

News

Taking Human Rights from Field to Journal

For the third year running, the Castan Centre has helped three Monash Law alumni to bring their experience working on human rights issues in the field to an academic journal. The Centre awarded bursaries for the successful candidates to publish an academic paper of between 6000 and 8000 words on a topic related to their work.

The 2013 recipients were Marika McAdam, Natalie Bugalski and Alexandra Phelan, with each of these outstanding alumni bringing a unique human rights perspective to the project.

Ms McAdam, an independent legal consultant and chairing member of the Marie Stopes International Ethics Review Committee, has chosen to write her Field to Journal paper on international understandings of human trafficking and migrant smuggling and the human rights

challenges these raise. Her paper will consider the point at which exploitation constitutes – or falls short of - trafficking and the human rights implications of this distinction. Ms McAdam is a Monash PhD candidate and the author of several UN publications on human trafficking.

Human rights lawyer and consultant Ms Bugalski will write her paper on human rights accountability in international development finance, trade and industry. Ms Bugalski, who obtained her doctorate at Monash University’s law faculty, will investigate the way several accountability processes have played out in the context of pervasive land rights abuses in Cambodia. Her paper will be informed by her experiences as co-founder and associate of the independent human rights organization Inclusive Development International.

Finally, Georgetown University Doctorate of Laws candidate Ms Phelan will write on the human rights implications of Australia’s implementation of international health laws, with a particular focus on emerging infectious diseases like the Middle East novel coronavirus. In her paper Ms Phelan will build on her writings on mandatory detention of asylum seekers in malaria endemic areas. She brings with her experience as a World Health Organization intern and a GAVI Alliance legal consultant.

Congratulations to all three bursary recipients.

The Field to Journal bursaries are supported by a three-year grant from the Alan and Elizabeth Finkel Foundation. Find more information on the project on our website at www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre.

Public Interest Law Careers Guide a Hit

If you’ve heard a lot of lawyer jokes or watched too many legal dramas, you might be surprised to learn just how many law students hope to work in human rights and related public interest areas. One of the many hurdles they face as they approach graduation is a lack of knowledge about their career options.

Luckily, a new guide is making things easier.

The Public Interest Law Careers Guide, launched in front of a packed house of almost 200 people at an event in August, features entries from more than 90 Victorian organisations working in areas as diverse as consumer rights, disability law and asylum seeker assistance.

One important feature of the guide is almost 20 testimonials provided by people working in the field. Often breaking into these areas of law is difficult, and many who work in the field report winding career paths leading them to their destinations. The testimonials provide

much-needed advice to students that there are many, many different paths to finding a rewarding job in law.

At the guide launch, Jillian Prior of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, Felicity Millner of the Environment Defender’s Office and former Victorian Public Service GRADS scheme participant Clare Bradin all shared their experiences of the tough but rewarding career paths they’ve followed.

The launch also recognised those who had worked so hard to bring this massive task to fruition, especially researchers from the Progressive Law Network (PLN) and staff from the Castan Centre. When the PLN approached the Castan Centre with the idea of producing a guide in early 2012, the two organisations found a willing supporter in the Victoria Law Foundation, which provided over \$15,000 to get the project up and running.

Pulling together the information for the guide

was an enormous project, and the PLN’s Penelope Swales, Katia Lallo and Alice Bewley handled the task with aplomb. At the Castan Centre, Andre Dao oversaw editing and website design, while Janice Hugo and Lisa Harrison worked hard to get the enormous amount of data onto the website.

Since its launch, the guide has proved extremely popular, receiving over 26,000 views in its first weeks of operation. It will be updated in 2014 to reflect the latest information, and the Centre is now accepting submissions for inclusion in the guide from public interest organisations around the country. You can view the guide at www.law.monash.edu/castancentre/careersguide.

The Public Interest Law Careers Guide was produced in conjunction with the Progressive Law Network and is supported by a grant from the Victoria Law Foundation.

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The Public Interest Law Careers Guide launch attracted a full house