COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CLINIC

Working with nonprofits and social entrepreneurs to expand economic opportunity and to advance economic justice.
Following several workplace raids conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in North Carolina last fall, El Futuro contacted our Clinic for help. El Futuro, a Durham-based nonprofit that provides mental health services to immigrants, wanted to know what to do in case it was raided. Not an easy task, but Sam took it on and did an amazing job!

Sam educated herself on the law, and worked closely with the staff of El Futuro to understand the organization and its operations. Through this process of creative collaboration with our Immigrant Rights Clinic, Sam created comprehensive policy that allows El Futuro to comply with the law while still giving the highest priority to the interests of its patients in order to protect the healing community that El Futuro is working to nurture.

Sam handled this matter with tremendous care and the utmost professionalism. Her commitment to client service on this high stakes and complex matter was exemplary and this award is richly deserved.
ANNA V. ELLEMENT

THE OVER AND ABOVE AWARD

Anna was a student-attorney in the Clinic in Fall 2019, and an advanced student-attorney in Spring 2020. Her dedication, service and leadership over the course of this year has been extraordinary.

During her time in the Clinic, in addition to handling a full caseload of discrete transactional matters, she helped to facilitate two mergers. In each of these mergers, Anna worked for months with the Boards of our client organizations. She educated them on the legal processes involved, helped them develop their strategies, and counseled them in ways that let them overcome multiple obstacles.

And if that wasn’t enough, in response to the pandemic, Anna took the lead in coordinating a number of different projects involving other clinic students. This work helped numerous affordable housing non-profits, community development organizations, as well as small businesses, particularly those owned by women and people of color, to get the resources they need to keep operating during this crisis.

Anna was always the first to ask if there was more she could do, always the one thinking two steps ahead about what her clients might need, and always the one to create room for others to become engaged. Anna truly always went over and above.
The Children’s Law Clinic provides free legal advice, advocacy, and legal representation to low-income, at-risk children in cases involving special education, school discipline, and children’s disability benefits.
SAMANTHA SMITH (FALL)

Sam earns this recognition for her zealous advocacy of her clients. Sam represented a teenager suspended from school in both an evidentiary hearing and an appeal hearing. In each, she effectively pressed school officials to see the facts and the overall school suspension policy in a light favorable to her client. She likewise ably advocated for specialized technology for a student with disabilities, crossing a language barrier to provide a voice for the student’s mother.
Elsa Haag (Spring)

Elsa took on a child’s disability appeal at the start of the semester, requiring her to understand a new area of law, decipher complex medical and educational records, seek out witnesses and prepare statements for them, write an extensive brief, and prepare for a live hearing. In less than five weeks, Elsa not only learned how the law applied to her case, she came to understand the systemic issues that face children with disabilities and their families in our society.
The Civil Justice Clinic represents a unique partnership between Duke Law and Legal Aid of North Carolina in which students work on cases relating to housing, benefits, and protection from domestic violence, among others.
• The Civil Justice Clinic works to develop and hone students’ civil litigation skills in the context of working on actual cases taken in directly by the CJC and/or in association with the Durham or Raleigh offices of Legal Aid of North Carolina. Cases will focus on vindicating the rights of impoverished individuals or groups who cannot otherwise adequately find access to justice in the civil courts.

• Cases may include prosecuting substandard housing claims, defense of eviction claims, prosecuting unfair trade practice and debt collection claims, defending efforts by the State to revoke healthcare workers’ licensure, and a variety of other matters.
MONIQUE ELOI AND MARISSA CANTU

- Served 2 semesters in our standard and Advanced Clinic as 3rd year students.
- Fiercely litigated cases on behalf of our clients before the NC OAH and Durham County District Court.
- Equally excellent researchers investigating potential causes of action for McDougald Terrace residents, and researching standards for judicial review in challenging a Final Decision of the NC OAH.
The Environmental Law and Policy Clinic is training the next generation of leaders to solve environmental problems by providing access to justice in underserved communities.
Over the course of three semesters, Libba and Emma developed a petition to the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission on behalf of four clients, three of whom were youth.

The lengthy and rigorous petition included sections of both legal and scientific analysis and writing. The underlying rule was nationally unique in its approach and may serve as a model.

When it became evident the petition would not get a hearing this semester, the team was undaunted, helping their clients understand their options and choose a route forward.
This team, who remained with the case for three semesters, took extraordinary initiative in identifying avenues of research and crafting work that served their clients needs. They created multiple complex work products that take on the matter from a variety of approaches.

In addition to legal and scientific work, Cam and Dylan created an interactive StoryMap that used narrative, infographics, photos, interactive maps, and other tools to convey the story of the case to their client’s members and other members of the public.
The First Amendment Clinic provides students the opportunity to work directly with clients facing free expression concerns, including defamation, content-discrimination, and reporter’s privilege.
CRAIG JONES

• Successfully argued (for over an hour!) a motion to compel discovery in a federal defamation case that was granted in large part;

• Filed a brief in a Washington state appellate court in support of an independent journalist in a case concerning the interpretation of Washington’s Media Shield Law and Public Records Act;

• Filed a brief in the First Circuit Court of Appeals in support of a student activist challenging her school suspension for speaking out against sexual assault in her school’s community;

• Worked on a summary judgment brief in a separate and still-pending federal defamation action.

9/30/19 in Charleston, SC
• In addition to successfully handling other client and clinic matters, this dynamic duo put together a summary judgment brief that WON dismissal of a nearly $110.4 million federal defamation lawsuit on behalf of their client.

• Though both had prepared to argue summary judgment motions in court, hearings were cancelled due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, their practice oral arguments were strong, as were – in the court’s view - their written ones!

“Based on the evidence and arguments presented to the court, no reasonable jury could find that Hennelly acted with common law malice. As such, there is no genuine issue of material fact as to this element, and summary judgment is warranted in favor of Hennelly.”

McGlothlin v. Hennelly
4/15/20 Summary Judgment Order
The Health Justice Clinic trains students to serve the unmet needs of low income people facing serious illness.
Amanda Ng, Ana Maganto Ramirez, and David Gardner represented their clients at administrative hearings seeking disability benefits. Through their zealous advocacy, each of these students secured critical income for their clients, who are unable to work because of their disabilities. All three ALJs complimented the students on a job well-done.

Caleb Logan took on a hearing very early in his first semester in the clinic. The client's disability benefits were going to be stopped by the Social Security Administration. Caleb was meticulously prepared and asked excellent follow-up questions and we soon received word that his clients benefits would continue.

Amber Black joined the HJC as an intern during her 1L summer. She successfully handled a Medicaid hearing that summer and the client was able to get much-needed surgery to relieve pain. She worked as the indispensable HJC student assistant for her entire 2L and 3L years.
We recognize Amanda Ng, Amber Black, Ana Maganto Ramirez, Caleb Logan, and David Gardner not only for their successful hearing advocacy. Each of these students has also worked with dedication and excellence on other matters. The excellent work each of them did is too lengthy to detail, but included end-of-life planning, help with employment discrimination and FMLA leave, policy projects, and an appeal to federal district court. We thank each of them for their hard work and service, and for bettering the lives of their clients and the communities we serve.
The Immigrant Rights Clinic offers students the opportunity to develop critical professional skills and deepen their knowledge while providing free legal services to immigrants who could not otherwise afford a lawyer.
Within the space of 8 weeks, this team of 3Ls took on the asylum claim for a woman and her two small children in front of one of the most difficult immigration courts in the country – with the most difficult judge at that court. The case challenged new nationwide restrictions on asylum based on family relationships.

Each student identified and secured an academic expert to provide key testimony and challenge the Attorney General’s new asylum policy.

The students established the gold standard in collaboration and zealous advocacy, culminating in a 5 hour trial, 800 pages of documentary evidence and a 25,000 word brief to preview any possible appeal. (They also made us look very good in front of co-counsel from USCIR – the largest immigration legal service provider in the state.)
Lucas jumped into the clinic head-first and quickly swam to the deep end. The clinic had agreed to defend a mother and her daughter in two separate cases in the Charlotte immigration court. Lucas, however, realized that to properly defend this family of women and children, spanning three generations, we needed to turn the two cases into NINE. Lucas volunteered for the extra effort these additional cases required, working on an emergency basis to secure the rights of these women and children while national injunctions were still in place that prevented the Trump administration from restricting their right to seek protection.
The International Human Rights Clinic enables students to critically engage with cutting-edge human rights issues, strategies, tactics, institutions, and law in both domestic and international settings.
Michelle Jackson, Advocacy Award
Over the course of two semesters, Michelle worked tirelessly on a project that culminated in a joint submission by the Duke International Human Rights Clinic to the U.S. Commission on Unalienable Rights. Michelle attended and monitored all five of the Commission’s public hearings in Washington, D.C., bringing a keen analytical mind to the questions and concerns work, resolutely pursuing research into some of the most pressing, challenging, and timely about human rights law and institutions. Michelle took great self-initiative in framing responses to the problematic aspects of the commission through a sophisticated human rights lens. In the final stages of finalizing the submission, Michelle continued to exhibit this same full and deep commitment to the project’s advocacy goals, extreme attention to detail, and creativity and vision that she had shown throughout.

Megan Sharkey, Advocacy Award
First as a clinic student and then as an advanced clinic student, Megan demonstrated single-minded perseverance, intellectual curiosity, and analytical sharpness in conducting legal research and writing on a project for the United Nations. Given the nature of the project Megan had to delve deeply into the laws, legal systems, and government structures of a range of countries under tight time constraints; further, Megan creatively navigated her way through a range of sources which was particularly challenging given the lack of transparency around the topic. While paying meticulous attention to detail, Megan also consistently maintained the ability to see the big picture and understand and frame her work around the gravity of the issues she was addressing. As an advanced clinic student, Megan was a wonderful mentor towards her team members who were new to the work.
Kathy Hong, Advocacy Award

For two semesters, Kathy worked on a project in which she displayed excellent analytical and original work in the unchartered topic area of national security and gender which required examining, analyzing, and synthesizing a voluminous and complicated array of research materials. Throughout both semesters, Kathy exhibited strong leadership; she was always the first to volunteer taking on extra work or to step in to help a team member, which was particularly meaningful on a fact-finding trip to the United Kingdom. Also on this trip, Kathy, in conducting interviews with a range of stakeholders, demonstrated her usual intellectual curiosity as well as flexibility in adapting to changed circumstances or new and unexpected information. And throughout, Kathy’s good humor provided great joy.
The Start-Up Ventures Clinic has the primary mission of aiding entrepreneurs and small business owners with the knowledge and tools necessary to understand their legal responsibilities, needs and protections, and processes.
PATRICK O’CONNELL – FALL

Class of 2020 JD/LLMLE Candidate

• Noteworthy commitment to client service, and responsiveness at all hours

• Exemplary regulatory analysis on matters ranging from securities to medical device law
SALONI MATHUR – SPRING

Class of 2020 – Intellectual Property Award

• Noteworthy, high-level intellectual property trademark and copyright analysis for a wide range of clients

• Saloni’s engagement and ownership of intellectual property matters set her apart from her colleagues in the spring semester, and broadened the subject matter of the clinic
THEODORE LEONHARDT – SPRING

Class of 2020

• Exceptional coordination of a multi-student, multifaceted, complex set of corporate governance transactions

• Humility, hard work, and collaboration are the signature of Ted’s work in the clinic and his relationships with his colleagues
The Wrongful Convictions Clinic investigates plausible claims of innocence made by North Carolina inmates convicted of felonies.

“It always seems impossible until it’s done.”

Nelson Mandela
MADISON WHALEN AND STEVEN DALLAS

TEAM ADVOCACY AWARD

Madison and Steven undertook the daunting task of mastering a massive case file in a Clinic case, including the numerous previous filings, and crafting a compelling (and long!) Petition for Certiorari to the NC Supreme Court. They worked cooperatively, creatively, compassionately, and tirelessly, and with great skill and judgment, to give their client the best chance at success. Extremely well done, team!
In the Clinic and Advanced Clinic, Jenna has worked on the Ruben Wright case. For the last year that has involved litigating a case in federal court in the District of Columbia under the Freedom of Information Act that may prove our client’s innocence. Jenna has taken the lead in the litigation, developing the claim, drafting the complaint, and briefing the dispositive motions. Our pro bono co-counsel, a prominent D.C. law firm, wrote of Jenna’s work, “Thank you so much for taking the lead throughout this process; your expertise and professionalism have really shown through.”
CLINIC COLLABORATION AWARD
Cameron Adams
MEM ‘20-
Nicholas
School of the Environment &
Dylan
Stonecipher
JD ‘20-Duke
School of Law
CLINIC FACULTY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENT
CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AWARD (CLEA)
Thank you for your service to the community, the profession, and the University!