

DePaul University
Asylum & Immigration Clinic

Natalie Long

*Assistant Attorney General
Environmental Bureau, Illinois Attorney General's Office*

*Clinic Participation:
2009-2010*

*Graduated:
2012*

After participating in the DePaul Asylum and Immigration Clinic, Natalie Long lived in Chiapas, Mexico, and Guanajuato, Mexico, where she brought her experiences from the clinic to bear in the development of environmental and land rights cases for local communities. Subsequent work in the environmental field has taken her to Southern Illinois, Pennsylvania, and now Springfield, Illinois, where she currently works as an Assistant Attorney General in the Illinois Attorney General's Southern Environmental Bureau.

In 2017 while living in Carbondale, Illinois, Natalie and a group of friends collaborated to form the Southern Illinois Immigrant Rights Project, a grassroots organization dedicated to advocating for support both for immigrant families in our community, as well as for State and federal policy supportive of immigrant communities. She have also assisted as a translator for colleagues who are immigration attorneys

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

I remember the sense of admiration that I held for my fellow clinic students, my clinic partner, our clients, and our clinic instructor; I had the good fortune to be surrounded by people who constantly inspired me.

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

The Clinic was my first opportunity as a young law student to gain legal experience in an applied fashion. Through its cases, I gained my first experiences in drafting affidavits; collecting and organizing evidence; and researching and presenting legal arguments, amongst other skills. All of these skills have been, and continue to be, essential tools in my legal career.

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

My career after participating in the Clinic took an unanticipated turn toward an area of law that does not explicitly overlap with immigration, and so my networking with immigration practitioners is currently somewhat limited. That said, I would not be where I am today without having been a student in the Clinic, as the experience shaped my life in an indelible fashion.

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

The Clinic provides a formative experience that will prepare you to be a skilled immigration practitioner. In the event a student chooses to pursue a different practice area for their legal career, the Clinic equips its students with practical, hands-on knowledge that readily transfers to others area of the law. I cannot recommend highly enough that a student enroll in the Clinic, so as to benefit from the lessons it has to offer.

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

Please allow me to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Albiol and my fellow Clinic alums (2009-2010) for their instruction and example during our year together at DePaul.