



**Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law
Annual Report 2015-2016**

CONTENTS

About Us

- 2 Mission Statement
- 3 Message from the Dean
- 4 Message from the Director
- 5 Where We Achieve Impact

Core Programs

- 6-7 Anti-Torture Initiative
- 8-9 Human Rights Education
- 10 Events & Speaker Series
- 11-12 Human Rights & Business
- 13-15 Impact Litigation

Student Engagement

- 16 Student Impact
- 17 Fellowships & Advisory Board
- 18 *The Human Rights Brief*

Special Events

- 19-20 25th Anniversary Celebration

Faculty & Staff

- 21 Affiliated Faculty & Staff

Looking Ahead

- 22 Upcoming Events & Contact





Our Mission

American University Washington College of Law established the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law as part of its long-standing commitment to international human rights and the rule of law. For over 25 years, the Center has worked with students, faculty and the international legal community to provide scholarship and support for human rights initiatives around the world. The Center has created opportunities for students, practitioners and activists through trainings, outreach, workshops, conferences, research, and publications. Whether characterized as a part of teaching or scholarship, each Center program promotes the value of service, thereby grounding the Center as a core resource to civil society and a bridge between academia and activists.

At A Glance

- • • • • **676**
STUDENTS BENEFITED FROM
CENTER PROGRAMS IN 2015-2016
- • • • • **\$942,549**
GRANTS AWARDED FOR
CENTER-LED INITIATIVES
- • • • • **50**
CENTER SPONSORED EVENTS
& ACTIVITIES IN 2015-2016
- • • • • **+125**
COLLABORATIONS WITH
INTERNAL & EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Message from Dean Claudio Grossman

It is my pleasure to introduce this Annual Report of American University Washington College of Law's (AUWCL) Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law (Center), which marked its 25th anniversary this academic year.

Since its founding, the Center has worked with students, faculty and the domestic and international legal communities to serve as a clearinghouse and provide support for human rights initiatives worldwide. The Center's initiatives open up valuable opportunities for students, academics, practitioners and advocates through unique programs, litigation, advocacy, training, outreach, workshops, conferences, research, scholarship, and more.



Student leaders on the Center's Student Advisory Board receive specialized guidance while applying their legal education and innovative skills to help address real-world challenges. The Center's student-run *Human Rights Brief* is a leading global online resource for human rights news, analysis and resources. Through extensive engagement on key and cutting-edge areas of the law, the Center has emerged as a vital resource for interested parties worldwide, as well as a bridge between academia and advocates.

I also take this opportunity to welcome Dean Camille Nelson to WCL. I am certain that her knowledge, experience and vision will further strengthen the Center's role as the hub where WCL and the world come together to reinforce human rights standards.

Claudio Grossman, Dean

Message from Director Macarena Sáez

This was an exciting year for the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law. The projects and activities described in this report reflect our deepest commitment to human rights education and the strengthening of international human rights and humanitarian law around the world.

We worked very hard to ensure that our students had plenty of opportunities to learn about human rights and humanitarian law while engaging, at the same time, with the world community. I want to highlight a few things: WCL students' work on pressing issues such as freedom from torture, sex workers' rights, land use, due process, independence of the judiciary, human rights standards in business, drug addictions and disability rights, and LGBTI rights. Their work aimed at strengthening human rights standards in countries as diverse as Egypt, Peru, Cambodia, and Colombia. We celebrated the Center's 25th anniversary bringing human rights awareness to high school students; reflecting on impact litigation, human rights education and the prevention of torture; and connecting our students with WCL alumni working on human rights and humanitarian law. The student-run *Human Rights Brief* launched its new internet platform and published high-quality articles from practitioners, faculty and students.

I joined the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in September 2015. It has been a wonderful experience working with a team of professionals and students so committed to human rights. As I reflect on our work for 2015-2016 I feel proud of the WCL community. This is a place where students, faculty, staff, alumni and the world come together with a common goal: to ensure that human rights standards are respected and humanitarian law is enforced. I look forward to another academic year full of initiatives and contributions.

Macarena Sáez, Director



Our Global Reach



Social Media Engagement



3,693

LIKES

3,158

POSTS



1,526

FOLLOWERS

1,522

TWEETS



67

PHOTOS

105

FOLLOWERS



1,731

SUBSCRIBERS

12,000

SUBMISSIONS

Anti-Torture Initiative

Founded in 2011, the Anti-Torture Initiative (ATI) was created to expand the reach and practical implementation of the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture (SRT), Professor Juan E. Méndez. The ATI focuses attention on follow-up, implementation, and accountability for the SRT's country-specific and thematic recommendations. The ATI works closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as with civil society organizations and government representatives in selected countries to engage with the SRT in follow-up activities, and to promote public dialogue on the issue of torture.



ATI At A Glance

.....

\$200,000

GRANTS AWARDED FOR
ATI PROJECTS

.....

+20

ATI SPONSORED EVENTS
& ACTIVITIES

.....

3

PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS

.....

3 EXPERT CONSULTATIONS

WITH **80** EXPERTS

FROM **+25** COUNTRIES

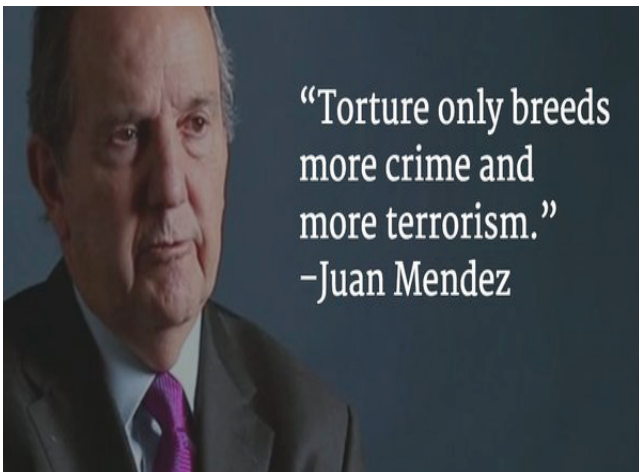
Anti-Torture Initiative

Project Highlights



The ATI organized a follow-up visit to the Republic of Ghana, during which ATI staff conducted visits with high-level government officials, held a civil society round-table, met with victims, and visited places of deprivation of liberty (including prisons, a psychiatric hospital, and a prayer camp). A follow-up report was produced by the ATI and presented by the SRT at the Human Rights Council in Geneva in March 2016.

The ATI held expert consultations designed to inform the drafting of the SRT's thematic reports on the topics of gender perspectives on torture and extraterritoriality and torture, and most recently on interrogations, investigations, and police custody practices. Together, these consultations have brought together more than 80 experts from 25+ countries for a series of intensive discussions on the subject matter of the reports.



The ATI contributed to the development of amicus briefs, expert testimony, and expert declarations by the SRT before national courts including Canada and the US, and international fora, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The project also coordinated preparations for the publication of volumes on the topics of Children Deprived of Liberty and Gender Perspectives on Torture.

2015 International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Student Writing Competition

The Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law, the American Society of International Law's Lieber Society, and the American Red Cross International Humanitarian Law team launched the Fifth Annual International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Student Writing Competition.

Each year, this competition is held as part of a joint effort to promote and enhance scholarship in international humanitarian law among students. The IHL Student Writing Competition promotes and supports student interest and deepening scholarship in IHL by providing students with a tangible way to become more directly involved in the global discourse around IHL.

The theme of the 2015 Competition was "The Intersection of International Humanitarian Law and Gender." Papers focused on ways in which IHL intersects with gender issues, such as the role of women as combatants, the gendered use of sexual violence during times of armed conflict, the impact of gender stereotyping on international humanitarian law, etc.



American
Red Cross



Human Rights Education

About

The Program on Human Rights Education is dedicated to promoting understanding of human rights through teaching and academic study beyond the law school curriculum. The program encompasses several initiatives including the International Humanitarian Law Student Writing Competition, the Human Rights Film Series, and a robust series of events. Students also have the opportunity to volunteer as student note-takers and to participate in networking events and community service activities.

2015 1st Place Winner

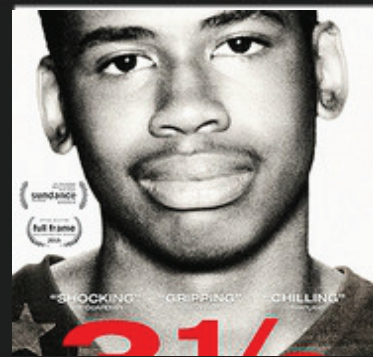


*Griffin Ferry,
J.D. Candidate, University of
Minnesota Law School*

Human Rights Film Series

The Human Rights Film Series, first organized in 2000 and co-sponsored with the American University Center for Media and Social Impact (CMSi), showcases the power of film to educate and advocate about human rights. Four exceptional documentary films that exhibit excellence in filmmaking and explore a broad spectrum of human rights issues were screened this past fall, focusing on the theme "Race and Justice in America". The 2015 Series featured "Daisy and Max", "120 Days", "3 1/2 Minutes, Ten Bullets", and "Out in the Night".

The film series annually receives contributions from American University's Washington College of Law, School of Communication, and College of Arts and Sciences. Following each screening, filmmakers and human rights advocates discussed the film and its issues with the audience. Prominent filmmakers included award-winning directors Jennifer Maytorena Taylor of "Daisy & Max", and Ted Roach of "120 days".



Human Rights Education

Every year, the Center hosts a number of expert panel discussions, conferences, presentations by renowned human rights defenders, lunchtime discussions on human rights-related issues, workshops, seminars and more. This past year, the Center hosted over 30 events on issues such as LGBTI rights, reproductive rights in Mexico, the state of political prisoners in Venezuela, the human rights implications of the Puerto Rican debt crisis, and the ways in which access to justice can be integrated into the development agenda.

Speaker Series

Disability & Human Rights Speaker Series: The series served as a unique opportunity to hear from highly successful practitioners in disability rights policy. The three session series featured Professor Robert Dinerstein, Judith E. Heumann, Special Advisor for International Disability Rights for the U.S. Department of State, and Eric Rosenthal, founder and executive director of Disability Rights International.

Human Rights & Humanitarian Law 101 Series: The series is designed to educate and engage students about basic issues in human rights and international humanitarian law, while providing an opportunity to network with students who have similar interests in human rights. Speakers included Faculty Director, Professor Macarena Sáez, and Professor Robert Goldman.

Coffee Hour Series: The Center's Student Advisory Board organized a series of four informal coffee hour conversations in conjunction with different student organizations. These coffee hours attract many WCL students who participate in thoughtful, robust conversations on a variety of human rights-related topics including, Islamophobia in south-Asian communities and economic discrimination against the LGBTI community.

 <p>Public Debt, Fiscal Policy & Human Rights in Puerto Rico</p> <p>Tuesday, April 5th 12:00pm-1:30pm</p> <p>With a daily economy and a public debt that exceeds \$70 billion, Puerto Rico is now the second most unequal territory in Latin America and the 10th most unequal territory in the world. The fiscal policies adopted with the objective of debt repayment have been regressive and have resulted in the concentration of inequality and poverty in the island. These resources have had a greater impact on the lives of the most vulnerable populations and their enjoyment of human rights.</p> <p>On April 4th, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights will hold a hearing on the Public Debt, Fiscal Policy and Poverty in Puerto Rico. Over 40 organizations will be represented at the hearing to denounce the situation and demand action from Congress and the US government to address the economic crisis with respect to the human rights of Puerto Ricans. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law for a panel discussion on the proposed next steps following the hearing.</p> <p>Free & open to the public</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law 1107F, Warren Building</p>	<p>ISO 18788: The New Standard for Responsible Security Operations</p> <p>Friday, November 20th 10:30am-12:00pm</p> <p>In the wake of the global growth of the private security industry, as well as the growing importance of the human rights responsibilities of businesses, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) created ISO 18788 Management System for Private Security Operations, designed to be the first standard ISO standard to address human rights risks related to the provision and use of private security services. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law to learn more about the standard, its incorporation into U.S. government procurement policy, and how to implement it and prepare for certification.</p> <p>Hosts include: Dr. Rebecca DeWitt-Schmidt, Director of the Human Rights in Business Program, American University Washington College of Law Dr. Marc Siegel, Commissioner of the ADR (H) Global Standards Institute Christopher Meyer, COO USA NET, Director of Contemporary Contractor Standards and Compliance, Department of Defense Ms. Lisa Dufwick, Managing Partner for Radon Compliance, LLC</p> <p>Register for the Webinar attendee.aiswashington.com/1031882 8097182228935088362</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	<p>BOLIVAR TWILIGHT</p> <p>Wednesday, June 8th 12:30pm-2:00pm</p> <p>Join the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law for a special screening of "Bolivar Twilight" (2014), a fascinating documentary that gives a voice to small-scale gold miners in Colombia as they face marginalization and political pressure from government forces with the arrival of international mining corporations.</p> <p>Room Y401 Yuma Building *Lunch will be provided*</p> <p>Dr. Rebecca DeWitt-Schmidt, Director of the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law's Human Rights in Business Program, will present on the legacy of human rights abuses in the extractives sector, as well as the current efforts being made by the industry and other stakeholders to address these problems.</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	<p>Political Prisoners in Venezuela The Case of Leopoldo López & Daniel Ceballos</p> <p>Thursday, October 22nd 12:00-1:30pm</p> <p>Political prisoners in Venezuela have been subject to human rights violations, arbitrary detentions from their public offices and unfair judicial proceedings. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law to learn more about the cases of Leopoldo López and Daniel Ceballos, current political prisoners, who have been accused of terrorism, kidnapping, and other crimes. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law to learn more about the cases of Leopoldo López and Daniel Ceballos, current political prisoners, who have been accused of terrorism, kidnapping, and other crimes. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law to learn more about the cases of Leopoldo López and Daniel Ceballos, current political prisoners, who have been accused of terrorism, kidnapping, and other crimes.</p> <p>Room 103 American University Washington College of Law</p> <p>LIVE WEBCAST AVAILABLE SIMULTRANEOUS TRANSLATION WILL BE PROVIDED</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	 <p>Pursuit of Asylum: Understanding the Current Refugee Crisis in Law, Perception, and the Media</p> <p>Wednesday, October 7th 12:00-1:30pm</p> <p>What is the difference between a refugee and a migrant? What obligations do European states have toward refugees? Why is there more collective empathy for refugees of war than for economic migrants?</p> <p>To explore the answers to these questions and more, join the Center's Student Advisory Board for a conversation about the current global refugee crisis. Learn from experts as we discuss the causes of the crisis, applicable international law, and the role that media plays in affecting public perception.</p> <p>Room 401 Referrals will be provided!</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>
<p>ACCESSIBILITY UN €1.00</p> <p>BRAIL UN €1.40</p> <p>RESOURCES UN €0.55</p> <p>Disability & Human Rights Speaker Series</p> <p>Wednesday, October 21st 12:45-2:00pm</p> <p>6th Floor Int'l Student Lounge Lunch will be provided</p> <p>Featuring Judith E. Heumann, Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, U.S. Department of State</p> <p>Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law for a luncheon discussion with Judith E. Heumann, Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, U.S. Department of State. The discussion will focus on the importance of disability rights in the informal setting from one of the top U.S. officials in disability rights policy. Learn more about her work in the Department of State and hear about her work in providing disability rights U.S. foreign policy. Lunch will be provided.</p> <p>FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	<p>Cumbre Social</p> <p>Thursday, November 20th 10:30am-12:00pm</p> <p>Register for the Webinar attendee.aiswashington.com/1031882 8097182228935088362</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	<p>Access to Justice for Female Victims of Sexual Violence in Colombia</p> <p>Wednesday, April 6th 12:00pm-1:30pm</p> <p>The Constitutional Court of Colombia found that sexual violence is a crime against the dignity of the victim and that it is necessary to ensure the high levels of transparency and protection of these victims. The Working Group on Gender Violence of the UN Human Rights Council is currently conducting a study on the situation of women victims of sexual violence in Colombia. Join the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law for a panel discussion on the findings of this report and what the Colombian government is doing to address these issues.</p> <p>Room N101 Warren Building *Refreshments will be provided*</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	<p>Palestinian Human Rights: Protections & Accountability</p> <p>Wednesday, April 20th 12:00pm-1:30pm</p> <p>The ongoing human rights situation in the Palestinian Territories has given rise to a number of international human rights law initiatives. The Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law will host a panel discussion on the current situation in the Palestinian Territories. The panel will be moderated by Dr. Rebecca DeWitt-Schmidt, Director of the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law's Human Rights in Business Program. The panel will discuss the current situation in the Palestinian Territories and the role of the international community in addressing these issues.</p> <p>Room N101 Warren Building *Refreshments will be provided*</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>	 <p>Integrating Access to Justice, Rule of Law, and Legal Aid Services into the Development Agenda</p> <p>Monday, April 25th 9:30am-12:45pm</p> <p>Access to justice and the effectiveness of Rule of Law have emerged as central components of development agendas in the past several decades. As organizations seek to integrate these approaches into the development process, more major development actors have discussed the efficacy and ways to reinforce the contributions of legal aid programs into sustainable development.</p> <p>This convening, co-sponsored by the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law and Access to Justice, will bring together key academic, policy, and operational actors from the World Bank, the ADR Rule of Law Initiative, the U.S. Department of State, among others, who will offer their insights on the challenges of promoting the rule of law in international development, and how to integrate impact indicators and empirical findings into the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework.</p> <p>Free & open to the public Light breakfast will be served at 8:30am</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law Claudia Grossman Hall</p> <p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p>
<p>FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p> <p>CONTACT: Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20058 Tel: 202.274.4180 Fax: 202.274.0783 humanr@wcl.american.edu</p>	<p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20058 Tel: 202.274.4180 Fax: 202.274.0783 humanr@wcl.american.edu</p>	<p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20058 Tel: 202.274.4180 Fax: 202.274.0783 humanr@wcl.american.edu</p>	<p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20058 Tel: 202.274.4180 Fax: 202.274.0783 humanr@wcl.american.edu</p>	<p>FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: www.WCLCenterForHR.org</p> <p>American University Washington College of Law 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20058 Tel: 202.274.4180 Fax: 202.274.0783 humanr@wcl.american.edu</p>



Human Rights in Business Project

The Human Rights in Business Project (HRIBP) believes that business practices and human rights must be brought into alignment, and that business success depends on the active respect and promotion of human rights. The HRIBP advances human rights in businesses through applied and policy relevant research on key human rights and business issues, and support of practical initiatives focused on actively channeling business activities to positively impact human rights. The HRIBP works collaboratively with businesses and their stakeholders, providing a neutral convening space to identify common ground on which to improve governance and foster rights-respecting corporate cultures.

Project Highlights

Human Rights in Business Program

Certifying Responsible Private Security Companies: Assessing the Implementation of Transparency and Disclosure Provisions
David Sebstead

Purpose of the Paper

- The main purpose of the paper is to examine the extent to which PSCs certified to a national quality and risk management standard – PSC.1 – met four public facing transparency and accountability requirements

Key Findings

- Lack of consistency among PSCs
- Lack of consistency among certification bodies
- Need for increased transparency

Significance of the PSC.1 Standard

PSC.1 is significant because it has extensive human rights requirements. PSCs are required to comply with PSC.1 to provide security services overseas to the DOD & the DOS.

Key to Table
CB = Certification body
Scope = scope of the certification
RA = Human Rights risk assessment
GM = Grievance Mechanism procedure
PSC = Private Security Company

PSC Name	CB	Scope	RA	Statement	GM	Total Average
1. Academi	Interlock	0	Y	3	2	2
2. Aegis Defense Services Ltd.	MSS Global	3	Y	3	1	2.5
3. Britam Defence Ltd.	MSS Global	2	Y	3	2	2.5
4. Chenequa Patriot Group	Interlock	0	N	0	0	0
5. Control Risks Group Ltd.	MSS Global	0	Y	3	2	2
6. Edinburgh International	Interlock	1	Y	3	2	2.25
7. Hart	MSS Global	2	Y	2	1	2
8. Garda World Consulting Ltd.	MSS Global	3	Y	3	2	2.75
9. G4S Secure Solutions	Interlock	0	Y	2	0	1.25
10. Olive Group	Interlock	2	N	3	2	2.25
11. Reed International	MSS Global	0	Y	3	2	2
12. Sterling	MSS Global	3	N	0	1	1
13. Triple Canopy	Interlock	0	Y	3	2	2

A poster presentation of David Sebstead's (J.D. '17) article

The Center, through the HRIBP, continues to serve on the civil society pillar of the multi-stakeholder International Code of Conduct Association for private security providers.

The Center co-sponsored a half-day event on the legal liabilities climate change poses for companies. The event was held in conjunction with Climate Action 2016 and attracted over 100 participants.

Dean's Fellow David Sebstead, through the HRIBP, published an article, "Certifying Responsible Private Security Companies: Assessing the Implementation of Transparency and Disclosure Provisions". It examines the extent to which private security companies are meeting key requirements related to transparency and human rights. His article was welcomed by the Secretariat and Board of the International Code of Conduct Association as invaluable to their discussion of the Association's certification procedure.

Human Rights in Business

Land Use Impact Assessment in Cambodia and Vietnam

.....



About

This project's objective is to create a completely new replicable tool to successfully facilitate community-government-business stakeholder resolution of land-related disputes. The centerpiece of this approach is the new participatory Land Use Impact Assessment (LUIA) tool, which integrates existing national laws, human rights norms and evidence-based approaches in both Cambodia and Vietnam.

To accomplish this goal, the project partners are creating a multi-stakeholder, human rights-based approach to assessing land use impacts in communities in Cambodia and Vietnam and then will integrate the LUIA process into land governance and dispute resolution initiatives.

LUIA At A Glance

.....

\$742,549

TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED

.....

5 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
IN **3** COUNTRIES



Impact Litigation Project

"I feel thankful to be a part of this unique and exciting experiential learning opportunity. Working directly with clients and on cases in the human rights field has enriched my law school experience tremendously."

Maria Corina Muskus Toro, LLM '17

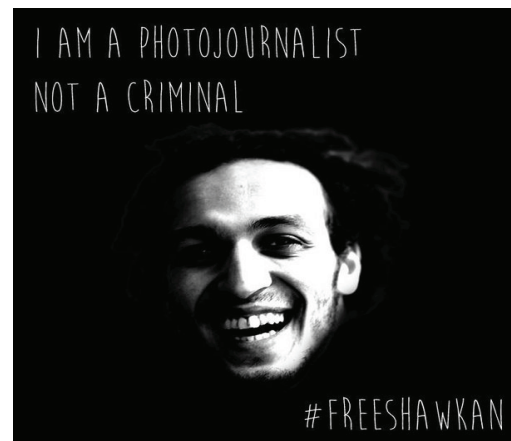
Project Highlights

The ILP team submitted an Urgent Action Request to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions seeking the release of an Egyptian photojournalist detained in Egypt since 2013.

The ILP submitted an Amicus Brief before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on behalf of plaintiffs in the case Luis Williams Pollo Rivera vs. República del Perú, and drafted a legal opinion requested by a Colombian organization on the intersection between drug addictions and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The team also provided assistance to the Rapporteurship on Immigration of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights on analysis and summary of decisions affecting immigration standards.

Professor Sáez and three WCL students traveled to Bogotá and Cartagena, Colombia, to meet with sex workers, the leaders of the first Latin American Sex Workers Union, and civil society organizations working with sex workers. The project aims to advance the regulation of autonomous sex work in Colombia.



The social media campaign seeking the release of Egyptian journalist, Mahmoud Abou Zeid

About the Impact Litigation Project

.....

The Impact Litigation Project (ILP) is an experiential education initiative that promotes and strengthens the rule of law and democracy around the world. In 2015-2016, the Project worked with 23 JD and LLM students on a variety of issues. The Project also submits and calls for the filing of *amicus* briefs in paradigmatic cases. To help raise awareness of pressing human rights issues, the Project attracts domestic and international media coverage. By collaborating with and strengthening a formal network of universities and non-governmental organizations, the Project helps defend and safeguard human rights.

The ILP offers writing opportunities for AUWCL law students who choose not to wait for graduation to start contributing to a better world. Students have the opportunity to collaborate on supervised cases with the potential to achieve broad and resounding impact on public policy and legislation. In addition to documenting human rights violations, these cases often promote government accountability, expand public education and awareness, and provide a foundation for future litigation.



Center director, Macarena Sáez, and Impact Litigation students meet with sex workers and union leaders in Cartagena, Colombia.

U.N. Committee Against Torture Project



*2015 UN CAT Project participants with Dean Claudio Grossman (center):
56th session of the United Nations Committee against Torture*

In the spring of 2016, the Center welcomed the United Nations Committee against Torture (UN CAT) Project into its core programming. Established in 2004 following Dean Grossman's election to the Committee, the Project includes a specialized seminar on the prohibition of torture under international law and a unique field component: experiencing the UN CAT's proceedings in Geneva, Switzerland. With the support of the Kovler Foundation, the UN CAT Project accepts 10 students each fall, who conduct extensive research, writing, and analysis under the supervision of Dean Grossman and Project Coordinator Jennifer de Laurentiis, on the prevention and prohibition of torture. Over 100 students and a dozen faculty have participated thus far, and Project alumni work around the country and the world, helping improve lives and building remarkable, principled careers in government, civil society, private practice, local and multinational organizations, academia, tribunals/courts, and starting/running their own NGOs.

How We Engage Our Students

33

*Human Rights
Brief Staffers*

26

*Student Volunteers
& Dean's Fellows*

5

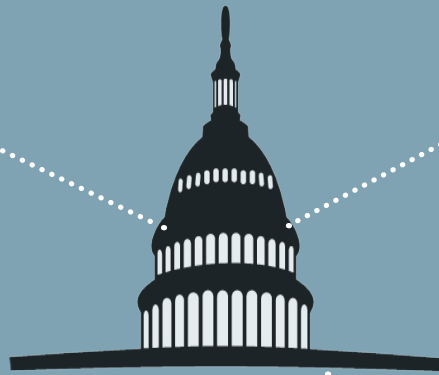
Student Fellows

7

*Student Advisory
Board Members*

549

*Students
Attending Center
Events*



The Center is dedicated to the continuing education and empowerment of its student body in the area of human rights. We offer many great ways for students to get involved, starting from year one. In addition to Dean's Fellowship opportunities with several of the Center's core programs, students can join the Student Advisory Board, get published in the world-renowned publication, *The Human Rights Brief*, or apply for one of the Center's several fellowship opportunities.



Student Engagement



2015-2016 Student Advisory Board (from l to r: Keisha Dufie, Noah O'Connor, Anupama Selvam, Mamie Aoughsten, Wilson Melbostad, Janie Williams, Blake Paradis)

Student Fellowships

The Disability & Human Rights Fellows Program, sponsored by the Open Society Foundations (OSF), brings attorneys from various parts of the world to WCL to engage in a specialized course of study focused on disability and human rights.

2015-2016 Fellows: Luisa Guzman, Laura Vargas

The Herman Schwartz Israel Human Rights Law Fellowship, jointly sponsored by the New Israel Fund, offers Israeli lawyers (both Palestinian and Jewish) a two year academic and professional experience and a one-year-paid placement in a human rights NGO in Israel.

2015-2016 Fellows: Uri Sabach, Souria Bishara

The Summer Human Rights Law Fellowship offers a position with the Vishnu Law Group in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to support the Land Use Impact Assessment (LUIA) Project and the Cambodian Environmental Code Project through legal research and writing, and strategy planning.

2015-2016 Fellow: Wilson Melbostad

Student Advisory Board

The Student Advisory Board (SAB), a group of seven highly qualified, creative students committed to human rights advocacy, provides students interested in and committed to human rights the opportunity to participate in the planning and implementation of Center programming, to learn tangible skills beyond the classroom for effective advocacy and activism, and to attend special SAB-only events and receptions.

Human Rights Brief

The Human Rights Brief, the student-run publication of the Center, provides continuous up-to-date content on cutting-edge legal issues for over 4,000 subscribers in 130 countries. The Brief has 17 senior staffers and 16 junior staffers.

Project Spotlight

In collaboration with the Office of Finance, the Human Rights Brief launched its newly redesigned website at a special reception marking the Center's 25th anniversary. This state of the art publication hosts a variety of new features while enjoying the same high quality content.



The Human Rights Brief is the flagship student-run publication at the Washington College of Law. The Human Rights Brief staff work closely with the Center for support, to brainstorm new ideas, and to help promote human rights events throughout the Washington College of Law community.

This relationship is unique at the Washington College of Law—no other publication has such strong institutional support while also maintaining student autonomy. This relationship allows the *Human Rights Brief* to push forward unique and timely content on global human rights issues.

In 2015 and 2016, with the help of the Center, we built a brand new state-of-the-art website, worked on the first publication of our special edition "Year-In-Review", highlighted our practitioners in the field, and championed the incredible work of our student staff of nearly fifty. A student-run publication this large would be impossible to maintain without the ongoing institutional support from the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law.

-- Whitney-Ann Mulhauser
(J.D. '16) &
Christopher Keeler (J.D. '16),
2015-2016 Editors-in-Chief



2015-2016 & 2016-2017 Editors-in-Chief
(l to r) Stefan Ducich, Whitney-Ann Mulhauser, Blake Paradis, Chris Keeler



25th Anniversary Celebration

On April 11-12, the Center celebrated its 25th anniversary by hosting a community engagement activity, a human rights networking event and a day-long conference, featuring panel discussions on the core issue areas of the Center. The networking event welcomed professionals from leading NGOs and government agencies from across Washington D.C. and the conference attracted renowned activists and experts in the human rights field. The luncheon keynote address was given by Ms. Kerry Kennedy, president of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.



Celebrating 25 Years

The Center began its 25th Anniversary with a community engagement activity with Thurgood Marshall Academy. The Center partnered with WCL alumna Alyssa Zamora (JD '14), a teacher at Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter School, to bring 17 high school students to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights hearings on April 7. They were joined by *Human Rights Brief* staffer, Noah O'Connor (JD '17), who delivered a presentation on the IACHR and the hearing they observed.

The Center also organized a networking event featuring human rights professionals, many of whom WCL alumni, from leading NGOs and agencies across Washington D.C. Students interested in exploring careers in human rights had the opportunity to speak with professionals currently working at the American Red Cross, Amnesty International USA, the U.S. Department of State, the Center for Victims of Torture, among others.

The Center concluded its anniversary celebration with a series of panel discussions on priority issue areas of the Center. Discussion panel topics included: (1) Enforcing International Standards in the Fight against Torture; (2) Business Challenges & Human Rights: The Case of Apple; (3) Making Human Rights Local: Promoting Human Rights in the U.S.; and (4) Advancing Human Rights Through Impact Litigation. The Founder's event culminated in a reception honoring the Center's former executive director, Hadar Harris, for her 13 years of service, and also celebrated the launch of the *Human Rights Brief's* new website.



Our Team

DIRECTOR

MACARENA SÁEZ

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

MELISSA C. DEL AGUILA

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

IMPACT LITIGATION PROJECT

UN CAT PROJECT

JENNIFER DE LAURENTIIS

ASSISTANT PROJECT DIRECTOR

ANTI-TORTURE INITIATIVE

ANDRA NICOLESCU

PROJECT DIRECTOR

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BUSINESS

REBECCA DEWINTER-SCHMITT

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

ANASTASSIA FAGAN

FACULTY CO-DIRECTORS

CLAUDIO GROSSMAN

ROBERT GOLDMAN

JUAN MENDEZ

DAVID HUNTER

DIANE ORENTILICHER

HERMAN SCHWARTZ

RICHARD WILSON

UPCOMING

Human Rights Welcome Orientation
August 17, 2016

Human Rights Brief Recruitment Event
September 1, 2016

**Center for Media and Social Impact
Story Movements Conference**
September 15, 2016

**Site Visit to U.S. Holocaust
Memorial Museum**
September 23, 2016

Human Rights and IHL 101
September, October 2016

Human Rights Reading Group
September-December 2016

Human Rights Coffee Hour Series
September, October,
November 2016

IHL Student Writing Competition
October 5, 2016

Human Rights Film Series
October 5, 12, 19, 26 2016

For more information about upcoming
events and programming, visit
www.WCLCenterforHR.org



Contact Us

Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law
American University Washington College of Law
4300 Nebraska Ave, NW
Washington D.C. 20016

Tel: 202-274-4180
Email: humlaw@wcl.american.edu
www.WCLCenterforHR.org