Civitas ChildLaw Center expands global initiatives

Under the direction of Daniel Geraghty, the Civitas ChildLaw Center continues to expand its participation and influence in international child and family law. "There are so many reasons to be involved and get our students involved in international work," says Geraghty. "It broadens all our perspectives, giving us insight into our own judicial system's strengths and weaknesses. Seeing how other countries are dealing with the same issues sparks ideas and different ways of doing things."

Although the United States is not a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Civitas ChildLaw Center models its work on the philosophy and provisions of the CRC. The center maintains a global leadership role in children's rights, and its faculty members are increasingly being asked to consult internationally. Geraghty has consulted extensively with UNICEF, particularly in Thailand and Vietnam. She and the team recently assessed a pending surrogacy law in Ghana and developed materials—later broadly distributed in other countries—to train clinical law faculty in Ethiopia.

Most years, Geraghty teaches a course called "Children's Rights and Medicine in Developing Nations," which students spend spring break immersed in a family law rights issues in another country. Past sites have included Tanzania, Turkey, and Thailand, among others. "Students learn a new topic, see firsthand, and have an opportunity to advance their own careers through scholarship," Geraghty says. Student research papers from this course have an excellent track record of publication, with at least one and as many as three articles published in law journals every year.

The center frequently goes on to international work in children's rights, and stay connected to the center with Geraghty (JD '11) now works with UNICEF in Sierra Leone, and recently worked with UNICEF to write a report on the draft child law in Ghana. She consulted extensively with UNICEF, and its faculty members have an excellent track record of publication, with at least one and as many as three articles published in law journals every year. Most years, Geraghty teaches a course called "Children's Rights and Medicine in Developing Nations," which students spend spring break immersed in a family law rights issues in another country. Past sites have included Tanzania, Turkey, and Thailand, among others. "Students learn a new topic, see firsthand, and have an opportunity to advance their own careers through scholarship," Geraghty says. Student research papers from this course have an excellent track record of publication, with at least one and as many as three articles published in law journals every year.

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