigration status made available in 2012 to "DREAMers"—immigrant youth who arrived as children, who enrolled in or finished high school and who have been integrated into our communities for five years or more.

**“The range of cases we are working on this spring reflects the complexity of immigration law, and we are teaching with a close eye on how immigration reform could affect all of our clients—and recognizing how our cases show us the gaps and needs existing under our present system.”**

**— Prof. Elizabeth Keyes, Immigrant Rights Clinic**



**Civil Advocacy Clinic Student Attorney, Michael Bayron.**

“Even in our second semester of clinic we are both still learning how to navigate the line between educating and counseling mediation participants. An even more significant challenge for us was in understanding the impact that receiving public benefits can have on a low-income parent’s needs or ability to make decisions during the mediation process.”

— Kate Anderson (3L) and Jessica Emerson (3L)

### Mediation Clinic for Families

Mediation Clinic for Families II students Kate Anderson (3L) and Jessica Emerson (3L) share their Clinic experiences :

We wanted to participate in the Family Mediation Clinic because the idea of using mediation to help low-income families resolve child custody and access disputes really appealed to us. One of the unique aspects of the Mediation Clinic for Families is that student attorneys are exposed to a wide variety of situations and roles within the mediation process. We were given the opportunity to take on clients for the limited purpose of representing them during court-ordered mediation sessions, and also had the chance to act as mediators in child access and visitation cases without attorneys in the room. Though we started our clinic experience having already completed mediation training and understood, at least in theory, what our roles as attorneys would look like, there were still several parts of our clinic experience that surprised us and impacted our decision to continue as Clinic II students this spring.

Our first major challenge as Clinic students was navigating the nuances between our roles as attorney during limited representations and as mediator during our co-

mediation sessions. Having taken UB’s mediation skills course prior to beginning clinic, we knew that the question of whether or not attorneys make good mediators had been going on almost as long as mediation has been in use, but learning how to navigate these very different roles gave us personal insight into this debate. As law students, we spend three (or more) years learning how to advocate for our clients, to analyze each side of an argument for its merits and weaknesses, to counsel clients on their options and how to negotiate for the best possible outcome. As student attorneys these tools came in handy as we worked to assist our clients during the mediation process, but as mediators we had to fight many of these instincts in order to maintain neutrality and allow the participants to make their own decisions about what worked best for their families. Even in our second semester of clinic we are both still learning how to navigate the line between educating and counseling mediation participants.

An even more significant challenge for us was in understanding the impact that receiving public benefits can have on a low-income parent’s needs or ability to make decisions

during the mediation process. For example, if a parent needs a court order for sole physical custody in order to qualify for public housing large enough to accommodate a family, then agreeing to joint custody isn’t an option for them, and, as a result, the other parent must be willing to give up a large amount of parenting time to ensure that their children have a roof over their heads. This level of government intrusion on family life and the complexity of the system have made it difficult for us both as student attorneys and mediators to educate participants on what they can and cannot agree to in mediation.

— Kate Anderson (3L) and Jessica Emerson (3L)



**CDC Student Attorneys Eric Bielitz and Jacob White discuss a case.**

## Clinic Faculty News

- **Michele Gilman** has published two law review articles: [The Class Differential in Privacy Law](#), 77 *Brooklyn L. Rev.* 1389 (2012) and [The Poverty Defense](#), 47 *Univ. of Richmond L. Rev.* 495 (2013)
- **Leigh Goodmark** was quoted in the Time Magazine article, "What's Wrong with the Violence Against Women Act?."
- **Mary Jo Livingston** was invited to teach DNA technology to Thai defense lawyers at a seminar in Bangkok, Thailand in February by the Transnational Crime Affair Section of the Department of State, the U.S. Embassy Bangkok, and the Lawyers' Council of Thailand.
- **Leigh Goodmark** was quoted in *The Daily Record* article, "Battered Wife Wants Contact but CSA Upholds Judge's Ruling."
- Many thanks to the founding donors for the Baltimore Communities Grant: **Professor Sabrina Balgamwalla**, **Jill Bussey '04** (Community Development Clinic alum), **Nadia Firozvi '05** (Civil Advocacy Clinic alum), **Professor Michele Gilman**, **Hope Keller** (UB Law Communication Director), **Professor Parag Khandhar**, **Professor Jaime Lee**, **Professor Audrey McFarlane**, **Professor Odeana Neal**, **Assistant Dean Vicki Schultz**
- **Leigh Goodmark** received the Judge Robert M. Bell Leadership in Public Interest Award from UB SPI.

## Spotlight on Clinic Staff

Deborah Thompson came to UB Law in 2006 working as a Program Coordinator with the Stephen L. Snyder Center for Litigation Skills. She worked hands on with student fellows, coordinated the law school's Litigation Week and was also Program Manager with the Baltimore Scholars Program.

She transitioned to the Clinics in 2009, working with Professors Stephen Harris and Michele Nethercott to start the Innocence Project Clinic (IPC). The IPC seeks to identify individuals who have been convicted in Maryland state courts of crimes they did not com-

mit and provide them with assistance in the investigation of their claims. In addition to supporting the IPC, Deborah also supports the Mediation Clinic for Families and other faculty.

Deborah says the part of her job she likes the most is working closely with the students. She also enjoys reading court transcripts from cases in the IPC. Since the Clinic's inception, three (3) IPC clients have been exonerated through the hard work of Clinic faculty, staff and students.

She's excited about the upcoming move into the new law school building

where the law school departments can work together in a brighter building and better environment.



Outside of work, Deborah is Nana to two grandsons and one granddaughter. She enjoys traveling, attending handbag shows and spending time with her mom, children and grandchildren.

## Clinical Law Faculty

- [Leigh Goodmark](#), Director
- [Sabrina Balgamwalla](#), Immigrant Rights
- [Danielle Cover](#), Family Law
- [Michele Gilman](#), Civil Advocacy
- [Daniel Hatcher](#), Civil Advocacy
- [Elizabeth Keyes](#), Immigrant Rights
- [Parag Khandhar](#) Community Development
- [Jennifer Kim](#), Family Law
- [Jaime Lee](#), Community Development
- [Cheri Levin](#), Writing Doctor
- Mary Jo Livingston, Criminal Practice
- [Kathryn Loncarich](#), Civil Advocacy
- [Jane Murphy](#), Mediation for Families
- [Michele Nethercott](#), Innocence Project
- [Lydia Nussbaum](#), Mediation for Families
- Linda Penn, Disability Law
- [Robert Rubinson](#), Mediation for Families
- [Daniel Shemer](#), Criminal Practice
- [Donald Stone](#), Disability Law

## Clinical Law Staff

- [Terry Berk](#), Immigrant Rights
- [Laura Garcia](#), Clinic Administrator
- [Melanie Hanson](#), Community Development
- [Brittmy Martinez](#), Family Law
- [Rosalind Williams](#), Civil Advocacy
- [Deborah Thompson](#), Innocence Project and Mediation Clinic for Families

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## Clinic Connections.

Real Clients,  
Real Cases,  
Real News



Chief Judge Robert M. Bell addresses the Spring 2013 Clinical Law Program student attorneys at the Swearing In Ceremony on January 15, 2013.

### Upcoming Events

- The Sixth Annual Feminist Legal Theory Conference will be held on March 7- 8, 2013.
- Summer/Fall 2013 Open House Information Sessions on Thursday, March 14, 2013 at 12:00pm and 5:30pm in the Moot Court Room.
- Applications for Summer/Fall 2013 semesters will be available March 4, 2013.
- Deadline for Summer/Fall 2013 Law Clinic Applications is Tuesday, March 26, 2013
- Results of lottery for Summer/Fall 2013 will be posted on March 28, 2013.

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