U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Selects USF Clinic for Pilot Program

The USF School of Law is one of two dozen law schools nationwide, and the only in the Bay Area, selected to participate in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Law School Clinic Certification Trademark Pilot Program. The program certifies law students to practice trademark law before the USPTO under the guidance of a faculty member. Students enrolled in the USF School of Law Internet and Intellectual Property Law Clinic now consult with clients who are often small business owners, draft and file trademark applications before the USPTO, and then communicate with trademark examining attorneys to handle any challenges, said Professor and Clinic Director Robert Talbot, who submitted the application for the USPTO program.

“This new program provides an invaluable opportunity for USF law students to gain practical, on-the-ground experience in trademark law while providing much-needed legal assistance to the community free of charge,” Talbot said. “Being chosen to participate in this program is confirmation of the strength of USF’s program in IP law.”

Employment Law Clinic Represents Mariners

Merchants who have their licenses revoked or suspended by the U.S. Coast Guard typically have had little access to representation to contest the decision—until now, thanks to a unique program in which USF School of Law Employment Law Clinic students are representing mariners in license revocation cases before the Coast Guard. The clinic’s program, which began this spring, and has handled two cases so far, came about after Rear Adm. Frederick J. Kenney ‘91, judge advocate general for the Coast Guard, suggested it. The National Maritime Center, the Coast Guard’s issuing authority, (USCG) authority, issued more than 240,000 credentials to merchant mariners who sail throughout U.S. waters. Last year, about 600 licenses were revoked nationwide, only 40 mariners requested trials, said Professor Robert Talbot, who oversees the clinic.

Yet many mariners, Talbot learned, might have good cases for their licenses to be restored, but without an advocate, they have little opportunity for free representation for maritime charges against mariners, most of whom couldn’t afford to fight them. We are like public defenders of employment rights protecting the right to work for those who work on the sea.”

There is great joy in telling a mariner he can retain his license to work at sea—you’ve saved a man’s livelihood. The thanks each mariner has expressed is palpable.” Alicia Kach ‘13
Dear Friends,

One of the key attractions for me in becoming dean of the USF School of Law was the successful and relevant clinical program. As we train the lawyers who will practice well into the 21st century, we expose students to real-life situations when people turn to lawyers for problem solving, strategizing, and advocating. The programs highlighted in this report provide virtual legal services to community organizations, and also support students for successful and rewarding careers.

Your support of the law clinic experience enables students to take a leadership role in cases and allows us to increase the number of clients we serve. As you review this report and our achievements, I ask that you join your colleagues with a donation so that our clinic's students can continue their training and advocacy. Be it meeting clients, making opening statements, cross examining witnesses, or networking with judges and attorneys, our students consistently say that their clinic experiences are among the most valuable of their law school careers.

We greatly appreciate your support and I look forward to seeing you in the coming days. Together, we can change the world from here.

Dean John Travits

M. Kamran Meyer Selected as First Hamill Fellow

The first USF School of Law Hamill Fellow, M. Kamran Meyer, will begin the two-year position this fall. The Hamill Fellowship, funded by a generous donation from USF trustee Steve Hamill ’78, provides an opportunity for a clinical law practitioner to increase his supervision and management of a law clinic at USF.

Meyer’s primary responsibilities will be with the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic, where he will directly supervise students’ case work and teach in the classroom in coordination with faculty. After graduating from the USF School of Law in 2005, Meyer became a criminal defense attorney, working for the Law Offices of Charles Bobrond, where he worked on motions, trials, sentencing, and discovery in state and federal courts. In 2011, Meyer opened his own criminal defense firm, the Law Office of M. Kamran Meyer. During the 2012–2013 academic year, he supervised the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic alongside Prof. Sharon Meadows and during her sabbatical.

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Child Advocacy Law Clinic

The Child Advocacy Law Clinic handled many complex cases this year that had not come to the attention of the court earlier due to difficult economic circumstances. The students worked in teams, filing and arguing motions, and as a result, the clients had significant support teams relyed upon. In one case a father regained custody of his four children, and the family received housing and educational support, including necessary special services for an autistic son. In another case representing a 2-year-old boy, the client was able to have minimal disruption in his life as his father fostered adopted him and arranged them to be moved in safe and contact with his birth mother and extended family.

Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic

The clinic’s caseload and trial work increased this year, litigating 67 cases during the academic year. The clinic’s motion work remains creative; challenging the government’s discriminatory enforcement, continuing to litigate a gang injunction in the Bayview, and writing motions for diversion in cases where it does not apply “by statute.” Professor M. Kamran Meyer assisted with the clinic and implemented a new model organizing teams around areas of “sport” law students with experience who provide guidance to newer students. Meyer will be the inaugural Hamill Fellow working with the clinic for the next two years.

Employment Law Clinic

The clinic represent- ed 30 cases and hours hearings on behalf of the immigrant community this year. In its MSP distinction, litigating 67 cases during the academic year. The clinic’s motion work remains creative; challenging the government’s discriminatory enforcement, continuing to litigate a gang injunction in the Bayview, and writing motions for diversion in cases where it does not apply “by statute.” Professor M. Kamran Meyer assisted with the clinic and implemented a new model organizing teams around areas of “sport” law students with experience who provide guidance to newer students. Meyer will be the inaugural Hamill Fellow working with the clinic for the next two years.

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Message from the Dean

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Your support of the law clinic experience enables students to take a leadership role in cases and allows us to increase the number of clients we serve. As you review this report and our achievements, I ask that you join your colleagues with a donation so that our clinic students can continue their training and advocacy. Be it meeting clients, making opening statements, cross examining witnesses, or networking with judges and attorneys, our students consistently say that their clinic experiences are among the most valuable of their law school careers. We greatly appreciate your support and I look forward to seeing you in the coming days. Together, we can change the world for those in need.

Dean John Trasvina

The USF Law Clinics with the support of law school alumni and friends. www.usfca.edu/law/makeagift

CLINIC HIGHLIGHTS

Child Advocacy Law Clinic The Child Advocacy Law Clinic handled many complex cases this year that had not come to the attention of the court earlier due to difficult economic circumstances. The students worked in teams, filing and arguing motions, and as a result, the clients had significant support teams behind them. In one case a father regained custody of his four children, and the family received housing and educational support, including necessary special services for an autistic son. In another case representing a 2-year-old boy, the client was able to avoid any disruption in his life as his foster parents adopted him and arrangements were made for ongoing safe contact with his birth mother and extended family.

Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic The clinic’s caseload and trial work increased this year, litigation 67 cases during the academic year. The clinic’s motion work remains especially challenging as it involves cases that are especially relevant to the criminal justice system.

Employment Law Clinic The clinic represent 30 cases and hours hearings on behalf of the immigrant community this year. In its MSP cases, the clinic handled more than 50 requests for help from federal employees, and students took five depositions while representing federal employees where agencies took an adverse employment action against the employees. In a new program representing mariners in San Francisco revocation cases before the U.S. Coast Guard, students handled two suspension and revocation trials on behalf of mariners. The clinic continued making presentations at local high schools in a partnership with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) called Youth At Work, and represented clients in EEOC employment discrimination mediations.

Frank C. Newman International Human Rights Law Clinic Ten students represented Human Rights Advocates (HRA) at the meetings of two United Nations human rights bodies. Four Edith Colvin interns attended the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women in New York, where they were assisted by former interns Patricia Tusingwe and Jeremiah Johnson. One student contributed to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women’s upcoming report, and others informed the Agreed Conclusions of the meeting. Six Frank C. Newman interns attended the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, Switzerland, assisted by former intern Lani Virostko. Four students made oral statements before the full HRC, and represented clients in EEOC employment discrimination mediations.

Frank C. Newman International Human Rights Law Clinic

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“Kamran Meyer has stellar criminal defense experience and has already proven to be an effective teacher. We are especially proud, because he is a USF alum who is a product of our Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic.”

Professor Bill Ong Hing

A Remarkable Opportunity to Shape Law

Working in the USF Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic confirmed why I came to law school—to fight for people who are forgotten and oppressed by society. Everything you do in the clinic is for your client. It is the most of both worlds: you learn constantly how to be a better lawyer, while also giving back to a community in need.

Fourteen months after first meeting my 19-year-old client, I am still fighting for him. But in reality, I am now fighting for the hundreds of others like him facing gang injunction charges. With the weight of my own client’s case on my mind, I realize I have been put in the remarkable position of shaping the complicated and politically charged world surrounding gang injunction law in San Francisco. For me, it is a privilege to argue why these injunctions violate my client’s constitutional rights. But these arguments are hollow if I forget how my client lives everyday without these basic liberties until I can demonstrate to the court why these gang injunctions redefine unfair.

“Participation at the Human Rights Council helped me put a face to the human right mechanisms entrusted to advance international human rights law.Having the skill set of a lawyer served incredibly beneficial in framing the issues, researching the facts, and providing substantive forward-looking recommendations.”

Alicia Bowers ’13
Frank C. Newman International Human Rights Law Clinic

“I really wanted a hands-on approach to law, and working with high school students and interviewing clients was something I would not have experienced within the traditional confines of a classroom. It’s one of many reasons that the clinic program is invaluable.”

Samantha Tran ’14
Internet and Intellectual Property Justice Clinic

The Criminal and Juvenile Justice Clinic bridges the gap between the theoretical and the practical, and it is one of the best experiences I have had at USF. Making court appearances, negotiating with district attorneys, and working with clients has been a welcomed break from the traditional law school curriculum.

Kyle Hardeman ’14
Criminal and Juvenile Justice Law Clinic

“I had the opportunity to advocate on behalf of a federal employee, and thanks to our legal training, skills, and efforts, we were able to help a man who wanted to leave work because of stigma. The entire clinic, represented the client in arbitration and both prevailed—an exceptional success rate for this type of case. In one case, an unrepresented 76-year-old investor was convinced by a broker to invest her savings in a deferred variable annuity, exposing her to risk and penalties. The arbitrator awarded this investor the full amount of her losses. Clinic students also began a blog in which they comment on recent developments in securities arbitration law.

Mediation Clinic Clinic students worked three days a week as court mediators in the San Francisco Small Claims Court, mediating a variety of matters including landlord tenant cases, car accidents, contractor disputes, creditor-debtor cases, and professional fees. They were successful in about 50 percent of their cases. Students continued to work with San Francisco District Attorney Neighborhood Court program, using the restorative justice model to address minor criminal matters.

Samantha Tran ’14
Internet and Intellectual Property Justice Clinic

For more student experiences, visit www.usfca.edu/law/news/socialmedia.
The USPTO selected the USF School of Law as one of two U.S. law schools to participate in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Law School Clinic Certification Program, based on its strong clinical program and intellectual property (IP) focus.

The USF School of Law is one of the few law schools in the country to have a clinic that focuses on IP law. The clinic provides students with the opportunity to work on real-world cases and gain practical experience in trademark law while helping clients protect their brands. The clinic has handled a variety of cases, including assisting a small business owner with trademark applications, helping a startup company draft and file trademark applications, and representing a major corporation in trademark infringement litigation.

The clinic is overseen by Director Robert Talbot, who has extensive experience in IP law. Under Talbot’s guidance, students have successfully represented clients in trademark cases, such as a startup that was being sued by a large corporation for infringement. The clinic’s success in these cases has resulted in positive feedback from clients and a growing demand for the clinic’s services.

The USF School of Law is proud to offer this unique IP clinic to its law students, and we believe that it is a great example of the type of practical, hands-on education that our students receive at the USF School of Law.