

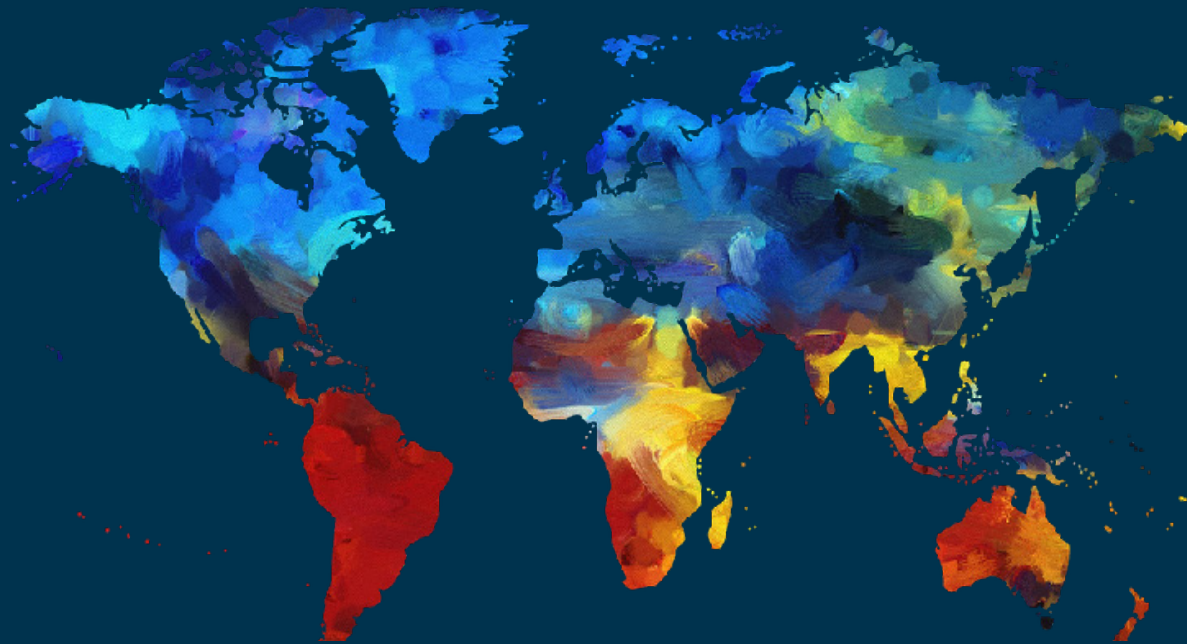


# Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law Annual Report 2017-2018

# 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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 support for human rights initiatives in the U.S. and around the world through teaching, scholarship, and service.

The Center engages in exciting innovations in human rights education and advocacy by way of training, complementary education, outreach, workshops and conferences, and research and publications. All Center programming promotes the value of service, thereby grounding the Center as a core resource to the NGO community and a bridge between academia and civil society.



**+70 partners / \$167,112 in new grants & gifts / 3 publications**

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# Message from Dean Camille A. Nelson

Over the past two years, I have had the pleasure of watching the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law work with students, faculty, and the domestic and international legal communities to protect and promote the rule of law and human rights. While there have been many emerging challenges and obstacles to human rights in the past year, the meaningful contributions of our expert faculty co-directors and dedicated program staff have been underscored by resilience and determination in their exciting innovations in human rights advocacy.



I am honored to present the Center's 2017-2018 Annual Report. This year, the Center worked conscientiously with our expert faculty, main campus colleagues, and civil society partners to open up valuable opportunities for students, academics, practitioners, and advocates through its extensive engagement in key and cutting-edge areas of law. *The Human Rights Brief* held its inaugural Disability Rights Symposium, a conference that featured renowned experts on disability rights with more than 100 attendees representing dozens of NGOs and government agencies from across the country. As part of a greater effort to expand our community's engagement with international civil society organizations, the Center launched two exciting initiatives – the Initiative on Transparency and Election Monitoring and the Syria Legal Clinic Project, which created numerous research positions for our students and connected them with dedicated alumni working in the field. The Center has provided our community with invaluable opportunities to support its tireless work to reinforce human rights standards in the areas of anti-torture and business with the U.S. government, the United Nations, and beyond.

As we move forward into academic year 2018-2019, I am proud of what the Center has accomplished and am excited about what the future holds. The human rights community at AUWCL - our committed faculty and staff, and our extensive network of students and alumni - is strong and vibrant, and together we will continue to enrich and influence global and local conversations on human rights. We look forward to sharing our journey with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Nelson'.

Camille A. Nelson  
Dean and Professor of Law



## Message from Director Macarena Sáez

This annual report is a testimony to the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law's longstanding commitment to advancing human rights and humanitarian law. The need for attorneys with an education in human rights has never been greater, as human rights violations and the erosion of the rule of law increasingly occur in every corner of the world. This report offers a snapshot of our contributions over the past year, which have provided immediate and incremental change within the greater American University community and throughout the world.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, our faculty, staff, and students worked hard to prepare conscientious and competent lawyers, by offering research opportunities, skills-based trainings, scholarly discussions, and other high-profile events with leading practitioners and activists. We collaborated with change-makers in the field to organize activities designed to explore contemporary issues in the Center's human rights priority areas with external audiences, including a series of book launches, expert convenings, and a working group of AUWCL human rights alumni. In addition, our new publications are representative of how we engage multiple stakeholders to shape global conversations around the issues of our time. Our growing grants operation has enabled us to expand student opportunities for research and advocacy on diverse issues in different regions around the world. The Center also worked in partnership with various civil society partners to ensure the success of our ongoing initiatives, while continuing to develop new projects related to access to justice and the rule of law.



Though human rights are being challenged on a global scale, I am optimistic about the future, because each new cohort of first year law students ushers in a new generation of advocates committed to upholding human rights principles in every area of practice.

On behalf of the Center, I would like to dedicate our 2017-2018 accomplishments to our dear friend and colleague, Associate Dean of Finance Khalid Khalid, whose passing in March touched our entire team. His steadfast support of the Center's work, along with his incredible smile, made our work not only possible, but also better.

Sincerely,

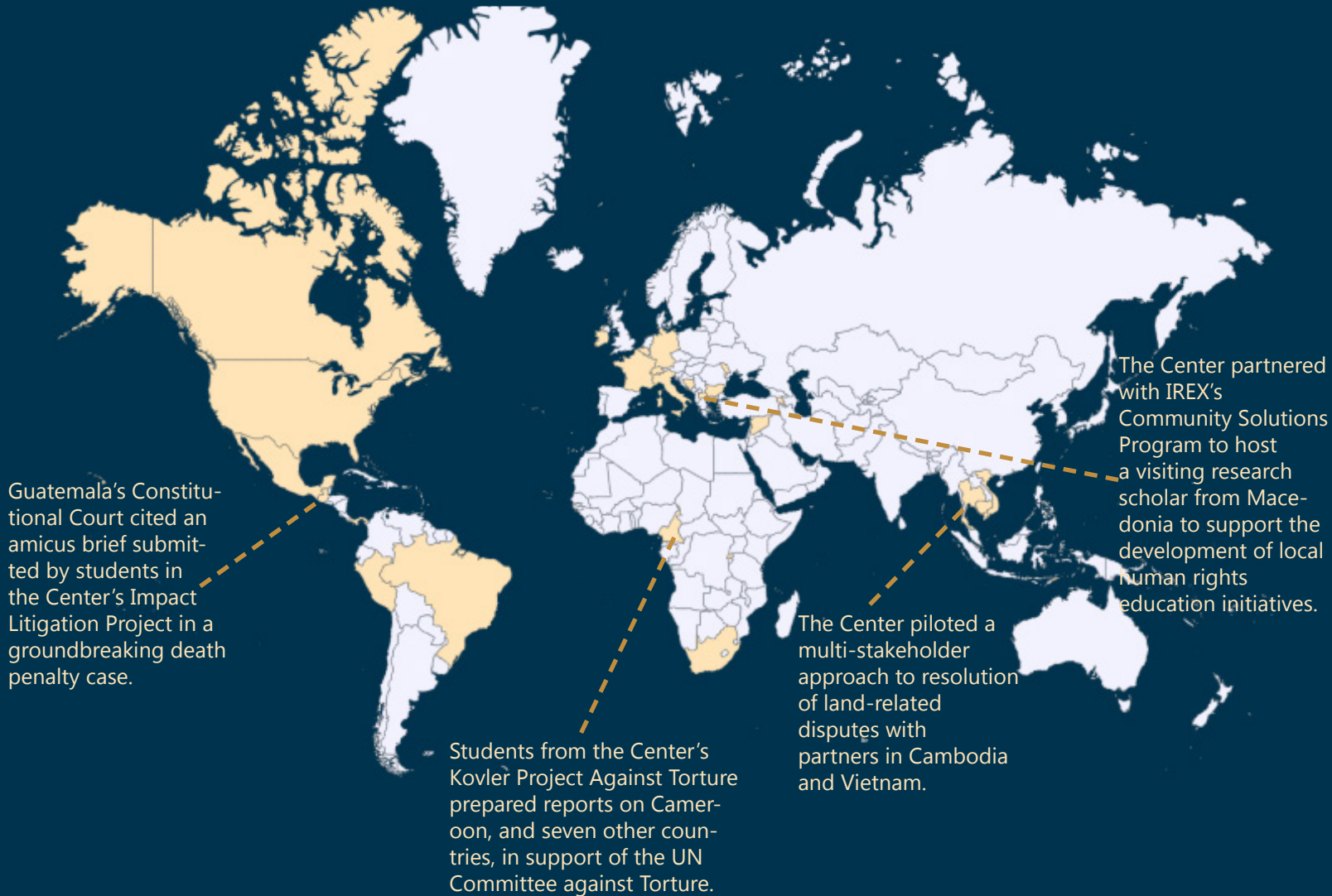
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Macarena Sáez'.

Macarena Sáez  
Director, Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law

Center faculty and staff attend an Anti-Torture Initiative event on the Universal Protocol for Investigative Interviewing at the United Nations headquarters in New York.



# Where We've Achieved Impact



## Social Media Engagement



**+1,334**

**New Likes**

**5,712**  
**Followers**



**+332**

**New Followers**

**1,983**  
**Tweets**

## Where We've Been

**Armenia • Barbados • Belgium • Bosnia and Herzegovina • Brazil • Bulgaria • Cambodia • Cameroon • Canada • France • Germany • Guatemala • Italy • Ireland • Macedonia • Mauritius • Mexico • Moldova • Panama • Peru • Puerto Rico • Rwanda • South Africa • Switzerland • Syria • Thailand • Timor-Leste • United States • Vietnam**

# THE CENTER BY THE NUMBERS

+70 collaborative partners • 3 new publications • 28 countries • 43 Human Rights Brief staffers • 23 Research Assistants • 15th Student Advisory Board cohort • 2 sponsored fellows • 24 students enrolled in 2 seminars • 15 legal interventions • +30 events • 4 grants and 1 major gift totaling \$157,029 • 2,180 Twitter followers • 5,663 likes on Facebook • 1,591 newsletter subscribers

**\$167,112**  
in NEW grants,  
gifts & individual  
donations





2017-2018

# *anti-torture & human rights*



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Center's Anti-Torture Program works to combat and prevent torture and other ill-treatment by engaging civil society and academia in discussions about how to increase compliance with international law and by teaching the current legal framework against torture to future lawyers, policymakers, and judges. The program focuses on two main initiatives, the **Anti-Torture Initiative** and the **Kovler Project Against Torture**, which employ diverse methodologies and programming to promote best practices, public dialogue, and education about torture and other ill-treatment.

## ANTI-TORTURE INITIATIVE

The Anti-Torture Initiative (ATI) was created to expand the reach and practical implementation of the work of the former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture (SRT), Professor Juan E. Méndez. Since 2011, the ATI has undertaken strategic and diverse follow-up initiatives in dozens of countries - such as, Brazil, Ghana, and Tunisia, among others - working on key issues, including the development of a universal protocol on non-coercive interviewing and attendant legal safeguards; gender perspectives on torture; implementation of the Istanbul Protocol; and solitary confinement.

## TOP ATI HIGHLIGHTS

The ATI published its latest edited volume, *Gender Perspectives on Torture: Law and Practice*, in March 2018. The articles span diverse topical areas around the issue of gender and torture and re-center the narratives on the experiences of women, girls, and LGBTI persons. The articles cover issues such as State responsibility for gender-based violence, gender and sexuality as the basis for specific harms, conditions of confinement, and healthcare and reproductive rights, among others. The publication was launched

at the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women at UN Headquarters in New York.

The ATI continued its work to develop a universal protocol for non-coercive interviewing and attendant legal safeguards. It carried out several strategy meetings and advocacy initiatives to garner support for the universal protocol, including production of an animated video, "Changing Police Mindsets: From Coercion to Justice." Additionally, a Steering Committee of 15 experts and practitioners, tasked with leading the development of the protocol, held its first meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in May 2018.

In June/July 2017 and May 2018, the ATI and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute held several training activities in Brazil to increase the capacity of key actors on the use of the *Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol)* and to promote the use of best practices with regard to the investigation, documentation, and prevention of torture. The trainings were held in Brasilia, Manaus, Natal, Rio de Janeiro, and Florianopolis for members of the Brazilian National Preventive Mechanism, State Preventive Mechanisms of Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, groups of legal professionals (judges, public defenders, prosecutors) and forensic medical experts.

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***"Contributing to projects highlighting the pervasiveness of torture and ill-treatment in healthcare settings, and looking at torture from gendered perspectives, have unquestionably strengthened my desire to build a career advocating for victims of human rights abuses."***

**-- Christine Vlastic, J.D. '19**



## KOVLER PROJECT AGAINST TORTURE

Kovler Project Against Torture students work under faculty guidance to assist the UN Committee against Torture (UN CAT). The Project provides a “deep dive” on torture prohibition under international law, cultivates valuable professional skills, and includes a specialized practicum and week at the UN CAT sessions in Switzerland. Established in 2004, over 130 students and a dozen faculty have participated thus far. Alumni build remarkable, principled careers in government, civil society, private practice, academia, and founding or running NGOs. The Project was renamed the Kovler Project Against Torture in 2016 in recognition of the Blum-Kovler Foundation’s generous support.

The Project collaborates in varying manners and degrees with numerous organizations committed to strengthening human rights and dignity. Those organizations have included the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), Amnesty International, Amnesty USA, the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (ICRT), the Anti-Torture Initiative (ATI), the Center for Victims of Torture, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), the Constitution Project, Human Rights First, and the Open Society Policy Center.

## TOP KPAT HIGHLIGHTS

Over this last year, the Project engaged with the UN Committee’s chairperson and country rapporteurs on human rights and compliance records related to the Convention for the Committee’s 61st – 64th sessions. Project students traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, with Project Directors/Professors Claudio Grossman and Jennifer de Laurentiis, for the Committee’s 62nd session in November, when the Committee reviewed reports from eight State

parties: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Italy, Mauritius, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, and Timor-Leste.

Kovler students observed the Committee’s dialogue with stakeholders, including State party delegations, identified germane developments, met in strategy and briefing sessions, and conducted follow-up research and briefings. The Project also organized specialized networking opportunities for students with alumni and friends in Washington, D.C. and Geneva.

The Project organized and/or participated in a variety of anti-torture initiatives over the last year including:

- A Conversation with Jens Modvig, Chairperson of the United Nations Committee against Torture, and Newly Elected Committee Member/AUWCL Professor Diego Rodriguez-Pinzon;
- The 3rd KPAT/UN CAT Project Reunion (2004-2017), during which dozens of Project alumni and faculty discussed countering torture and related topics.

The Project values the support from Ms. Kelsey Lee Offield.

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***“The Kovler Project Against Torture reinforced my belief in the positive influence that both non-governmental and international organizations can have on States, and highlighted the diplomatic nuances necessary for achieving progressive change through the UN system. It also helped me to hone useful skills that will stay with me throughout my career.”***

**-- William Vazquez, J.D./M.A. '19**

**ATI project director Juan Méndez with executive director of the Irish Penal Reform, Deirdre Malone, during a visit to Ireland following meetings to discuss solitary confinement.**







2017-2018

# *disability & human rights*



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Center's Disability and Human Rights Program seeks to advance the human rights of persons with disabilities, and help overcome the effects of exclusionary practices, so that persons with disabilities achieve a state of full and effective participation and inclusion in society. Since 2007, the Center has worked across disciplines to bring together the disability rights, development assistance, and human rights communities to examine the important and emerging intersections of disability rights and human rights. Through conferences, scholarship, specialized fellowships, and collaboration with leading nongovernmental organizations, the Center works to increase implementation and adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## DISABILITY & HUMAN RIGHTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

In 2012, the Center launched its Disability & Human Rights Fellowship Program, sponsored by the Open Society Foundations' (OSF) Disability Rights Scholarship Program. The program, which just concluded its sixth year, brings attorneys from various parts of the world to AUWCL to engage in a specialized course of study focused on disability and human rights. The program provides disability rights advocates with the necessary expertise to develop new legislation, jurisprudence, impact litigation, and scholarship. The Center has hosted 17 fellows from seven countries, many of whom have gone on to work in high-profile positions in national governments and inter-governmental organizations.

The Center welcomed this year's Disability Rights Fellow, Mariela Galeazzi, an Argentinian disability rights attorney with a law degree from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata. She is an advocate for inclusive education for children with disabilities and for de-institu-

tionalization of people with psycho-social disabilities through strategic litigation and with organizations advocating for people with disabilities. In April 2018, Mariela was awarded the Goldman-Grossman award at the 21st Annual Hispanic Law Conference. This award is given annually to an LL.M. student who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the national and/or international Latinx community.

Mariela represented the Center at the Civil Society Forum of the 11th session of the Conference of the State Parties to the CRPD at the United Nations where she presented recommendations to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities regarding the CRPD Draft Comment No. 7 on Article 4.3 and 33.3. Through this experience, Mariela was able to directly liaise with other international organizations working on these issues, and strengthen legal and academic networks worldwide.

## SPRING SYMPOSIUM ON DISABILITY RIGHTS IN 2018

Last spring, the *Human Rights Brief*, a student-run publication of the Center, hosted its inaugural spring symposium. The day-long conference featured renowned experts on disability rights, immigration, and gender to explore the various challenges people with disabilities face, as well as the ways in which activists and practitioners can work towards greater inclusion. More than 100 people attended, representing dozens of NGOs and government agencies from across the country. The Center was thrilled to welcome Judith Heumann, former Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the U.S. Department of State, and an internationally recognized leader in the disability community and a lifelong civil rights advocate for disadvantaged people, as the Symposium's keynote speaker.



Symposium organizers Hannah Nallo (J.D. '18) and Todd Hull (J.D. '19) at a reception following the Symposium on Disability Rights in 2018.

CLAUDIO GROSSMAN HALL



THE HUMAN RIGHTS BRIEF  
& THE DISABILITY LAW SOCIETY PRESENT

## A Symposium on Disability Rights in 2018

**FEBRUARY 23, 2018**  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW  
4300 NEBRASKA AVE., N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20018  
CLAUDIO GROSSMAN HALL  
[HRBRIEF.ORG](http://HRBRIEF.ORG)

**HUMAN RIGHTS BRIEF**

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW  
CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
& HUMANITARIAN LAW

9:00 - 9:30 AM	Registration & Breakfast
9:30 - 9:45 AM	Welcome Remarks
9:45 - 11:15 AM	Panel #1: Immigration & Disability Rights
11:15 - 11:30 AM	Coffee Break
11:30 - 1:00 PM	Panel #2: Women & Disability Rights
1:00 - 2:00 PM	Luncheon Keynote Address
2:00 - 3:30 PM	Panel #3: Deinstitutionalization & Community Inclusion
3:30 - 4:00 PM	Reception to Follow in Founder's Hall Lobby







2017-2018

*business &  
human rights*





## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Center's Human Rights in Business Program (HRIBP) aims to foster responsible business conduct and promote human rights and justice for people adversely affected by business activity around the world. The program uses the neutral platform of the university to engage stakeholders to find rights-based solutions to the impacts of business activities around the world. Core initiatives focus on a variety of issue areas, including human rights impact assessment, land use and community-driven operational grievance mechanisms, international finance regulation, and responsible conduct of private security service providers.

Through the HRIBP's Accountability for the Security Sector in Risk Environments (ASSURE) project, the Center is a founding member of the civil society pillar of the International Code of Conduct Association, a Geneva-based multi-stakeholder initiative dedicated to ensuring private security providers uphold human rights and humanitarian law standards in their operations.

## HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROJECT

This year, the Center launched Networked Expertise in Support of Human Rights Impact Assessment, a collaborative effort between the Center and the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences' Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights, and Law Program; the American Bar Association's Center for Human Rights' Business and Human Rights Project; and NomoGaia. This initiative seeks to bring multidisciplinary expertise to bear on the corporate due diligence process, and, in particular, seeks to generate and promote methodological consensus and good practice in HRIA.

In April, the Initiative piloted a series of small group stakeholder discussions via webinar with experts and practitioners from around the world to begin to identify challenges and opportunities for developing interdisciplinary good practice in HRIA. HRIBP's Director (pro bono) Rebecca DeWinter-Schmitt presented on the project at the May annual convention of the International Association of Impact Assessment in Durban, South Africa.

## LAND USE IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROJECT

The Center's Land Use Impact Assessment (LUIA) Project has convened a team of local partners to create a pilot tool to facilitate multi-stakeholder (community, government, and business) resolution of land-related disputes in Vietnam and Cambodia, rooted in inclusive community empowerment and engagement. The centerpiece of this approach is the participatory Land Use Impact Assessment tool, which integrates existing laws, human rights norms and evidence-based approaches. The LUIA tool incorporates the best practices of those who have been able to achieve results in this extremely difficult operating space, and empowers them with a desperately needed alternative mechanism to reduce long-standing land disputes.

Building off of momentum and relationships established through sustained and strategic stakeholder engagement over the past three years, the LUIA team continues to advance its goal of creating an innovative approach to multi-stakeholder documentation and evidence-based dispute resolution through the LUIA process. Throughout this past year, LUIA project staff traveled to the region to meet with local partners, lead trainings, represent the Center at meetings with local community stakeholders, and to conduct field research.



2017-2018

# human rights education



## Human Rights 101

What are human rights?

How do I become part of the human rights community at WCL?

The Center's **Student Advisory Board** is organizing the fourth annual Human Rights 101 -- an intensive "crash course" in human rights including an introductory lecture featuring **Professor Macarena Saez** and the opportunity to learn more about human rights opportunities at WCL from current Student Advisory Board members.

For more info, visit [www.WCLCenterForHR.org](http://www.WCLCenterForHR.org)

CONTACT:  
Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law  
4300 Nebraska Ave, NW, Washington DC 20016  
Tel: 202.274.4180 Email: [humlaw@wcl.american.edu](mailto:humlaw@wcl.american.edu)



## The Pardon Power: Implications for the Rule of Law

Monday, September 11th

12:00pm-1:15pm

NT01 Ceremonial Classroom

Lunch will be provided

Join the *Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law* and the *Program on Law & Government* for a teach-in examining the scope of the pardon power and its implications for the rule of law. AUWCL faculty experts will provide constitutional law, criminal law, and international law perspectives based on the recent pardon of former sheriff Joe Arpaio. Featured speakers include Professors Bob Goldman, Ira Robbins, and Herman Schwartz. The panel will be moderated by Professor Fernando Laguarda.

This event will be the first in a series of rapid response panels to address pressing issues related to the rule of law and human rights in the United States.

Visit [www.WCLCenterForHR.org](http://www.WCLCenterForHR.org) for more info

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## Crímenes de Lesa Humanidad Cometidos Durante la Dictadura Argentina: Trayendo los Perpetradores a la Justicia

Jueves, 22 de Marzo

12:00pm-1:15pm Yuma 401

\*Recepción a seguir\* Founders Hall Lobby

La Iniciativa contra la Tortura y el **Centro de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Humanitario** invitamos cordialmente a una presentación del Sr. Raúl H. Sánchez, Secretario de Derechos Humanos de la Provincia de Córdoba, Argentina. El Sr. Sánchez brindará información sobre los crímenes de lesa humanidad cometidos por oficiales durante la dictadura militar en Argentina, y analizará los esfuerzos recientes para llevar a estos oficiales ante la justicia. La discusión será moderada por **Juan E. Méndez**, profesor de Derecho de los Derechos Humanos en Residencia y ex Relator Especial de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Tortura. Este evento será en español. Habrá traducción simultánea al inglés.

Para más información: [www.WCLCenterForHR.org](http://www.WCLCenterForHR.org)

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202.274.4180 [humlaw@wcl.american.edu](mailto:humlaw@wcl.american.edu)



## "Newtown" (2016) A Human Rights Film Screening

Wednesday, March 28

4:30pm-7:00pm

Yuma YT17

Join the **Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law's Student Advisory Board** for a screening of "Newtown" (2016). "Newtown" explores the aftermath of the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. This documentary follows a traumatized community fractured by grief and driven toward a sense of purpose. The screening will be followed by a student-led roundtable discussion on the film and the ways in which youth are leading the movement for gun control.

FOR MORE INFO, VISIT: [www.WCLCenterForHR.org](http://www.WCLCenterForHR.org)

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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS ON CAMPUS...

This past year, the Center hosted over 30 events, including panel discussions, workshops, seminars, expert convenings, and more, addressing key human rights issues.

*Human Rights Reading Group:* Throughout the year, students confronted the dilemmas and issues that arise in connection with human rights, focusing on how acknowledgment of such critiques can help advocates better navigate the field with creativity and critical reflection in this monthly series.

*Human Rights Skills Series:* The Center's *Student Advisory Board* organized a series of workshops designed to introduce students to the professional skills relevant to careers in human rights. These seminars allowed participants to develop sector-specific skills and competencies prioritized by employers.

*Conflict and Crisis in Venezuela: Human Rights & International Responses:* Together with AU's Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, the Center hosted a roundtable discussion examining the human rights crisis in Venezuela with the Washington Office on Latin America and Vision Democratica.

*Human Rights Book Launch Events:* This year, the Center hosted four book launches which explored contemporary issues in human rights priority areas for Center faculty and staff. The book topics included an exploration of how an international criminal tribunal affects local communities; the U.S. Government's practice of torture; the ethics and challenges of legal work for human rights in Israel; and, critical topics at the intersection of gender and the prohibition of torture. These events were held in collaboration with key partners, such as Amnesty International USA, Human Rights First, and the New Israel Fund, among others.

## ...AND AROUND THE WORLD

*Initiative on Transparency and Election Monitoring:* This year, the Center served as the Secretariat for the independent panel of experts who evaluated candidates for open positions as judges for the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The independent panel is part of an ongoing effort by the Open Society Justice Initiative, the Due Process of Law Foundation, and the Center for Justice and International Law to increase the transparency and visibility of the Inter-American election process, thereby strengthening protection mechanisms in the Inter-American Human Rights System.

*Latin American Initiative on Justice, Gender, and Sexuality:* The Center's Latin American Initiative on Justice, Gender, and Sexuality seeks to: (1) expand the work of the Latin American Scholars Network (ALAS Network) in the areas of reproductive rights and gender issues related to transitional justice; (2) increase the knowledge of sexual and reproductive rights as human rights, and of gender and sexual violence among law professors and activists; and (3) mainstream the role of gender and sexuality in issues of transitional justice in Latin America. This summer, ALAS Network experts piloted a ground-breaking 30-hour course examining various legal debates regarding the definition and regulation of sexuality.

*Syria Legal Clinic Project:* Last fall, the Center partnered with the Free Syrian Lawyers Association to conduct research on access to justice in internal armed conflicts. Center research assistants conducted research on an array of access to justice and rule of law issues worldwide. The Center also provided expertise on issues relating to comparative legal research, international humanitarian law, and transitional justice.



# UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

Center leads human rights site visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for AUWCL students, including students from Professor Juan Méndez' Prevention of Genocide seminar







NGO partner Coalición LGBTTTI de Incidencia en las Américas with the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights Rapporteur on LGBT Rights & Commissioner Flavia Piovesan



2017-2018

# *impact litigation*



## OVERVIEW

The Center's Impact Litigation Program aims to promote and strengthen the rule of law and democracy around the world. Through the Seminar on Strategic Litigation in International Human Rights, AUWCL 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, this initiative seeks to promote government accountability, expand public education and awareness, and provide a foundation for future litigation that helps defend and safeguard human rights around the world.

## 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. During AY 2017-2018, the Project worked with approximately 20 J.D. and LL.M. students, Humphrey Fellows, and a visiting scholar on a variety of human rights issues.

Mirta Moragas (LL.M. '18) and Melida Ceballos (LL.M. '18) drafted and submitted a petition before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights against Paraguay for discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The petition was filed in conjunction with Paraguayan NGO Ariana on behalf of female prisoners who are denied intimate partner visits that are regularly allowed to heterosexual male and female prisoners. The same students drafted an amicus brief submitted to the First Court Specialized in Constitutional Matters of Lima (Peru) on issues of abortion and human rights.

In support of its decision to eliminate the

death penalty, the Guatemalan Constitutional Court cited an amicus brief submitted by ILP students Aythnis Rivera (LL.M. '17) and Tatiana Devia (J.D. '18). This was the first time ever that the Constitutional Court referred to a specific amicus brief.

Building on earlier students' work, ILP students Audrey Mulholland (J.D. '19), Amy Ernst (J.D. '19), and Kristina Gancarova (LL.M. '18) extensively analyzed recent jurisprudence of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, laying the foundation for an upcoming publication on this important matter.

Students additionally:

- Drafted an amicus brief for a case against Ethiopia before the African Commission of Human Rights and Peoples' Rights;
- Prepared a preliminary report on the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions;
- Analyzed the Pardon powers of the President of the United States and its use in the case of Joseph Arpaio.

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***“Working on such a high-profile case, such as the Arpaio Pardon, made me realize how many factors are involved in litigation. The ILP provided me with the tools to influence and have an impact on policy-makers, judges, civil society, and many other stakeholders.*”**

**-- Alan Vogelfanger, LL.M. '18**

# HOW WE'VE ENGAGED OUR STUDENTS

The Center is dedicated to the continuing education and empowerment of its student body in the areas of human rights and humanitarian law. We offer many exciting ways for students to get involved, starting from year one. In addition to research opportunities with several of the Center's core initiatives, students can join the Center's Student Advisory Board, publish articles in the *Human Rights Brief*, or apply for a fellowship opportunity with the Center.



**43** *Human Rights Brief* Staffers



**23** Research Assistants



**24** Students Enrolled in **2** Classes



**6** Student Advisory Board Members  
who organized **5** events





**International Visiting Research Scholar Flaka Pollozhani & Science Po intern Sofia Auzmendi attend the Center's Anti-Torture Initiative's event at UNGA72 in New York with members of the Center's Student Advisory Board.**

## STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Center welcomed its fourteenth Student Advisory Board (SAB) in February 2018. The SAB is a group of creative students who are committed to human rights advocacy. The SAB provides students with the opportunity to participate in the planning of Center programming, and to learn tangible skills for effective advocacy.

## THE HUMAN RIGHTS BRIEF

A student-run publication of the Center, the *Brief* provides concise legal analysis of cutting edge human rights issues. This past year, the *Brief* included 15 senior staffers and 28 junior staffers.

The *Human Rights Brief* continues to experience incredible success, contributing articles, editing pieces, representing the Center at human rights events around D.C., and working with practitioners around the world to further human rights scholarship. This year, AUWCL students and practitioners published over 97 new articles in the *Brief*.

## SPONSORED FELLOWSHIPS & INTERNSHIPS

The Center partnered with IREX's Community Solutions Program to host international visiting research scholar *Flaka Pollozhani*, a Ph.D. student from Macedonia. Flaka conducted comparative research on freedom of expression issues in the U.S. and the European System for the Protection of Human Rights. She also worked with the Center to develop community-based human rights education initiatives in Macedonia.

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

The Center continued to host undergraduate interns from Science Po in France. This year, the Center welcomed *Sofia Auzmendi* who provided programmatic support and helped create a database of Center alumni.





# CENTER SNAPSHOTS: 2017-2018



# 2017-2018 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law's public events and activities focus on initiatives with an diverse array of partners around the world.

- Human Rights 101/International Humanitarian Law 101
- The Pardon Power: Implications for the Rule of Law
- Site Visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
- Book Launch: *Gender Perspectives on Torture: Law, and Practice*, edited by the Anti-Torture Initiative
- Human Rights Analysis and International Financial Regulatory Standards
- Human Rights Career Panel: Breaking into International Human Rights Law
- Feminist Theory in Armed Conflict: All-Female Protection Units in Syria
- Human Rights Networking Event
- Human Rights in Crisis - What Future for the European Court of Human Rights?
- Book Launch: *Unjustifiable Means: The Inside Story of How the CIA, Pentagon, and US Government Conspired to Torture*, by Mark Fallon
- Human Rights Litigation before the European Court of Justice
- Crimes Against Humanity During the Argentinian Dictatorship
- "Newtown" (2016): A Human Rights Film Screening
- Human Rights Reading Group
- Book Launch: *The Wall and the Gate: Israel, Palestine, and the Legal Battle for Human Rights*, by Michael Sford
- International Finance and Human Rights Workshop Series
- Transnational Injustice Report Launch and the International Commission of Jurists
- Conflict and Crisis in Venezuela: Human Rights and International Responses
- Lawyering Skills Series: Learning to Advocate for Yourself
- Book Launch: *Some Kind of Justice: The ICTY's Impact in Bosnia and Serbia*, by Diane Orentlicher
- Disability Rights in 2018 Symposium
- Puerto Rico in Crisis: Disaster Response through a Human Rights Lens
- The Role of the Hague Academy of International Law
- Independent Panel of Experts' Report: Election of Inter-American Human Rights Judges
- Doing Justice: Electing the Best Judges & Commissioners to Enforce Int'l Human Rights Law
- Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico: A Crisis for Environmental and Indigenous Rights

The Center partnered with the War Crimes Research Office to host a launch for Center faculty co-director Diane Orentlicher's book, *Some Kind of Justice: The ICTY's Impact in Bosnia and Serbia*, which has been recognized by leading experts as a landmark contribution to the field. Expert panelists discussed the groundbreaking and timely account of how an international criminal tribunal affects local communities and the factors that account for its pathbreaking impact over time.





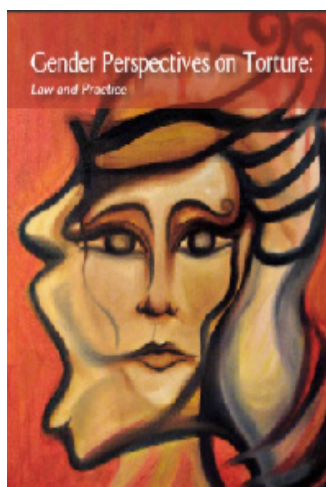
# 2017-2018

## PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

The Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law produces reports, policy papers, scholarly articles, books, and other publications, including the student-run online resource *The Human Rights Brief*, which policymakers, advocates, international aid organizations, legal practitioners, and others use to help inform decisions on issues of international human rights and humanitarian law.

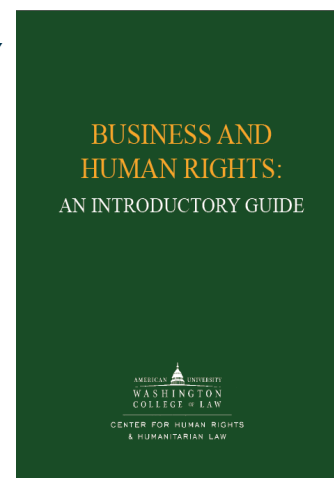
### ***Gender Perspectives on Torture: Law and Practice***

This edited volume brings together contributions by more than twenty-five experts to provide novel insights into critical topics at the intersection between gender and the international human rights law prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, while addressing the unique experiences of women, girls, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in a variety of contexts.



### ***Business and Human Rights: An Introductory Guide***

This publication introduces key concepts and stakeholders in the field of human rights and business, as well as the unique ways in which initiatives at American University Washington College of Law foster responsible business conduct and promote human rights and justice for people adversely affected by business activity around the world.



### ***The Human Rights Brief (HRBrief.org)***

A student-run publication of the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law, the *Brief* reports on developments in international human rights and humanitarian law and provides concise legal analysis of cutting edge human rights issues.



### ***Resources on Transparency and Election Monitoring***

The Center's Initiative on Transparency and Election Monitoring compiled various reports, articles, resolutions and guidelines, and scholarly works related to the nomination and election processes of the Inter-American Human Rights System.







## CENTER FACULTY & STAFF AT A GLANCE: 2017-2018

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The 2017-2018 academic year was filled with numerous moments of accomplishment, scholarship, and celebration for the faculty and staff of the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law. Here are some of the highlights.

Under the direction of faculty co-director **Anita Sinha**, students participating in the International Human Rights Law Clinic secured a grant of asylum by an immigration judge in two cases, thereby allowing clients to remain safely in the U.S.

Center associate director **Melissa del Aguila** became a founding member of the Human Rights Education Research Group, a collaborative research initiative dedicated to catalyzing inter-disciplinary and multi-network research around emerging issues in human rights education.

Faculty co-director **David Hunter** co-authored an amicus brief on the right to a stable climate supporting Our Children's Trust in the constitutional climate lawsuit, *Juliana v. U.S.*, against the U.S. government in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

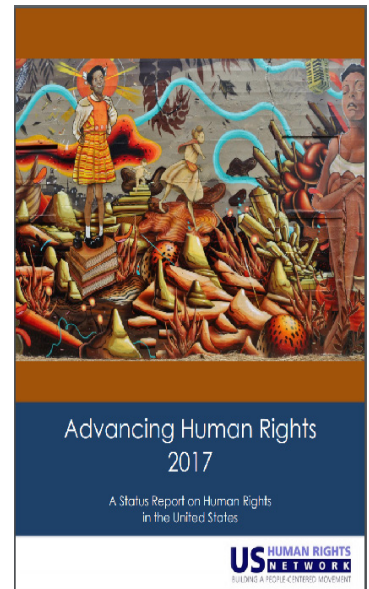
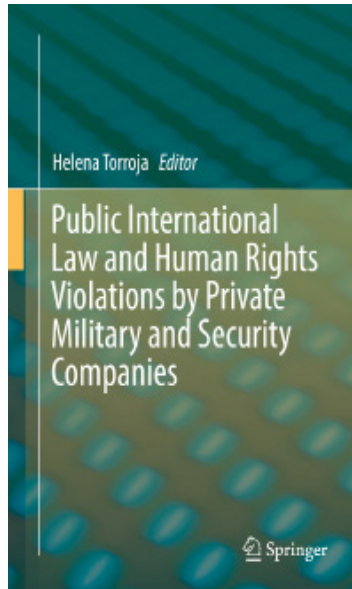
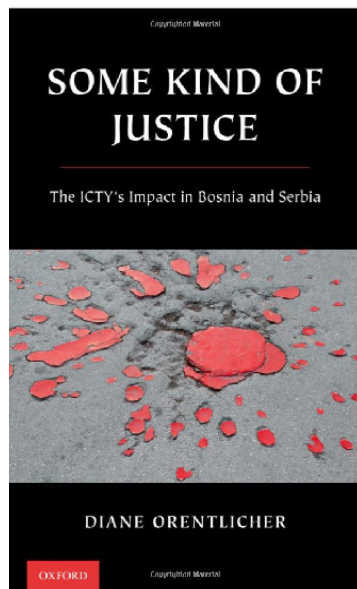
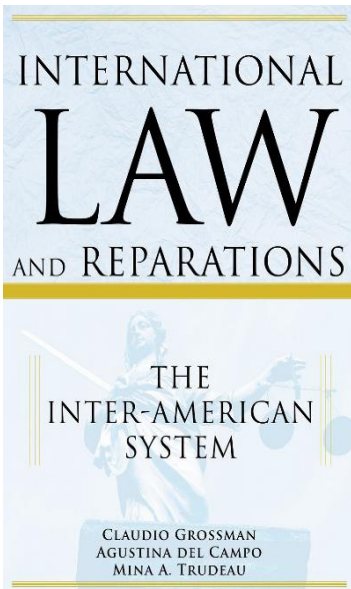
**Rebecca DeWinter-Schmitt**, director (pro bono) of the Human Rights in Business program, contributed a chapter exploring limitations of soft law initiatives in the book: *Public International Law and Human Rights Violations by Private Military and Security Companies*.

Faculty co-director **Juan Mendez** served as a member of the Selection Committee to appoint the individuals serving on Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace, Truth Commission, and additional organs created by the 2016 Peace Agreement.

Center faculty director **Macarena Sáez** received the "Innovation in Pedagogy Award" from American University Washington College of Law. The award recognizes exceptional creativity and innovation in instruction for the Center's Impact Litigation Project seminar.

Dean Emeritus and faculty co-director **Claudio Grossman** co-authored a new book *International Law and Reparations: The Inter-American System*, which presents a comprehensive analysis on the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights concerning full reparations.

ATI assistant director **Vanessa Drummond** participated in an expert convening in Armenia with over 30 human rights experts from countries across Europe. The conference, organized by the Open Society Foundations, assessed regional civil society strategies for combating torture.



Faculty co-director **Robert Goldman**, in his capacity as acting-president of the International Commission of Jurists, led a roundtable seminar to discuss how to address accountability and reparations for violations of human rights in the U.S.



Center program coordinator **Anastassia Fagan** contributed a chapter to the U.S. Human Rights Network's *Advancing Human Rights: A Status Report on Human Rights in the United States*. The report offers an overview of human rights struggles in the U.S. during 2017.

Faculty co-director **Herman Schwartz** was honored at a celebration in Tel Aviv last spring for his work promoting human rights in Israel

through the Herman Schwartz Israel Human Rights Law Fellowship Program, which concluded this year.

Faculty co-director **Diane Orentlicher** published a new book, *Some Kind of Justice: The ICTY's Impact in Bosnia and Serbia*, which offers a pathbreaking account of how an international criminal tribunal affects local communities.

**Jennifer de Laurentiis**, associate director of the Center's Kovler Project Against Torture and Impact Litigation Project, led AUWCL students to New York City to observe and report on the UN International Law Commission's session.

# Our Team

## **Macarena Sáez**

Director  
Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law

## **Melissa C. del Aguila**

Associate Director  
Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law

## **Anastassia Fagan**

Program Coordinator  
Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law

## **Jennifer de Laurentiis**

Associate Director, Impact Litigation &  
Kovler Project Against Torture

## **Vanessa Drummond**

Assistant Project Director  
Anti-Torture Initiative

## **Rebecca DeWinter-Schmitt**

Program Director (*pro bono*)  
Human Rights in Business Program

# Faculty Co-Directors

## **Robert Goldman**

Professor of Law and Louis C. James Scholar

## **Claudio Grossman**

Professor of Law and Dean Emeritus  
R. Geraldson Scholar for International  
and Humanitarian Law

## **Anita Sinha**

Assistant Professor of Law and Director of  
the International Human Rights Law Clinic

## **Juan E. Méndez**

Professor of Human Rights Law in  
Residence

## **Diane Orentlicher**

Professor of International Law

## **Herman Schwartz**

Professor of Law

## **David Hunter**

Professor of Law

*The Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law extends its deepest gratitude to the individual donors and institutional funders who have supported our work over the past year. Your generosity and commitment make it possible for the Center to advance its mission and vision, to promote human rights through teaching, scholarship, and service.*









CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
& HUMANITARIAN LAW

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