

2013 Global Interns Jet Off Around the World

By André Dao



L-R Henrietta Champion de Crespigny, Ellyse Borghi, Leah O'Keefe, Kristine Tay, Lisa Harrison, Naomi McClellan, Nicola Greenberg, Laura John

Each year, the Castan Centre's Global Internship Program is a highlight of our activities. The 2013 Program will see nine students flying off to eight leading human rights organisations on four different continents. Once again, we had an outstanding pool of applicants, making our final decision a very difficult one. It also meant that the successful candidates are all incredible human rights advocates and, having completed a cross-cultural training course, are preparing to head off on to their assignments at the time of press.

Our two New York City interns will be Ellyse Borghi and Laura John. Ellyse will be interning with the Center for Constitutional Rights, working on their strategic litigation to defend rights related to gender and sexuality. Ellyse has previously interned with the Centre for Women's Justice in Jerusalem, and at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi Ghana, where she managed a team of African volunteers who designed and implemented a Micro-Finance project. Laura is a passionate advocate for refugee rights, and appropriately, she'll be interning with Human Rights First where she will work in the Refugee Protection Program. Before setting off for the United States, Laura is completing a three month internship with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Asia Pacific) in their Legal Protection Unit.

On the other side of the world, three interns will be heading to Africa. Naomi McClellan will be interning at the Human Rights Advocacy Centre in Accra, Ghana. She has previously volunteered her time with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Monash Amnesty International and World Youth International, which has seen her travel to Nepal and Kenya to work on domestic violence and HIV/AIDS programs. The other two African placements are at the South-African organisation, Lawyers for Human Rights. The internship is supported as part of the Monash-Oxfam agreement. Lisa Harrison and Nicola Greenberg will travel to South Africa to help the LHR in its work assisting desperate refugees with their asylum applications and other legal issues. Lisa has volunteered at a number of organisations, from the St Vincent de Paul Soup Van in Footscray to the Federation of Community Legal Centres. Nicola is particularly interested in refugee law, and is the co-ordinator of a volunteer refugee tutoring program, Wednesday Night Tutoring at the Richmond Housing Commission.

A little closer to home, Leah O'Keefe is heading to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to intern with International Women's Rights Action Watch – Asia Pacific. Leah has a strong interest in the South-East

Asia region, having majored in Indonesian and lived there as an exchange student in 2008. This experience fostered her interest in women's rights and Islamic feminism, which are both sure to feature in her work with IWRAW-AP. Excitingly, she'll also get to travel to Geneva in February for a session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Joining Leah in Geneva will be Kristine Tay, who is interning with the International Commission of Jurists. Kristine will be working with the ICJ's international secretariat in the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Group. Kristine is no stranger international human rights work, having travelled to Cambodia to volunteer for a locally-run human rights NGO, and interned in London with both Fair Trials International and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Adrienne Walters will be interning with the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health in Delhi, India. The current rapporteur is the widely respected Anand Grover, who was appointed in 2008. Adrienne, a Masters student, is currently working at the Top End Women's Legal Service in Darwin, where she regularly sees the impact that gendered and cultural stereotypes and systemic discrimination have on health and access to health services.

Finally, Henrietta Champion de Crespigny will be off to Haiti to intern with Plan International, where she will work on the intersection between children's rights and gender disparities. Having volunteered with Aboriginal Legal Aid and for the Castan Centre, Henrietta is looking forward to the opportunity to work with an international NGO which has a multilayered approach to international aid and advocacy.

You can follow the interns on their journeys overseas and their work with these unique organisations on the 2013 Global Intern blog at <http://castanglobalinterns.wordpress.com>. Interns will be updating the blog periodically with stories, photos and video.

The 2013 Castan Centre Global Interns are generously supported by Daniel and Danielle Besen, Sylvia & Michael Kantor, the Dara Foundation, the Nordia Foundation, the Monash Law Faculty's Student Mobility Fund, the Monash University Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) and MyriaD Consultants, which conducts the pre-departure cross-cultural training. Information about the 2013 interns can be found at www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre/internships/global-intern-program.html.