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HARVARD NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION CLINICAL PROGRAM

Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program celebrates 10th anniversary and growing impact

Via Harvard Law Today

In 2006, the Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program (HNMCP) opened its doors with a handful of students pursuing independent clinical work.

This past November, HNMCP celebrated its 10th anniversary and the clinic’s evolution into a robust program of global clinical work in dispute systems design, innovative pedagogy around teamwork, and expanded course offerings in multiparty negotiation, group decision-making, teams, and facilitation. Today, HNMCP counts 260 current and former students and 84 clients from the United States and around the world. Courses offered by HNMCP have also expanded to include deeper dives into advanced skills such as multi-party negotiation and facilitation.

The clinic celebrated its growth, success, and its anniversary on Nov. 5, with a public symposium, hosted by Robert Bordone ’97, Thaddeus R. Beal Clinical Professor of Law and Director of HNMCP, and Rachel Viscomi ’01, Assistant Director and Clinical Instructor at HNMCP. The symposium was both retrospective and prospective, addressing the clinic’s foundational focus on dispute-systems design, as well as looking at the role of facilitation and political dialogue.

Martha Minow, the Morgan and Helen Chu Dean and Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, opened with remarks commending the program’s focus on creative thinking and uniquely designed solutions that address the systemic nature of problems.

“That everybody in this room understands that having a bridge from what’s hard to what’s promising and having a bridge that connects people — that connects a problem to a solution, having a bridge that actually connects theory to practice — that’s what the effort is,” Minow said.

Bordone said he was grateful for help from members of the Harvard Law School community to advance the clinic. He cited former HLS Dean and current Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Elena Kagan ’86, who supported the creation of HNMCP in 2006. And he acknowledged Dean Minow’s support in helping the clinic grow and flourish since she became dean in 2009. Bordone paid special tribute to Frank E.A. Sander ’49 LLB ’52, Bussey Professor of Law, Emeritus, whose work serves as a foundation for the field and whose mentorship was critical to the founding of the clinic.

The first panel of the day looked at the ways in which Dispute Systems Design theory has come to be applied to an ever-broader range of contexts. The four panelists addressed the implications of context, identity, and setting to the theory and practice. “Dispute Systems Design: Expanding Horizons” was moderated by Viscomi and featured: Seanan Fong, HDS ’16, consultant and founder of Cylinder Project and a solo ombudsman to a major tech company; Stacie Nicole Smith, senior mediator and director of Workable Peace at the Consensus Building Institute; Stephan Sonnenberg ’06, faculty member and clinic expert at the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Bhutan; and Joseph B. (Josh) Stulberg, Michael E. Moritz Chair in Alternative Dispute Resolution at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law.

The conclusion of the 2016 election season lent particular saliency to the second panel of the day, which explored the power of dialogue to bridge differences. It also explored the challenges and limits of facilitators in leading conversations around charged topics. Bordone moderated “Political Dialogue: The Promise and Perils of Facilitation,” which included panelists: Toby Berkman ’10, associate at the Consensus Building Institute; Suzanne Ghais, principal at Ghais Mediation and Facilitation; Liz Joyner, executive director at The Village Square; Heather Scheiwe Kulp, clinical instructor at HNMCP and lecturer on law at Harvard Law School; and Fr. Josh Thomas, executive director of Kids4Peace International.

The panel built on HNMCP’s growing body of work in political dialogue over the past three years, which includes a collaborative dialogue series Real Talk. The series is a joint initiative with the Systemic Justice Project, the HLS Now dialogue series on campus, a Facebook Live conversation and a new reading group in fall 2016, “Political Dialogue in Polarizing Times: Election 2016”.

The symposium also featured a preview of HNMCP’s new pedagogical tool that will soon be available. The video shows an unrehearsed facilitated dialogue among police officers and community members, as well as a post-dialogue interview with two professional facilitators, Danielle Bart ’13 and Toby Berkman ’10.
In Nima, a large community in the center of Accra, Ghana, water flows through the plumbing system of a small human rights advocacy office for only a few hours each day. Professor Lucie White and some of the first students in Making Rights Real: the Ghana Project learned this the hard way. One morning they arrived at the Legal Resources Centre to find the office flooded and all of the clients’ files drenched. The previous day, a student had inadvertently left the spigot open after finding it dry. Everyone then worked together to lay each piece of paper outside in the courtyard to dry in the African sun.

That could have spelled the end of the Ghana Project. Instead, it marked the beginning of a true partnership to work for underserved Ghanaians. Sustained through mutual trust, it has now enabled more than 200 HLS students to gain first-hand experience working for economic rights, development, and social justice.

In 1999, White met Raymond Atuguba S.J.D. ’04 in Ghana. He was about to begin his graduate studies at HLS, and she was investigating social welfare issues in sub-Saharan Africa. They discussed his cases at the legal clinic he had co-founded, the Legal Resources Centre.

That conversation was the seed of the Ghana Project. Two years later, Atuguba and White took a group of students from HLS and the University of Ghana to work with the Legal Resources Centre lawyers and community members on economic and social rights like health care and sanitation.

“We were looking at what the problems were on the ground and then seeing if we could use human rights advocacy to address them” said White. “In the first few years, we focused on healthcare. We’d take 14-hour trips to the North in a little van, bumping along to places where people had been left out of the nation’s health system for lack of cash.” Through this work, the students helped the Legal Resources Centre and other Ghanaian partners launch a successful effort to improve Ghana’s National Health Insurance Law.

The Ghana Project’s subsequent report, submitted to the state petroleum oversight agency and the clinic’s partner organizations, helped to open up ongoing public discussion regarding the nation’s and companies’ obligations to use oil wealth to further people’s social rights.

These efforts continue with White’s current class. Says White, “We are trying to educate and activate people around issues that most directly affect their everyday lives. We’re working on complex legal questions that are being addressed at the highest levels of government. Yet the basic issues at stake are urgent for communities who need healthcare, jobs, and education now. In the Ghana Project, we take on long-term social justice challenges. Ghana has been making so much progress to ‘make rights real’ since I’ve been there. It’s a privilege to enable our students to see that and to play their own small role. And it’s been a transformative experience for me to have this opportunity.”
Student Honors Program at the SEC: An inside look at a government agency

By Monica Kwok, J.D. ’18

This fall, I worked at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) through the Student Honors Program. The program is specifically designed to familiarize students with the regulation of securities markets by providing them the opportunity to work directly on projects that uphold the SEC’s mission. Through agency wide meetings and broadcasts, I became acquainted with the Commission’s various divisions and their functions. Though I worked specifically within the Enforcement Division, it was fascinating to learn about the different responsibilities of the Corporation Finance, Economic and Risk Analysis, Investment Management, and Trading and Markets divisions.

Over the course of my time at the SEC, I was staffed on various legal research and writing projects. The Enforcement Division is unique in that it investigates and litigates securities laws violations, such as fraud. My placement made it possible for me to survey crucial components of the process, including attending investigative testimonies and participating in Commission wide meetings. These key opportunities gave me insight into how the Commission’s attorneys and forensic accountants advance legal arguments and evidence for an enforcement action. My work ranged broadly from researching legal standards to help narrow investigations to gathering and analyzing information pertaining to tips and referrals.

I was also fortunate enough to work directly with several fantastic attorneys, all of whom provided excellent guidance and professional mentorship. It was incredible to learn about their unique career trajectories, as they each hailed from vastly different fields of law.

This experience has transformed the ways in which I think about current events, particularly in the financial regulation space. With my remaining time at Harvard Law School, I hope to further explore the intersection of regulatory policies and proceedings and corporate criminality through related coursework and research projects.

My formative experience with the Department of Labor

By Monica Wilk, J.D. ’18

My internship with the Department of Labor was a wonderful, formative experience because I actually enjoyed traditional lawyering work for the first time. On the first day of class in the Employment Workshop, our Clinic Director, Steve Churchill asked us to share our biggest fear of becoming a lawyer. I explained my fear of burnout by expressing how much I honestly disliked lawyering work. At the time, I regretted attending law school, let alone signing up for a clinic. However, this internship completely changed my attitude about pursuing a career in law because I discovered satisfying, challenging work that I enjoyed. The work involved pressing, important issues and required quick problem solving, creative thinking, and sophisticated analysis. I found myself looking forward to returning to work, something I never imagined would happen at the beginning of the clinic. As a result, I had the opportunity to identify for myself some of the work environment characteristics necessary for a satisfying, successful career.

The work’s constant urgency was a terrific motivation and energized day-to-day operations. Second, the attorneys and staff fostered a supportive, collaborative work community. They appeared to genuinely like one another, cared about everyone’s success, and felt comfortable reaching out to ask for help or second opinions. Forgoing social politics in favor of a culture of collegiality allowed the office to maintain an effective community of lawyers conducive to producing great work. Third, the attorneys demonstrated their pride and appreciation in their career as a platform to affect change through their work. The seriousness and intensity with which everyone approached their work showed how sincerely the attorneys are driven by the Department of Labor’s mission. When attorneys spoke of how privileged they felt to work for the Department, they cited individual cases and plans to address the needs of communities rather than broad concepts like “upholding employment rights.” Allowing the work and its relevance to speak for itself pushed the role of the lawyer to the background and rightfully foregrounded the importance of service to lawyering. Such a humble, supportive work community complemented the challenges of addressing complicated problems at an urgent pace, and created a work environment in which the attorneys—and I—thrive.
Lisa Dicker ’17

“Lisa, you are great at arguing! You should be a lawyer.” While growing up this was a statement I frequently heard. It was true. I was excellent at arguing. I loved the thrill of the heightened emotions, the adrenaline of crafting my next point, and the satisfaction of watching my opponent squirm. What I didn’t love was the aftermath—the relationships that were damaged, the pain of not being heard, and the emptiness when a resolution was not reached.

In undergrad I took a step away from what seemed to be my predestined path of law school and studied international relations and Asian studies. My international relations classes told me that the drivers of conflict were political and economic power, but my Asian studies classes showed me that religion, history, culture, pride, fear, and reputation all also had an impact on conflict and its resolution. I found my way back on the path to law school because I wanted to explore international conflict resolution as a practitioner who bridged the gap between the perceived drivers of conflict and the underlying factors that also impact it.

The first semester of law school was a blur of black letter classes and learning to become even better at arguing. At the end of the semester I felt the same hollow feeling so familiar to me after a failed argument. As future lawyers, how were we being trained to resolve disputes? During the spring semester, I took the Negotiation Workshop. In the Workshop, I was trained in skills such as interest identification, effective communication, value creation, option generation, and responses to difficult tactics. The Workshop was a paradigm shift for me. I discovered a new way of engaging in a dispute that challenged me to redefine what it meant to “win” and to become part of the solution. That semester the combination of the Negotiation Workshop and a course on Public International Law inspired me to dedicate myself to conflict resolution not as an arguer, but as a problem-solver.

After the Workshop, I dove headfirst into the world of dispute resolution. The following fall as a student in the Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Clinic (HNMC), with the support of my clinical supervisor Heather Kulp, I worked on a project with the New Hampshire Superior Court designing and delivering a curriculum to prosecutors and defense attorneys on effective negotiation skills in the context of criminal settlement conferences. During the spring semester I undertook a second HNMC project under the supervision of Rachel Viscomi to work with an organization in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo that negotiates with refugees and armed combatants to disarm and repatriate to Rwanda. The project culminated in a curriculum on negotiation, communication, and conflict management and I traveled with Rachel and my clinic partner to Rwanda and the DRC to deliver our training. Also during the spring, I served as a Teaching Assistant for the Negotiation Workshop, led an HLS Negotiators project that designed and facilitated a coaching program for high school students on the fundamentals of negotiation, and took the Dispute Systems Design course. Through working in these incredibly diverse contexts I was struck by how the skills of interest-based negotiation transcended their differences; high school students in Cambridge and peace-builders negotiating with combatants in the DRC struggle with similar barriers in communication, including difficulties identifying interests, generating options, and effective framing advocacy. And these barriers are what I had developed the skillset to help solve.

This summer I put my skillset to the test working on Syrian peace negotiations. I had learned negotiation skills in the context of simulations during the Workshop, trained others in these skills through my 2L client projects and TA experience while expanding my academic knowledge in my classes, and now I was challenged to serve on a team of lawyers who support the negotiation efforts of the High Negotiations Committee of the Syrian Opposition. Again, I found the theory and skillset taught by HNMCP—including conflict analysis, negotiation advising, effective framing, and client relationship development— invaluable as I navigated the complexity of a deeply divisive, hostile, and painful conflict.

As lawyers we are often confronted with the worst of humanity and challenged to serve clients at their darkest moments. In the world there are more than enough arguers who provoke and sustain conflict. I truly believe that what we need are more people equipped with the knowledge to engage with conflict with an understanding that conflicts started by people can be resolved by people as long as they have the skillset to craft durable, lasting resolutions to conflict. My experiences with HNMC have transformed me into that kind of person and that kind of lawyer. I am no longer an arguer. I am a problem-solver.

Lisa Dicker ’17 is a 3L at Harvard Law School originally from Tennessee. Lisa is a co-Editor-in-Chief of the Harvard Negotiation Law Review, a two-time student of the Negotiation and Mediation Clinic (HNMC), a teaching assistant for the Negotiation Workshop and the Program on Negotiation’s Negotiation and Dispute Resolution Seminar, and a former co-President and current board member of HLS Negotiators. As part of her ADR-focused coursework, Lisa has taken the Negotiation Workshop and Dispute Systems Design courses and is currently enrolled in both The Lawyer as Facilitator and Collaborative Law.
Human Rights Clinic releases report on Syrian refugees and documentation of legal status

In November, the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School and the Norwegian Refugee Council Jordan launched Securing Status: Syrian refugees and the documentation of legal status, identity, and family relationships in Jordan, a 45-page report that details the challenges Syrian refugees living outside refugee camps encounter obtaining official documents from the Government of Jordan that allow them to access services, such as healthcare, as well as humanitarian assistance.

Nearly 80 percent of the 655,000 Syrian refugees registered with United Nations’ refugee agency in Jordan live outside refugee camps, in Jordanian cities, towns, and rural areas. The report outlines official processes for refugees to obtain documentation, the challenges refugees encounter, and the consequences faced by those who lack documentation.

The report focuses on issues surrounding “legal documentation,” a term referring in this context primarily to new Ministry of the Interior Service Cards (“new MoI cards”), but also encompassing asylum seeker certificates (documentation issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]), Syrian passports, and Syrian identity cards. The new MoI card is a particularly important piece of legal documentation because possession of a card confirms that its holder is officially entitled to live outside refugee camps.

According to the report, the largest groups of concern are refugees who are ineligible to receive new MoI cards and refugees who are eligible, but have not yet obtained new MoI cards because they lack the documents necessary to receive a card through the normal issuance process.

Although this report is focused on legal documentation, it also updates Registering Rights: Syrian refugees and the documentation of births, marriages, and deaths in Jordan. Jointly published by the IHRC and the NRC in October 2015, Registering Rights highlighted the challenges that Syrian refugees face around “civil documentation” – meaning, in this context, registering births, marriages, and deaths – and the consequences that flow from non-registration of such life events.

Health Law and Policy Clinic

Harvard Law School & National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable Announce Preliminary Findings in Project to Grade Medicaid Access to Hepatitis C Treatment

The National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR) and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School (CHLPI) announced the preliminary findings of Hepatitis C: The State of Medicaid Access – a comprehensive assessment of state Medicaid programs’ discriminatory restrictions on curative treatments for hepatitis C, the nation’s deadliest blood-borne disease. The full report, with accompanying rankings and state-by-state report cards, will be released in early 2017.

Preliminary analysis from Hepatitis C: The State of Medicaid Access – announced today at The Liver Meeting® in Boston – shows some improvements in both state Medicaid program transparency and access since 2014, yet also demonstrates that most states continue to impose discriminatory restrictions which contradict guidance from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), as well as guidance from AASLD and the Infectious Disease Society of America. Also concerning is that nearly half of states may not be making all restrictions publicly available.

The report will also provide the first-ever national assessment of Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) coverage of curative HCV treatments.

“With this announcement, we are officially putting state Medicaid programs on notice,” said Ryan Clary, executive director of NVHR. “State Medicaid directors need to make all treatment criteria publicly available and detail any plans to comply with CMS guidance, which clearly states that coverage policies cannot block hepatitis C patients’ access to effective, clinically appropriate and medically necessary treatments. It is unacceptable to have discriminatory restrictions that conflict with the CMS guidance or with established hepatitis C treatment standards. Our final report will grade and rank each state’s access criteria, and states that continue to discriminate will be called out.”

Read full story on the CHLPI blog.
Judge Russell Reflects on the Founding and Future of Veterans Treatment Courts

“...one gets to sit in and listen to a pioneer. Today we are going to have that opportunity,” said senior Disabled American Veterans (DAV) leader, David Gorman, of the Honorable Robert Russell, the 2016 DAV Distinguished Speaker. Pioneer is an accurate description of Judge Russell, who founded the nation’s first Veterans Treatment Court in Buffalo, NY in 2008.

He started and continues to lead the movement to create adjunct court systems designed specifically to meet the needs of our nation’s veterans.

On Wednesday, November 9, 2016, Judge Russell delivered the 2016 DAV Distinguished Speaker Lecture at Harvard Law School. Reflecting on his January 2008 founding of the Erie County Veterans Treatment Court, Judge Russell explained that the idea came to him after noticing an increased number of veterans appearing before him in two existing problem-solving courts: the Drug Court and the Mental Health Court. He recognized that many veterans have a difficult time readjusting to life after service, a struggle which makes this community more vulnerable to mental health issues and addiction. The unique circumstances surrounding veterans inspired Judge Russell to ask the question, “What can we do to afford the best opportunities for our veterans?” His answer was to propose a court program designed specifically to address the underlying needs of veterans in the criminal justice system and connect them with the benefits and treatment that they earned in service.

Judge Russell’s lecture highlighted the positive impact of camaraderie and sense of community with the courts, calling them the “secret sauce” of the Veterans Treatment Courts’ success. He gave several examples of instances when the efforts of volunteer mentors, all of whom are veterans themselves, helped guide others through the rehabilitation process and overcome obstacles along the way. He found that there was “something about the beauty of service . . . that another veteran with the same symptoms and challenges are likely to come to [another] veteran’s aid to see how they can support,” and that this is truly what makes Veterans Treatment Courts unique.

After his lecture, Judge Russell joined Judge Eleanor Sinnott of the Boston Municipal Court, Judge Mary Hogan Sullivan of Dedham District Court, and Professor Evan Seamone, of the Mississippi College of Law in a discussion panel. The panel, moderated by Betsy Gwin, Clinical Instructor in LSC’s Veterans Legal Clinic, discussed the challenges and opportunities of Veterans Treatment Courts.

In the past eight years, Veterans Treatment Courts have expanded to over 300 courts across the country, including several in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Judge Hogan Sullivan, the mother of a Marine Corps veteran, founded the first Massachusetts Veterans Treatment Court in Norfolk County in 2012, and was instrumental in expanding it throughout the state. Building upon Judge Hogan Sullivan’s success, Judge Sinnott, a former Navy Military Intelligence officer of 10 years, established the first Veterans Treatment Court in Boston in 2014. Professor Seamone, a former active duty Army Judge Advocate General (JAG) attorney and current Army Reserves officer, offered his perspective as a professor of law, saying that “the court system has become responsible in [a] first response capacity . . . [including] everyone from judges to attorneys.” He encouraged attorneys to “adopt an enhanced client-counseling posture.”

The event was cohosted by the Veterans Legal Clinic at the Legal Services Center (LSC) of Harvard Law School and Harvard Law School’s Armed Forces Association. Introductory remarks were given by retired Executive Director of the DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters, David Gorman.

“The growth of Veterans Treatment Courts highlights the unique needs of the veterans community and how judges and lawyers should think creatively about how we can best meet those needs,” said Betsy Gwin. “The Veterans Legal Clinic was thrilled to bring this important discussion to the law school with the participation of experts from across the country.”

Supported by a generous grant from the DAV Charitable Service Trust, the DAV Distinguished Lecture Series provides an annual forum at the world’s most renowned university and law school, public servants, and thought leaders to speak on issues of importance to the nation’s veterans. The series recognizes leading figures in the veterans’ community, raises awareness about the needs of veterans, sparks discussion about the public policies that most impact veterans, particularly those with service-connected disabilities, and serves as a call to action for veterans and non-veterans alike to help ensure the nation honors its commitments to those who have served.
The Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic (FLPC) released *Keeping Food Out of the Landfill: Policy Ideas for States and Localities*. This toolkit provides comprehensive information on eight different policy areas that states and localities can consider as they ramp up efforts to reduce food waste. There are great opportunities for food waste reduction at the federal level, but much can be done by states and localities, whose involvement in finding solutions to food waste and food recovery is vital. The toolkit includes recommendations for each of the policy areas, which can be utilized by legislators, advocates, food donors, and food recovery organizations to call for policy changes. Each section of the toolkit describes the relevant federal laws, provides state examples, and offers the Clinic’s policy recommendations. The policy areas addressed in *Keeping Food Out of Landfills* are:

- Liability Protection for Food Donations;
- Tax Incentives for Food Donations;
- Date Labeling;
- Food Safety for Food Donations;
- Food Waste Reduction in K-12 Schools;
- Feeding Food Scraps to Livestock;
- Organic Waste Bans and Waste Recycling Laws; and
- Government Support for Food Waste Reduction.

*Keeping Food Out of Landfills* covers a range of exciting policy examples from all over the country, such as Virginia’s new tax incentive for food donors, California’s funding to support food recovery infrastructure, guidance by Indiana to help schools implement share tables and reduce food waste, and organic waste bans and waste recycling laws from New York City to Vermont. A variety of educational resources are included in the toolkit to encourage readers to expand their knowledge of ways to address food waste.

The toolkit comes at the end of a year focused on food waste reduction for FLPC. In June, the Clinic co-hosted the Reduce and Recover: Save Food for People conference on food waste reduction with the EPA and MassDEP. “EXPIRED? Food Waste in America,” a documentary from FLPC and Racing Horse Productions on date labels and their contribution to food waste was released in February and this month it received an award at the Faces of Hunger Short Film Festival in New York. The Clinic has also published a federal tax incentives legal guide, “Federal Enhanced Tax Deduction for Food Donations,” a two-pager on ways to improve the federal Emerson Act, “Recommendations to Strengthen The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act,” and a report on the laws surrounding using food scraps for animal feed, “Leftovers for Livestock: A Legal Guide for Using Excess Food as Animal Feed.”

Approximately 40% of the food produced in the U.S. is wasted annually. At a time when millions of Americans are food insecure and thousands of farmers struggle to stay afloat, the negative consequences of wasting food extend far beyond the environmental impacts and loss of resources that could have been otherwise allocated. FLPC hopes this toolkit will serve as a guide to creating systemic change that redirects food from the landfill to those who need it most.
Tips from Social Workers

Often times, for students working in the clinics and student practice organizations, helping real clients means helping people facing great adversity and trauma in their lives. Our office reached out to the three social workers in our programs, asking their advice for students engaged in this work. Below are some of their suggestions.

**Lila Buoniconti**  
**Harvard Immigration & Refugee Clinic**

In the social work field experiential learning has long been an integral part of professional training. Now that the ABA has recommended law students receive a minimum of six credits of experiential learning it seems budding law students might learn from the social work experience, particularly when it comes to finding balance between the professional and personal.

Often, our personal lives strongly influence our professional lives, and may be the driving force in choosing a career. Yet without self-reflection and stress-reduction skills, client work can sometimes become overwhelming. Usually this happens with progressive exposure to the many needs of our clients, especially in the realm of public interest law. It can be difficult to turn off our thoughts about clients and their needs, particularly when their lives mirror our own. This is why it is important to take time off, breathe, and do healthy things that help us disconnect from the work. And yet, not all of the responsibility rests upon us to take care of ourselves. Research shows that burnout comes easily in settings with high caseloads or demanding work hours. Work places, therefore, need to recognize that their staff can be most productive when work-life balance is promoted and employees are encouraged to discuss their needs openly.

My advice to clinical students, embarking on experiential learning, is to seek out mentors that allow you to grow both professionally and personally; they are in abundance around our in-house clinical programs and they will help you self-reflect as well as support your professional goals. HLS also organizes many Wellness offerings that can help you develop a toolbox for stress-reduction skills. I am forever grateful to the mentors and supervisors in my life that recognized the need for balance and am keenly aware that my clients have benefitted as a result of my ability to thrive in a supportive work place. As the airlines always say, secure your own oxygen mask before helping others; do this for yourself and you will be a more efficient zealous advocate.

**Anne Eisner**  
**Education Law Clinic of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative**

One of my roles in the Education Law Clinic is to draw on my training and experience as a social worker to help students navigate their relationships with their clients. I’d like to encourage you to consider in some depth how your relationships with your clients are progressing. Practicing attorneys, as well as the field of legal education, continually observe that an intentional focus on client relationships is an essential feature of effective lawyering, and that the process of building a positive, trusting relationship with a client can be as important as addressing the legal/advocacy aspects of the case. It is within the context of a trusting relationship that clients feel heard and understood, are receptive to the counsel you provide, develop clarity and realistic expectations about the possible outcomes, and are able to fully participate in all aspects of the case.

But equally important to the case-related benefits that accrue as the result of this working partnership with clients is the way your clients will feel about their experience with you as they—maybe for one of the few times in their lives—experience being treated with unconditional positive regard, respect, and dignity. While this is important for all clients, it is especially critical for clients whose life histories include chronic adversity, traumatic events, or social or racial injustice, some of whom may find it particularly difficult to develop a trusting relationship given their life experience. Consider continuously focusing on and sharing with your clinic supervisor your observations and questions about the relational skills you are using to build positive rapport with your clients, as well as to explore culturally-responsive ways of relating and any implicit biases that may get in the way. This focus, along with your active listening and empathic understanding of the full context of your client’s experiences, will enable you to begin developing this critical aspect of effective lawyering skills.

**Chris Pierce**  
**Criminal Justice Institute, Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, Prison Legal Assistance Project, Harvard Defenders, Tenant Advocacy Project**

I think my advice to clinical students might be to enjoy the work you do with your clients. Enjoy the work with grateful and appreciative clients and build your skills of empathy and sympathy for clients who are really in need of your help. Lastly, appreciate that small changes and kind interactions can make a difference. You may not change a life but you can help a person improve the quality of their life and experience they have with you and the legal system.