

DePaul University
Asylum & Immigration Clinic

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*Graduated:
2001*

What do you remember most about your time in the Clinic?

The day Anne and I went to court to represent "Sue", a trafficked victim from Thailand, in the administrative hearing. It was a memorable day for us, especially when we won the case. We succeeded to give Sue a new chance to start a new life for herself. This was one of my best memories from law school overall.

What lessons from the clinic do you still use today or have used in your professional career?

We were taught how to build the case file and keep records. I started my career in international law without a proper induction. The training I received at the clinic was very useful to me.

How did your involvement with the clinic help you connect with other professionals in the field?

I did not practice in this specific area. I relocated to The Hague, Netherlands where I worked for the United Nations.

What would you tell current or future DePaul law students about the clinic?

The experience at the clinic is very valuable because it provides a foundation that you cannot assume you will receive when you start your first job after law school. The more you absorb while working at the clinic, you will guarantee having a better head start.

Is there a message you would like to share with your fellow Clinic alums, faculty, or staff?

I am grateful to DePaul for the supportive and inspiring environment it provided to its students. There is no doubt that we mattered and were not considered just a number. The vast opportunities to learn in alternative ways, such as through the Asylum Clinic made the experience more rewarding because we were able to experience how our dedicated work can positively impact people's lives. At DePaul, we learned that a dedicated career in law should be about service and social justice, and not about profiting individually. Congratulations to the Asylum Clinic for turning 25 and thank you for giving me such a wonderful foundation upon which I was able to build a strong career!

Is there anything else you would like to share about your clinic experience?

My career path in law is non-traditional. When starting my legal studies, I already knew I wanted to become an international civil servant but did not know how I was going to make that happen. While in law school, I was navigating my options after graduation, which I found difficult because what overshadowed the discussion at the time were the more traditional career options. I felt nervous for not wanting to be a litigator and striving to carve out something else, considering how much I had already invested in my studies. I consider myself lucky to have been able to find employment with the United Nations. It was a very rewarding experience for me because I was fortunate to work at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at a time when international justice was a priority in the geopolitical narrative. The ICTY was a laboratory for new graduates, and we learned a lot. I am not sure it is the same case today. For new graduates, my advice would be to establish your career domestically before you expand more broadly. It is vital that you have a career foundation rooted in your home country to fall back on. Although an expatriate's lifestyle is exciting, there does come a time where you feel that you need to contribute more locally. In the field of international justice, if you are employed at the international tribunals, you are likely to be more removed, which means that you are unlikely see the impact of your work directly. After twenty years, this is the reason why I am now focusing my work more locally in Iraq.