IMMIGRATION LAW

FROM THE MEXICAN BORDER to the halls of Congress, the controversy over immigration law has intensified and become more critical to U.S. policymakers. Virginia’s Immigration Law Program allows students to explore the key legal and public policy issues affecting this debate, including whom the United States should admit, who should qualify for political asylum, what should be done about the undocumented, the impact of immigration on the economy or on national security, the role of the states, and the challenges of building an effective immigration management system. Building on the strengths of an experienced faculty, Virginia’s program benefits students preparing for careers in the immigration field, as well as those pursuing careers in criminal law, business law, family law, administrative law or public policy, or who simply have an interest in immigration issues. The Law...
Migrant Farmworker Project and discrimination cases. The program to assist an isolated family law. Of immigration, including the meaning of national membership and cultural identity, the ethics of international relations, or the link between policy and international human rights. Students also build practical skills through an immigration clinic and several pro bono programs offering aid to clients. And the program brings in expert speakers on immigration law, including leading attorneys and policy advocates, immigration judges and government officials.

COURSES AND SEMINARS
CORE COURSES
Citizenship and Group Identity
Immigration Law
Refugee Law and Policy
CLINIC
Immigration Law Clinic
RELATED COURSES
Administrative Law
Antiterrorism, Law and the Role of Intelligence
Foreign Relations Law
Goverance and Control of the Multinational Business
Enterprise
Human Rights, Public International Law and the Scholarly Process
International Human Rights Law
International Law
Law Clinic
International Law and International Relations
Legislation
National Security Law
Presidential Powers
Race and Law

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND PRO BONO PROJECTS
Outside of the classroom, the Immigration Law Program provides students with numerous hands-on learning experiences.

HUNTON & WILLIAMS PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP
In 2004, the Law School developed a pro bono partnership with the Richmond-based law firm Hunton & Williams. The firm’s attorneys work pro bono with the assistance of student volunteers to represent indigent clients in the areas of immigration, asylum and family law.

MIGRANT FARMWORKER PROJECT
Run by the student group the Latin American Law Organization, the Migrant Farmworker Project works with the Legal Aid Justice Center’s Immigrant Advocacy Program to assist an isolated population often in need of legal counsel. The program represents immigrants and farmworkers throughout the state. Although the center handles mostly employment law cases, it also takes housing and discrimination cases. Student members of the Migrant Farmworker Project visit migrant farm labor camps and inform workers about their rights. The project also seeks to increase awareness about the substandard treatment of immigrant workers and conditions in which they live and work in Virginia. Students do not need to speak Spanish to participate.

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
REFUGEE ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES
The International Rescue Committee in Charlottesville (IRC) each year helps approximately 200 refugees, selected overseas as part of the U.S. refugee admissions program, to resettle in the U.S. Since opening in 1998, the IRC has resettled more than 2,500 refugees from 31 countries in Central Virginia. Recent arrivals include refugees from Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, Colombia, Afghanistan, and D.R. Congo, among others. After one year in the United States, they are eligible for legal permanent resident (green card) status, but must first complete a potentially daunting set of forms and records. For many years, Virginia Law students have found ways to partner with the IRC to assist with this process and have also assumed other volunteer roles with the organization.

IMMIGRANT JAIL OUTREACH PROJECT
In conjunction with the Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition, law student volunteers are trained to help CAIR Coalition attorneys in their work at local jails in Virginia housing hundreds of immigrant detainees. Students may assist in know-your-rights presentations, interview detainees to screen for those who may have claims to immigration status, and conduct initial case development with follow-up interviews and legal research. CAIR then attempts to place cases in their pro bono network or refers to outside counsel those with legitimate claims to status who lack the resources to fund their own defense.

FOR JESUS MUNIZ AND HER DAUGHTER (seated), a long and difficult road to permanent resident status in the United States finally ended with the help of the Law School’s Immigration Law Clinic.

The achievement was the culmination of years of work by clinic students, who helped Muniz use a law designed to help women escape abusive relationships without jeopardizing their pursuit of permanent immigration status.

“I was so grateful to have someone to help,” Muniz said. “At that time, I had nothing, no money, and I was scared about how everything was going to work. It was a miracle to find people like [clinic director] DOUG FORD and the students.”

School provides an ideal setting for considering philosophical and theoretical issues posed by immigration, including the meaning of national and cultural identity, the ethics of international relations, or the link between policy and international human rights. Students also build practical skills through an immigration clinic and several pro bono programs offering aid to clients. And the program brings in expert speakers on immigration law, including leading attorneys and policy advocates, immigration judges and government officials.

A bill championed by 2014 graduates JULIANNE JAQUITH and ROXANA MILLER to protect unsuspecting immigrants in Virginia from immigration consultant fraud recently became law in the state. “We hope that our contribution in this area will create awareness among residents of the Commonwealth and help protect innocent victims from unscrupulous individuals,” Miller said.

The scammers, often notaries public, charge high fees for inaccurate immigration services or legal advice they are not qualified to give. In Latin America, a “notario” is highly trained, educated and licensed to provide legal advice, creating confusion for many who seek these services in the United States. The students said the idea to work on the legislation began as an assignment for their Public Interest Law and Advocacy Skills class.

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