Center News/Faculty and Staff Updates

Human Rights Brief

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**Center News**

From launching a new project on human trafficking and forced labor, to continuing engaging lunchtime discussions for WCL students, to sponsoring visits of professors from Pakistan, the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law continues its tradition of innovative outreach and advocacy, promoting the causes of human rights and social justice throughout the world. The following are the highlights of the Center’s Summer and Fall 2008 news, events, and projects.

**Center Conducts First Training Program for Teaching of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

Following the release of the Center’s joint report with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the status of teaching International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in U.S. law schools (available at http://www.wclcenterforhr.org), the Center and the ICRC convened a two-day training program for law teachers on June 4-5 at WCL. Representatives from eight law schools, ICRC staff from Geneva and Washington, and members of the American Red Cross attended the event. Expert IHL teaching faculty included Professors Gary Solis, Burrus Carnahan, Doug Cassel and Jordan Paust. The Center and the ICRC plan to expand the initiative in the coming months and the ICRC has committed funds to the Center to help support the Teaching IHL project. The next training will take place in June 2009. This project seeks to expand and improve the teaching of IHL in law schools both in the United States and abroad.

**Center Launches New Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Program**

Ann Jordan joined the Center’s staff in September as the first project director of the Center’s new Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Program. Jordan, the former director of Global Rights’ Initiative Against Trafficking in Persons, will design and lead the program which has been established to raise awareness of human trafficking and forced labor as well as to promote a rights-based approach to addressing and combating these problems. By focusing on the effects of the sex trade as well as the consequences of forced labor (a form of exploitation often ignored by organizations focusing on human trafficking), the program seeks to widen the debate to promote effective and far-reaching solutions at both the international and local level to combat all aspects of human trafficking.

**Four Professors from the University of Peshawar (Pakistan) Participate in Study Visit to Examine the Use of Media to Promote and Protect Human Rights**

In May, the Center welcomed three journalism professors from the University of Peshawar (Pakistan) Department of Journalism and Mass Communications and one English professor from the Department of English and Applied Linguistics to WCL to participate in a month-long study tour to explore ways in which media can be used to promote and protect human rights and gender. Among the people they met were Bill Siemering, founder of Developing Radio Partners and founder of National Public Radio; Radio Soap Opera consultant Pamela Brooks; AU School of Communications Dean Larry Kirkman and professors David Johnson and Rick Rockwell; and University of Maryland School of Journalism Dean Lee Thornton. The group also conducted site visits to NPR, MHZ Community Television Station, and Voice of America. The professors also participated in two courses at the WCL Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. Their visit was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of State to support capacity-building programs for human rights and gender programming on campus radio and television outlets at the University of Peshawar (Pakistan). The visit was part of an ongoing educational collaboration between the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at WCL and the Human Rights Studies Centre and Gender Studies Department at the University of Peshawar (Pakistan).

**Center and the Women in International Law Program (WILP) Host Dr. Ved Kumari, University of Delhi and Member of the Gender and Law Association (GALA)**

In June, the Center and the Women and International Law Program (WILP) hosted Dr. Ved Kumari, a founding member of the Gender and Law Association of India (GALA) and key participant in the joint Center-WILP project on Gender Mainstreaming in Legal Education and Law Reform project in India, for a three-day visit. Dr. Kumari was in the United States on a personal visit but came to WCL to discuss next steps in the project and potential spheres of collaboration. Professor Ann Shalleck, Professor Brenda Smith, WILP Associate Director Daniella Kraiem and Center Executive Director Hadar Harris met with Dr. Kumari during her stay to determine the next steps in the project.

**The Center and the National Institute of Military Justice Host Lively Discussion on Boumediene v. Bush Case**

The Center, in conjunction with the National Institute of Military Justice (NIMJ), hosted “Boumediene v. Bush and the Future of US Detention Policy,” a lunchtime panel attended by students, staff, and outside visitors from the DC community in September. The panel focused on the implications of Boumediene, a recent U.S. Supreme Court case that guaranteed Guantánamo Bay detainees the right to habeas corpus. Moderated by Jonathan Tracy of the NIMJ, the panel was comprised of Richard Sarp, Chief Counsel of the Washington Legal Foundation, and WCL Professors Stephen I. Vladeck and Richard Wilson.
Center Hosts Strategy Session for Four Israeli Human Rights Attorneys Focused on the Impact of Prolonged Occupation on Democracy

The Center hosted a half-day strategy session with human rights attorneys and activists in Washington, DC to discuss the impact on democracy of prolonged occupation with four leading Israeli human rights attorneys. The meeting was a closed-door session with lawyers and policymakers. The candid discussion examined lessons learned from the Israeli experience and its implications for U.S. engagement in Iraq, Afghanistan and the open-ended “war on terror.”

Participants included Michael Sfard, Legal Counsel, Yesh Din — Volunteers for Human Rights; Sari Bashi, Director, Gisha — Center for the Legal Protection of Freedom of Movement; Limor Yehuda, Director of the Occupied Territories Program, Association for Civil Rights in Israel; and Dr. Amir Paz-Fuchs, Board Member, Bimkom — Planners for Planning Rights. The meeting was part of a series of discussions held at WCL, Columbia, Harvard and Emory Law Schools seeking to establish ties between Israeli and U.S. legal communities concerned with human rights and humanitarian law.

Lunchtime Lecture Series Provides WCL Students with the Fundamentals of Human Rights Law and Advocacy

The Center continues to organize a robust series of lunchtime lectures during the academic year. The first in the series, “Munching on Human Rights,” targets first-year law students to provide a “taste” of human rights law and theory. The Center’s Executive Director, Hadar Harris, spoke about the treaty reporting process, while WCL professor Rick Wilson lectured on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The second in the series, “The Nuts and Bolts of Doing Human Rights Work,” teaches students key skills and strategies in the field. The sessions included “War Stories (and more) from the Field,” a look at the reality of doing human rights work around the world. Speakers included Environmental Law and Human Rights activist Professor David Hunter, Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Program Director Ann Jordan, Abderrahim Sabir from Human Rights Watch, and Center Director Hadar Harris, Patricia Pasqual, director of the Washington, DC office of the Foundation Center, conducted a skills session providing the ins and outs of grant proposal writing. In a session focused on realizing vision, third-year student at WCL Erik Swanson discussed the journey he took from working as director of a secondary school in Guatemala to eventually founding Roots and Wings International, an NGO that promotes higher education in impoverished indigenous regions of Guatemala. He described the practical steps he took from first having only an idea to actually establishing an NGO that currently provides 17 university scholarships to indigenous students as well as after-school tutoring to 250 elementary school students in the surrounding area. The series also included an event for WCL students discussing ways to find and fund summer employment in the human rights community. This series will continue in the Spring semester.

LLM and Humphrey Fellows Continue to Share Ideas and Plans at the Center’s Weekly Human Rights Roundtable

Each week, LLM and Humphrey Fellows meet for the Center-sponsored Human Rights Roundtable at WCL. The Roundtable, facilitated by the Center’s Executive Director Hadar Harris and Practitioner-in-Residence Meetali Jain, is an opportunity for these students to share their experiences and strategies in the human rights field. Those attending the Roundtable are also planning on organizing site visits to further pursue their academic and professional interests. The Roundtable is scheduled to continue throughout the academic year.

New Program Associate, Brett Schwartz, Joins the Center

In August, the Center welcomed Brett Schwartz to its staff as a program associate to support the wide array of program monitoring and outreach activities. In 2007, Mr. Schwartz received his M. Phil. in International Peace Studies from Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Following his graduation from Georgetown University in 2005, he spent a year of service at the MATCH School, a high achieving inner-city urban charter high school in Boston, Massachusetts, teaching and tutoring History and English. Mr. Schwartz joins the Center after a six-month internship at the World Security Institute’s Washington Prism news service, an online Persian-language publication based in Washington, DC, where he wrote on topics such as international relations, politics, and the environment.

Updates about Center activities and upcoming events, as well as webcasts and podcasts of most Center events can be found at the Center’s website: www.WCLCenterforHR.org.

Faculty and Staff Updates

Claudio Grossman, Dean of WCL and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, participated in the 40th session of the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) in April–May, where he was elected the Committee’s Chair. Dean Grossman has served as a Committee member and Vice Chair since 2003. Also in April, Dean Grossman was a panelist in a joint conference with Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, Argentina, addressing “Impact Litigation as a Means to Protect Human Rights.” Moreover, he lectured on impact litigation at a panel regarding “The Role of the Law School in Promoting and Protecting Human Rights.”

In May, Dean Grossman was elected a member of the governing board of the International Association of Law Schools (IALS) during its first democratic election. The IALS has 187 members from law schools around the world, and WCL is currently the only U.S. law school with a member on the Governing Board. Dean Grossman also participated in IALS’ General Assembly in May. That same month, Dean Grossman served as a panelist at the D.C. Hispanic Bar’s Luncheon Series on Strategies for Getting a Law School Teaching Job. In June, Dean Grossman gave a lecture at the Lead America leadership conference at American University, about “The Future of the Inter-American Human Rights System.” During the month of July, Dean Grossman was a moderator at the Annual SEALS Conference in Florida, for a panel regarding the “Internationaliza-
tion of Legal Education: Best Practices for International Programs.” In August, he participated in meetings of COLAM in Santiago, Chile.


He also presented “Challenges for Human Rights in the Western Hemisphere: The Role of the Inter-American System” for Hispanic Heritage Month at the Office of the Attorney General, in Washington, D.C.

Dean Grossman recently published several works including four contributions to the online edition of the Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law: “Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (1948)”; “Inter-American Commission on Human Rights”; “Mayagna (Sumo) Awas Tingni Community v Nicaragua Case”; and “Disappearances.” He also co-edited Advocating for Human Rights: 10 Years of the Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition with Claudia Martin and Diego Rodríguez-Pinzón for the Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

Robert Goldman, Professor of Law at WCL and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law was elected the sole U.S. Commissioner on the board of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), a prestigious non-governmental organization headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. He replaced Jerome Shestack, a former president of the American Bar Association. Moreover, Professor Goldman was also elected to the ICJ’s Executive Committee. Since June, he has traveled three times to Geneva to work on the final report of the Eminent Jurists Panel on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights, an independent group of 8 jurists, chaired by the former Chief Justice of South Africa, Arthur Chaskalson. The report will be finalized in December 2008 and will be made public in February 2009.

Hadar Harris is the Executive Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at WCL. In June she hosted the first Teaching International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Institute at WCL. In July, she hosted a dinner for WCL alumni in Tel Aviv, Israel which brought together 18 top human rights attorneys in Israel who graduated from the US-Israel Civil Liberties Law Fellowship program run by the school with the New Israel Fund. In July, Harris traveled to Kosovo to provide technical assistance to UNIFEM and the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) of the Government of Kosovo on preparation of a report on compliance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) requested by the CEDAW Committee. In August, Harris was the only participant invited from the United States to participate in a workshop on Advanced IHL Training for Law Professors held by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva, Switzerland. In September, Harris kicked off the Center’s Munching on Human Rights series by giving a multimedia presentation to a packed room on the ins-and-outs of treaty reporting, using video footage of the recent US report to CERD. She also spoke at a panel entitled, War (and Peace) Stories from the Field, part of the Center’s new Nuts and Bolts of Human Rights Work series. Harris also participated in a day-long strategy session for the US Human Rights Network Training Committee of which she is a member. Finally, this semester she is teaching a new seminar entitled, “Law, Politics and Human Rights in Crisis” which explores the interplay of law and politics in promoting and protecting human rights during times of crisis.


Professor Martin has continued to serve as a member of the editorial board for Oxford Reports on International Law in Domestic Courts, Oxford University Press and Amsterdam Center for International Law and as a contributor on Inter-American Human Rights Law for the Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights.


She provided testimony urging enactment of legislation enabling U.S. courts


In December 2007, Professor Orentlicher participated in a symposium on “The Responsibility to Protect and the International Criminal Court: America’s New Priorities,” sponsored by the Center for International Human Rights at Northwestern University School of Law in Chicago, IL. She participated in the “Africa Forum” sponsored by the Open Society Institute in Dakar, Senegal on February 4–8, 2008; served as a panelist on “Universal Jurisdiction: It’s Back” at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law in Washington, D.C. on April 12, 2008 and presented a paper at a high-level consultation on “Fifteen Years of International and Hybrid Tribunals: The Past, Present and Future,” co-hosted by the Open Society Institute and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, at Wilton Park, United Kingdom, on April 14–15, 2008.


Her publication, Shrinking the Space for Denial: The Impact of the ICTY in Serbia, was reported in Aleksandar Roknic, “Is Space for Denial Shrinking in Serbia?: International law professor analyses Hague tribunal’s impact in Serbia,” Institute for War and Peace Reporting, July 11, 2008, and in “Serbian minister: No contact from US authorities over beating suspect’s case,” monitored by BBC News, July 11, 2008. Professor Orentlicher was interviewed on KPCC’s “Air Talk” about the arrest of Radovan Karadzic, July 23, 2008; quoted in Mike Corder, “Karadzic trial revives Bosnians’ hope for justice,” Associated Press, July 26, 2008; interviewed on NPR’s “Talk of the Nation” about war crimes tribunals, July 29, 2008; interviewed on CNN International about the first appearance before International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia of Radovan Karadzic, July 31, 2008; quoted in “Karadzic Appears in Court, Refuses to Enter Plea,” Online NewsHour, July 31, 2008. Finally, Professor Orentlicher was invited by the World Economic Council to serve on its Global Agenda Council on the International Legal System.

Diego Rodríguez-Pinzón is Professorial Lecturer in Residence and Co-Director of the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at WCL. In July 2008, he taught “The Inter-American Human Rights System” at the 39th Annual Study Session, René Cassin International Institute on Human Rights at the University of Strasbourg, in Strasbourg, France and at the Human Rights Development Initiative in Pretoria, South Africa. In October 2008, he taught the course “The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights” during the III Curso de Capacitación en Direitos Humanos of the Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos (IDDH), in Florianópolis, Brazil.

Professor Rodriguez-Pinzón published, 10 Years of the Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition with co-authors Claudio Grossman and Claudia Martin for the Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Brill Publishers (Kluwer International) Geneva, Switzerland, 2008. He contributes to the British publication Butterworths Human Rights Cases ( Lexis/Nexis) as the
correspondent for the Americas. The publication is a multi-volume series that reports on recent human rights cases around the world. Professor Rodriguez-Pinzón contributes to the international law journal Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights, reporting periodically on the news of the Inter-American Human Rights System.

During May and June 2008, Professor Rodriguez-Pinzón co-hosted the Specialized Human Rights Summer Program of the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at WCL. The program brought more than 180 participants and more than 30 faculty from around the world. In May 2008, he co-hosted the Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition, which brought a record number of participants from the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Moreover, in May 2008, he participated in the panel presentation “Current Status of the Inter-American Human Rights System: A Reflection on the Reform Process” at the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

In August 2008 he presented the lecture “El Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos: La Corte y la Comisión Interamericanas y los sistemas internos de protección” at the First Seminar of the Latin American Consortium for Post-Graduate Studies in Human Rights, Belém do Pará, Brazil. In October 2008, he participated as Chair of the panel presentation “Institutional Challenges Facing Regional Systems for the Protection of Human Rights,” at the conference Advocacy Before Regional Human Rights Bodies: A Cross-Regional Agenda at WCL. Finally, he is currently Ad Hoc Judge at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights for the case Chiriboga v. Ecuador. The Court released its decision on admissibility and merits on 6 May 2008.

Susana SáCouto is Director of the War Crimes Research Office (WCRO) and Professorial Lecturer in Residence at WCL. She presented opening remarks and delivered a presentation as part of a panel on “The Devil is in the Details: Policy and Practice” at the Conference on Prosecuting Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes before Internationalized Criminal Courts, co-sponsored by the WCRO and the Women in International Law Program held on October 14, 2008. On October 18, she participated in an expert meeting held in Chicago, IL, on strategies to end sexual violence. On October 31, Professor SáCouto spoke at a launch event co-hosted by the WCRO, the International Bar Association and the Friends of the ICC in The Hague, The Netherlands, where she discussed key recommendations from the WCRO’s Report on The Confirmation of Charges Process at the International Criminal Court (ICC). The report, a copy of which can be found on the WCRO website at http://www.wcl.american.edu/warcrimes/, is the fifth in the Office’s ICC Legal Analysis and Education Project, which aims to provide in-depth analyses of critical legal issues raised by the ICC’s early activities. Professor SáCouto also published an article with co-author, Katherine A. Cleary, entitled The Gravity Threshold of the International Criminal Court in 23 American University International Law Review, 807 (2008).


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