



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, and the impact of immigration on the economy or on national security.

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCED FACULTY, STUDENTS CONSIDER ISSUES posed by immigration and build practical skills through an immigration clinic and pro bono efforts offering aid to clients. The program also brings in expert speakers on immigration law, including leading attorneys and policy advocates, immigration judges and government officials.

**WITH HELP FROM
IMMIGRATION LAW
CLINIC STUDENTS,**
an Afghan national who had been
imprisoned for three years
on a misdemeanor charge
was recently freed on bond.

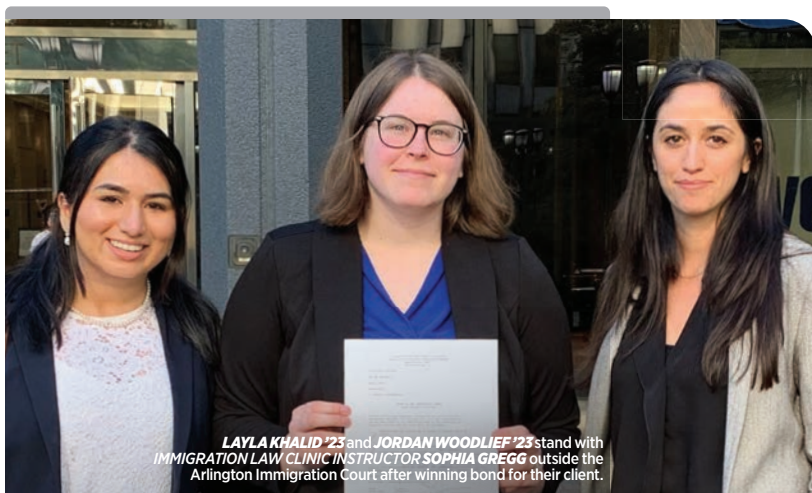
LAYLA KHALID '23 and **JORDAN WOODLIEF '23** argued their client's case at the Arlington Immigration Court and won his release in December 2021.

"From the start, the case was an uphill battle," said clinic instructor Sophia Gregg, a lawyer with the Legal Aid Justice Center. The case was further complicated by his asylum appeal before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

The client had fled Afghanistan to live in Pakistan as a child due to persecution by the Taliban, and later came to the United States on a student visa in 2015 to seek refuge when the persecution continued, Khalid said. In 2018, he was convicted of a misdemeanor simple assault with a 90-day suspended sentence, but was detained by the Department of Homeland Security at the Farmville Detention Center in Virginia for more than three years.

"Our client faced severe medical issues in detention, including contracting COVID-19, experiencing symptoms of PTSD and schizophrenia, as well as enduring physical violence from the prison guards," Khalid said.

The clinic first won a bond hearing in im-



LAYLA KHALID '23 and **JORDAN WOODLIEF '23** stand with **IMMIGRATION LAW CLINIC INSTRUCTOR SOPHIA GREGG** outside the Arlington Immigration Court after winning bond for their client.

migration court.

"Jordan and Layla worked all throughout the Thanksgiving break, filing over 100 pages of documents in support of the client's case, and spoke to the client every other day for months to gather the facts and to prepare for the bond hearing," Gregg said.

The students

obtained records confirming that their client was abused by Farmville Detention Center guards, and that an internal investigation absolved him of any responsibility.

"This fact proved to be very poignant to the immigration judge," Woodlief said.

Khalid said she felt "incredibly relieved"

upon the client's release.

"Instead of learning about the complexities of the immigration system in a classroom, we were able to experience it firsthand with real cases and learned how to navigate the system along the way," she said.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

CORE COURSES

Immigration Law and Policy
Immigration Law Clinic

COURSES

Administrative Law
Asian Americans and the Law
Border Policy and Politics
Foreign Relations Law

International Human Rights
Law
International Human Rights
Law Clinic
International Law
International Law of Migration

and Refugees
Labor Law
Legislation
National Security Law
Presidential Powers
Racial Justice and Law

*These courses represent the
2020-23 school years.
Not all courses are offered
every year.*



As an **EMPLOYMENT LAW CLINIC** student **ANA M. TOBAR '21** spoke to the Virginia General Assembly on behalf of farm workers seeking to remove their exemption from minimum wage laws, and more broadly to increase the minimum wage for Virginia's workers.

"My passion for immigration law stems from my experience as a first-generation immigrant," Tobar said. "Several immigration laws that have been enacted and rescinded within the past few years have affected me, and most importantly, my family and close friends. I decided to get involved in immigration activism because I realized the great privilege that I had as a documented individual within the United States."



PROFESSOR AMANDA FROST, an expert in immigration and citizenship law, is the author of the book "You Are Not American: Citizen Stripping From Dred Scott to the Dreamers." Her scholarship has been cited by over a dozen federal and state courts, and she has been invited to testify on the topics of her articles before both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.



ABOVE
SIARRA ROGERS '19
and R. COOPER
VAUGHAN '17 meet
with a worker
during a visit
through the Migrant
Farmworker
Project.

The project, which began in the early 1980s, provides students experience in field investigation and immigration law, helps them practice their Spanish and counts toward their Pro Bono Challenge hours.

AFGHAN IMMIGRANT PROJECT

Coordinated by the Charlottesville-Albemarle Bar Association Volunteer Pro Bono Program, the project deploys students to help Afghan refugees fill out paperwork aimed at reuniting them with family members stranded abroad.

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.

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 with know-your-rights presentations, interview detainees and conduct initial case development.

INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ASSISTANCE PROJECT

UVA Law is home to one of 29 student chapters of IRAP, which develops and enforces a set of legal rights for refugees and displaced persons.



IMMIGRATION LAW

law.virginia.edu/immigration

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