

Spring-Fall 2011

The Human Rights Clinic (HRC), which launched in January 2011, exposes students to the practice of law in the international and cross-cultural context of human rights litigation and advocacy at the local, national, and international levels. In the classroom, students critically engage with human rights law and contemporary social problems while honing their lawyering and advocacy skills. Outside of the classroom, students gain hands-on experience working on cutting-edge human rights projects and cases before the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and other human rights bodies. Currently we are working on three umbrella projects: Gender Justice in the Americas, Human Rights in Post-Earthquake Haiti, and Farmworker Justice in Florida. Highlights of the Human Rights Clinic's work this academic year include:

### **Gender Justice in the Americas**

- Coordinating the Jan. 2011 visit to Miami of Rashida Manjoo, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women. Students organized a day-long program at The Lodge, a local domestic violence shelter, where over 30 domestic violence and women's rights advocates spoke about violence against women in South Florida. Students drafted briefing papers for Ms. Manjoo on the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and their work was directly reflected in the Special Rapporteur's final report to the United Nations.
- Drafting a manual on *Domestic Violence and Human Rights Law* for family law and domestic violence attorneys, in coordination with the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence and the Arizona State University College of Law, Diane Halle Center for Family Justice.
- Working on all aspects of *Jessica Gonzales v. U.S.*, the first human rights case brought by a domestic violence victim against the U.S. Students have assisted with preparing the final brief to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and in developing fact sheets, press releases, and a website related to the case, in anticipation of an April 2011 decision.
- Publishing an Op-Ed in *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald* in March 2011 entitled "Violence Against Women Still A Problem"/ "Violencia contra las mujeres viola sus derechos humanos" (each op-ed was co-authored by two HRC students).
- Hosting (along with University of Diego Portales (Chile), Center for Reproductive Rights, and the Human Rights Institute of Columbia Law School) a convening, *Gender Justice in the Americas: A Transnational Dialogue on Sexuality, Violence, Reproduction & Human Rights* (Feb. 2011) that featured discussions with leading scholars and advocates from over 20 countries in the Americas about recent law and policy developments at the local, national, and international levels in the areas of human rights, women's rights, gender, reproduction, sexuality and economic justice.

### **Human Rights in Post-Earthquake Haiti**

- In collaboration with the Immigration Clinic and four other domestic and international organizations, commencing a multi-dimensional campaign to stop deportations to Haiti, including filing a human rights petition before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and engaging in domestic legislative and policy advocacy. The Commission granted the human rights petition for precautionary measures, and the Clinics recently presented their case in a formal working meeting before the Commission in Washington, D.C. Nearly all students in the HRC attended the meeting in D.C. Students recently appeared on *Island TV* to discuss the case.
- Assisting attorneys and NGOs with the prosecution in Haiti of Jean Claude ("Baby Doc") Duvalier for crimes ranging from embezzlement to crimes against humanity.

### **Farmworker Justice in Florida**

- Partnering with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) on an innovative project to promote corporate social responsibility in the tomato fields of Florida. Students have conducted legal research on international complaint mechanisms and are drafting a Guide for the CIW on Labor and Employment Law provisions relevant to their constituency.