Our Accomplishments for 2012-2013

Our Cases

This year our clinic students again helped our clients through difficult times. Some notable cases:

“We got the baby back!”

“The charges are dismissed!”

“Gratefully, my child will be safe.”

“It’s time to bring this nightmare to an end.”

Click for details

Awards and recognitions

Our 2013 Award Winners: Each year, the Legal Clinic makes four monetary awards recognizing the exceptional work and commitment of our interns. Our honorees: Zachary Bidner, Jaklyn Garrett, Paige Hoster, and Bonnie Blumert.

Click for more details

“Steppin’ Up, Moving Forward”
SCAP Fashion Show Community Service Project

This year the clinic, working with the OU School of Social Work Graduate Students Association, built upon its relationship with S-CAP, produced “Steppin’ Up, Moving Forward” a fashion show featuring the S-CAP women as models.

Click for more details

Judge Rod Ring appointed Criminal Defense Clinic Supervisor

Criminal Defense Clinic students will be learning under the supervision of former Cleveland County Judge Rod Ring. Judge Ring, an OU COL alum brings a wealth of experience to this position.

Click for more details

Questions or comments? Email us at legalclinic@law.ou.edu or call 405-325-3702
Our Accomplishments for 2012-2013

“We got the baby back!”

The excitement came through this text from the courthouse when our client’s 4 month old baby was brought back to Norman by her estranged father. The father had taken the baby for a visit but instead of returning the baby, he disappeared with her to South Carolina. Clinic intern Zachary Bidner and Prof. Brenda Barnes used social media and subpoenas to track the father to a relative’s home in South Carolina. Arming the Horry County sheriff’s office with Court orders obtained in Cleveland County court, the father was ordered to return the baby. As a result of the outstanding work of Zach and Prof. Barnes, mom and the baby she had not seen in two months were reunited in a very emotional, stirring moment at the courthouse.

“The charges are dismissed!”

The Court minute order dismissing felony theft charges was the proverbial music to our client’s ears. When a client was charged with conspiracy to rob a drugstore, Clinic Intern Paige Hoster and Prof. Rod Ring were able to show the Assistant District Attorney that it was a case of mistaken identity. Following up on the good work done by interns Matt Lafon and Brian Watts, Paige was able to produce date and time stamped pictures of the client attending a family reunion and visiting a local casino. These photos proved that she was not at the drugstore participating in a robbery. Through the diligent work of these three interns, a misguided prosecution was dismissed.

“It is time to bring this nightmare to an end.”

A tragedy escalated into an unimaginable nightmare when a fatal accident led to the prosecution of our client for manslaughter. Agreeing to drive even though her license had been suspended, our client believed that she was doing the right thing. Her husband had been drinking and was in no condition to drive. They were not far from home. She didn’t foresee that a truck, driven by teenagers at midnight on a July night, would barrel into them, causing their car to make multiple spins, crash into a culvert and throw them from the car. Her husband was killed. Burying her husband was one of the hardest things our client had ever done. Almost 9 months after the accident, our client was charged with negligent homicide. When she refused a plea offer that required her to go to jail, the Assistant District Attorney increased the charges to manslaughter, in an effort to force her to accept jail time. Our client didn’t give in and neither did our interns. Zach Bidner, under the supervision of Prof. Rod Ring, persuaded the judge that jail time was not appropriate and convinced the judge to put our client on probation.

June 2013

CLINIC STUDENTS DO IT ALL! A sampling of the activities:

This year clinic students continued to be vital contributors to the life of the law school. Just some of the activities in which our clinic students were stars:

- Dylan Erwin, SBA President Elect
- Paige Hoster, Editor in Chief, AILR, NTC Mock Trial Team
- Zachary Bidner, NTC Mock Trial Team
- Carrie Phillips, AILR, Civil Rights Moot Court Team
- Shane Hill, Civil Rights Moot Court Team
- Lark Zink, Jessup Moot Court Team; OKJOLT
- Kelli Ude, BLSA Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Team
- Bonnie Blumert, BOA, AAJ Trial team
- Jaklyn Garret, AILR
- Daniel Triplett, Sports Law Moot Court
- Missy Harman, Civil Rights Moot Court Team

Still Inside:
- Judge Rod Ring joins clinic faculty
- Clinic Director gets Tenure and awards
- Clinic professionalism oath
- Section 1983 cases
- Alumni news

Client’s vehicle after the accident
**The OU Legal Clinic**

**June 2013**

**Our Accomplishments for 2012-2013**

**“Gratefully, my child will be safe.”**

Sometimes the best thing that a mother can do for her child is to recognize that if she can't care for the child, she can make certain that child is put into good hands. Our client had the maturity and honesty to recognize that she needed to become more stable before bringing her child back to her house. But she was determined that her daughter would have the best care, living with someone who genuinely loves her as she does. It took a hotly contested evidentiary hearing with Clinic Intern Paige Hoster under the supervision of Prof. Amy Pepper to achieve that goal.

**“Kudos to our interns and supervising faculty attorneys”**

This year clinic students handled over 265 cases in Cleveland and McClain Counties. Collectively, they provided almost 6000 hours of legal services to persons who might not otherwise have legal representation. Our clients overwhelming praise the work of our interns.

A letter from a client sums it up:

“...My student representative appeared youthful but never once was I reminded of this in his ability to explain or find the answers needed for my defense. Whenever I didn’t quite grasp something or had a tedious question he was quick to answer or return my messages with a positive demeanor and professionalism making the entire process much less strenuous.

I am certain that his mentor or advocate, Brenda Barnes, assisted greatly in my case if not as a tenured shadow, then as a standard bearer for the testament of educational esteem for both the law and the University. I am grateful to both of them....My gratitude has altered my perceptions of the legal process.”

**Collaboration with the School of Social Work**

The O.U. Legal Clinic and the O.U. School of Social Work have teamed up to provide clinic students and graduate students in social work the opportunity to experience the holistic approach to lawyering and social work. Crystal Navarro, a graduate student in the School of Social Work, worked on her practicum in the Legal Clinic during the Fall 2012 semester and is continuing to work in the Clinic during the Spring 2013 semester assisting our interns and their clients.
Student Awards and recognitions

Each year, the Legal Clinic makes four monetary awards recognizing the exceptional work and commitment of our interns. This year our award winners are:

**The Cindy Foley Fellowship: Bonnie Blumert.** This fellowship was created to honor Cindy Foley, a long time clinic faculty supervising attorney who lost her battle with cancer in 2010. Awarded to students who are doing unpaid summer placements at government agencies or non-profit focusing upon indigent criminal defense, this year’s fellowship goes to a student who will be working at the Oklahoma County Public Defender’s office. Bonnie, a rising 3L, was a standout intern in the Criminal Defense Clinic, representing her clients with passion and determination.

**The Cindy Foley Award: Paige Hoster.** This award honors the memory of Cindy Foley and her 18 years as a supervising faculty attorney. It is presented to the clinic student who most exhibits passion, competence, and commitment in the representation of clients.

**The Kelly Beardsley Award: Zachary Bidner.** This award is in memory of 1994 graduate, Kelly Beardslee, and is presented to the outstanding criminal defense Legal Intern from the O.U. Legal Clinic who demonstrates overall excellence in representing people charged with crimes who are unable to afford an attorney.

**The Larry Siria Award: Jaklyn Garrett.** The Siria award is in memory of 1984 graduate, Larry Siria, and is presented to the outstanding civil Legal Intern from the O.U. Legal Clinic who is compassionate, caring and dedicated to representing people who are unable to afford an attorney.

Legal Clinic Oath of Professionalism

To underscore the unique responsibility and duties of clinic interns, a new tradition was started the Spring 2013 semester. All Clinic students will now take an Oath of Professionalism. This semester the Oath was administered during the semester orientation by our new supervising attorney, retired judge Rod Ring. “We created the oath because we believe that it is important that clinic interns recognize that the responsibilities that they have to their clients mandate that they carry themselves with certain decorum and propriety,” said Prof. Wattley.

**The Professionalism Oath:**

“As an intern in the University of Oklahoma College of Law Legal Clinic, I promise that I will do my best to be responsible for what I say and do, to respect myself and others, to be fair and honest in all of my dealings, and to be considerate and caring in all of my interactions. I pledge that I will be diligent, compassionate, and dedicated as I represent my clients to the best of my ability. When engaged in clinic business, I will be mindful of the trust that has been placed in me, the responsibility that I have assumed, and the clients who I serve.”

Still Inside:

-S-CAP Community Service Project
-Judge Rod Ring joins clinic faculty
-Clinic Director gets Tenure and awards
-Alumni news
And more
Beginning in 2011, the clinic began to receive appointments from the Western District of Oklahoma in Section 1983 civil rights cases. The University of Oklahoma is the only Oklahoma law school that receives such appointments from the federal court. As a result of this program, two clinic students have conducted a federal jury trial and another clinic student argued a case before the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver. That case was remanded to the District Court for Trial. On January 28, 2013, two clinic students, Zachary Bidner and Jaklyn Garrett, under the supervision of Prof. Wattley, appeared before United States District Judge Stephen Friot for trial. The case involved allegations that the Plaintiff had been wrongfully hogtied and placed into segregated confinement at the Garvin County Jail. The case took an unexpected turn when the Plaintiff, who is serving a life sentence in Georgia, decided not to exercise his right to testify via telephone.

Judge Friot after commenting on the client’s decision not to testify stated:

“And I can say, perhaps to coin a phrase, to Mr. Bidner and Ms. Garrett, I feel your pain. You’ve poured your heart into this case. You really did. Your preparation was very obvious. Your presentation of this case, which was triable as of right after this Court of Appeals made its rule on the immunity issue, and your involvement in this case has aided the administration of justice; it has aided the cause of Mr. Allen, despite choices that he made that substantially, if not completely, impaired the viability of his case. And the Court in all sincerity and emphatically commends you for the work that you very obviously put into this case.”

Not only did Zach and Jaklyn get experience that far exceeds that of even some practicing lawyers, they have a story that will be shared for years to come!

Judge Rod Ring joins the clinic

The OU Legal Clinic scored a coup when it was able to obtain the services of Retired judge Rod Ring to be supervising students in the Criminal Defense Clinic. Rod assumed those duties on January 1, 2013. Rod is a 1987 graduate of the COL. As many of you are aware, he was a District and Special Judge in Cleveland County for over twenty years. He will bring a valuable perspective of the law to our students and clients. “Having Rod join our faculty is quite exciting. Our students’ experience will be enhanced by learning from someone who has been on the bench,” said Professor Wattley in welcoming Rod.

According to Rod, “attending the OU College of Law changed my life and I’m excited to be able to be involved in the law school experience again with today’s students. Watching the students meet with clients, deal with prosecutors and appear in court has reminded me of how difficult it is to start practicing law. The time spent in the Legal Clinic should be invaluable when our students move into practice.” Rod’s presence on the clinic faculty reflects the clinic’s commitment to providing strong faculty mentorship for our students.

Rod took a spot that became vacant when Norman attorney Pat Chesley, returned to private practice. Pat, who served as the supervising attorney for the fall semester, had been impressed with the commitment, interest, and passion of our interns.
“Steppin’ Up, Moving Forward” - SCAP Community Service

Each year clinic students design a community service project that reflects an understanding that lawyers can provide service in a variety of ways. This year the clinic, working with the OU School of Social Work Graduate Students Association, built upon its relationship with S-CAP, produced “Steppin’ Up, Moving Forward,” a fashion show featuring the S-CAP women as models. Through the clinic’s efforts, a letter of support was sent by Governor Mary Fallin, calling S-CAP a model program that should be replicated throughout the state.

S-CAP is an intervention program created by Cleveland County Sheriff Joe Lester. Working with women who have been incarcerated in the Cleveland County Jail, the program’s focus is to help them put their lives together. They want to become independent, to be reunited with their children, and to prove themselves to their family and their community but the burdens of a felony conviction make their path much more difficult.

For our students, meeting these women, hearing their stories, and getting to know them, confirmed for them that people should not be cast aside because of a criminal record. They met women who had owned their own business, had been managers in major corporations, nurse, or real estate brokers but had their lives come crashing down, usually because of a marriage that had failed or an abusive relationship.

Sheriff Lester praised the work of the clinic and social work students in a letter to Dean Harroz.

Purple cords worn by clinic graduates

Last year, the clinic faculty and staff responded to requests by our graduating students for recognition cords that could be worn with their academic regalia at graduation. With Lori Ketner’s assistance, the clinic selected purple cords to symbolize a student’s participation in the clinic. Graduating students who proudly wore the purple cord to honor their work in the clinic were: Cassie Bachman, Zachary Bidner, Jaklyn Garrett, Nathaniel Hales, Adam Holcomb, Paige Hoster, Cory Ortega, Elijah Plant, Daniel Triplett, Kelli Ude, Brian Watts, Katie Wilder, Parker Wise, and Lark Zink.

We’re so proud!!

The graduating clinic students receiving Academic Achievement Awards this year were: Grayson Barnes, Zachary Bidner, Jaklyn Garrett, Nathaniel Hales, Adam Holcomb, Paige Hoster, Stephanie Jacoby, Kelli Ude, Katie Wilder, and Parker Wise. Congratulations to each of them!
DIRECTOR CHERYL B. WATTLEY RECEIVES TENURE

October 4, 2012 was a very special day for the O.U. Legal Clinic. Professor Cheryl B. Wattley, Director of Clinical Education at the College of Law was recommended by the COL faculty for tenure. The Board of Regents acted upon that recommendation at its meeting in May, granting our director tenure and promoting her to a full professorship.

Professor Wattley has been at the COL since 2006. She has served as Director of the Legal Clinic since 2007 and has brought many new and creative ideas to the COL, the Clinic and its students. Most recently she developed a collaborative relationship with O.U. School of Social Work allowing a graduate student to complete their practicum in the clinic office. This placement also exposes clinical students to an interdisciplinary holistic approach to lawyering while provide social services to our clients.

Professor Wattley was also the driving force behind the “Academic Intern” license which allows first semester 2L’s the opportunity to use a legal intern license in the Clinic while concurrently completing the course requirements. This has been a huge boost to the Clinic during the fall semester alone. During our Fall 2012 semester, 10 of our 22 students were “Academic Interns”.

In preparing her tenure packet for review by the COL faculty and outside reviewers, several of her prior students and professionals who have worked closely with Professor Wattley on different projects wrote special letters of support on her behalf. It is amazing to see how she has indeed influenced so many lives in such a short time.

A sampling of comments from her support letters include:

“Professor Wattley helped me realize the meaningful and significant impact I was making in the lives of my clients and others.”

“Surely, there will be no better addition to the O.U. Law family than someone that cares, listens to students concerns, prioritizes availability, and pushes her students to perform beyond their own perceived limitations.”

“I have received immeasurable benefit from having Professor Cheryl Wattley as a teacher and sincerely hope that her efforts will be rewarded by receiving tenure, so that she can continue to inspire and guide OU students for years to come.”

“…she became a resource – someone I could go to for advice, or with a question about an interesting point of law, or simply to sit and talk when the stresses of law school would become too much.”

“The partners of my firm have said they hired me specifically because of my clinic, mock trial, and federal trial experience, but are still pleasantly surprised at how much my work exceeds the quality level it ‘should’ have, given that I just graduated in 2011.”

“My experience with the Section 1983 Clinic in general, and with Professor Wattley in particular, tells me that Professor Wattley has done a superb job of providing leadership, mentoring and inspiration to the participating students, resulting, in turn, in a priceless professional experience for the students.”

Professor Wattley is all smiles when she hears the favorable vote by the law school faculty and gazes upon the flowers given to her by the Black Law Students Association for which she serves as faculty advisor.

“The clinic has been such an important part of my COL experience. The clinic faculty, staff and students have been wonderfully supportive of my ideas for the clinic and new program initiatives. My tenure approval is due in no small measure to their encouragement and support. I welcome this opportunity to say “thank you” for the support and for the letters that were written on my behalf.”

Cheryl Wattley

— Alumni news
And more stories
Clinic work brings Director Wattley recognitions

For the first time, the College of Law nominated a professor for the DaVinci Award. Professor Cheryl Wattley was awarded one of five of the DaVinci Fellows Awards for 2013. The DaVinci Institute is a unique private partnership of leaders in higher education across the state of Oklahoma. It aims to encourage critical thinking and creativity to improve the quality of education in Oklahoma. All award winners were honored with a banquet at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City.

This year, Professor Wattley was also one of the inaugural recipients of the Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher diversity award from the Oklahoma Bar Association. The OBA created this award to recognize leaders and statewide diversity efforts to increase the need for tolerance and diversity awareness.

The Oklahoma City Association of Black Lawyers honored Professor Wattley at its annual gala with the Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Award in recognition of her work to promote justice.

“We want to know! Tell us your news”

Those of you who were students or faculty with the clinic know that “we are family.” When you stepped through the doors of the Clinic office you became part of our “clinic family”. We want to keep in touch with you and brag on you whenever possible.

Have news you want to share? Have you won that big case? Made a move to a new firm? Won an election? Gotten married? Had a baby? Taken the dream vacation? Published an article?

We want to include “your news” in future editions of the Clinic Newsletter. Please send your announcements about marriages, births, new employment, articles you have published, etc. to Lori at legalclinic@law.ou.edu. Also, be sure to frequent our Facebook page (OU Legal Clinic) for news and announcements.

Please update your contact information whenever necessary: address, phone (home and office), and e-mail address. All information can be e-mailed to legalclinic@law.ou.edu.

“We need your help.”

Each year our students do great and amazing work representing people in Cleveland and McClain Counties who need our assistance. For those of us who teach in the clinic, we know that such experiences teach our students fundamental lawyering skills, professionalism, and service. But in order to more fully promote the educational benefits of the clinic, we need information and data from you, our alumni. Below is a link to a survey that asks about what you learned in the clinic. PLEASE take the time to complete the survey. Whether you have been out of school for one year or forty years, the data will help us immeasurably in presenting the benefits of the clinical experience. Click on the following link to complete the survey: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QHZRBHF

“Mark your calendars! Come run with us at Race Judicata”

Race Judicata, the annual 5k run and 1 mile walk hosted by the O.U. Law - Student Bar Association, was held on Sunday, November 4, 2012. The race was once again held in memory of the late Cindy Foley, a faculty member of the O.U. Legal Clinic who dedicated her life to public service. All proceeds from this year’s race, approximately $7,500 benefitted the Cindy Foley Fellowship and the Oklahoma Lawyers for Children. Nearly the entire Foley/Bullard clan was present at this year’s event along with 168 faculty, staff, students and others participating in the race to support these wonderful causes.

The 2013 running of the Race Judicata will be on November 2, 2013. Because this race directly benefits the clinic awards and scholarships, we welcome your participation but we need your support. And the good news is, you don’t have to run to donate. We look forward to seeing many of you at this year’s race! Who knows, by next year some of the Clinic crew might even be in shape to run the 5K instead of barely walking the 1 mile!

From the Director’s Corner

“We need your help.”

Each year our students do great and amazing work representing people in Cleveland and McClain Counties who need our assistance. For those of us who teach in the clinic, we know that such experiences teach our students fundamental lawyering skills, professionalism, and service. But in order to more fully promote the educational benefits of the clinic, we need information and data from you, our alumni. Below is a link to a survey that asks about what you learned in the clinic. PLEASE take the time to complete the survey. Whether you have been out of school for one year or forty years, the data will help us immeasurably in presenting the benefits of the clinical experience. Click on the following link to complete the survey: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QHZRBHF
Alumni News

Professional Profiles:

Wayne Janoe is a 2009 graduate of the COL and Clinic. He joined JAG immediately after graduation and is currently the Chief of Fiscal Law for Regional Command – South in the southern part of Afghanistan. His team of lawyers cover more than a fifth of the country and are continuing the fight as they transition responsibility to the Afghan military and police. Wayne says “It is a fun and intellectually challenging job.”

All of us are very proud of Wayne and all of our clinic grads who are serving in the JAG and other divisions of the military keeping us safe. These are a few of the Clinic grads who have served or are currently serving our country: Joe Ashbaker, 2002; Jake Brezilliac, 2003; Clay Compton, 2003; Amy Nelson, 2003; Shelly Cole, 2005; Laura Loomis, 2008; Corey Tisdale, 2008; Wayne Janoe, 2009; Callie Hall, 2010; and R.J. Harris, 2012. Our sincere apologies if we left someone off this list! THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SERVICE!

Jeffrey Cartmell – Deputy General Counsel on Indian Affairs

Jeffrey Cartmell, a 2012 graduate of the COL and past Co-Chief Counsel of the Legal Clinic, was a three semester clinic student. He also earned a Native American Law Certificate. After the Bar, Jeff became the Deputy General Counsel for Indian Affairs under Governor Mary Fallin. In his position, he conducts significant outreach to tribal leaders in Oklahoma, visits and tours tribal headquarters, meets directly with tribal leaders, and facilitates round-table discussion on State-Tribal relations within Indian Country. “These conversations have shaped my priorities and goals, which include addressing cross-deputization agreements, Indian Child Welfare issues, and the development and implementation of State-Tribal burn ban compacts. Sitting face-to-face with tribal leaders and listening to the troubles tribal nations face has prepared me specifically for the role of Attorney Advisor. ”

Jeff also collaborates on all tribal issues with the Governor’s General Counsel and other State officials as needed. Performing extensive legal research and drafting advisory memoranda for the Governor. He meets with State and Tribal officials to effectively and efficiently resolve gaming compact compliance issues. Jeff is currently assisting with Tribal-State tobacco compact development and negotiations. This includes working closely with the Oklahoma Tax Commission, Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office, tribal leaders, and tribal attorneys.

Marriages:

Charlotte Hughart (1977) and Paul, July 2012 * Judith Peck (2010) and Daniel Morgan, September 2011
Jeep Darnell (2011) and Meghan Coon, October 2011 * Sara Kate Billingsley (2007) and Mark Allen, December 2012
Aaron Taber (2009) and Jeanine Taber, April 2012 * Bobbak Dolatabadi (2008) and Sammi De, September 2012
Laura Mealy (2012) and Andrew Talbert, September 2012 * Erin Troub (2011) and Kyle Therrian (2010), March 2013
Artoush Varshosaz (2008) and Natalia Marash, June 2013

Future Clinic Students (i.e. babies):

Taylor, June 2011, son of Elizabeth Frame Ellison (2009) and Christopher Ellison (2009)
Griffin, October 2011, son of Nate Hales (2013) and Heather Hales
Ireland, February 2012, daughter of Amber Godfrey (2008) and Stuart Godfrey
Evelyn, March 2012, daughter of Sylvia Lanfair (2010) and David Lanfair
Sean, June 2012, son of Yvonne Duncan (2008) and Sean Duncan
Elijah, September 2012, son of Judith Peck Morgan (2010) and Daniel Morgan
Evelyn Grace, April 2013, daughter of Kristie Gotwald (2012) and Joe Gotwald